

Bible Course **Lesson 19**

The New Covenant and Testament

Many people have assumed that God's law and His Covenants have nothing to do with Jesus Christ and New Testament Christianity.

No wonder that so many can't understand why God promised to make a New Covenant; with whom the New Covenant will be made; and what terms and conditions will regulate it!

You need to know the answers to these vital questions so that God will make the NEW COVENANT YOU!

Unless He does, you won't be able to receive the PROMISES contained in NEW TESTAMENT--the will of Jesus!

Our potentialities are so great we can then become even of the family of God--for we can then be born into the ruling Kingdom of God! These are the plain teachings of your Bible! How wonderful!

Isaiah was inspired to write; "O Lord, you are our Father, we are the clay, and you are our Potter; we are the works of your hand" (Isaiah 64:8).

THE NEW COVENANT MARRIAGE YET FUTURE!

1. Did Jesus Christ, the God of the "Old Testament," promise that He would make a new covenant- a new marriage agreement--with Israel and Judah even before Old-Covenant Israel had gone into captivity for disobeying the law? Jeremiah 31:31. Does Hebrews 8:8 also verify this?

Comment: Note that the event was STILL FUTURE when Paul wrote the book of Hebrews.

2. Does the reason that a New Covenant must be made lie in the fact that there was a fault in the Old Covenant? Hebrews 8:7.

3. What was this fault--was it in the law? Psalm 19:7. See also Romans 7:12. If the fault was not in the law, which is "perfect," nor with God, who kept His part, the fault must have been with "them," the people, must it not? Hebrews 8:8, first five words.

Comment: The law was perfect. But the PEOPLE were weak. They did not keep their part of the Old Covenant marriage agreement.

4. But under the New Covenant, what does God propose to do? Hebrews 8:10 and Jeremiah 31:33. Is this promised New Covenant to be a better marriage covenant than the Old Covenant? See comment.

Comment: Under the old marriage covenant, God wrote His laws on two tables of stone. The people could see the law with their own eyes, but the law was not within their hearts and minds. The law was not a part of them. But under the terms of the new covenant the Lord promises that He will make a marriage agreement only with those who have allowed Him to place the loving principles of God's nature within their hearts and minds, so they can keep the law. Remember, for it is very important! He will marry His "bride"--the collective members of the body of His church--only when she has proven herself worthy by obedience to His law. The Old Covenant Israelites had no promise of receiving the holy spirit which could write God's law in their hearts and minds. The New Covenant agreement into which we shall enter will correct the fault of the Old Covenant by making it possible for us to obey God's law in its spiritual intent. Then we can receive the eternal promises made to Abraham by means of God's holy spirit. The Holy Spirit. According to the Testament or will of Christ, gives us a new nature--the nature of God. No longer need man be weak, as he was under the Old Covenant, so that he cannot fulfil his part of the Old Covenant and receive God's promises. This time man will be able to fulfil his part and receive the promises of the New Covenant!

5. Who is the messenger who came to herald the coming of the promised New Covenant for those who would avail themselves of it? Mal. 3:1. Is this messenger "the Lord"--Christ? Mark 1:1,2.

6. Is the message of this New Covenant a part of the gospel message--the good news--Christ preached? Mark 1:1,14-15. Is repentance and belief in the Gospel to be a part of what modern Israelites must do in order to enter into this New Covenant which Christ will propose? Verse 15. Does Matthew 15:24 also verify the fact that Christ was sent only to the "lost"--the scattered--"sheep" or people of Israel to herald the Good News of the soon coming New Covenant proposal? But did Christ later instruct His disciples to preach the Gospel--which contains the message of the New Covenant--to all the world? Luke 9:2; Matthew 24:14.

7. Do Gentiles have any hope now of ever being partakers of this promised New Covenant, or are they strangers to the Covenants of promise--the promises contained in the covenants made with Abraham and those promises which will be contained in the New Covenant? Ephesians 2:11,12. But in what way may a Gentile--one having no blood relationship to Abraham--come into the New Covenant relationship? Verse 13 and Galatians 3:29; Romans 11:17.

