

Key Text: Hebrew 8:6

“But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.”

WHAT IS COVENANT?

A “Covenant” is a word that is synonymous with Testament. ***A covenant is an agreement between two parties or people that involves promises on the part of each to the other.*** The Hebrew word for covenant means “Betweenness” emphasizing the relational element that lies at the basis of all covenants. Human covenants are significantly different from divine covenants in at least four aspects.

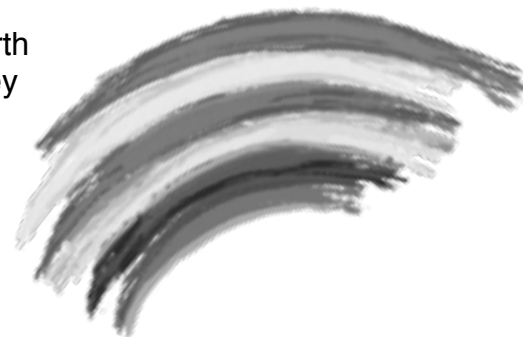
1. All divine covenants originate with God and not with man. (Gen. 9:9)
2. All divine covenants are everlasting. This means that a divine covenant may be accepted or rejected but cannot be altered. (Gen. 9:16)
3. All divine covenants are memorialized with a visible sign and a pledge of some sort. (Gen. 9:13)
4. The fourth and final point is that while human covenants might involve equal parties, divine covenants always involve a weak party with an all-powerful, all-knowing, and ever-present God. This means that only mankind has the possibility of failing to meet the requirements specified in a divine covenant. In spite of this dynamic God still desires to enter into a covenant relationship with mankind. This is another way that mankind may experience the faithfulness and loving-character of God. (2 Timothy 2:13)

God desires for us to live in a “Covenant” relationship with Him.
Exodus 6:7; Psalms 111:5,9.

COVENANTS IN THE BIBLE

NOAH’S COVENANT (Gen 8:20 - 9:17)

God made a covenant with Noah after the destruction of all life on earth outside of the ark. The terms were simple. Noah and his family were to obey God and be fruitful and multiply. God’s pledge or promise was that He would never again destroy life on the earth with flood waters. The sign or symbol of this covenant was the “**Rainbow**”. Every time that God looks at the rainbow He thinks of the promise He made with this covenant for all time.



ABRAHAM’S COVENANT (Gen. 12:1-3; 15:18; 17:2,11; 22:1-18)

God’s covenant with Abraham had multiple terms. God promised to bless the descendants of Abraham and to make them His special people even giving them their own special land. God also promised that Abrahams decedents would be innumerable and that He would bless the entire world through Abrahams descendants. In response to this, Abraham was to remain faithful to God and serve Him. The symbol and sign for this covenant was the “**Cutting**” away of flesh through circumcision.

COVENANTS IN THE BIBLE *(continued)*

MOSES' COVENANT (Exodus 19:3-25; 20, 24:1-12)

God initiated this covenant to formalize the redemptive relationship between the Lord and His "Chosen People." God promised that the nation of Israel would be a kingdom of priests and kings enjoying all the blessing of His presence in their life. This meant that they would be blessed and favored everywhere that they went. Their responsibility was to obey the commandments that God laid out through Moses. The symbol or sign for this covenant was "**The Sabbath**". (Ex. 31:13, 16-17)

DAVID'S COVENANT (2 Samuel 7; 22:51, Psalms 89:3-4)

God promised to make David's name great on the earth. He promised to establish his throne forever and to give him rest from all enemies. The symbol of this covenant is actually "**The Sun and the Moon**". (Psalms 89:36,37) Think of the faithful consistency of the sun and the moon, then apply that quality to David's covenant.



THE NEW COVENANT (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Matthew 26:26-29; Hebrews 8:7-13)

The major promise of this New Covenant is, that God will write His law on hearts and not on tablets of stone. He promises that each person may know God personally and experience the forgiveness of iniquity and sin without the need for additional sacrifice. He declares that He will no longer remember their sin. The promise of this covenant is symbolized in "**Communion**" and the pledge or seal of this covenant is baptism by water and the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 1:13,4; 4:30)



HOW CAN YOU AND I ENTER INTO THE NEW COVENANT?

- ◆ **Accept "The Blood" of Christ through repentance. Salvation is through Faith in Jesus' Sacrifice for your sin.**
- ◆ **Accept "The Promise of Salvation." Trust Jesus as your Lord and mediator with God.**
- ◆ **Accept "The Seal of water & Spirit baptism". Walk in the Spirit and be in "Fellowship" with God and Believers.**

HOW IS THE OLD COVENANT FULFILLED IN JESUS CHRIST?

A very important point to understand is how the Old Testament relates with the New Testament. If we misunderstand a verse like Hebrews 8:13 a person might easily dismiss much of the Bible as no longer significant to faith under the New Testament. This would be a horrible mistake. All of the Bible is applicable to your faith. What happened with the new covenant was a fulfilling of the old testament requirements making the old practices and system of sacrifice unnecessary. God did not erase any of the requirements, He simply perfected them. A thorough reading of Hebrews chapters 9 & 10 will clarify this truth.

Jesus provided a "one-time" **Blood Sacrifice** that had previously been provided by ongoing animal sacrifice.

Jesus **took over the position of priest** and is now the only mediator needed between God and mankind. This has given access into God's Holy presence to all mankind instead of a select few priests.



The Earthly **Temple built by Moses has now been replaced** by the Heavenly Temple that was the inspiration for the earthly one.

Jesus has finished His work for salvation and has entered into rest. **Jesus has provided this same "Sabbath Rest"** to all through faith in Him. See Hebrews 4:9-11

God has given the seal of the Holy Spirit to all of His disciples. It is through yielding to the Holy Spirit that we experience all the promised fellowship that was pictured in the Old Covenant. Today, Jesus baptizes us with the Holy Spirit so that we have true fellowship with Him and with other believers. If you walk "IN" the Holy Spirit you will fulfill all the requirements placed on you in the New Covenant. (Romans 8:4,14)