

The Two Covenants, I

1. **Heb 8:7**-The bible teaches that there are two covenants;
 - a. The first covenant; also called “old” (**Heb 8:13**)
 - b. The second covenant; also called “new” (**Heb 8:8, 13**)
2. The bible teaches that the second covenant was established only because the first one was faulty (limitations);
3. **Heb 8:6; Heb 9:1-- The covenants are tied with the work of ministration in the sanctuary**; this is because the promises and blessings of the covenant are dispensed only through the sanctuary service;
 - a. The first covenant tied to a worldly sanctuary (**Heb 9:1**)
 - b. The second covenant tied with the mediatorial work of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary (**Heb 8;**
4. **QUESTION:** What is the **first** covenant? What is the **second** covenant or the “new” covenant? What was wrong with the first covenant? If God is the author of this covenant as well, what could possibly be wrong with it?
5. It is absolutely important to know the answers to these questions because our salvation depends on it; we need to know and make sure that we are in the right covenant relationship with God; it goes to say that to not know, is fatal!
6. Some cherish the wrong understanding that the first covenant applied to those who lived in Old Testament times only and is no longer valid today; the truth is, there are still people today who are living under the first covenant!
7. it is also thought that the New covenant applies to the New testament times only, or after the death of Christ; the fact of the matter is, the new covenant was valid even before the death of Christ! It had existed even in the days of Abraham and the patriarchs!

As the Bible presents two laws, one changeless and eternal, the other provisional and temporary, **so there are two covenants**. The covenant of grace was first made with man in Eden, when after the Fall there was given a divine promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head. To all men this covenant offered pardon and the assisting grace of God for future obedience through faith in Christ. It also promised them eternal life on condition of fidelity to God’s law. Thus the patriarchs received the hope of salvation. **PP 370**.

This same covenant was renewed to Abraham in the promise, “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” Genesis 22:18. This promise pointed to Christ. So Abraham understood it (see

Galatians 3:8, 16), and he trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of sins. It was this faith that was accounted unto him for righteousness. . .

Though this covenant was made with Adam and renewed to Abraham, it could not be ratified until the death of Christ. It had existed by the promise of God since the first intimation of redemption had been given; it had been accepted by faith; yet **when ratified by Christ, it is called a new covenant**. The law of God was the basis of this covenant, which was simply an arrangement for bringing men again into harmony with the divine will, placing them where they could obey God's law. { PP 370.4}

Another compact—called in Scripture the “old” covenant—was formed between God and Israel at Sinai, and was then ratified by the blood of a sacrifice. **The Abrahamic covenant was ratified by the blood of Christ, and it is called the “second,” or “new,” covenant, because the blood by which it was sealed was shed after the blood of the first covenant.** That the **new covenant was valid in the days of Abraham** is evident from the fact that it was then confirmed both by the promise and by the oath of God—the “two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie.” Hebrews 6:18. **PP 371.**

8. Notice the points presented in the statement above:
 - a. **The second or new covenant**--existed even in the days of Abraham (and even before)
 - b. **The first or old covenant**--was brought in 400 later, when God made a covenant with the Israelites on Mount Sinai
9. **Figure this one out:** The second covenant actually came before the first covenant; the New covenant is older than the Old covenant!!
10. The new covenant is also called the “everlasting covenant:”

The **covenant** of grace is not a new truth, for it existed in the mind of God from all eternity. This is why it is called the everlasting **covenant**. **FLB 77.**

Salvation Through the Abrahamic Covenant Only

11. The human race only has hope under the Abrahamic covenant

There is hope for us only as we come under the Abrahamic **covenant**, which is the **covenant** of grace by faith in Christ Jesus. The gospel preached to Abraham, through which he had hope, was the same gospel that is preached to us today.... Abraham looked unto Jesus, who is also the author and the finisher of our faith. **6BC 1077.**

The only means of salvation is provided under the Abrahamic **covenant**. **FLB 78.g**

12. **Gen 15:9-18**--The Abrahamic covenant was a covenant in which God in condescension, entered into with Abraham, to make his promises to him binding and immutable;
 - a. **Gen 12:1-3**—God promised to bless Abraham
 - b. **Gen 15:1-5**—God's promised blessings included both material and spiritual blessings
 - i. **Material blessings**
 1. **Gen 15:1-5**—God promised to give Abram a son

2. **Gen 15:5**—God promised to make Abram a great nation
 3. **Gen 15:7**—God promised to give Abram the land of Canaan for a possession
- ii. **Spiritual blessings**
 1. **Gen 15:6**--Righteousness on account of Abraham's faith
13. **Gen 15:7**—to assure Abraham of the immutability of His promises, God condescends and enters into a covenant with Abraham; human covenants are made to make promises binding;
14. **Gen 15:9-18**—For the sake of Abram, God entered into a covenant with him, following the custom of the land in those days, in which animals were killed, split in halves and arranged to form two separate lines, so that the covenanting parties can pass between the pieces, while declaring oaths:
 - a. *"May I be like these animals if I do not fulfill my part of the covenant"*
 - b. This a much more dramatic way of making covenants than just writing on paper and affixing signatures!
15. **Jer 34:17-22**—this passage shows that the Jews practiced this form of making covenants long after Abraham's time;
 - a. The princes and priests of Judah made a covenant with the Lord by passing between parts of slain animals, promising to free their Hebrew slaves if God would deliver them from the armies of Babylon which had surrounded Jerusalem to destroy it;
16. Following the custom of the land in those days, the covenant God entered into with Abram required that God (smoking furnace) should pass between the pieces; God however, puts Abram to sleep ;
 - a. Abram put to sleep while God walked between the pieces to teach Abram that he had no part in fulfilling the terms of the covenant;
17. **"Deep sleep"**— Heb. *"tardemah,"* meaning "sleep from the Lord;" in other words, divinely induced sleep
 - i. **Gen 2:21**- Adam caused to sleep deeply by the Lord
 - ii. **1 Sam 26:12**—deep sleep from the Lord
 - iii. **Isa 29:10**—can also have a spiritual application; God poured out deep sleep on His stubborn people;
18. This one-sided covenant is an illustration of the plan of salvation which is solely by God's grace apart from human effort (**Eph 2:8-9; Tit 3:5**);
19. **Rom 3:31; Tit 3:5-8; Jas 2:20-22**--Grace however, does not do away with works; human effort shows that faith is real;