Comment: The New Covenant will be a better covenant than the Old Covenant was. The Old Covenant was national--to one nation only--to Israel. It gave only temporary material earthly blessings. It gave no promise of the Holy Spirit and eternal life. The Testament or Will of Jesus, on the other hand is finally to be culminated in a New Covenant. It promises eternal inheritance of the earth, son-ship in the ruling spiritual Kingdom of God and naturally, the Holy Spirit of eternal life with which to make these promises possible. The New Covenant, unlike the Old Covenant, is actually preceded by a will--that is, a testament. To be correct, the first part of the Bible should not be titled "The Old Testament." For the question of death of either party to that Covenant did not enter into the agreement as it would had it

been a will—a testament. The Old Covenant was simply an agreement—"You do this and I'll do that. So—properly the title of the second part of the Bible should be," The New Covenant and Testament." The Greek, in which this latter part of the Bible was originally written, uses the Greek title "Diatheke" which is translated interchangeably as "covenant" and "testament."

8. When does God say this New Covenant was confirmed? Daniel 9:27. Was it the Messiah who did this? Verse 26. (Notice that by Christ's supreme sacrifice of Himself He did away with the necessity of animal sacrifices and oblations.) And does 1 Corinthians 1:7-8 tell us the Messiah--Jesus--is coming to establish this promised New Covenant at His at His second coming?

Comment: A "day" in the prophecy of Daniel 9:27 represents a year. Christ ministered three and a half years—one half of this prophetic week. Then He sacrificed His blood for the "many" people of the world so that they need not die. A tremendous sacrifice. He thus "made firm" the New Covenant at that time by saving people so they need not die eternally for their sins. Thus He made it possible for them to receive the Holy Spirit by which they may be born again as spirit beings and enter into the New Covenant relationship.

Immediately after Christ's second coming, He will take the remaining three and one-half years to establish the New Covenant by actually covenanting with those who were saved by His blood because of His first three-and-one-half-years' ministry. The word "confirm" means to "make firm" or "establish." All who are born again as spirit beings will, at Christ's second coming, be officially invited to enter into the New Covenant marriage relationship with Christ as their husband. This is the way Christ will establish the New Covenant. We must be ready! This must be our goal! What a priceless privilege!

9. Christ, remember, is the sacrificial Lamb of God. Does Rev. 19:7, 9 describe this glorious marriage event in which we who are ready will become the bride, at His second coming? Read also II Corinthians. 11:2.

[Christ to RE-MARRY His Wife!](#)

Some may ask, "How can Jesus Christ marry the New Testament church which is composed of both Israelites and Gentiles, if He was already married to ancient Israel under the Old Covenant?" The fact is Jesus Christ is no longer bound by marriage to ancient Israel! That marriage contract has been dissolved! Notice how.

1. After ancient Israel had disobeyed God's law, followed the customs of the heathen— serving other gods—did the Lord plead with them to return from their adulterous ways? Jeremiah. 3:14.

Comment: When ancient Israel broke God's marriage covenant, they were actually committing spiritual adultery. They put the customs of heathen peoples and the worship of idols ahead of the worship of God Who was their Husband. Because God is Holy He does not "co-exist" with sin! Therefore He was forced to separate His "wife"—ancient Israel—from Himself. (Isaiah. 50:1.)

2. Was it the sins of ancient Israel that separated them from God? Jeremiah. 3:6, 8; Isaiah. 50:1 and Isaiah. 59:1-2.

Comment: Even though Israel had committed adultery, God was, however, not free to marry again! Adultery is not a cause for divorce and remarriage! That's why the Eternal said, "I am married unto you" (Jeremiah. 3:14). The Lord—Jesus Christ of the New Testament—was still bound by His part of the conditions of the marriage contract.

