

The Two Covenants

Maniscalco

Joe

Lesson Seventy-Six

1. When God was about to speak the law to Israel, of what did He tell Moses to remind them?

“Tell the children of Israel; Ye have _____ what I did unto the Egyptians, and how _____ you on eagles’ wings, and _____ unto Myself. Exodus 19:3, 4.



2. What covenant did He propose to make with them?

“Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: and ye shall be unto me an _____, and an _____. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.” Exodus 19:5, 6.

3. What is a covenant?

“A mutual agreement to two or more persons or parties, in writing and under seal, to do or to refrain from some act or thing; a contract” Webster.

4. When Moses told the people what the Lord had proposed, what did they say?

“And all the people answered together, and said, all that the Lord hath spoken _____. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.” Exodus 19:8.

5. In the Covenant which the Lord proposed to make with Israel, what did He say that they were to do?

“Now therefore, if ye will _____, indeed, and keep my _____...” Exodus 19:5.

6. What was His covenant which they were to keep as their part of the mutual agreement or covenant between Him and them?

“And he declared unto you his covenant, which he wrote them upon _____ of _____.” Deuteronomy 4:13.

7. What relation did the ten commandments bear to the covenant made between God and the children of Israel?

As seen by the last text quoted, the ten commandments were the “covenant” to which the Lord referred, when in proposing a covenant with Israel, He said, “If you will _____ my voice indeed, and _____ my covenant,...” Exodus 19:5.

Note: The Ten Commandments were termed God’s covenant made, but something which God commanded them to perform, and He promised them something, provided they would keep them. Thus the Ten Commandments—God’s covenant—became the basis of

the covenant made between Him and Israel. The Ten Commandments, in all their details are “all these words,” concerning which the covenant was made. See Exodus 24:8.

8. After God had spoken His law (the “covenant which He commanded,” Exodus 20:3-17), did He continue speaking to the people?

“And _____ . And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.” Deuteronomy 5:22.

9. What was the nature of the instruction afterward given to Moses (Exodus 20:22 to close of Exodus 23)?

It was a practical application or explanation of the Ten Commandments, so that the people might be able better to understand what was involved in the keeping of them. The reference to the altar—how it should be built, and how approached—in Exodus 20:24-26, simply shows the care that God would have taken in His worship. In Exodus 23:14-19 we have other commandments also concerning worship.

10. When Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and they promised to be obedient (Exodus 24:3), what did Moses then do, that there might be no misunderstanding?

“And Moses _____ , and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel...And he took the book of the covenant, and _____ of the _____ .” Exodus 24:4, 7.

11. When the people had again heard the words of the Lord, and again promised obedience (verse 7), what was done to ratify the covenant which had thus been made?

“And Moses took the blood, and _____ , and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.” Exodus 24:8.

“And _____ , Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.” Hebrews 9:19, 20.

Note: We have here the complete account of the making of the first covenant. It consisted of a promise of obedience to the Ten Commandments, on the part of the children of Israel, and the statement by the Lord of what He would do for them provided they obeyed His voice.

12. Is the covenant made at Sinai the only covenant which God made with Israel?

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that _____ with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord.” Jeremiah 31:31, 32.

13. What comparison does God make between the two covenants?

“But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a _____, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.” Hebrews 8:6, 7.

14. In what respect was the first covenant faulty?

It must have been faulty in the very particulars wherein the second was better, namely, in the promises, as seen by the last part of Hebrews 8:6: “He (Christ) is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.”

15. What are the promises of the new covenant?

“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; _____ into their _____, and _____ them in their _____: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, And every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.” Hebrews 8:10, 11.

“For I _____, and I will remember their sin no more.” Jeremiah 31: 34b.

16. Are these promises stated in the order of their fulfillment?

It is evident that in Jeremiah 31:33, 34, where the promises of the new covenant are more fully stated than in Hebrews 8:10, 11, those promises are not stated in the regular order of their fulfillment; because forgiveness of sins is mentioned last, whereas it must necessarily precede the writing of the law in the heart; remembering sin no more, or blotting out of sin; and translating the people to the heavenly Jerusalem, where all shall see and know the Lord. See Isaiah 54:11-13; Revelation 21:2-4.

17. In the first covenant, to what was Israel’s promise really equivalent?

In the first covenant the people promised to keep all the commandments of God, so as to be worthy of a place in His kingdom. This was a virtual promise to make themselves righteous; for God did not promise to help them. But says Christ, “Without Me ye can do _____.” John 15:5. And the prophet says, “All our righteousnesses are a _____ rags.” Isaiah 64:6. The only perfect righteousness is God’s righteousness, and that can be obtained only through faith in Christ. See Romans 3:20-26. The only righteousness that will insure us an entrance into the kingdom of God is “the righteousness which is of God _____.” Philippians 3:9. Of those who shall inherit the kingdom of God, the Lord says, “Their righteousness is of me.” (Isaiah 54:17); and the prophet says of Christ, when He has taken His place as king over all the true Israel, “This is his name whereby he shall be called, the LORD OUR _____.” Jeremiah 23:6.

18. Yet what must be done in order to have eternal life?

“If thou wilt enter into life, keep the _____.” Matthew 19:17. Also see Revelation 22:14.

19. Then how could ancient Israel have any chance for eternal life?

“How much more shall the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of _____, for the _____ of the _____ that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the _____ of eternal inheritance.” Hebrews 9:14, 15.

Note: The fact that Christ, as mediator of the second covenant, died for the remission of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, shows that there was no forgiveness by virtue of that first covenant.

20. How alone can the good works required by the law be manifested in the lives of men?

“For it is God which _____ in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Philippians 2:13. Also look at John 15:4, 5; Ephesians 2:10; Hebrews 13:20, 21; 1 Corinthians 15:10; Galatians 2:20.

