

# New Covenant



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**Exodus 24:1-18**

Have you ever been somewhere, you walk in, or you're at an event and something strange starts happening? It's weird, you don't know what it is, and you're witnessing it, seeing it, but you don't really understand what you're seeing and to you it seems rather strange when other people seem like it's very normal. This happened to me on my wedding day. I was getting married to Katie. We were juniors in college. We had the ceremony- that was normal to me. I had seen some ceremonies. Then we went to the reception. We did some normal things. We cut the cake, we had the first dance, and all of that was sort of normal to me, but then I was brought out a chair and asked to sit in the middle of the floor. My wife was an AOII at the time. So, all of a sudden, all of her AOII sisters came up and made a circle around me. They joined hands and began to sing to me, which I thought was rather strange. I just got married to a girl, and then all of these girls came and start singing to me! It was like... *I've already picked one! It wasn't you. It was her...* I didn't know exactly what was going on, but I just went with it. It seemed like it wasn't too strange, but it was a little bit strange. I was sitting there listening to the song and then all of a sudden, I don't know what it was, there was a cue or something, and then they started speaking what I believed was a different language! They started chanting as loud as they could and as fast as they could. They were saying all these words, doing all these things, and it ended with a high pitched "SORORITY." I was like... *WHAT JUST HAPPENED?* It was the strangest thing I had ever encountered! I was trying to understand it. I was looking around like... *What is going on? What just happened?*

I look at my wife's face and it was the most normal thing to her ever. I was like, "That was weird." She was like, "Wasn't that great?" So, for me, it was completely strange and abnormal, but to her it was completely normal because she had actually been taught that. She had went to weddings and participated in this. See, she was in the AOII culture so to her everything was normal. To me, outside of AOII culture, it was strange, a little awkward, a little weird, and I didn't know what it meant, what they were saying, or what exactly was going on. It was just strange!

So, what I want to say is that we are going to read Exodus chapter 24, and to our ears, it's going to be a little bit strange because we are going to see that God is going to affirm the covenant that he started in Exodus chapter 19 where he rescued his people in the first of Exodus. He brought them to the mountain and told them he would be their God and they will be his people who will be a holy priesthood and a holy nation. Then he gives them the Ten Commandments and the law. Now he is affirming this covenant and it's going to be a little strange to us because it's going to involve the cutting of animals, blood, and throwing blood on people and that is a little strange to us. That's a little bit weird! So, I just want you to know that because you're going to be like me at the wedding and wondering what's going on especially if you're new to church.

If you aren't familiar with the Bible or the Old Testament, it's going to be really, really strange to your ears. But, I want you to know that in the culture this would have been very normal to the people of Israel. In the near eastern culture, this is how you made a covenant. This is how kings entered into covenants with people. The higher king would give faithfulness and would give commands. The lesser people would go into this covenant with the thought they would be loyal, they would obey, and they would ratify it with a ceremony with blood and other things. So, we are going to see that and it's very abnormal to us, but it's very normal to the people of Israel. They would have seen this. They would have heard about this in other nations and other people, but God is taking this and he

is making a covenant with HIS people. And he is ratifying it. He is affirming it.

I love what Dr. Gentry and Dr. Wellum say. They say that this event in Exodus 24 is most like a wedding today. So if you think about what is going on you can compare it to a wedding ceremony today. It is this visual ceremony, it is a thing they are going through, to affirm and to ratify this covenant that God has with his people. Then, here is what they say about marriage. They say two people who are not related by blood are now by virtue of the covenant of marriage closer than any other kin relationship. Now, just think about that. I remember my wedding. I was with my fiancé. I was looking at her and at this point we aren't kin at all. We aren't blood related at all. Then, all of a sudden, we have a ceremony, this formal event happens, and after that I'm closer kin to her than I am my momma. Think about that! That's crazy! I'm going to be buried by HER not my mother. That is how BIG of a deal a marriage covenant is. So, we get that. These people aren't together but then all of a sudden they have a ceremony and now they are closer kin than anybody else on the planet. Think about this as we see Exodus 24. God is entering into a covenant with his people and although it isn't exactly like a wedding we can get familiar language from that, that God is entering into a relationship where he will be their closest of kin. Think about the Old Testament. What does God speak to Israel? He says I am your husband and you are my bride and although she goes wayward they have this covenant relationship. So, if you want to think about it this way, think about this as Israel's wedding scene in Exodus 24 where God is going to ratify his covenant with her. So we see that what started in chapter 19 where he was making him his. He gave them the law and the Ten Commandments and now he is ratifying, he is affirming that. So this is kind of like Israel's wedding. There is a ceremony. There is a meal where they eat together like a sort of reception and it's going to sound familiar to what we know today of a wedding, but it's the way they did covenant in the near eastern culture and we are going to see God entering into a covenant with his people.