These conditions were, however, limited by death! Only the death of one of the partners of a marriage covenant can sever the marriage relationship—marriage is binding until death! Jesus Christ's death on the stake at Golgotha freed Him from His first marriage contract to ancient Israel. Now he is free to marry a repentant, forgiven, sin-free "spiritual Israel"— the New Testament Church—when He returns!

3. Who is it Jesus will marry when He returns? Rev.19:7. Notice the words "his wife."

Comment: When Jesus returns He promises to make a new covenant—a new marriage agreement. That new marriage contract will be made with "spiritual" Israel — converted Israelites and Gentiles—now born of the Spirit.

This time the wife will remain faithful. Why? Because she will have received God's Holy Spirit and, at the resurrection, will have born as a perfect spiritual nation—into the Kingdom of God. God's spirit enables us to keep His laws which are still the terms and conditions of the marriage agreement—the New Covenant—He will make with us!

CHRIST CAME THAT WE MAY KEEP THE LAW

Some believe that Jesus came to "do away with the law." Just what was the purpose of Christ's coming anyway?

How ignorant the vast majority are of the most vital of all the facts they should know. Those who have set themselves up as ministers have not taught the people the truth, nor do they themselves know it.

Learn here the truth from your Bible!

1. Did Christ come to "do away with the law"—to "nail the law to the cross"? What did Christ, Himself, say? He should know why He came. What are His words? Mat. 5:17. Do verses 18 and 19 also show He did not come to destroy the law? On what two great things does Christ say "hang all the law"? Mat. 22:40, 37, 38. 39.

Comment: The great royal law of love has always existed. It with its ten points, the ten commandments, was in effect in the Garden of Eden. The law stands fast forever. Love of God as revealed by His law will never become obsolete (Psalms. 111:7, 8). People have been unable to bring themselves into harmony with this highest of all laws!! Christ here repeats twice for emphasis that He did not come to destroy —to do away with—the law.

2. On the other hand, what did Christ say He came to do? Mat. 5:17, last eight words. What did Christ mean by these words, "I come ... to fulfil"? See comment.

Comment: Christ was the first-begotten of many brethren. He was a mortal human being, just as you and I, but He was begotten of the Holy Spirit of God at his physical conception whereas with you and me, conception by the Holy Spirit comes later in life—after we have sinned. Christ "fulfilled the law" perfectly. Most certainly in Christ's "fulfilling" of the Law He did not annul the Law. He enlarged—His demonstrated the power of the Holy Spirit of God, if placed within man, to be able to fulfil—keep—the law. For with God all things are possible (Mat. 19:26). Christ came to pay with His own life the penalty of eternal death for all of us. He makes it possible that we may receive the Holy Spirit of life whereby we can fulfil the law also!

With the advent of the New Covenant promise of the Holy Spirit with which to keep the Law, God can now magnify— His commandments from the keeping of the law in the letter, as commanded under the Old Covenant, to the original intent that God desired from the beginning in the Garden of Eden.

God can now require the keeping of the law in the spirit—in its spiritual intent. This is a far more difficult task!! But man can have more power—the power of the Holy Spirit—to accomplish this feat if he will surrender to God!

Christ came to magnify the law. This is why He said, "Ye have heard that it was said by them in old time [by God's law-givers under the Old Covenant], thou shalt not commit adultery [physically]: but I say unto you, that whosoever looks after a woman to lust after her [mentally] hath [already] committed adultery" (Mat. 5:27, 28). Now it is counted a sin if one even lets the thought of adultery enter the mind. Or dwell on sins of any other kind.

Christ, by paying with His life for the sins of all mankind so that we need not die an eternal death for them, has made it possible that all may enter into the New Covenant relationship with Him. These two ways, then, are how Christ came to "fulfil the Law"—He, Himself, fulfilled it by obeying it, and has made it possible for "whomsoever will" to fulfil— obey—it!

