

# THE TWO COVENANTS

## **1. WHAT two covenants are contrasted in the Bible?**

“In that He saith, A *new* covenant, He hath made the first *old*. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.” **Hebrews 8:13.**

## **2. By what other terms are these covenants designated?**

“For if that *first* covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the *second*.” **Verse 7.**

## **3. In connection with what historical event was the old covenant made?**

“Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt*; because they continued not in My covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.” **Verse 9.** See **Exodus 19:3–8.**

## **4. When God was about to proclaim His law to Israel, of what did He tell Moses to remind them?**

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

## **5. What proposition did He submit to 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 a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” **Verses 5, 6.**

## **6. What response did the people make to this proposition?**

“And all the people answered together, and said, *All that the Lord hath spoken we will do*. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.” **Verse 8.**

## **7. In this covenant with Israel, what obligation was imposed upon the people?**

“Now therefore, *if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant*.” **Verse 5, first part.**

**8. What was the Lord's covenant which they were to keep as their part of this covenant?**

“And He declared unto you *His covenant*, which He commanded you to perform, even *Ten Commandments*; and He wrote them upon two tables of stone.” **Deuteronomy 4:13.**

**NOTE** — The Ten Commandments were the “covenant” to which the Lord referred, when, in proposing to make a covenant with Israel, He said, “If ye will obey *My voice* indeed, and keep *My covenant*,” etc. **Exodus 19:5.** The Ten Commandments were termed God's covenant before the covenant was made with Israel: hence they cannot be the old covenant itself. They were not an agreement made, but something which God commanded them to perform, and promised blessings upon condition they were kept. Thus the Ten Commandments—God's covenant— became the *basis* of the covenant here made with Israel. The old covenant was made *concerning* the Ten Commandments; or, as stated in **Exodus 24:8**, “concerning all these words.” A covenant means a solemn pledge or promise based on conditions.

**9. After the law had been proclaimed from Sinai, what did the people again say?**

“And all the people answered with one voice, and said, *All the words which the Lord hath said will we do.*” **Exodus 24:3.**

**10. That there might be no misunderstanding, what did Moses do?**

“And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, . . . and he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people.” **Verses 4–7.**

**11. What did the people once again promise to do?**

“And they said, *All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.*” **Verse 7.**

**12. How was this covenant then confirmed and dedicated?**

“And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the

Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And *Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.*” **Verses 5–8.**

**13. How does Paul describe this dedication of the covenant?**

“For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and *sprinkled both the book, and all the people*, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.” **Hebrews 9:19, 20.**

**NOTE** — We here have the complete account of the making of the first or old covenant. God promised to make them His peculiar people on condition that they would keep His commandments. Three times they promised to obey. The agreement was then ratified, or sealed, with blood.

**14. Within less than forty days after the making of this covenant, while Moses tarried in the mount, what did the people say to Aaron?**

“*Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.*” **Exodus 32:1.**

**15. When Moses came down from Sinai, what did he see?**

“And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw *the calf, and the dancing*: and Moses’ anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount.” **Verse 19.**

**NOTE** — The great object and secret of the old covenant is revealed here. The people did not realize the weakness and sinfulness of their own hearts, or their need of divine grace and help to keep the law; and so, in their ignorance, they readily pledged obedience to it. But almost immediately they began to commit idolatry, and thus to break the law of God, or the very conditions laid down as their part of the covenant. In themselves the conditions were good; but in their own strength the people were unable to fulfill them. The great object of the old covenant therefore was to teach the people their weakness,

and their inability to keep the law without the help of God. Like the law itself, over which the old covenant was made, this covenant was designed to shut them up to the provisions of the new or everlasting covenant, and lead them to Christ. **Galatians 3:23, 24**. And the lesson which Israel as a nation had to learn in this, each individual now must learn before he can be saved. There is no salvation in self. Unaided, no one can keep the law. Only in Christ is there either remission of sins or power to keep from sinning. The breaking of the tables of the law signified that the terms of the covenant had been broken; the renewing of tables (**Exodus 34:1, 28**), God's patience and long-suffering with His people.

**16. Wherein does the new covenant differ from and excel the old?**

“But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of a *better covenant*, which was established upon *better promises*.” **Hebrews 8:6**.

**17. What are the “better promises” upon which the new covenant was established?**

“This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, *I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; . . . I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*” **Jeremiah 31:33, 34**. See **Hebrews 8:8–12**.

**NOTE** — These are simply the blessings of the gospel through Christ. They are promised upon condition of repentance, confession, faith, and acceptance of Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant, which means salvation and obedience. In the old covenant there was no provision for pardon and power to obey. It is true there was pardon during the time of the old covenant, but not by virtue of it. Pardon then, as now, was through the provisions of the new covenant, the terms of which are older than the old covenant.