So, the main thing that I want you to see this morning is that God is a covenant keeping God. That is what we really want to see! God is a covenant keeping God. God loves his people. He enters into a covenant with them and he is faithful though they are unfaithful. Just think about how unfaithful Israel is. If we make the analogy of a wedding, Israel cheats on the Lord on her honeymoon night. Moses is up on the mountain getting the rules for the tabernacle and Israel goes down and breaks the first two commandments. They make their own God, they worship it, and they form an idol. Literally, on the honeymoon, Israel, as the bride of the Lord, walks out and cheats on him. You can kind of feel the weight of that. Israel is not a faithful bride. She is a wayward bride though God is a faithful God and a faithful husband and even though she forsakes the covenant, he will keep pursuing her because that is God's love. He is a covenant keeping God.

What we are going to see is that Israel breaks the covenant and that brings us to the need for a NEW covenant, which is what we are going to see this morning. So, that is the goal of the sermon. What I want us to do is see the old covenant. I want us to see it and look at it. I want us to see the old covenant, but ultimately I want us to behold the new covenant and see how much more glorious the new covenant is that we have in Christ. I want us to see how much superior and greater it is that we have in Jesus Christ. So, see the old covenant. But, behold, see, hold onto, sing, dance, and rejoice, because you have a better covenant in the Lord Jesus Christ. That is going to be the big point of the sermon. So, what we are going to do is compare and contrast the old covenant with the new covenant as we read Exodus chapter 24.

Scripture:

Exodus 24:1-2 - **Then he said to Moses, "Come up to the Lord, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar. 2 Moses alone shall come near to the Lord, but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him."**

## **The new covenant has a great mediator.**

So, we are going to compare and contrast Moses as the mediator to Jesus as the better mediator. Moses is called up to go on the mountain to meet with God, to mediate this covenant between God and man. Now, I don't know if you've ever been called up somewhere by somebody superior to you to do something that you really shouldn't do in and of yourself, but you're called; somebody invites you to do something and you kind of get special privileges. I remember when I was in college. My father-in-law, Allen, was on the Board of Regents. We were at a football game one time, me and my new bride, and all of a sudden Katie gets a text from Allen. Allen said, "Hey, you guys come up to the President's Box." I was just eating my popcorn in the student section with my free tickets. All of a sudden... *oh, we're going where? I didn't know there was a President's Box.* So, we go to this elevator, we push the button, the elevator opens up, and this guy is standing there and says, "You can't go on this elevator. This is only for the President's Box." We said, "Yes, we're with Allen Stout. He invited us." He said, "Oh, well come in!"... *Yeah, that's right! I'm in now. That's my father-in-law. Just saying.* So, the elevator goes up, the doors open, and when it opened there was this moment of I do not belong here. I had my t-shirt on and they were all in suits and ties. I just had popcorn and they had hors d'oeuvres and chicken wings on little platters and fancy stuff. There were all of these rounds tables and people there and I knew their faces, but they didn't know me because they were important people. It was almost like... *umm, let's go back down. We don't belong up here.* Then, all of a sudden Allen says, "Hey, over here!" I felt this little boost of confidence and thought... *ok, yeah, I can go over here...* You feel out of place, you go over there, you sit down, and you start to get familiar. You start to feel like... *Yeah, can I get some more chicken wings over here?* I was sat down watching the game and I was also watching over all of the other people in the commoner seating with no air conditioning or glass. I was eating my chicken wings and enjoying the President's Box while everyone else was enjoying their cheap seats.