PREPARATION: WE MUST MAKE AS PROSPECTIVE BRIDE!

1. What purpose has the Old Covenant period served?

Comment: It has been necessary for God to make man realize, through centuries of experience, the ageless fact that true happiness comes only by living in accordance with the great eternal law of love. And make man realize that he, of himself, is utterly incapable of doing so through his own means.

The Old Covenant has done just this! For the Israelites, down through the centuries, have been known as the nation of God. Yet all know that Israel could never keep His law. Thus Israel has become an example to the people of the world that all mankind, of themselves, cannot keep God's law either.

And then—just at this point—God has sent His only begotten Son to this unhappy and sorrow-ridden world with the joyful news—the "Good News"—of the arrival of a New Covenant. A covenant whereby one may be "begotten again, grow again and, at Christ's coming, be born again" a new creation (II Corinthians. 5:17), having another nature—the loving Spirit of God.

2. Each of us must receive the Holy Spirit which will set in motion the changes which must occur within us before we can be "born again" with the spirit body and holy spiritual nature we must have in order that Christ can establish His new marriage covenant with us. What are the terms of Christ's testament or will whereby we may receive the Holy Spirit necessary to cause these changes? What does Christ say you must do now in order to receive the Holy Spirit? Acts 2:38. Are not three things necessary?

Comment: Here you have the very essence of the things you must do now to prepare yourself to be a member of the Church which Christ will marry at His coming. Three things are necessary for you to do now in order to receive the promised Holy Spirit. You must repent, believe, and be baptized. What does this mean?

LET'S UNDERSTAND

First: You must "repent"—be sorry for your old ways, and surrender yourself, as far as it is humanly possible to the loving rule of God—for God will save no one He cannot rule.

Christ purchases true Christians with His blood which He shed on the tree for their sins so that they need not die an eternal death for sin (Acts 2:38). That is, Christ purchases those who are willing to prepare now to enter into the New Covenant with Him at His coming, and He has promised now to place the Holy Spirit within them.

Those who agree to enter into the New Covenant with Christ thereby will agree to become Christ's purchased servants—they agree to do His will. And, as "servants of Christ, doing the will of God," you will be doing His will this time—unlike those under the Old Covenant— "from the heart" (Eph. 6:6). For God will have, under the terms of the New Covenant, inscribed His law "in the fleshly table of your heart" (Jeremiah. 31:33 and Ezek. 11:19), by the indwelling of His Holy Spirit within you!

Second: You must believe— that the Holy Spirit of power promised by the terms of Christ's Will can completely crush out your old carnal nature and change you. And believe that Christ is your Saviour, as your present high priest, and coming Ruler.

Christ, by paying with His life for the sins of all mankind so that we need not die an eternal death for them, has made it possible that all may enter into eternal life. No wonder it is that when we look at the failure of those people to keep the law under the Old Covenant, we realize that we need a Saviour—Christ—to pay for our sins. We realize the Old Covenant "Law has been our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (Gal. 3:24). And that it is only right and proper that we acknowledge Him who has redeemed us as our coming Ruler and King and Husband!

Third: You must be baptized.

So—to summarize—you must: (1) repent, (2) believe, (3) be baptized.

After you have done this, what does God promise to do, according to the terms of Christ's " Will or Testament? ". . . and you shall receive " the gift of the Holy Spirit"!! (Acts 2:38). This is what God promises to do on His part.

There it is!

This is the spirit of power that came upon the apostles just after Christ's death (Acts 2:4). This is the prior requirement for entering into the new covenant relationship with Christ at our resurrection. How glorious that God has promised us a way of liberation from all our unhappy ways!! Then, at Christ's soon coming, we may inherit all the other marvellous things that the New Covenant promises—eternal life, the Kingdom, and the earth forever. The Holy Spirit gives us the power to have all these blessings!

