

God's Plan For Saving Man

LESSON THREE - THE TWO COVENANTS

Failure of Bible teachers and students to make a proper division of the word of God, making no distinction between the **Old** and **New Covenants**, has contributed a great deal to existing confusion as to God's plan of salvation. Judaism, one of the greatest hindrances to Christianity through the ages, is a consequence of this failure. Much present day denominational error is traceable to this failure to rightly divide.

In this lesson we want to study the relationship of the **two covenants** to God's people in the two dispensations, the purpose and passing of the first and the establishing of the second.

What is a **Covenant**? A covenant is, "An agreement by two or more individuals to do or refrain from doing some act." A **Contract**. The **Old Covenant** was an agreement between God and a nation; The **New Covenant** is an agreement between God and individuals. In both, blessings are promised and conditions are stipulated. A covenant may be **conditional**, as with Israel(**Exodus 19:5-6**), or **unconditional**, as with Abraham(**Genesis 15:18**).

I. THE OLD COVENANT.

- A. This covenant was made **between God and Israel**, when Israel was brought out of Egyptian bondage(**Ex. 19:1-5; 24:1-8**).
- B. This law was a **national law**, given **only to Israel** to govern them as a nation; ONLY the Israelites were subject to it(**Ex. 20:1-2; 31:12-17**). **NO** other people were mentioned.
- C. This law was not only limited as to people, but as to time. It was given "till the seed should come"(**Gal. 3:19**), which seed was Christ(**vs. 16**).
- D. How much was included in this old law? What part are we obligated to keep? **IF WE FOLLOW ANY PART OF THE OLD LAW, WE ARE OBLIGATED TO FOLLOW ALL OF IT**(**Gal. 5:3; 3:10**). But if the law has been done away with, then it is useless to appeal to that law for authority to justify anything we do.

II. WHAT ABOUT THE TEN COMMANDMENTS?

- A. Some contend the Ten Commandments are moral law and the rest of the old law is ceremonial. However, **God makes no such distinction!**
- B. The Lord speaks of the Ten Commandments as the covenant(**Ex. 34:27-28; Deut. 4:13**).
- C. If we can show that the covenant was fulfilled, removed, and another made by Jehovah, we will have shown the Ten Commandments have been done away and are not the law by which the Christian is to live.

III. THE PASSING OF THE OLD COVENANT.

- A. God promised a "New" and "Better" covenant(**Jer. 31:31-34**).
 - 1. Now Jesus is the mediator of a new covenant(**Heb. 8:6; 9:15**).
 - 2. Before the new could be established, the old had to be removed(**Heb. 10:9**).
- B. Jesus had come to fulfill the first(**Mat. 5:17-18**), which he claimed to have done(**John 17:4; 19:28-30**).
- C. The Holy Spirit later declared the first had been fulfilled and taken out of the way(**Eph. 2:14-16; Col. 2:13-16**).
- D. Paul tells us we are not under the Old Law(**Rom. 7:1-7**).
- E. This law, in its entirety, the one written on stones and all that pertains to it, was done away in Christ(**2 Cor. 3:3-16**).
- F. **So the entire law, including the Ten Commandments, is done away.**

IV. THE NEW COVENANT - THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

- A. Under the new covenant all authority now belongs to Christ. **If all authority now belongs to Jesus then there is none left for those before him or those who come after**(**Mat. 28:18**).
- B. **All** nations are included in this covenant(**Mark 16:15-16**).

C. Therefore, it is through the New Covenant that Jesus fulfills the promise made to Abraham that through his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed (**Gal. 3:6-8, 15-16, 23-29**).

D. Under this covenant, in Christ, all are "new creatures" (**2 Cor. 5:17**).

CONCLUSION:

It is in the **New**, not the **Old**, that the sinner today finds his way to God, the terms of pardon, and the conditions of fellowship with the Father and of eternal life. And it is in the **New Covenant** that he finds the fulfillment of God's promise, which promises are guaranteed by the blood of Jesus.