**18. In what statement was Christ promised as a Saviour and Deliverer of the race as soon as sin entered?**

“And the Lord God said unto the serpent, . . . I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and *her seed*; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.” **Genesis 3:14, 15.**

**NOTE** — The covenant of grace, with its provisions of pardon and peace, dates from the foundation of the world.

### **19. To whom was this covenant-promise later renewed?**

“And God said unto *Abraham*. . . Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with *his seed* after him.” “I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and in *thy seed* shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” **Genesis 17:15–19; 26:4.**

### **20. Who was the seed here referred to?**

“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, *which is Christ*.” **Galatians 3:16.**

### **21. What shows that the new or second covenant and the Abrahamic covenant are virtually the same?**

“And if ye be Christ’s, then are *ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise*.” **Verse 29.**

**NOTE** — No one should allow himself 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 this He made a covenant with Abraham; He also made a covenant with Noah, and with Adam. Neither must it be supposed that the first or old covenant existed for a time as the *only* covenant with mankind, and that this must serve its purpose and pass away before any one could share in the promised blessings of the second or new covenant. Had this been the case, then during that time there would have been no pardon for any one. What is called the new or second covenant virtually existed before the covenant made at Sinai; for the covenant with Abraham was confirmed in Christ (**Galatians 3:17**), and it is only through Christ that there is any value to the new or second covenant. There is no blessing that can be gained by virtue of

the new covenant that was not promised to Abraham. And we, with whom the new covenant is made, can share the inheritance which it promises only by being children of Abraham, and sharing in his blessing. **Galatians 3:7, 9**. And since no one can have anything except as a child of Abraham, it follows that there is nothing in what is called the new or second covenant that was not in the covenant made with Abraham. The second covenant existed in every essential feature, except its ratification, long before the first, even from the days of Adam. It is called second because its ratification, occurred after the covenant made and ratified at Sinai.

**22. What is necessary where there is a covenant?**

“For where a covenant is, there must also of necessity be *the death of that which establishes it*. For a covenant is made firm over the dead victims; whereas it is of no force while that which establisheth it liveth.” **Hebrews 9:16, 17**, Boothroyd’s translation.

**23. With whose blood was the new covenant dedicated?**

“And [He took] the cup in like manner after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in *My blood*, even that which is poured out for you.” **Luke 22:20, R. V.**

**24. What power is there in the blood of this covenant?**

“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, *make you perfect in every good work* to do His will.” **Hebrews 13:20, 21**.

**25. Through which covenant only is there remission of sins?**

“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause He is the mediator of a *new covenant*, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” **Hebrews 9:14, 15, R. V.**

**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 the first covenant.

**26. Under the old covenant, what did the people promise?**

To keep the law of God in their own strength.

**NOTE** — Under this covenant the people promised to keep all the commandments of God in order to be His peculiar people, and this without help from any one. This was virtually a promise to make themselves righteous. But Christ says, “Without Me ye can do nothing.” **John 15:5**. And the prophet Isaiah says, “All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.” **Isaiah 64:6**. The only perfect righteousness is God’s righteousness, and this can be obtained only through faith in Christ. **Romans 3:20–26**. The only righteousness that will insure an entrance into the kingdom of God is “the righteousness which is of God by faith.” **Philippians 3:9**. Of those who inherit the kingdom of God, the Lord says, “Their righteousness is of Me” (**Isaiah 54:17**); and the prophet Jeremiah says of Christ, “This is His name whereby He shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness.” **Jeremiah 23:6**.

**27. Under the new covenant, what does God promise to do?**

“I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.” **Jeremiah 31:33**.

**NOTE** — The new covenant is an arrangement for bringing man again into harmony with the divine will, and placing him where he can keep God’s law. Its “better promises” bring forgiveness of sins, grace to renew the heart, and power to obey the law of God. The dissolution of the old covenant and the making of the new in no wise abrogated the law of God.

**28. Where was the law of God written under the old covenant?**

“And I made an ark of shittim-wood, and hewed *two tables of stone*. . . . And He wrote on the tables . . . the Ten Commandments, which the Lord spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the Lord gave them unto me.” **Deuteronomy 10:3, 4**.

**29. Where is the law of God written under the new covenant?**

“But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of

Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, *I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.*” **Jeremiah 31:33.**

### **30. What reason is given for making the new covenant?**

“For if that first covenant had been *faultless*, then should no place have been sought for the second. For *finding fault with them*, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant.” **Hebrews 8:7, 8.**

**NOTE** — The chief fault in connection with the old covenant lay with *the people*. They were not able, in themselves, to fulfill their part of it, and it provided them no help for so doing. There was no Christ in it. It was of *works* and not of *grace*. It was valuable only as a means of impressing upon them their sinfulness and their need of divine aid.

### **31. What unites all believers under the new covenant?**

“Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: *but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the, blood of Christ.*” **Ephesians 2:11-13.**



## **SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE TWO COVENANTS**

1. Both are called covenants.
2. Both were ratified with blood.
3. Both were made concerning the law of God.
4. Both were made with the people of God.
5. Both were established upon promises.

## **DISSIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE TWO COVENANTS**

<b>OLD COVENANT</b>	<b>NEW COVENANT</b>
Called the old covenant.	Called the new covenant.
Called the first covenant.	Called the second covenant.
A temporary compact.	An everlasting covenant.
Dedicated with the blood of animals.	Ratified with the blood of Christ.
Was faulty.	Is a better covenant.
Was established upon the promises of the people.	Is established upon the promises of God.
Had no mediator.	Has a mediator.
Had no provision for the forgiveness of sins.	Provides for the forgiveness of sins.
Under this, the law was written on tables of stone.	Under this, the law is written in the heart.
Was of works.	Is of grace.
Conditions: Obey and live; disobey and die.	Conditions: Repent and be forgiven; believe and be saved.

**THE OLD**  
*If. If ye. If ye will. If ye will do.*  
*If ye will do all.*  
*If ye will do all, then—ye shall be*  
*My people, and I will be your God.*

**THE NEW**  
*I. I will. I will do.*  
*I will do all.*  
*I will do all, and—will be your*  
*God, and ye shall be My people.*