



A Better Covenant

When we talk about the New Covenant, we are talking about the better covenant. In Hebrews 8:6, we read *He [Jesus] is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.* As we begin our study of the New Covenant, we must ask, “What made the New Covenant better?” If it’s better, why is it better? Why is it better?

A lot of people would say that healing made the New Covenant better, but healing is in both covenants. The first thing God said to Israel when they came across the Red Sea out of Egypt was, “I am the Lord thy physician, the Lord that heals thee.”¹ He made a commitment to Israel to heal them. They were bitten by snakes, and He healed them. They had a plague go through the camp, and He healed them. He said, “If you serve me, I’ll bless your bread and water, and I will take sickness away from you.”² There is healing in the Old Covenant.

There is also healing in the New Covenant. The life of our Lord Jesus on earth highlights God’s mercy toward all who were sick. After His work was completed and He ascended to the Father’s right hand, the apostles and others continued His ministry of healing. In 1 Peter 2:24 the permanency of God’s plan is recorded – “By His stripes we were healed.” So it isn’t healing that makes the New Covenant better. There’s healing, healing, healing from Genesis to

Revelation. That’s a comfort to me. Healing wasn’t a last minute effort. It wasn’t penciled in to God’s agenda. “Oh yea, I probably should heal these people, they’ll be sick a lot.” No, it was always there. It was always there. It’s not healing that makes the New Covenant better.

How about prosperity? Did you know there is prosperity for God’s people in both covenants? We read in the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy, God’s commitment to His people who walked in obedience to the law. God said, “If thou shalt hearken diligently....all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee.”³ That would do it, wouldn’t it? Overtaken by blessings! Then the New Testament says “God will meet your need out of His riches.”⁴ It also says *What things soever you desire, when you pray, believe that [you] receive them and [you] shall have them.*⁵ That’s prosperity. When God’s people “seek first the kingdom” and His plan is primary in their lives, these wonderful promises will prosper them. That is in the New Testament and in the Old Testament.

Here we must return to our original question. If not prosperity, if not healing, what makes the New Covenant better? The answer unfolds in the wonderful book of Hebrews. According to Hebrews, the one thing the Old Covenant could not do was take away sin. In Hebrews 10:4, we read, *For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.* But oh the glory of the sacrifice of Jesus. HE

APPEARED TO PUT AWAY SIN BY THE SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF.⁶ What a difference!

The Old Covenant made an atonement for sin. The word “atonement” means to cover. Under the Old Covenant sins were not removed, they were covered. In the New Covenant, our sin is blotted out.

When I was a little girl, we would visit my grandmother and grandfather in Oxford, Florida. After dinner they would take a cloth – Do you remember that? – And cover the dinner. Nobody put anything in the refrigerator in those days; they just covered up the food. Anytime you went to the table you couldn’t see the food, but you knew it was under the cloth. We hear about these things, but we don’t see them too much because we’ve progressed to refrigeration. Isn’t that a good thing? Well, when the blood of bulls and goats was shed and the sacrifice was made, it was an atonement for sin, it was a covering. Sin was not removed.

God’s provision to cover the sin of His people was a wonderful, wonderful thing. But it was not sufficient. It was not enough. Thank God for our God who does more than enough! He won’t quit before His work is complete. He never says, “Close enough, that’ll do.” Aren’t we glad God didn’t look at our life and say, “Oh well.”

No, from the foundation of the world, God had a

marvelous plan. He was going to cover sin until Jesus came into the world, then He could do something better. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus He could blot out sin. This would remove the consciousness of sin that was constant in the Old Covenant,⁷ and that is better. Much better!

This is only the beginning of better things. Because of the blood of Jesus, we can be sons of God. We can be new creatures – new in spirit - with eternal life. The Holy Spirit can indwell our spirit and led us into the plan of God. We can walk in the fullness of the Spirit enjoying the gifts of God. This is better! This is much better! These better promises established by the better covenant are so much better.



¹ Exodus 15:26

⁵ Mark 11:24

² Exodus 23:25

⁶ Hebrews 9:26

³ Deuteronomy 28:1-2

⁷ Hebrews 10:1-2

⁴ Philippians 4:19

The preceding article is was taken from the message entitled “The Better Covenant”. To obtain a copy of the entire message, send \$6 to P.O. Box 3283, Lakeland, FL 33802-3283. We’ll send it to you postage paid.



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