

Lesson 40 - The New Covenant

Last week: **The Atonement - the most fundamental work that God wrought through His Son Jesus Christ.**

Please note that your questionnaire has two sides.

The New Covenant

?? The **first step** in the **unfolding** of God's Plan of Redemption for man commenced when He implied or hinted of a future victory over the serpent who had tempted Eve and led to the sin of our first parents for which they were cast out of the Garden and from God's presence.

This Divine announcement, recorded in Genesis 3:14-15 and spoken by Jehovah Himself immediately after the fall of our first parents, was included in a mysterious oracle where Jehovah reveals that redemption would be provided for man, **through the Seed of a woman.**

?? **Secondly**, following that, in Genesis chapters, 12, 13, 15, 17, and 22

God makes a 7-fold Promise to Abraham. Here was the **second step** in the unfolding of God's Plan of Redemption - the giving of the Abrahamic Promise and the inauguration of the Old Covenant with Abraham and his posterity.

?? **Thirdly**, was the establishment of the **Mosaic System** to **prepare the way for** and **point forward to**, in type, symbol, and prophecy, the events, institutions, and laws of the Christian System.

The Abrahamic covenant was enlarged into a national covenant at Sinai, through the mediation of Moses. At the same time the Law was given, eternal principles of right and wrong were established in the Decalogue.

This entire Old Covenant was for the purpose of **preparing the way for**, and **proving the divine origin of**, the New Covenant and its institutions.

?? Fourthly, God raised up Hebrew prophets who foretold all the details of the life, work, and reign of the Messiah.

This part of Old Testament prophecy was for the purpose of identifying the true Messiah at His coming. And the Messianic predictions of the Old Testament were **all fulfilled in the life and ministry of Jesus.**

?? The fifth step in the unfolding of God's Plan of Redemption for man was the special ministry of John the Baptizer.

John had a special work as a forerunner or harbinger or “one who goes before” to both prepare the way and to herald the advent and reign of the Christ (The title Christ means The Anointed One) - *“Behold the Lamb of God!”*

Luke 1:76-*“Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways,”*

?? The sixth step in the unfolding of God’s Plan of Redemption for man was the ministry of Jesus, the Incarnate Word.

We read in John 1:14 that *“the Word became flesh and dwelt among us”*

This is Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, the Son of the living God. It was He who was given a work - to execute God's Plan of Redemption for us.

This phase of the unfolding of God's plan included:

- The entrance of the Word into human flesh;
- His work and ministry as one who revealed God
- His work as our perfect exemplar;
- His death on the Cross as the all-sufficient Atonement for the sins of the world;
- His death, burial and resurrection;
- His ascension to the right hand of the Father;
- and His coronation as King of kings and Lord of lords.

?? It is important personal ministry of Jesus was special dispensation of God’s grace towards the Jewish nation:

John 1:11 - *“He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.”*

His own people rejected Him, and their leaders coerced the Roman officials into putting Him to death. The Jewish people shouted: *“His blood be on us, and on our children”* (Matt. 27:25).

The personal ministry of Jesus was under the Mosaic Law, to which He rendered a faultless obedience.

Matt. 5:17--*“Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill.”*

Jesus **fulfilled** the Mosaic Law in the sense that He obeyed its requirements perfectly.

The First Commission to His disciples was: *“Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel”* (Matt.

10:5,6).

It was not until **after** His death, burial and resurrection, that He gave the last and Great Commission; in which He authorized His evangelists to **go into all the world** (Mark 16:15) and make disciples of all the nations (Matt. 28:19).

?? Now, the present or Christian Dispensation began with the ratification of the New Covenant by the death of Christ.

It is the **Covenant of Grace** mediated by Jesus Christ.

In scripture, a **covenant** is a solemn religious compact or agreement. The Greeks had two words for covenant, namely, **syntheke**, and **diatheke**. "syntheke" was used to denote a solemn agreement made between equals - like you and I making an agreement. The latter - "diatheke" denoted any arrangement made by a superior for the acceptance of an inferior. And hence it is, that all of God's covenants are expressed in Greek by the word "**diatheke**"

Three factors enter into the making of every covenant, namely, the covenanter, the covenantee, and the stipulations agreed upon.

The Bible is the history of two great Covenants, The first or Old Covenant, the Covenant of Law (otherwise known as "the letter," "the ministration of death," "the ministration of condemnation," etc.) was made with the Hebrew people through the mediatorship of Moses.

The last or New Covenant, the Covenant of Grace, the Gospel Covenant (otherwise known as "the spirit," "the ministration of the spirit," "the ministration of righteousness," etc.) is entered into, with all obedient believers, through the mediation of Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 8 - there is a new covenant

2 Cor. 3 - the apostles were ministers of the new covenant

?? The final step in the unfolding of God's Plan of Redemption for man was the inauguration of the Christian System, its principles, laws and institutions.

This last phase of the unfolding of God's plan included:

- (1) the giving of the Great Commission;
- (2) the giving of the Holy Spirit to be a first gift of the forthcoming inheritance for the children of promise and as the agent of the Godhead upon earth during the present Dispensation;
- (3) the preaching of the facts, commands and promises of the Gospel;
- (4) the establishment of the church of Christ;

- (5) the establishment of the Christian ordinances and Christian worship;
- (6) the writing and compiling of the New Testament Scriptures to serve as an all-sufficient guide in religious faith and practice for the true Church until Jesus comes again.

?? In this present dispensation, we should be **especially thankful** that we are under the provisions of the New Covenant *"which hath been enacted upon better promises"* (Heb. 8:6)

The Old Covenant was **ritualistic, legal, ceremonial**; the New is essentially **spiritual**. The basis of membership in the Old was **fleshly**; the basis of membership in the New is **spiritual**.

John 3:3 - *"Except one be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*

2 Cor. 2:7-9 - *"Now if the **ministry of death**, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end, 8 will not the **ministry of the Spirit** have even more glory? 9 For if there was glory in the **ministry of condemnation**, the **ministry of righteousness** must far exceed it in glory."*

The Old was the "**ministration of death**," in the sense that the penalty for its violation was usually capital punishment (stoning to death) ; and the "**ministration of condemnation**," in the sense that the tendency of the Law was to identify sin and thus condemn the sinner.

The New is the "**ministry of the spirit**" in the sense it is spiritual in its essential nature; and "**the ministry of righteousness**" in the sense that it is primarily designed to nurture faith and holiness in the individual.

?? In addition to all this, the New "**hath been enacted upon better promises**," namely, **remission of sins**, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and eternal life (Acts 2:38, Rom. 6:23). Let us therefore thank God that we are living under the provisions, privileges and blessings of the New Covenant!

Next Week: **What God did Through the Apostles**