THE DECISION IS YOURS

If you intend to enter into the New Covenant marriage agreement with Christ, you should begin preparation now! Later may be too late. But the decision is yours to make. God will not force you. He leaves you free to choose. Notice:

1. When God offered the Old Covenant to ancient Israel, did He coerce them into entering this covenant with Him, or did He allow them to voluntarily decide whether they would enter into it? Ex. 19:3, 5-8. Notice the word "if" in verse 5.

Comment: The word "if" shows that God did not force the people of ancient Israel to enter into the Old Covenant with Him.

2. Did God coerce the next generation of Israelites, forty years later, to enter this same Covenant with Him, or did He allow them to choose whether or not they would do so? Deut. 30:19. Note the words, "choose life."

Comment: Christ will not force anyone into entering a covenant with Him. Nor will He force you into a decision to start preparing to enter a covenant with Him. Why? God is creating beings with abilities like His own—beings with minds like His own —beings who can choose—beings who are free moral agents, and who are not mere automatons like the rest of His creation, such as the plants and animals. Christ never did force anyone to covenant with Him, and He never will! For He is forming beings who must voluntarily choose correctly! They will become God's supreme creation!

He will advise though—He says, "choose life." You also are a free moral agent just as were the former generations to which the other covenant—the Old Covenant—was offered. What will be your choice?

The New Covenant promises life—eternal life —and as the collective bride of Christ a close relationship with Him. And all the other blessings that will attend this high calling.

What are you going to do now about the New Covenant which is to be offered you when Christ comes? If you choose not to prepare yourself now for entry into this Covenant by refusing to allow God to place His Holy Spirit within you—the Spirit of eternal life—you will not be transformed, at Christ's soon coming, into a spirit being—the form you must be in to be able to covenant with Him.

God will not make a marriage covenant with a lower — human — form of life. In order to attend the wedding supper of the Lamb, you must be "born again"—a spirit being—just as God is!

Persistent refusal to submit will lead to eternal death.

WHERE TO RECEIVE THE SPIRIT?

The time is now at hand for you to make a decision. Think deeply on this matter as you meditate on this lesson and the lessons just ahead. These will give God's revealed instruction on how you can finally enter into the New Covenant, husband-wife relationship with the living Jesus Christ, your Redeemer.

The evidence is now crystal clear that in order for to inherit eternal-life you must also stand ready to enter into this New Covenant relationship with Christ. That's the only way to be born again of the life-giving Holy Spirit of God, and inherit all the other things you really desire.

Does God leave you in the dark on this most vital of all things? Or does He clearly point out to you the fact that He does have a Church, and show you how you can identify it from among the welter of so-called "churches" of today?

Which church—that is the question of all-encompassing importance! The Bible plainly gives the answer to this question, too. Let's understand what it says.

1. Long before Moses and Mount Sinai, did God have a priest upon the earth who represented Him, and carried out His work? Gen. ., .) 14:18, 19. Also review in Lesson 7, questions 5 through 13.
2. Later, did God call Moses as a servant to serve Him? Ex. 3:11, 12. Did God have Moses deliver the terms of the Old Covenant to the people at Mount Sinai? Ex. 19:3-8, 21:1, 24:3.
3. Was it not another mortal flesh-and-blood human being—Jesus Christ (Heb. 2:9, 14)— who came to announce, for God, the terms of the New Covenant to the people of His time, and to the world? Mai. 3:1, Mark 1:14.

Comment: God uses human beings to represent Him in His religious dealings with human beings upon the earth. After God personally gave the ten commandments to the people at Mount Sinai, it was a human being, Moses, who gave the terms of the Old Covenant to the people for God. Then God used Christ, in His human form, to announce the conditions of the New Covenant. And today God uses certain human beings to represent Him in his dealings with man.

