

Two stone tablets with Hebrew text, likely representing the Ten Commandments. The tablets are light-colored with dark, carved text. They are positioned side-by-side against a dark background. The text is arranged in columns on each tablet.

So Great a Covenant

Hebrews 8

So Great a Covenant

- Three lessons in this study to date:
 - So Great a Salvation
 - So Great a High Priest
 - So Great a Covenant

So Great a Covenant

- A covenant is an agreement between two beings involving promises on the part of both to the other.
- Covenant comes from bereeth - “a cutting; a compact made by passing between pieces of flesh; a confederacy, covenant, league” (Strong's)
- It comes from a Hebrew root word that means “to cut.” This is the custom of two people passing between the split bodies of slain animals after making an agreement

So Great a Covenant

- Gen. 15:9-10, 17 - “So He said to him, Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon. 10 Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two... 17 And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces.”

So Great a Covenant

- Jer. 34:18 - “And I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before Me, when they cut the calf in two and passed between the parts of it”
- Gen. 31:54 - “Then Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain, and called his brethren to eat bread. And they ate bread and stayed all night on the mountain.”

So Great a Covenant

- Gen. 17:10-11 - “This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; 11 and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.”

So Great a Covenant

- Ex. 24:6-8 - “And Moses took half the blood and put it in basins, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. 7 Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient. 8 And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, This is the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you according to all these words.”
- 1Sam. 18:3 - “Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.”

The Covenant of Christ

- The New Testament makes a clear distinction between the covenants of the Law of Moses and that of Christ
 - Gal. 4:24-26 - “For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar-- 25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children-- 26 but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.”

The Covenant of Christ

- 2Cor. 3:7-9 - “But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away, 8 how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? 9 For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory”

The Covenant of Christ

- God accomplished for His people what the old covenant failed to do
 - Jer. 31:31-34 - “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah- 32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. 33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

The Covenant of Christ

- Jesus is the Mediator of this superior covenant between God and man
 - Heb. 8:6 - “But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.”
 - Heb. 9:15 - “And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.”
 - Heb. 12:24 - “Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.”

The Covenant of Christ

- The offering of Christ sealed the new covenant under which we are justified by God's grace
 - Matt. 26:28 - “For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”
 - Luke 22:20 - “Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.”
 - 1Cor. 11:25 - “In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

The Covenant of Christ

- The new covenant holds God's promise (forgiveness of sin and eternal life) and our promise in return (faith, love, and a lifetime of service)
 - Heb. 10:2, 22 - "For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins... 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."

The Covenant of Christ

- Heb. 12:22-25, 28-29 - “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. 25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven... 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire.”

The Old Covenant

- The first covenant was not faultless
 - Heb. 8:7 - “For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.”
- The Levitical priesthood was flawed and powerless
 - Heb. 7:11 - “Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron?”

The Old Covenant

- The Law made no one perfect, was weak and unprofitable
 - Heb. 7:18-19 - “For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, 19 for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.”
- The sacrifices could not cleanse away sins
 - Heb. 10:4, 11 - “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins... 11 And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.”

The Old Covenant

- The people of the first covenant were also at fault
 - Heb. 8:8-9 - “Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah-- 9 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 did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD.”

The Old Covenant

- Jer. 11:6-8 - “Then the LORD said to me, Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying: 'Hear the words of this covenant and do them. 7 'For I earnestly exhorted your fathers in the day I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, until this day, rising early and exhorting, saying, Obey My voice. 8 'Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but everyone followed the dictates of his evil heart; therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but which they have not done.”

The Old Covenant

- God built obsolescence into the old covenant. By calling the promised covenant “new” (Jer. 31:31), God declared the first covenant would become obsolete
 - Heb. 8:13 - “In that He says, A new covenant, He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.”
 - 2Cor. 3:13 - “Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away.”

The New Covenant

- It is inward and spiritual
 - Heb. 8:10 - “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”
 - James 1:21 - “Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.”

The New Covenant

- 1Peter 1:22-23 - “Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, 23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever”

The New Covenant

- It provides a close relationship with God
 - Heb. 8:10 - “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”
 - 1Peter 2:9-10 - “But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God...”
 - Rev. 21:3 - “And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.”

The New Covenant

- It is with people who truly know the Lord
 - Heb. 8:11 - “None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.”
 - John 6:45 - “It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.”

The New Covenant

- It grants full forgiveness of sins
 - Heb. 8:12 - “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”
 - Rom. 11:27 - “For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.”
 - Rom. 7:24 - “O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?”

The New Covenant

- It is for everyone
 - Heb. 7:25 - “Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”
 - Rom. 1:16 - “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.”

The New Covenant

- Heb. 10:19-23 - “Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and having a High Priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”

The New Covenant

- Heb. 2:1-3 - “Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him”