So, it's that moment where you get to go somewhere because somebody invited you. Now just imagine Moses getting invited to go up the mountain from God. How much greater is that than my invitation from Allen to the President's Box? I mean, he got to go up on the mountain with God! God invited him to go up and the reason he invited him to go up is because he was going to be the mediator between God and his people in this new covenant. So, God is inviting him to come into his presence. He is inviting him to come up on the mountain to be in his presence, but notice how this is a little picture already of what the tabernacle -which is what we are getting to at the end of Exodus- is going to be like. Because here's the truth- God is with his people yet he is also separate from his people and it is shown in the way he invites people to come up. He invites Moses and he says... *Moses, you only come up to me. You alone stand in my presence.* What is that representing? It's representing this holy of holies that is going to be in the tabernacle. There is going to be a place that only one person, the high priest, can come once a year. That is the only place designated to him or when God meets with Moses in particular. So it's one person at a time going into this holy of holy place. That is where Moses is.

But in the tabernacle, there is also going to be this holy room where the priests are going to do their priestly duties and operate. The seventy here are in God's presence but away from God's presence. There is a distance between them. So Moses is right with God, but the seventy are at a distance. Then, where are all of the people? They are at the bottom of the mountain representing where the courtyard is going to be. It's the fenced in area where the people of Israel can go because they are Israelites and God is their God. It's a little bit of a symbol that they are with God and God is with them, though yet not completely and not yet fully because there is still division. There is going to be a curtain that separates the two.

Here we have a mediator that is going up. God is getting his presence back with his people, but it's not going to be perfect and here is what Moses does. He walks up, he gets God's commands, and he's supposed to bring it back down to the people. So Moses is taking the word of God down to the people. He's the mediator of what the New Testament will call the old

covenant. Now, just think for a minute about the idea that the new covenant has a greater mediator. With the old covenant, it was Moses, a sinful man who was mediating between God and man. What do we have in the new covenant? Jesus Christ, the perfect God man, fully God and fully man who doesn't go up and bring down God's word. He IS God's word who has come down. Think about the mediation that's going on between us and God through Jesus Christ, the one person who can perfectly bridge the gap between God and man because he's fully God and fully man. See, in Jesus we have a PERFECT mediator and that is why Hebrews 8:6 says, "But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises." He is mediating the better covenant. He is a better mediator because there are better promises. What are those promises based on? Him not their obedience. So there is this better mediation, this better covenant and that is who Jesus Christ is. So, see the old covenant mediated through Moses, but behold the glory of the new covenant that is mediating by God himself, God who comes down in the Lord Jesus Christ, the God man who stands between you and your heavenly Father. That is the new covenant we have in Christ.

### **The new covenant is made in better blood.**

This is where it gets a little strange. This is where the blood is talked about. So, I am going to read and just imagine you're in this audience, you're all dressed up, and you're here. Imagine if I did what Moses was supposed to do with these people. Your outfit is going to go home with blood splattered on it. That's kind of strange, right? You're going to have an awkward conversation at the restaurant. *...Umm, sir, why are you covered in blood? ...I just went to church. ...Ok, which church? I'm never going there.* Right? It's a little strange! So, let's just read it and think about what exactly is going on. Here is what it says in verse 3, "Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the rules. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words that the Lord has spoken we will do." 4 And Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord. He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain,

and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. 5 And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord." So, there's a lot of killing, there's a lot cutting, there's a lot of blood, and there's some burning. Things are getting strange to our modern ears, but this is how the God is making a covenant with the people.

Picking up in verse 6," And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. 7 Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient." 8 And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words." Imagine God reads the Bible to you, you say you will obey, and then you get blood thrown on you. What exactly is going on? Well, again, this is normal to them. This is normal to their culture. This was how you made a covenant. A covenant involved blood. And, what Gentry and Wellum say is this symbolism is that the one blood joins the two parties. So you God and you have man and this blood is joining the two together. God- the higher one of the covenant- is promising faithfulness to them and the people of Israel- the lesser in this covenant- are promising loyalty, obedience, and love. That is their end of the deal. This is how normal covenants worked between a king and people but the blood also says something else.