The Gospel is the message about the Kingdom of God. A kingdom is constituted of four things: territory, ruler, laws and citizens. The gospel message must, therefore, include the New Covenant message whereby "born again" people may covenant with Christ to rule with Him in a husband-wife relationship as citizens in the future spirit-governed Kingdom of God. The Father has planned from the very foundation—the very beginning—of the world, how these four things which will constitute His Kingdom must be brought into being! (Mat. 25:34-)

4. Christ, Himself, was here on this earth but a short time. Is it true that Christ founded a church to carry the message of this new covenant on down to people through all the ages, so they could now receive the Holy Spirit and thus be prepared to enter the Kingdom at His soon coming?

Mat.16:18.

5. Was this Church to be composed of many different denominations? Or was it to be but one church? Was this church to have the "keys" to the Kingdom—the means of obtaining entrance into the Kingdom? Verse 19.

Comment: One of the most important keys is to know that there is to be a New Covenant, know how to enter into it, and know how to keep your part of it so that God may forever fulfil His part. The church you need to be in is the only one that has this key!

6. After the New Covenant was made known, when did the promised Holy Spirit first enter into those who knew how to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit? Acts 1:4, 5; 2:1-4. By the entrance of the Holy Spirit into these people, were they thus put within God's church—the Church of God? I Corinthians. 12:13.

Comment: These members, by surrendering their wills to God, and by having God's Spirit placed within them, became the members of His spiritual body. They became the members of His body just like the members of your body, your eyes, arms, legs—are members of your body and subject to your will. Here is the origin of the first true spiritual Church of God on the earth.

7. Do not the following references show that God's true Church should bear the name "Church of God"? Read and write out each of these vital proofs: Acts 20:28; I Corinthians. 1:2; 10:32; 11:22; and 15:9; 2 Corinthians. 1:1; I Thessalonians. 2:14; 2 Thessalonians. 1:4; I Tim. 3:5 and Gal. 1:13.

8. Down through the ages, since Christ's time, has there been a very small group who have continued to be the teachers of things concerning God's New Covenant and will? Rev. 2:1, 8, 12, 18. Rev. 3:7,8.

Comment: These seven actual Churches mentioned here existed in the time of the apostles. But each also represents a type of the true Church of God in its successive stages on down from the time of Christ. These are traceable through history.

THE CHURCH OF GOD

1. To whom was Jesus Christ sent? Matthew 15:24.

Comment: Jesus was sent to the house of Israel. And the work of proclaiming the gospel will not only go to the house of Israel but to the whole world! Christ founded His Church for this purpose.

God's true Church is not the shouting, senseless "Pentecostal type" church.

God's Spirit is "the spirit of a sound mind."

2. There is a special Spirit in God's Church—the Holy Spirit of God. For by His Spirit we are baptized into His Church. But does Paul warn you about receiving a different spirit? 2Corinthians 11:4.

Comment: This different spirit is the spirit of anti-Christ (I John 2:18). It is against Christ. It splits groups into denominations. It is not the uniting Holy Spirit of God. Do not make the fatal mistake of attempting to covenant with God through the wrong church. If you do, the apostle John here warns, you will receive

the wrong spirit. You will be led in to not keeping the commands as revealed in God's word, the Bible.

3. Are other warnings given against attempting to covenant with God through false churches? Mark 13:6.

Comment: Many—not the few, but many— will come in Christ's name, thus falsely classifying themselves as Christians, and will thus deceive the many. Remember that after you are begotten, you must grow. IF you choose the wrong church through which to covenant with God, you will be fed the wrong spiritual food. You will then die spiritually if you are fed this wrong spiritual food—it is poisonous! Finally, keep always in mind that God's final warning message to all the earth must be carried by any means possible and that includes the internet!

Other churches have wrongly appropriated God's true Church name "Church of God," just as they have wrongly appropriated Christ's name—Christian. Consider these facts as you learn more, in the lessons just ahead, about entering into the New Covenant with Jesus Christ at His second coming!

Remember, the decision to enter into God's covenant is up to you!