

## What happened to the New Testament?

One day when I was studying the phrase New Testament in Matthew 26:28, I was surprised to find out that most of the new popular translations of the Bible do not have the words "New Testament" in their scriptures. These versions will use either "the covenant" or "the new covenant".

The versions that I looked at were the *Revised Standard Version* (RSV), ©1881-1885 and 1901, 1946-52 and 2nd NT edition 1971; the *American Standard Version* (ASV), ©1901; the *New English Translation* (NET), ©1996; the *New American Standard Bible* (NASB), ©1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977 and 1995; the *Christian Standard Bible* (CSB), © 2017; the *English Standard Version* (ESV), ©2001, 2007, 2011 and 2016; the *New International Version* (NIV), ©1973, 1978, 1984 and 2011; the *New Living Translation* (NLT), ©1996, 2004 and 2007; and finally, the *New King James Version* (NKJV), ©1987.

None of the following versions had foot notes for their use of the covenant: ASV, RSV, NET, nor the NASB.

The CSB uses the covenant<sup>fn</sup> with the foot note "Other mss read *new covenant*." The ESV and the NIV use the<sup>fn</sup> covenant with the foot notes "Some manuscripts insert *new*."

The NLT uses the covenant<sup>fn</sup> with the foot note "Some manuscripts read *the new covenant*"

The NKJV uses the new<sup>fn</sup> covenant with the foot note "The NU Text Omits *new*".

With the preliminary information out of the way, why is this a problem one would ask? We hope to see by the scriptures why this is a problem.

In the Bible context, there is a difference between a testament and a covenant. A testament requires both blood and death. A covenant requires neither blood nor death.

1. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament had blood and death as central basis of the Testaments.

[14] **How much more shall the blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? [15] And for this cause he is the **mediator of the new testament**, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions [that were] under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. [16] For where a testament [is], there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. [17] **For a testament [is] of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.**  
Hebrews 9:14-17

(Not surprisingly, the only new version that has testator is the NKJV and they occur in the same verses as the King James Bible. Also, in Hebrews 9:16 & 17, the NKJV and the ASV uses the word "testament", the NASB uses the word "covenant" and the remaining versions use the word "will".)

{Covenants do not require blood and death to be placed in force. The Noahic Covenant was established with Noah without blood and death. The rainbow was the token instead of blood to guarantee the covenant's continual force.

[14] And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, **that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:** [15] **And I will remember my covenant, which [is] between me and you and every living creature of all flesh;** and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.  
Genesis 9:14-15

In the passage from Hosea below God promises Israel that the name of Baalim will be taken from their mouth in the land of the millennial Kingdom and that they will be betrothed unto the LORD in righteousness and faithfulness. Note that this covenant is even with the beast of the field, and with the fowls of heaven and with creeping things to do Israel no harm.

[14] Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. [15] And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt. [16] And it shall be at that day, saith the LORD, *that* thou shalt call me Ishi; and shalt call me no more Baali. [17] **For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth,** and they shall no more be remembered by their name. [18] **And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and *with* the creeping things of the ground:** and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely. [19] And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, **I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness,** and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. [20] I will even **betroth thee unto me in faithfulness:** and thou shalt know the LORD. Hosea 2:14-20

2. A testament is made by one party while a covenant requires two or more parties. A testament is not "made with " another nor is it an "agreement between" two parties. A testament is "His testament." It is not a testament "with" any person or group such as the Abrahamic, Noahic, or New Covenants. There is no such thing as "Israel's Testament" or the "Church's Testament."

... the ark of **his testament.** Revelation 11:19

... **the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.** Hebrews 9:20

... **he is the mediator of the new testament** Hebrews 9:15

Since a testament is an action solely by the Godhead, there are no other people required to make it effective.

3. A testament has no interaction of parties stated to effect its existence. A covenant always requires interaction of parties for it to exist. Covenants require an interaction between two parties. Abraham did leave his father's house as he was told in Genesis 11. Had he not, there could have been no Abrahamic Covenant.

[1] Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: [2] And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: [3] And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. Genesis 12:1-3

[6] And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite *was* then in the land. [7] And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him. Genesis 12:6-7

The testaments were determined by God in heaven, not between man and God on earth.

Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. Hebrews 10:9

4. A testament is never dependent upon a covenant. A covenant may receive the benefit of a covenant. Israel receives covenants under both Testaments. Without the Old Testament Israel could not have received a portion of the blessings under the under the Abrahamic Covenant, for the testament provided temporary forgiveness of sins. The same is true of the Mosaic Covenant. Without the New Testament, the Davidic Covenant and the New Covenant to Israel would not be possible to enjoy, since the blood of bulls and goats can not take away (remit) sins.