See, the blood in a covenant said that if either party breaks the covenant the faithful one of the covenant gets to kill the one who offended the covenant. That is what the blood is about. The reason you sprinkled blood on you was because if you disobeyed, if you didn't obey then that would be your blood. You would be the one who died. So here is this ceremony, this formal agreement that God and his people are making. It is a covenant, a wedding ceremony if you will. So there are terms. What are the terms? The Ten Commandments and the law. And we will explain how to practically live out the ten commandments in the life of Israel as a nation; they are a unique people and they are a holy nation. So this will be the terms.



Then there are parties. You have God and you have the people of Israel. They are going to be joined together in a covenant. Then, this agreement... *Yes, we will obey.* God gives the terms. The people say yes. It's wedding day. They are making their vows and Israel says... *I do. I will. I will be a faithful bride.* Then it is made in blood. We have this covenant that is made in blood with the promise of obedience. But what is the problem? Israel doesn't deliver. Israel doesn't keep her vows. She promised love, loyalty, and obedience. She promised these things to her new husband and then as Moses is delayed on the mountain 40 days the people go down, break the first two commandments, and cheat on him on their honeymoon. That is how bad Israel as a bride is. That is how wayward she is in her breaking of the covenant, which brings up a problem. If Israel breaks the covenant what happens? Israel dies. That is the terms of the covenant. When it becomes broken the other one dies. So, here's the deal. All of Israel doesn't die that day. All of Israel doesn't die so we automatically see that this covenant is undergirded by God's grace, his mercy, his forgiveness, and his long suffering with his people. You have a husband whose bride is going wayward over and over again. He constantly loves them. That is what God does with a never ending, never giving up, never stopping, always and forever love. That is what God is doing with his people.

Think about the prophets. The prophets were covenant enforcers. If you read the prophets, what are they saying to Israel? Keep the covenant! Go back to your people! Stay true to God! Keep your end of the bargain. They are constantly telling the wayward bride to go back to her husband. They are covenant enforcers... *You're in exile because you've broke it. Yes, God has forsaken you, but it's because you broke the covenant. You need to return to him.* That is what the prophets are pleading with Israel although she never learns, she never listens, and she always runs away. Then, God, through the prophets, began to speak of a new covenant that is different than the old covenant. It's a new covenant that is going to be a better covenant. Here is what we see in Jeremiah 31:31, "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the

house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. What was wrong with the first covenant? It wasn't the covenant; it was the bride. She broke it. She couldn't obey it. She couldn't keep it. ... *I was her husband. She was my bride. She said, "I do." And then she ran away.* That is what happened so I'm going to give a new covenant, a different covenant, a better covenant. One that is different than the one of their fathers because they broke that one.

So we have this new covenant that is coming. What is this new covenant? Well, Jesus is going to pick it up in the New Testament and it's a covenant that we will see right off the bat is with better blood. What is the old covenant? It's a covenant in blood. Moses said... *I'm making a covenant in blood. Here is the covenant: bulls and goats, spread their blood. If you break the covenant, you will die. We are in a relationship through blood.*

Then, what does Jesus do when he is sitting with the disciples at the Passover meal? The Passover meal was meant to celebrate their exodus from Egypt though Jesus through the gospel is making a new exodus not from Egypt. His departure, his exodus is going to bring in a new creation. People are going to be new in the new exodus of Christ. He is the new Passover lamb. And what does he say when he has the Passover with his disciples that he transforms into the Lord's supper? Here's what he says in Luke chapter 22, verse 20, "And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood." ...*It's not in bull's blood, it's not in goat's blood. It's in MY blood. This is the NEW covenant FOR you in MY blood.* See, we have a new covenant in the very blood of Jesus Christ. That's why the new covenant is superior to the old covenant. The old covenant of bulls and goats couldn't deal with sin. It couldn't truly make those who worshipped the Lord right, but the blood of Christ can truly do away with sin. It can make us right with the Lord. So it is a new covenant in his blood. Notice what Jesus is not doing. Jesus doesn't hold the cup up and say I'm making a new covenant. Here is the blood. Let's sprinkle it on each other. He doesn't do that. He

doesn't threaten them... *Here's a covenant. If you keep we are good. If you break it I'm going to kill you.* No, it's not a threat; it's a prophesy. He isn't threatening blood with the covenant. He's prophesying that it's his blood that will be the ratification of this new covenant. In other words, in this new covenant you've already offended it and you already must die, but it's his blood, it's his life that dies for you.

See, the covenant, if you disobey you die. Christ says I know you already disobeyed so I'm going to die for you so that when you come to me and believe in me, my death becomes your death. My obedient life becomes your obedient life. This is why the new covenant is better. Jesus doesn't say come to me and make sure you obey every part of it. Jesus says I've already obeyed it. Come to me and I'll forgive your disobedience and give you my righteousness and you'll be an unbreakable covenant because of what I've done for you. That is the new covenant! That is why it has better blood. The blood of Jesus Christ is our security. Christ obeys for us and Christ takes our disobedience so that we can have an unbreakable relationship with our God through Jesus Christ. That is the covenant. It is made in better blood. It speaks a better word to us.

### **The new covenant brings greater fellowship.**

The new covenant brings better fellowship with the Lord. Here's what it says in Exodus 24, starting in verse 9, "Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, 10 and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness." 11 And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank." What is going on here? We have the banquet. We have the reception. God has made a covenant. The bride and groom are in a relationship now and now we are having this banquet. We are having this reception and we are eating a meal together where the men are beholding God. They are with God and in his presence and it is representing this fellowship with God and man. See, eating a meal together represents being in fellowship with a friend and not a foe. That is why Jesus when he ate

with sinners and tax collectors the Pharisees wiggled out... *HOW CAN YOU DO THAT? You are saying you have accepted and are friends with them because that is what a meal means...* See, a meal meant something in these cultures. It meant you were friends; you're not enemies. And here God is eating with his people and eating a meal is saying we are now in a relationship with one another. There is this fellowship that is going on with us.

So, they beheld God, but notice it wasn't a perfect beholding of God. They saw him, but they didn't see him perfectly. That is why there is a strange sentence. They say they saw the God of Israel and everyone is like... *hey, what did he look like? ...Umm, there was like pavement road that was clear and the clearness looked like the clearness of Heaven. ...Really? So, that's what he looked like? ...Uh, yeah!* They beheld him, they saw him, but they were looking at the under of this road that God's presence is on. So it isn't like they were fully looking at God, but they were seeing and beholding the God of Israel. They were seeing his presence. They were caught up in his presence.

Here is the shocking thing and the authors say it. They say God didn't lay his hands on the men. They are saying God didn't kill them. It's like they reported to their buddies saying we beheld God and we all lived! They are telling a story that shouldn't be. If we behold God, we should all die because his holiness is far superior to our holiness. We have none. We are sinful, but they beheld the glory of God.

So they are fellowshiping with God through this covenant. There is this real fellowship. They are really seeing the Lord, but then there are these shadows where they aren't exactly seeing the Lord. They are beholding him, but it's only for a moment. They eat a meal but then they have to go back down the mountain. Then, after that, God will come in the tabernacle, but he will put a veil up. He will say... *you beheld me no more. There is a veil. Now you won't see me. Now you won't get to go into my presence, but you will know my presence is in that tabernacle and you'll see it again*

*in the temple...* So God is with them. They are fellowshiping with him, but it's for a moment, not forever.

Then what happens in the new covenant? What happens when Jesus comes? Jesus, the very presence of God who is God, comes down to dwell among his people and he lives a perfect life that we couldn't. He dies a death that all of us deserve. And he rose from the dead and what happens? The veil in the temple is ripped from top to bottom. There is no division, no more separation in fellowship. We all get to go into the presence of the Lord and behold him.

Think about when Jesus gives the new covenant. What is he doing? He's eating with his disciples. It's the picture of what they did on the mountain. They ate and beheld God. The disciples were eating and beholding Jesus who is God, but it is a beholding that will last forever. He will never leave them or forsake them. He will tell them to keep eating this meal over and over again and remember I'm with you, I'll never forsake you, and one day you will come and be with me in a new kingdom where we will eat a new meal together, but that banquet will never end. And that's what we get to do tonight! If you have plans, cancel them. Come tonight because we get to sit down at the table to say we have fellowship with God not because of our obedience, but through Jesus and what he did for us. It's a meal with fellowship with the Lord through his death, burial, and resurrection. We proclaim his death and his resurrection. We proclaim that he is coming back and he's going to eat this meal again with us in his father's kingdom where there will be perfect fellowship forevermore.

See, the old covenant brought fellowship but it wasn't perfect. The new covenant brings perfect fellowship with God and fellowship is going to be enjoyed in a new kingdom forever without sin because of what Christ did for us. See, the new covenant has better fellowship.

**The new covenant empowers greater obedience.**

The new covenant empowers greater obedience and here's what it says starting in verse 12, "The Lord said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain and wait there, that I may give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction." 13 So Moses rose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. 14 And he said to the elders, "Wait here for us until we return to you. And behold, Aaron and Hur are with you. Whoever has a dispute, let him go to them." So God is saying take my law to the people. Take those stone tablets down to the people. Why? For their instruction. They were to instruct the people of Israel. They were to instruct the bride of the Lord in how she was supposed to live in a covenant relationship with the Lord.

See, they are supposed to go into a land that is very central to all of the nations of the world. And in that land, they are to be a light to the nations. In that land, they are supposed to heed to the word of God and by heeding the word of God they are supposed to live out true humanity. What is true humanity? Loving God with all of your heart, loving your neighbor as yourself, and caring for creation as you're supposed to which is exactly what Adam and Eve were supposed to do but they couldn't. They lost it. They disobeyed. So God is setting up in Canaan this place, this people, where when people pass through, when they do trade, or when they're walking into Canaan, they would see what true humanity was supposed to be like- people loving God with all their heart and loving each other as themselves. It was this place that's purpose was to have blessings attached to it as we saw last week. They were supposed to be a light to the nations. Canaan was to be the new Eden... *Take them, instruct them, and make sure they live out this new humanity that I have intended them to do. They are to be a royal priesthood and a holy nation. That is the covenant that I am building with them.*

Yet there was a problem and the problem was the stone hearts within them couldn't obey the stone commandments that God had given them. They just couldn't do it. The problem wasn't with the stones. The problem wasn't with God's laws and commands. They were the way they were supposed to

live. The problem was with their stone hearts. They were rebellious. They were broken, not just on the outside, but they were broken deeply on the inside. They were stubborn and rebellious and they always went away. This is why God continues to speak in the Jeremiah covenant, that new covenant. Here's what it says in Jeremiah chapter 31, starting in verse 33, "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

There is a new covenant. There is a different covenant. What is different about it? God is going to fix the fundamental problem with his people and that is their sin problem. It is their unredeemed heart. God says he is going to come and in the new covenant, he is going to redeem them. When somebody believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, change is going to happen. There is going to be a supernatural event of salvation where God takes the outward law and he puts it on your heart. He gives you his spirit so from the inside out, you love the Lord with all your heart and you treat your neighbor as yourself. He is going to change YOU and it's going to be different. In this covenant, in Israel it was a mixed crew- some knew the Lord and some didn't. That is why they had to teach their neighbor... *hey, you need to know the Lord! ...I don't know the Lord. ...You need to know it.* It was mixed company. In the new covenant, there is no mixed company. Everyone in the covenant knows the Lord. It is a regenerate company. All of us. You don't have to teach someone in the new covenant to know the Lord, they already know him! It's a relationship. It's based on forgiveness of all of your sin. It's a new heart and a new nature that now does what? It now obeys the Lord who rescued you. That is the difference of the new covenant. It's on the foundation of true forgiveness. It's on a changed heart. See, Moses brought them down this law that they couldn't obey, but Jesus removes our stone hearts and he changes us from within so that we can obey.

Here's what Israel was supposed to do, be a holy nation and a royal priesthood so the whole world could see what life is like living in relationship with God. They failed. Why? Because they had stone hearts. They needed God to do something. They needed a miracle and that is exactly what the gospel does. The gospel creates that miracle and here is what Peter will say in 1 Peter chapter 2:9. We are now a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, and we are proclaiming the excellencies of who God is. Who is that talking about? It isn't talking about Israel. It's talking about the church who is made up of Israel and the Gentiles coming together in the church.

See, the church does what Israel could not. The church lives out true humanity. The church, because we have been redeemed and we have God's spirit inside of us, because we have been changed, we can live out true humanity. We, as the church, can love God with all of our heart, all of our mind, all of our soul, and all of our strength. We, as the church, can love our neighbor as ourselves. Why? Because we have better empowerment. We have the Lord Jesus and his spirit living within us.

Israel couldn't do their task because they weren't empowered to do it. But, we, as the church, have been empowered through the Holy Spirit. We, as the church, can go in the nations and live as that holy priesthood, that holy nation set apart to the Lord as those people living in the kingdom of God, obeying the rule and reign of God, and showing the world what life looks like if you're in a relationship with God. That is what the church is called to do. See, we have greater obedience.

So, what does that mean for you? That means everything if you're a believer in Christ. It means that if you're a believer in Christ that you can do what Israel couldn't do. You can go into your workplace and visibly show everyone around you what life looks like living under God's reign and rule. You can show them what true humanity looks like. In your family, you can show your spouse and your kids what true humanity is like- loving God, loving neighbor, and caring for the world. You can actually do that! In



your sports, whatever you do, where ever you go, with the people that you bump into, you can show them that this is what real humanity is. And how can you do that? Because you've been redeemed, you've been saved, you've been forgiven, and now you have better obedience. You have obedience that is by walking in the spirit; not obeying the lust of your flesh. You have obedience from the inside out not just trying to obey really hard on the outside.

See, you can live out what God had intended all along and that is for all of us to spread out through this world and show the world what life looks like living under God's rule and reign because that is what the new kingdom is going to be all about. The new kingdom will be life under God's rule and reign with no more sin. So, right now in the here and now, right in this present age, we the church get to show a picture of what the kingdom is going to be like.

Are you living in that? Are you leaning into that? You have what Israel didn't have. You have the spirit of God within you. We have no excuses to live a mediocre life. We have all of the excuses in the world to say... *I'm going to live for King Jesus because he's the one that is empowering me to do so...*

### **The new covenant brings greater glory.**

Here is what it says starting in verse 15, "Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. 16 The glory of the Lord dwelt on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days." We see this glory. We see Moses up on the mountain. We see that he encountered this abstract glory of God. It was cloud but he could see this glory of God- the manifestation of who he is, the manifestation of his holiness- coming through it. Moses could behold it. He could see the glory of God! But, what do we have in the New Testament? In the New Testament in 2 Corinthians, chapter 4, verse 6 says, "For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." We don't have God's glory in a

cloud. We have God's glory in the very face of Jesus Christ! We see and behold God's glory in the face of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We have a greater glory that we get to behold as the people of God. It's a greater covenant. It comes with greater glory.

So here is what I want you to see. I want you to see that God is a covenant keeping God. Even though Israel broke the covenant, God didn't kill all of Israel. Instead he kept pursuing her. Even while she was wayward, he kept loving her, he kept pursuing her, and he promised to make a new covenant that wouldn't be based on her obedience of keeping the covenant, but based on the obedience of his son Jesus Christ who dies for her disobedience and raises so that he could give her his obedience. That is the glory of the gospel! That is the glory of the new covenant that we live under. It is based on the obedience and the life of Jesus Christ and when we come to him it is an unbreakable covenant because it is based on him and not on us. It is this new covenant he spoke to her. This covenant would have a better mediator, better blood, better fellowship, and it would call better obedience so that now, as the church, we can actually go and live out the mission that God has called his people to.

We can actually do this! We can go to college tomorrow, we can go to high school, we can go to middle school, and we can sit in our classes and we can show everyone around that here is what life looks like under the rule and reign of God. Because I have God's laws stamped on my heart, now I love God with all of my heart, I love my neighbor as myself, and as long as I walk in the spirit I won't gratify the desires of my flesh and I will show the world what the new kingdom is going to be like. It's full of joy! It's full of patience, kindness, gentleness, and self-control. It's full of all of those fruits of the spirit. When someone hangs out with you they should see what life is like under the rule and reign of God because God has done for you in the new covenant. He has changed you from the inside out. He has forgiven you and he has set you free to go and live and spread his fame and his glory and his presence all throughout the nations. That is what we get to do as the church.

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