

## “A Tale of Two Covenants” Hebrews 8:6-13

INTRO:

Our Lord revealed Himself in the Old Testament through many names. The chief among these names is Yahweh or Jehovah. This name is translated LORD in most of our translations. This is God’s special name; it means that our God is a covenant making and keeping God. He has a plan that is been unfolding since the beginning of time. It is a plan which includes our living in fellowship and relationship with our holy God. For that to happen, God entered into a covenant with us. His plan included two covenants, an Old Covenant and a New Covenant. The writer of the Book of Hebrews explores these two covenants in the verses we are about to study. He laid the groundwork for this study in Chapter 7 by explaining how our Lord Jesus Christ is a superior high priest to those of the Aaronic/Levitical priesthood.

**I. The Old Covenant (v. 7-8)**

**II. The New Covenant (v. 8-13)**

**I. The Old Covenant (v. 7-8)**

A. *“But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with them, He says: “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.” (Hebrews 8:6-8)*

Why do we need a new covenant? Did God make a mistake in creating the first covenant?

1. God’s first covenant, the Law, was given to the people of God for a specific purpose.

We read of that purpose in **Galatians 3:19**;

*“What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.”*

The first covenant, the Law, was given to show us our transgressions. In short, it was given to show us the righteous standard that God has set and to demonstrate our total inability to live without sin before God.

2. The ultimate purpose of the Law was to bring us to Christ. **Galatians 3:24** says, *“Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”*

B. Because, in God’s plan the first covenant was to prepare for the coming of Christ, a new covenant was needed. While the Old Covenant was good and holy, it could not do everything we needed done. **Romans 8:3** reminds us,

***“For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh.”***

The Old Covenant did not fail because it was flawed; it failed because we were unable to keep its demands. It was never designed to be God’s final word to us. It was designed to lay the ground work for the New Covenant, which would replace it.

## **II. The New Covenant (v. 8-13)**

A. God is instituting a New Covenant. What is this covenant going to look like?

B. First, the New Covenant is different from the Old Covenant in that it is an internal covenant. **(v.10)**

***“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their heart.”***

1. The Old Covenant consisted of an external standard that the Jewish people had to meet. Paul summed it up in **Romans 10:5** in these words:

***“For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, ‘The man who does those things shall live by them.’”***

In short, do this and you will live. Fail to do them or disobey them and you will die!

2. The New Covenant, on the other hand, included something that the Old Covenant never had. God writes it upon our minds and our hearts so that it is part of us and we want to fulfill it through the Holy Spirit living and working in us. Paul described this in **Romans 8:3-4**.

***“For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”***

Salvation is more than a decision to accept God’s offer of forgiveness through His Son. It is a response to the inner working of the Spirit of God. When God saves us He enters our lives and changes us from the inside out.

C. Second, the New Covenant makes a way in which we can have a perfect relationship with God. **(Hebrews 8:10b-11)**

***“I will be their God, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.”***

1. The blessing Adam and Eve lost, God gave back to us in the New Covenant. We will be His people and He shall be our God.

2. How will that work? It happens because of the inward witness of the indwelling Holy Spirit. We who have come to Him by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, will know really know God personally. Two passages are important here. First, as Jesus prays to His heavenly Father in **John 17:3**, we learned that eternal life is a life filled with the knowledge of God Himself.

***“And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”***

Second, remember the encouragement that John gave us in **1 John 1:3**.

***“That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.”***

D. Third, the New Covenant will provide complete forgiveness and putting away of sin (v.12). ***“For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”***

While the sacrifices of the Old Covenant priests could never take away sin once for all, the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ for our sins once for all – never to be repeated – did away with our sins forever.

What a blessing we were given in the New Covenant. Are you a part of that covenant? Have you put your trust in Christ to save you? Then you can sing.