

# THE NEW COVENANT

*“No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their wickedness and remember their sins no more.”*

—*JEREMIAH 31:34*

The New Covenant God makes with His people also means a new relationship, and this new relationship is possible because it is based on a new redemption. And from this new redemption comes a new means of restoring righteousness into human experience.

Under the Old Covenant, the Hebrew people sacrificed the blood of animals for the atonement of sin, but their sacrifices could never cleanse the conscience of the worshipper. Hebrews 10:1 speaks of this ritual happening ‘endlessly year after year’. Verse 11 says, “Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.” Notice the monotony of ‘again and again’, ‘year after year’, ‘day after day’. But now, under the New Covenant, God says, “your sins are remembered no more.”

The blood sacrifice of bulls and goats did not remove sin, but acted like a post-dated cheque. A post-dated cheque covers a debt, but doesn’t remove it until there is enough money in the account and the cheque is cashed. The blood of bulls and goats served like a post-dated cheque, covering sin, but not removing it. When Jesus cried out on the cross, “It is finished,” He was saying the money is now in the bank, and every Old Testament believer could cash their cheque. The real currency was not

the blood of bulls and goats, but the precious blood of Jesus. There is money in the account, the debt is paid and it is finished. Blood sacrifices were now redundant.

When God said He would remember our sins no more, this has nothing to do with what we deserve, but everything to do with the quality of our Priest. Jesus, absolutely sinless, didn't just offer a sacrifice; He was the sacrifice and it is by His blood alone we have access to God. The whole saving work of Christ is encompassed in the New Covenant. Our sins are forgiven at the cross, and from there we go to Pentecost, where God says, "And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws." (Ezekiel 36:27).

The law, written on tablets of stone, God now writes upon our hearts, and we are given a hunger and thirst for righteousness. This isn't our own doing, but the work of the Holy Spirit. God has only one thing to give us and that is Himself. Under the New Covenant, everyone, from the least of us to the greatest, has the divine privilege and blessing of coming to know and experience God without ritual but on the basis of repentance.

***PRAYER: Dear Heavenly Father, it is absolutely incredible to me that we have direct access to You. Thank You for Jesus who made that possible.***

***TO REFLECT UPON: What steps am I taking to ensure a living, active relationship with God?***