The New Covenant Pt. 2

Covenants

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The Better Covenant: Why the Blood of Jesus Changes Everything

There is a question worth sitting with for a moment. If you could choose between living under the old covenant or the new covenant, which would you choose? Most people instinctively reach for the new covenant, and for good reason. Grace. Freedom. Assurance. No more wondering whether you have done enough. No more repeated sacrifices. No more trying to remember hundreds of laws and hoping you have kept them all.

But to truly appreciate why the new covenant is so extraordinary, it helps to understand what it replaced, what it fulfilled, and what it cost.

Two Halves of One Story

The Bible is not simply a collection of ancient religious writings. It is one unified story held together by covenants, binding agreements between God and his people. The Old Testament contains four major covenants: the Noahic covenant, sealed with a rainbow; the Abrahamic covenant, sealed with circumcision; the Mosaic covenant, marked by the Sabbath; and the Davidic covenant, which carried a promise so profound that its sign was not a physical object at all. Its sign was the promise itself, a promise that one day a king from David's line would sit on an eternal throne, and his kingdom would never end.

When the New Testament opens, it does not waste a single word. Matthew 1:1 introduces Jesus as the son of David and the son of Abraham. That is not a casual genealogical note. It is a declaration. Every promise made to Abraham, that through his descendants all the nations of the earth would be blessed, and every promise made to David, that his throne would be established forever, finds its answer in one person. Jesus is not a footnote to the Old Testament story. He is its fulfillment.

What We Mean by the Old Covenant

Here is something important that often gets lost in casual Bible reading. When the New Testament refers to the old covenant, it is not talking about everything written before Matthew. It is not dismissing the covenants with Noah, Abraham, or David. The old covenant, as Paul uses the term in 2 Corinthians 3, refers specifically to the Mosaic covenant, the law given to Israel through Moses at Mount Sinai.

Paul describes this covenant as glorious, because it was. It came from God. It carried God's glory. But he also describes it as a ministry that condemned, because that is what the law does. It reveals the standard of God's holiness, and in doing so, it reveals how far short human beings fall. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 3 that even in his own day, when the old covenant was read, a veil remained over the hearts of those who could not yet see past the law to the one the law was always pointing toward. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, that veil is taken away. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

The Purpose of the Law

This is one of the most liberating truths in all of Scripture. The old covenant was never designed to save anyone. It was designed to show us that we need saving. The 613 commandments of the Mosaic law were not a ladder to climb toward God. They were a mirror, reflecting back the reality of human sinfulness. The sacrifices of the old covenant covered sin temporarily, year after year, but they could never remove it permanently.

The law was meant to bring people to the end of themselves. To make them look at the impossible standard and say, I cannot do this on my own. I need something more. I need someone else.

That someone was always Jesus.

A New Covenant in My Blood

On the night before his crucifixion, Jesus sat with his disciples at the Passover table. Every person in that room had grown up under the old covenant. They knew the law. They knew the sacrifices. They knew the priests and the rituals and the weight of trying to live rightly before a holy God. And then Jesus took the cup and said something that reoriented the entire history of God's relationship with humanity. In Luke 22:20, he declared that the cup represented the new covenant in his blood, poured out for them.

The new covenant was not simply an upgrade. It was a transformation. Everything the old covenant demanded but could not produce, Jesus accomplished. He perfectly fulfilled the law. He became the ultimate sacrifice, the one whose blood did not merely cover sin but removed it entirely. The curtain in the temple that separated ordinary people from the presence of God was torn from top to bottom the moment Jesus died, as though God himself reached down and opened the way.

What the Blood Makes Possible

The writer of Hebrews closes that great book with a benediction found in Hebrews 13:20-21, describing Jesus as the one brought back from the dead through the blood of the eternal covenant. That phrase, the blood of the eternal covenant, carries the weight of everything.

The blood of the new covenant makes possible an internal transformation. Rather than laws carved in stone, God writes his law on human hearts. Obedience becomes a matter of desire, not merely duty.

It makes possible complete forgiveness. Hebrews makes clear that under the old covenant, sins were covered. Under the new covenant, they are forgiven and forgotten. God remembers them no more.

It makes possible an intimate, direct, and permanent relationship with the Father. No more priests as intermediaries. No more annual rituals. Believers have immediate access to God himself.

And it makes possible the free gift of salvation. Not earned, not achieved, not maintained through perfect law-keeping. Received by faith in the one who kept the law perfectly on our behalf.

Reflecting on the Story You Are Living In

When you open your Bible tomorrow morning, you are stepping into one of two sections of this great covenant story. Wherever you are reading, ask yourself which covenant the people in the text were living under. Let that perspective deepen your understanding of what God was doing and where the story was heading.

And then remember this. You are living on the other side of the cross. You are the beneficiary of the blood of the eternal covenant. Every promise God made, from Abraham's tent to David's throne, has been answered in Jesus. That is not just theology. It is the reason for everything.