

The New Covenant

This is a detour inside a detour. We are studying Romans chapter 7 with a detour into Galatians and now a detour into the New Covenant. This is necessary to explain Paul's reference to Abraham and the covenant made to Abraham. That covenant has three paragraphs, none of which have been fulfilled yet. They will be fulfilled in the Millennium. It is very important to note that none of the Old Testament covenants were made with the Church or even mention the Church. However, Gentiles in the Church Age, even Jews, benefit from it as Paul explains.

Now the Galatians were taught by Paul previous to his letter to them. So Paul did not have to explain covenants and Abraham to them. All he had to do was reference them and the lessons he taught. But we need to review some things because of differences in the language, culture and history.

Why do we call the 1,000 year period after the Tribulation, the Millennium? Revelation chapter 20 characterizes that period as lasting 1,000 years. In Latin, 1,000 is *mille*. So, from a single passage in the New Testament, not the Old Testament, we take that name. The Old Testament and even the gospels call this period the Kingdom.

Similarly, the New Covenant receives its name from a single passage in the Old Testament, Jeremiah 31:31-33. That is the Old Testament. There is a reference to it in the New Testament when Jesus institutes the communion. And the "New Testament" is just another translation of the same terminology. Yet, the New Testament Scriptures do not allow us to say that we are under the New Covenant. Because there is so much confusion on this topic, we need to spend this lesson investigating it.

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Jeremiah 31:31-33

Note: During the reformation there was an emphasis on sola scriptura, Scripture alone. This set it apart from Catholic oral tradition. But then, how do the reformers deal with the Old Testament? At one point, everything in the Old Testament had to somehow include Jesus Christ. They could do this through allegory. But that was not literal interpretation. How is it a Christian book? Here are some quotes from Biblical Interpretation: Past & Present.

“Covenant theology gave the church a way of reading the Old Testament as a Christian book without lapsing into allegory, and it soon became the accepted framework for almost all Protestant biblical interpretation.¹”
p167

“Within Christian theology itself, the emergence of covenant theology led to a reappropriation of the Old Testament, which now became the historical record of the church before Christ. The Old Testament enjoyed a revival of interest among Christians seldom seen before or since. Theologians spoke quite happily of the ‘Jewish church’ and looked upon the law as still valid, in some sense, for Christians.” p207

“Even today, it is still widespread among the conservative elements in Protestantism, and as a way of reading the Old Testament as a Christian book it has never been adequately superseded².”

“The strong Old Testament bias of covenant theology quickly led to the belief that Protestant states were in some sense heirs of ancient Israel.³”

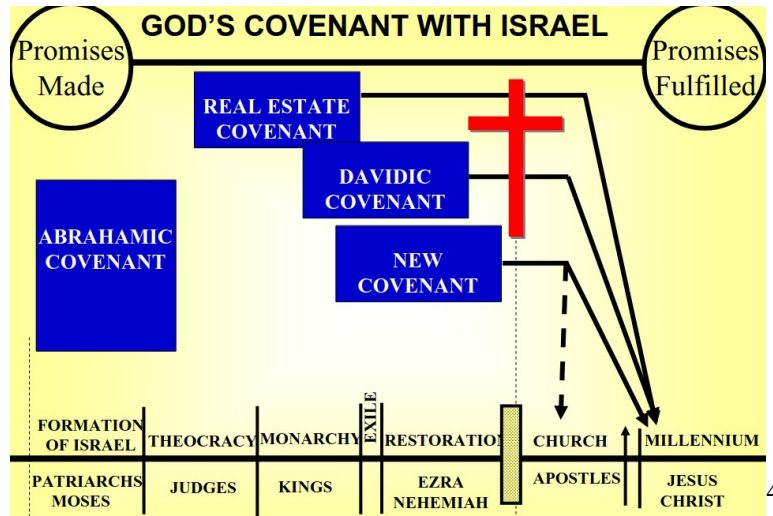
The point of this note is to alert you to the fact that Covenant Theology looks at the covenants as pertaining to Christians. Dispensational Theology does not. In particular, a point that I make repeatedly is that the New Covenant was made with Israel and applies to Israel, not the Church.

