

THE HISTORY OF SALVATION IN THE COVENANTS OF GOD
(The New Covenant - continued)

We've been examining the covenants of salvation under the heading of *parties, promises, ratification, obligation, and fulfillment*. Last week, under *promises*, we looked at the *promise of a new heart*, the *promise of a unique relationship to God*, and the *promise of the knowledge of the Lord*. Today we continue with our examination of the **five promises** of the new covenant

- * **FOURTH - The promise of the FORGIVENESS OF SIN - Jeremiah 31:34** - "And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

See also **Hebrews 8:12** - "For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more."

The very *repetition* of sacrifices under the Old Covenant was designed to teach the **incompleteness of remedy** for the problem of human sin. This, as we discussed last week, was another reason for God's gradual revelation in the history of multiple covenants. The superiority of the New Covenant shines more brightly.

Hebrews 10:1-4 - "For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. [2] Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sin? [3] But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin every year. [4] For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins."

This passage contains crucial teaching in understanding the supremacy of the New Covenant to the old. See also **Hebrews 9:15** - "Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant." Note especially the *contrast between the two covenants*: Hebrews 10:3 - "an annual *reminder* of sin" (Old Covenant) - and Jeremiah 31:34 - "I will forgive their wickedness and *remember* their sins no more" (New Covenant).

- * **FIFTH - The promise of an ETERNAL INHERITANCE - Hebrews 9:15** - "Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant."

More details are spelled out in **Hebrews 9:24-25** - "For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. [25] Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own,"

All of the earthly pictures and images of the Old Covenant will find their fulfillment in the *eternal blessings* of heaven and the *full scope of salvation* offered in Jesus Christ.

- c) **The RATIFICATION** - The New Covenant is ratified by the *shed blood of Christ*. Go back and read of the **Covenant with Abraham - Genesis 15:9-10,17-18** - "[9] He said to him, 'Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.' [10] And he brought him all these, cut them in half, and laid each half over against the other. But he did not cut the birds in half....[17].... When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. [18] On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, 'To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates....'"

This is called "*cutting a covenant*". Blood had to be shed. The blood *sealed* or *ratified* that the agreement wasn't just words or empty promise. The blood showed that the covenant was *activated* - it was now *put into effect*.

See **1 Corinthians 11:25** - "In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'" The blood of Jesus is the *sign* or *proof* that the New Covenant is now in effect. It will still work for me! I need not doubt or question. The shed blood is proof of Calvary's ongoing effectiveness.

- d) **The OBLIGATIONS** - As in the covenant with Noah, there are no works to be performed by man to enter this covenant. Good work *follow* faith in Christ and are the *fruit* of His indwelling Spirit, but *faith in Jesus Christ is the sole requirement* - **Galatians 3:22** - "But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe." See also **Hebrews 6:11-12** - "And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, [12] so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises." The relationship between faith and works is shown clearly in these words.
- e) **The FULFILLMENT - FIRST**, we are freed from the bondage of sin and the condemnation of the law - **Romans 8:2** - "For the law of the

Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.” Second, we too have become the *“people of God”* - 1 Peter 2:9-10 - “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. [10] Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.” And third, we will yet receive our eternal inheritance in Christ - Philippians 3:20-21 - “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, [21] who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.”