

THE NEW COVENANT

- Read Luke 22:7-20, commenting that the public ministry of Christ actually ends with the end of ch. 21.

Emphasizing: "the new testament" (or covenant) "in my blood".

This raises some questions.

- (1) What is a covenant?
- (2) If this is new, what was the old?
- (3) What was wrong with the old that made it necessary for the Lord to establish a new one?
- (4) How is the new superior?

I. WHAT IS A COVENANT?

It is "an agreement between ~~persons~~ ^{persons} ~~of~~ parties" (Webster's, p. 234). This agreement involves "an exchange of promises" (Webster's, p. 22); that is, there are things which each one who enters into a ~~covenant~~ ^{covenant} ~~agreement~~ agrees to do.

Here we need of the Lord establishing an agreement, a covenant with His disciples.

II. But we notice He calls it a "new covenant"!

IF THIS IS NEW, WHAT WAS THE OLD?

Read Heb. 9:15-21.

Where & when did this take place?

See Exodus 24:1-8.

We see that it was established at Sinai and had to do with the law of Moses.

And so we would not miss the main point, Moses repeats the words of the

people in vv. 3, 7.

But we still have not entirely answered the question, WHAT WAS THE OLD? what was the purpose of the Mosaic Law? It was God expressing Himself, primarily in a negative way (8 to 2) regarding what constituted SIN. Its purpose was to keep them from sin. But the only help it gave the people was to inform them. It was up to them to do it, and then God would fulfill His promises. These were the terms of the agreement!

III. WHAT WAS WRONG WITH IT, THEN, THAT NOW THE LORD JESUS IS PREPARING TO ESTABLISH A NEW COVENANT?

It proved to be insufficient to deal with the problem of sin.

As Paul says in Rom. 8:3, "For what the law could not do..."

There was nothing wrong with God's part, but man was utterly unable to keep his promise in the agreement.

IV. How ^{IS} THE NEW COVENANT SUPERIOR?

A. First, with regard to responsibility.

In the first covenant, part rested on men; part on God. In the New Covenant it rests upon God. Cf. Heb. 9:15. Also Heb. 10:12-18. See Luke 22: ^{"I give unto them"} "I wash you" ^{"I wash for you"}

In this connection it is:

- (1) Irrevocable. Westcott (Heb., p. 265) points out that solemn covenants

were made on the basis of a blood sacrifice (cf. Gen. 15:7-11).

The death of the sacrifice was considered as the death of the one making the covenant, thus rendering it impossible for a change to be made. That is the reason we ^{do not} have a changed covenant, but A NEW COVENANT. Cf. Heb.

- (2) Assured. Cf. Heb. 9:16. "There ^{is} _{10:9} must of necessity be" — must be established. There is certainly no question at this point. The death of Jesus Christ is an established fact.

B. Second, with regard to results:

1. The forgiveness of sins. The fact that OT sacrifices were continually offered is an indication that the sin question was not settled.
Cf. Heb. 10:1-4, 12-18.

2. The abolition of sin. Cf. Heb. 9: 24-28, 11, 12, 15.

3. The prevention of sin.

This is where the Lord's supper is so significant. The point can be seen by answering one simple question:

What different use was made of the blood when the first covenant was established as compared with the estab. of the new covenant?

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Read Heb. 9:19, 20

Then read ~~Take~~ 1 Cor. 11:23-26,
"Take, eat... as oft as ye drink it...
as often as ye eat this bread,
and drink this cup."

That which symbolized the
body and blood of our Lord
was not to be on them, but in
them.

Add to this a very important
OT Scripture: Lev. 17:11 a, "For
the life of the flesh is in the
blood."

Cf. Jn. 6:53, "Then Jesus said
unto them, Verily, verily, I say
unto you, Except ye eat the
flesh of the Son of man, and
drink his blood, ye have no
life in you."

What does it mean to do this?
John 6:35, "And Jesus said unto
them, I am the bread of life: he
that cometh to me shall never
hunger; and he that believeth on
me shall never thirst."

"Whoso eateth my flesh & drinketh
my blood, hath eternal life" (Jn 6:54).
But also - "He that eateth my flesh,
& drinketh my blood, dwelleth in
me, and I in him" (Jn. 6.56).

- Concl. We do not believe that you are
eating Christ flesh & blood when
you take these elements. These
are symbols, a picture of what

each one of us did when we believed in Christ. At that moment, as a part of the new covenant -

- (1) I was forgiven of all my sins as I experienced salvation.
- (2) I was guaranteed that some day I would be in heaven with sin forever abolished
- (3) But also, here and now "Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal 2:20)

This applies only to believers, but to all believers - all who have accepted Jesus Christ as Savior.

What a covenant? And what a privilege is ours this morning to remember the One on whom it all depends!