¹ Gerald Lewis Bray (1996). Biblical interpretation : past & present. Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity Press. 167

² Gerald Lewis Bray (1996). Biblical interpretation : past & present. Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity Press. 207

³ Gerald Lewis Bray (1996). Biblical interpretation : past & present. Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity Press. 207

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God's Covenants with Israel

The New Covenant is one of a series of covenant with the sons of Israel. It was not promised to the Church. It is not currently in effect. It is a promise that has been ratified by Jesus Christ on the cross. It is often misunderstood as applying to Christians. It does not. Let us delve into some of the particulars.

To my surprise, this was taught a mere two years ago. So some of the material that was used for three one-hour lessons is included. No quote marks are included. I was the author. Quote marks are included where there are quotes from other people.

New Covenant Summary Points:

1. **Biblical**: It is revealed in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Some covenants taught by Covenant theologians are inferred but not revealed in Scripture⁵. The New Covenant is specifically mentioned in Scripture:

Jeremiah 31:31 “Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new

⁴ <https://deanbibleministries.org/dbmfiles/slides/2005-Hebrews-112.pdf>

⁵ This is especially true of Covenant Theology.

covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,

Luke 22:20 And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.

2. **Parties**: God, party of the first part made a covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah, party of the second part. In other words, it is made with all of Israel.

Jeremiah 31:31 “Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,

There is no Church mentioned. In Dispensational Theology, the Church is a mystery not revealed in the Old Testament.

Jeremiah 50:4 “In those days and at that time,” declares the Lord, “the sons of Israel will come, both they and the sons of Judah as well; they will go along weeping as they go, and it will be the Lord their God they will seek.

Jeremiah 50:5 They will ask for the way to Zion, turning their faces in its direction; they will come that they may join themselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant that will not be forgotten.

Everlasting Covenant. It continues into eternity.

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3. **Need**: The Mosaic Covenant was conditional and temporary. It provided for maximum blessing *if* Israel was obedient to the Lord. Due to the existence of the sin nature and no counteracting spiritual power, the people were unable to meet the criteria of obedience. But God in His grace was going to provide a way that Israel would be obedient and actually take possession of the Land, have a king to sit on David's throne and have the maximum promised blessings. The Mosaic Covenant was needed from a human perspective to prove to humans that they cannot meet God's righteousness apart from the enabling ministry of God the Holy Spirit. The New Covenant fulfills this for the Jews in the Millennial Kingdom. We may not fully understand how God is going to do this: human beings with a sin nature plus a special endowment of the Holy Spirit (indwelling + constant filling) which will keep them from turning away from God. Plus a perfect knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures. There is perhaps a sense in which, when God kicks Satan and his *cosmos diabolicus* off the earth, that He replaces it with Jesus' "*cosmos spiritualus*." I just made up that term. But, I can think of no other short description of what Jesus Christ will set up in the Millennium.

Hebrews 8:7 For if that first covenant (Mosaic Covenant) had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. (New Covenant).

Romans 11:25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in;

Romans 11:26 and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob.”

Romans 11:27 “This is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.”

4. **Mediator**: Jesus Christ is the mediator. Blood must be shed and death is required.

Hebrews 9:13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh,

Hebrews 9:14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Hebrews 9:15 For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

New Covenant.

