

The Church of our Lord Jesus the Christ
A Scriptural New Testament Church

The Two Covenants

Lesson 5

INTRODUCTION

The Bible is divided into two parts: (1) the Old Testament, and (2) the New Testament. The Old Testament contains the law of Moses. **It is also called the first covenant.** The New Testament contains the law of Christ. **It is also called the second covenant, or new covenant.**

The words "covenant" and "testament" have the same meaning. The two words will be used in this lesson, so remember that you can use one in the place of the other.

A "covenant" (testament) is an agreement or contract between two or more people. Let us illustrate this by looking at a man who did not have a job. He went from place to place seeking employment. Finally he found someone who would give him work. Before he started work, he was told that he would receive so much money each month. He was told to start work at 7 o'clock in the morning. He would then stop at 3:30 P.M.. He was to work these hours five days a week. Now if this man wants the job, he must agree to these rules. If the man takes the job, an agreement (contract) or "covenant" (testament) has been made between him and the employer.

THE FIRST COVENANT

If man wants to be pleasing to God, he has to do what God tells him to do. God has had two great covenants with man. God's first great covenant was with the nation of Israel. God gave the covenant to Moses to give to the people. These first commandments that God gave to Moses are known as the Ten Commandments (**Exodus 20:1-17**). God also gave Moses many other commands and ordinances (**See Exodus, Chapters 21-23**). The Israelites agreed to all of these commands and ordinances. "...*All that the Lord has said we will do, and be obedient*" (*Exodus 24:7*).

Moses then showed that the covenant had been made between God and the Israelites. "*And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words*" (*Exodus 24:8*). This covenant is referred to as the first covenant. "*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. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second*" (*Hebrews 8:6-7*). This "first covenant" is better known as the Law of Moses. **This covenant (Law of Moses) was given only to the Israelites (Jews).** It was not given for all people. Neither was it to last forever.

PURPOSE OF THE LAW OF MOSES

Man was sinful. He needed to know that he was a sinner. The Law of Moses showed man that he was a sinner. "What *shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law...*" (Romans 7:7).

Another purpose of the law was to serve as a schoolmaster to bring the people unto Christ. "Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Galatians 3:24). The law of Moses taught the Israelites until Christ came. It was only to show man what was pleasing to God until Christ came. The law of Moses was to prepare the way for the coming of Christ. The law of Moses showed man what sin is. Since it did this, it has fulfilled its purpose.

THE FIRST COVENANT NAILED TO THE CROSS

The law of Moses had to be done away before the law of Christ (second covenant) could be established. "He takes away the first that He may establish the second" (Hebrews 10:9). When the law of Moses was done away, the law of Christ came into effect. But when was the law of Moses done away? The writer of Colossians tells us, "...having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross" (Colossians 2:14). The "handwriting of ordinances that was against us" is the law of Moses. Jesus did away with the law of Moses when He died on the cross.

THE NEW COVENANT (TESTAMENT)

Jesus said, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill" (Matthew 5:17). Christ fulfilled the law and the prophets. When He fulfilled them, they were no longer needed.

After Jesus was raised from the dead, He said: "...These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me" (Luke 24:44). All of the things that had been written about Christ in the law, prophets, and psalms were fulfilled when He died on the cross. In the book of Acts we are told: "Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb" (Acts 13:29).

Christ fulfilled the law of Moses. When He fulfilled the law, He took it out of the way. It was no longer to be obeyed. Christ brought a new law. "And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant...." (Hebrews 9:15).

The law of Christ is now to be obeyed. The New Testament calls the law of Christ the new covenant or the second covenant. **This new covenant, the law of Christ, is for ALL people.** "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

Christians must live according to the teachings in this new covenant.

Read the Lesson before taking the Test.

Fill in the blanks:

1. The Bible is divided into main parts.

2. The Old Testament contains the law of .
3. The New Testament contains the law of .
4. The words "covenant" and have the same meaning.
5. An agreement between two or more people is a .
6. The law of Moses is also called the covenant.
7. The law of Christ is also called the covenant or covenant.
8. Jesus did away with the law of Moses when He on the .
9. The law of Christ is for people.
10. The law of Moses was only for the .

Check the correct answer.

- True False The law of Moses is found in the New Testament.
- True False The law of Christ is found in the New Testament.
- True False The Israelites (Jews) never agreed to a covenant with God.
- True False The first commands God gave to Moses to give the Israelites are known as the Ten Commandments.
- True False The law of Moses was to last forever.
- True False The **purpose of the law** of Moses (reason why the law of Moses was given) was to show man what sin is and prepare the way for the coming of Christ.
- True False Christ fulfilled the law and the prophets.
- True False Christ brought a new law.

Fill in the blanks in the scriptures:

1. "For if that covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for the " (Hebrews 8:7).
2. "Having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And he has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to his " (Colossians 2:14).
3. "Do not think that I came to the law and the prophets. I did not come to destroy, but to " (Matthew 5:17).

Questions or Comments you may have.