21. In order to have God make us “perfect in every good work to do His will,” what must be our position?

“_____ yourselves therefore to God. _____ the Devil, and he will flee from you.” James 4:7.

“Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but _____ yourself unto _____, as those that are alive from the dead. And your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.” Romans 6:13.

22. What is said of the law in the second or new covenant?

“I will put my law in their inward parts, and _____ it in their _____.” Jeremiah 31:33.

23. Since no such promise was made in the old covenant (see Exodus 19:5-8; 24:3-7), were not the promises of the new covenant much “better” than those of the old? When and how was the second covenant ratified?

By the death of Christ: “And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and _____ he shall cause the _____ and the oblation to cease.” Daniel 9:27.

“For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the _____. For a testament is of force after men are ____: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.” Hebrews 9:16, 17.

24. Then how could the Israelites, or any people before the first advent, derive any benefit from it?

By faith in the promised Redeemer. Romans 4:17. “As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations, before him whom he believed, even _____, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.” Also see Hebrews 6:13, 16-20.

25. How and in whom was the covenant with Abraham confirmed?

“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, _____.” Galatians 3:16.

26. Is there anything in the second covenant that was not in the Abrahamic covenant?

“And if ye be _____, then are ye Abraham’s _____, and heirs according to the promise.” Galatians 3:29, 6-9.

Note: None should allow themselves to be confused by the terms first covenant and second covenant. While the covenant made at Sinai is called “the first covenant,” it is by no means the first covenant that God ever made with man. Long before that He made a covenant with Adam. Neither must it be supposed that the first or old covenant existed for a period of time as the only covenant with the people before the promise of the second or new covenant could be shared. If that had been the case, then during that time there would have been no pardon for the people. What is called the “second covenant” virtually existed before the covenant was made at Sinai; for the covenant with Abraham was confirmed in Christ (Galatians 3:17), and it is only through Christ that there is a value to what is known as the second covenant. There is no blessing that can be gained by virtue of the second covenant that was not promised to Abraham. And we, with whom the second covenant is made, can share the inheritance which it promises, only by being children of Abraham. To be Christ’s is the same as to be children of Abraham (Galatians 3:29); all who are of faith are the children of Abraham, and share in his blessing (Galatians 3:7-9); and since no one can have anything except as children of Abraham, it follows that there is nothing in what is called the second covenant that was not in the covenant made with Abraham. The second covenant existed in every feature long before the first, even from the days of Adam. It is called “second” because both its ratification by blood and its more minute statement, were after the ratification of the covenant made at Sinai. More than this, it was the second covenant made with the Jewish people. The one from Sinai was the first made with that nation.

27. Then why was the covenant made at Sinai?

The Lord was just giving His law. The promise of the Israelites to keep it perfectly, and their failure, brought them face to face with the consequences of violating the law of God. The consciousness of guilt, and a sense of its consequences, would be much more forcibly impressed upon their minds than if they had not made the promise which they did. And being thus brought face to face with their sin, and realizing its full enormity, they would be driven to the only source of help, ample provision for which had been made in the covenant with their father Abraham. Thus it might be said that the first covenant was made in order to bring the second covenant (all the terms of which were the Abrahamic covenant) into bolder relief and to secure its acceptance by the people.

When it was demonstrated that the first covenant—the Sinaitic covenant—contained no provisions for pardon of sins, some will at once say, “But they did have pardon under that

covenant.” The trouble arises from a confusion of terms. It is not denial that under the old covenant, i.e., during the time when it was specially in force, there was pardon of sins, but that pardon was not offered in the old covenant, and could not be secured by virtue of something else, as shown by Hebrews 9:15. Not only was there the opportunity of finding free pardon of sins, and grace to help in time of need, during the time of the old covenant, but the same opportunity existed before that covenant was made, by virtue of God’s covenant with Abraham, which differs in no respect from that made with Adam and Eve, except that we have the particulars given more in detail. We see, then, that there was not necessity for provisions to be made in the Sinaitic covenant for forgiveness of sins. The plan of salvation was developed long before the gospel was preached to Abraham (Galatians 3:8), and was simply sufficient to save to the uttermost all who would accept it; the covenant at Sinai was made for the purpose of making the people see necessity of accepting the gospel.

Hebrews 9:1 is a text that hinders many from seeing that all God’s blessings to man are gained by virtue of the second covenant, and not by the first. That text read: “Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, they were forgiven (Leviticus 4), seems to some conclusive evidence that the old covenant contained the gospel and its blessings. But forgiveness of sins was not secured by virtue of those offerings, “for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.” Hebrews 10:4. Forgiveness was obtained only by virtue of the promised sacrifice of Christ (Hebrews 9:15), the mediator of the new covenant, their faith in whom was shown by their offerings. So it was by virtue of the second or new covenant that pardon was secured to those who offered the sacrifices provided for in the ordinances of divine service connected with the old or first covenant.

Moreover, those “ordinances of divine service” formed no part of the first covenant. If they had, they must have been mentioned in the making of that covenant; but they were not. They were connected with it, but not a part of it. They were simply the means by which the people acknowledged the justice of their condemnation to death for the violation of the law which they had covenanted to keep, and their faith in the mediator of the new covenant.

In brief, then, God’s plan in the salvation of sinners, whether now or in the days of Moses, is: The law went home emphatically to the individual, to produce conviction of sin, and thus to drive the sinner to seek freedom; then the acceptance of Christ’s gracious invitation, which was extended long before, but which the sinner would not listen to; and lastly, having accepted Christ, and being justified by faith, the manifestation of the faith, through the ordinances of the gospel, and the living of a life of righteousness by faith in Christ.