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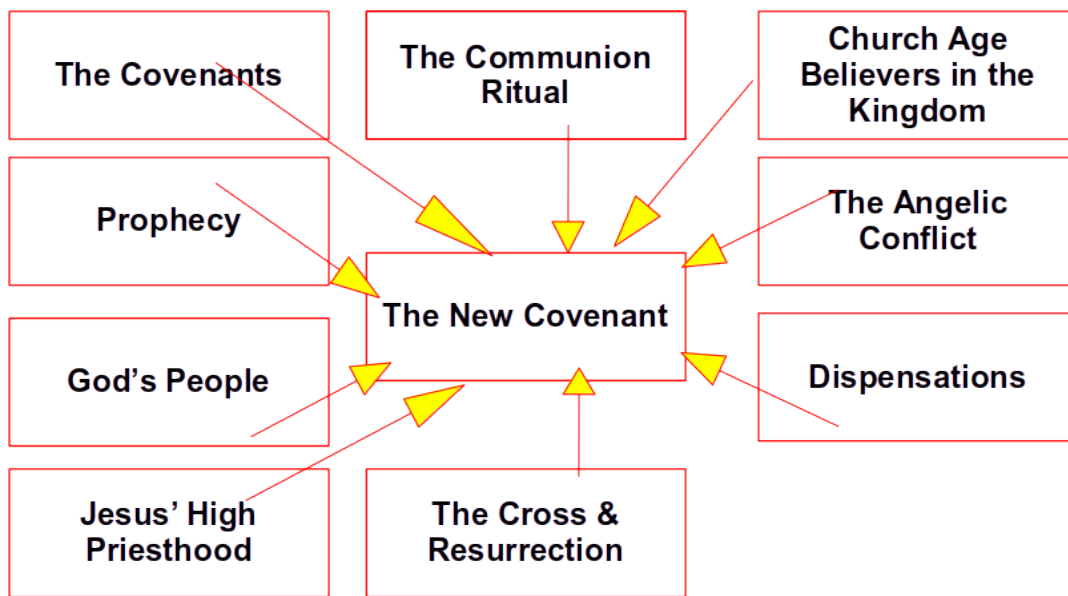
Not part of this lesson, but referred to by Robby Dean is the fact that with the New Covenant is the requirement for a New Priesthood and a new High Priest, Jesus Christ.

5. **Heritage**: The New Covenant is the culmination of covenants to Israel. The Abrahamic Covenant has three paragraphs: Land, Seed, Blessing. The Land/Palestinian Covenant deals with Land; The Davidic covenant deals with the seed and the New Covenant deals with the blessing.
6. **Provisions**:
 - A. **People**: The New Covenant is between God and the nation Israel. It does not include the Gentiles in the Millennium. Gentiles are blessed by association as a result of the New Covenant.
 - B. **Obedience**: Jews will be regenerate survivors of the Tribulation who will be “changed” so that they will be obedient in righteousness. The weakness of the Mosaic Law was not the Law itself nor with God. The Mosaic Law demanded a righteousness that man on his own cannot produce. God will do something to the believing Jews at the end of the Tribulation which will empower them to always be obedient to God’s righteousness. This will be the same as or at least similar to but better than what Christian believers have today: Indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the filling of the Holy Spirit. The Christian today can chose to be filled by the Holy Spirit by faith or not. The Jews in the Millennium will always choose to be filled with the Holy Spirit. They will have free will but will always choose to walk by faith dependence on the Holy Spirit. As a result, blessings that Israel missed out on in the Jewish Age will be fulfilled in the Millennium. God ensures their obedience and

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hence their continual blessing. When man, as a result of Adam's fall and as a result our sin nature cannot meet the righteousness of God, He will make a new Jew who can. When man failed, God acted without perverting His Righteousness to ensure the promises He made to the Jews will be kept. Wow!

There are many concepts and doctrines that connect to the New Covenant. It is beyond this series of lessons to cover them all.



Just an illustration of the Fabric of Scripture

Some key points on the New Covenant (quotes are from Robby Dean's lessons in Hebrews)

1. Scriptures

“Jeremiah 31:31-34 That's not the first time chronologically that there is an indication that God is going to give Israel a better covenant. It is referenced in a number of other passages in the prophets. But this is the only place in the Old Testament where it is called “New” Covenant.”

Isaiah 49:8

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Isaiah 54:10

Isaiah 55:3

Isaiah 59:21

Isaiah 61:8-9

Jeremiah 32:37-41

Jeremiah 32:39-40

Ezekiel 11:19

Ezekiel 16:60-63

Ezekiel 18:31

Ezekiel 34:25

Ezekiel 36:25-28

Ezekiel 37:21-28

Hosea 2:17-20

Amos 9:13-15

I am fairly certain that the New Covenant is referenced obliquely in other passages as well. As in Isaiah 42:6, for instance.

2. Persons

“Who are the persons involved? What is very clear in the Jeremiah passage and the Hebrews passage (It doesn't change the wording at all.) God says:”

**Jeremiah 31:31 (KJV) Behold, the days come,
saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant**

with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

“I didn't hear "with the church" in there. I didn't hear Peter. I didn't hear Paul. I didn't hear John. It's with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah.” [quoted from Robby Dean]

Summary: The parties to the New Covenant are God and the houses of Israel and Judah. And remember. The New Covenant is an extension of paragraph three of the Abrahamic Covenant, the blessings. The Abrahamic Covenant applies to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and descendants. This last word, descendants is from the Hebrew word for “seed.” This is a reference to DNA.

3. Importance

“The importance is that this New Covenant provides for the regeneration of Israel in the Millennial Kingdom, and the fulfillment of all other covenants and promises to them. Part of the New Covenant secures them in the land so it's not just isolated to that spiritual regeneration. So it's going to provide for all these things. It's the culmination of everything that has been going on from the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 12. It all points to that and when that New Covenant is enacted at the return of Christ at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom that's when all these promises, all these prophecies, everything finally comes to fulfillment in relationship to Israel.”

4. Provisions

Summary of those 10 provisions (from Robby Dean):

1. The covenant was made with the nation of Israel (Jeremiah 50:4-5)/ Jeremiah 31:31-33.

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2. The covenant is in contrast to the Mosaic Covenant, which depended on the obedience of Israel for its fulfillment (Jeremiah 31:32)
3. The major portion of the covenant will be fulfilled after the Great Tribulation (Jeremiah 30:7)
4. The New Covenant will take the place of the Mosaic Covenant and will be written "in their hearts" instead of on tablets of stone (Jeremiah 31:33).
5. The New Covenant will feature great spiritual blessings for the people of Israel (Ezekiel 36:26-30)
6. The New Covenant will reveal the glory of God so that it will no longer be necessary to witness to others (Psalm. 72:19; Jeremiah 31:34)
7. The New Covenant will feature forgiveness, grace, and blessings (Jeremiah 31:34).
8. In the covenant God promised the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Ezekiel 36:27; Joel 2:28-29)
9. There will be universal knowledge of Jehovah among the people of Israel (Jeremiah 31:34).
10. The covenant includes a promise that Israel will obey God and have a right attitude toward Him forever (Jeremiah 32:39-40).

5. Confirmation

Robby Dean references several passages to confirm what is said in the Jeremiah chapter 31 verses concerning the New Covenant.

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There is probably a question about the “Lord’s Table” and mention of the new covenant there. Also, what about Paul as minister of the New Covenant?

1 Corinthians 11:25 In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

1 Corinthians 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

Luke 22:20 And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.

There are many perspectives to the communion service. The Lord’s Table for the Christian is a memorial to the work of Jesus on the cross. It provides the basis for our salvation.

But it is also the sacrifice that ratifies the New Covenant for the Jew.

2 Corinthians 3:1 Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some, letters of commendation to you or from you?

2 Corinthians 3:2 You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men;

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2 Corinthians 3:3 being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

2 Corinthians 3:4 Such confidence we have through Christ toward God.

2 Corinthians 3:5 Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,

2 Corinthians 3:6 who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

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Robby Dean has a helpful comment on this passage.

“So he talks about the fact that he is a minister of the New Covenant. Then he goes on to talk about this in these subsequent verses. But the point that he is making is that as an apostle what he is doing is applying to those who become believers in this age, the gospel that comes from the sacrifice that is made on the cross. That sacrifice is what is the basis for the New Covenant. The New Covenant is established and enacted with Israel. By virtue of that covenant though, there is blessing by association to Gentiles and to all the world. That is what God had promised to Abraham - that all the world would be blessed through him. So that blessing comes through Christ who is the other party of the New Covenant, and we as Church Age believers are in Him and by virtue of our position in Him and in relationship to Him we partake of certain New Covenant blessings. That's exactly what the writer of Hebrews does.⁶”

This is a perspective we have rarely studied. Yes Christ died spiritually on the cross being judged for the sins of the world. But that death, the “Blood of Christ,” represents the sacrifice that “cuts” or makes the New Covenant. Remember that in the Old Testament the Abrahamic Covenant was ratified by an animal sacrifice. Leviticus has identifies several sacrifices that represent aspects of Christ’s death as the basis of our salvation. It is the reason that we only have to believe in Jesus to receive divine righteousness and everlasting life. It also seals the New Covenant, provides its foundation. And from that New Covenant there is blessing for all in the Church age by association following the pattern of Abraham: faith.

⁶ <https://deanbibleministries.org/new-testament-menuitem/hebrews-menuitem/message/2005-hebrews-122a/read>