For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Hebrews 10:4

Most covenants impart blessings because of the forgiveness made available by the testaments. Neither one of the two Testaments are based upon or dependent upon covenants.} Material in the brackets, { } are from *The Gospel of Matthew* by Dave Reese © 2002

When one is studying the word of God, we are commanded to study the bible in the way the Lord commands us to study. We get this information from the Apostle Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles (Romans 11:13) who states in the book of First Corinthians:

If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. Corinthians 14:37

Thus the method of study to be approved of God is found in II Timothy:

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. II Timothy 2:15

When one rightly divides the word of truth, one must understand that all the Bible is not written to you but all of it is certainly for one's learning and understanding. One should ask these questions when studying. Who is talking or writing. To whom is the speech or writings spoken. When is it in time, past present or future. Paul also gives help by identifying three groups in I Corinthians 10:31. They are the Jews, Gentiles and the church of God. The church of God is made up of believing Jews and Gentiles as seen in Galatians 3:28: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." When this is done, one will understand that most of the bible is written to Israel, God's first born.

And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, *even* my firstborn: Exodus 4:22

The first five books were written by Moses and they cover the creation, the fall of man, the Genesis flood (also the first covenant, the Noachic covenant which token was the rainbow), the scattering of Gentile nations with its concurrent confusion of language at Babel, the calling of Abram by God and his sons Isaac and Jacob who became the father of the nation of Israel. The exodus of the children of Israel out of Egypt and the giving of the ten commandments to Israel by the prophet Moses and the instructions for building the tabernacle. Also, included were the instructions of the Levitical priesthood and history of the nation Israel wandering in the wilderness up to the time Joshua was getting ready to take Israel into the promise land. The remaining books of the old testament, record the history of Israel, its prophetic writing. In short, it contains the five books of Moses, the prophets and the writings. These books tell of Israel's and Judah's kings and the eventually scattering of Israel into the nations. The OT prophecies emphasize the promise of the dispersed nation being brought back into the land that their father Abraham was promised by God.

It is in the book of Jeremiah that we find the phrase, new covenant where it is also the first usage. (The other three uses are found in the book of Hebrews)

31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that 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 bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my

covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: 33 But this *shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel*; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Jeremiah 31:31-34

What one will notice that this new covenant will be made at a future date (the days come ... I will make). Jeremiah is writing while the northern and southern kingdoms are divided. One must consider that this covenant is not made with Gentiles nor the Church of God which is his body. It is made with Israel. When the new covenant is made all of Israel shall know the LORD, their iniquity will be forgiven and their sins will be remember no more.

The old testament has many covenants within such as the Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, the Davidic and of course, the new covenant. These covenants contain promises Abraham and his off spring Isaac, Jacob and of course Israel. We should note that the only covenant that was given to the Gentiles was the covenant God made with Noah and his family.

Now Paul (a preacher, apostle and teacher of the Gentiles, I Timothy 2:7) tells us in II Timothy another very important fact for Bible understanding. He says:

Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. II Timothy 2:7

In regard to the new testament, Paul says in I Corinthians :

1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ. 2 Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered *them* to you. I Corinthians 11:1-2

In the same chapter, he gives the church ordinance of the Lord's supper:

23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25 After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the *new testament in my blood*: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. I Corinthians 11:23-26

In II Corinthians, the Apostle Paul points out that he is an **able minister of the new testament** not the new covenant.

Who also hath made us able **ministers of the new testament**; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.  
II Corinthians 3:6

What is so very critical to this discussion is found in Ephesians chapter 2.

11 Wherefore remember, that **ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh**, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time **ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise**, having no hope, and without God in the world: 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the **blood of Christ**. Ephesians 2:11-13

You should note this very important fact that we as Gentiles in time past were strangers from the covenants of promise. Therefore, the church of God, the Body of Christ, has no Old Testament promises nor covenants. Because of the death and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Body of Christ came into existence. One will not find anywhere in the scriptures that the Body of Christ in under the New Covenant.

Paul was cognizant of the new covenant as seen in his writing in the book of Romans.

25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.  
Romans 11:25-27

The writer of the book of Hebrews also states that in the future the Lord will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith 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 continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. 10 For this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: 11 And they shall not

teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. 12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. Hebrew 8:8-12

Because of the Lords Jesus Christ's death on the cross of Calvary (the death of the testator) we get the following blessing through the blood of Christ:

In whom we have redemption through **his blood**, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Ephesians 1:7

In whom we have redemption through **his blood**, *even* the forgiveness of sins: Colosians 1:14

25 Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in **his blood**, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26 To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Romans 3:25-26

Much more then, being now justified by **his blood**, we shall be saved from wrath through him. Romans 5:9

19 For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell; 20 And, having made peace through **the blood of his cross**, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven. Colossians 1:19 & 20

Well, in conclusion what happened to the New Testament. It looks like the words "new testament" have been removed from all the modern bibles even though God told men not add to or diminish his word. The phrase New Testament is still in my King James Bible. Since the new covenant has not been made with Israel (which will happen when he returns to set up the millennium kingdom) what blood is going to take care of your sins? Remember, that we Gentiles are strangers from the covenants of promise.

It is Christ's blood of the New Testament that takes care of our sins today and will take care of the nation of Israel sins when the fulness of the Gentiles come in (Romans 11:25-27).

6 The words of the LORD *are* pure words: *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. 7 Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever. Psalm 12:6-7

Amen.

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