Still the patriarch begged for some visible token as a confirmation of his faith and as an evidence to after-generations that God's gracious purposes toward them would be accomplished. The Lord

condescended to enter into a covenant with His servant, employing such forms as were customary among men for the ratification of a solemn engagement. By divine direction, Abraham sacrificed a heifer, a she-goat, and a ram, each three years old, dividing the bodies and laying the pieces a little distance apart. To these he added a turtledove and a young pigeon, which, however, were not divided. **This being done, he reverently passed between the parts of the sacrifice, making a solemn vow to God of perpetual obedience.** Watchful and steadfast, he remained beside the carcasses till the going down of the sun, to guard them from being defiled or devoured by birds of prey. About sunset he sank into a deep sleep; and, “lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him.” And the voice of God was heard, bidding him not to expect immediate possession of the Promised Land, and pointing forward to the sufferings of his posterity before their establishment in Canaan. The plan of redemption was here opened to him, in the death of Christ, the great sacrifice, and His coming in glory. Abraham saw also the earth restored to its Eden beauty, to be given him for an everlasting possession, as the final and complete fulfillment of the promise. **PP 137.**

The Patience of the Saints

20. Abram needed two things in order to inherit God’s promises:
 - a. **Faith**—trust in God’s word alone to fulfill what it promises
 - b. **Patience**—Abraham needed patience because the promises made to him would not be fulfilled immediately (**Gen 15:13-16**)
21. Abram’s lack of faith and patience at the beginning of his experience results in unnecessary suffering for him and for his posterity
 - a. **Gen 16**—the story of Hagar and Ishmael
22. **Gen 22: Rom 4:16-19; Jas 2:20-24**—Abraham’s faith and patience triumphs at last when he demonstrates perfect obedience to the will of God in sacrificing Isaac;
23. **Heb 6:11-14**—Abraham’s **patience** and **faith** to inherit God’s promise held up by Paul before the Hebrew converts to Christianity to urge them to be steadfast and to continue hoping to receive the benefits of Christ’s ministration in the heavenly sanctuary; many of these were reverting back to Judaism, discouraged;
 - a. “**Hope** set before us;” the “**hope** which is an anchor to the soul”—is sure and steadfast because Jesus had been ordained high priest after the order of Melchisedek and is now ministering “within the veil”;
 - b. **Gal 5:5**—Righteousness in Paul’s day was in the form of hope; previous generations of Christians longed to possess it but only enjoyed a foretaste of it in justification and sanctification; these died not receiving the full application of the New covenant promise
24. **Rom 4:17-25; Gal 3:29**—the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant are valid today to those who believe in Christ:
 - a. Christ’s Righteousness given by **imputation** only;
 - b. This is a benefit of the work of Jesus in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary and is a partial application of the new covenant promise

The New Covenant Promise About to Be Fulfilled

25. **Heb 8:10-12**--With the change of ministration from holy to most holy in 1844, the New covenant promise of righteousness by faith in Christ, is no longer being just imputed to the faithful believers, but being imparted in the fullest and final sense:

- a. **Rev 6:9-11**--The faithful dead are now being given the robe of Christ's perfect righteousness; soon this work of imparting the righteousness of Christ in the final sense will move on to the living;
- b. **Lev 16:30**--Those who are alive today are living in very exciting times simply because they are living under the very shadow of the final atonement in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary; they should be the most excited and should be living with the greatest anticipation because in a little while, the New covenant promise to blot out sin in the life and in the book of heaven is about to be eternally fulfilled!! The work of final cleansing is about to transition with the living!

God's people are now to have their eyes fixed on the heavenly sanctuary, where the final ministration of our great High Priest in the work of the judgment is going forward,—where He is interceding for His people. **Ev 223.**

While Christ is cleansing the sanctuary, the worshipers on earth should carefully review their life, and compare their character with the standard of righteousness. **Ev 224.**

26. The New covenant promise will soon be fulfilled to those who are alive; this is the complete and final application of the new covenant promise:

All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life. . . **GC 483.**

Jesus does not excuse their sins, but shows their penitence and faith, and, claiming for them forgiveness, He lifts His wounded hands before the Father and the holy angels, saying: I know them by name. I have graven them on the palms of My hands. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." Psalm 51:17. And to the accuser of His people He declares: "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" Zechariah 3:2. **Christ will clothe His faithful ones with His own righteousness, that He may present them to His Father "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."** Ephesians 5:27. **Their names stand enrolled in the book of life,** and concerning them it is written: "They shall walk with Me in white: for they are worthy." Revelation 3:4. **GC 484.**

Thus will be realized the complete fulfillment of the new-covenant promise: "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found." Jeremiah 31:34; 50:20. **GC 485.**

27. The question is, do we have the faith and the patience to wait for it just a little bit longer?
28. **Rev 13:10**—The faith and patience of the saints during the Dark Ages is noted;
29. **Rev 14:12**—the final generation of believers described as having faith and patience to inherit the New covenant promise: “here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus”