

## HLH- 830430- Covenant \_ Testament

Mr. Haguehold asked me to speak on a subject today that I addressed in the last day of Unleavened Bread, the meaning of the covenant and testament, and what is this that we call the New Testament.

I have before me here for obvious reasons on this occasion, since our subject deals with translations that do not always convey thoughts clearly.

I have a King James, which we should normally call the authorized version, the revised authorized version, or as in America, the New King James, and the revised standard.

I wanted to touch upon this, and since the time I presented it here in Southern California, the only other time was at the Days of Unleavened Bread.

I'm treating this simply as a Sabbath subject and not trying to link it as a part of the Holy Day series, so we'll take a little different approach.

There is indeed misunderstanding today over the word covenant and testament in the Bible because of a number of factors which I would like to outline first, until we understand what has happened to the English language where the problem resides.

We would not always understand why the terms differ in different translations.

We should be familiar with the fact that the King James version was translated 370 years ago, approximately, when the word testament was, in English, in possession of the meaning of covenant, whereas today we generally conceive of a covenant as an agreement between two parties or more over matters that are to occur which have certain obligations.

And we reserve the concept of testament or will, essentially, for the bequeathing, usually, and an instrument of writing in which a declaration is made as to the disposal of a state after death.

That is, when a covenant is arranged today and agreed upon and signed, it is enforced.

But a testament is not or a will is not enforced until someone dies and is subject to revision all along the line, so long as the revisions are legally and properly cared for.

Usually a witness, even for a will or a testament, is involved.

When the King James version was written, the word testament had indeed the sense of covenant.

And therefore, when we read in the King James version, or the authorized version, that this is the blood of the New Testament, the writers understood that it meant the New Covenant.

They did not understand, in every place, that it meant what we have come to wonder without real definition, but to wonder as to its meaning as a New Testament.

Because we certainly aren't talking about Matthew through revelation.

And if there's a New Testament, where was the old? Because God didn't make a testament at Sinai, that is, a will.

So what we must understand now is something that is important in the background, only made clear in the introduction to the New Testament, in the revised standard version of the modern translation.

In the introduction to the section that we call the New Testament, or preceding Matthew, I find this correctly stated.

The New Covenant commonly called the New Testament of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, revised standard version.

So the revised standard version does correctly define that what this should be is the New Covenant.

This is the story of the proposal of the New Covenant, just as in principle the material we call the Old Testament has the introduction in Genesis and part of Exodus, and then is really the story of God's dealing with the nation under the Sinaitic Covenant, which later came to be called the Old Covenant.

But we do not find that God made a will.

We do not find that he made a testament in the modern sense at Sinai.

Hence the terms in our Bible, Old Testament and New Testament, meant when translated in 1611 and earlier, it meant Old Covenant and New Covenant.

Today the word testament has another meaning in our language, in common usage, and Old Testament and New Testament today does not focus in on the idea of Old Covenant and New Covenant.

That merely means essentially a group of books from Hebrew Aramaic and a group of books in the Greek.

And we use the term the Old Testament and the New Testament merely to define a group of books without ever asking ourselves whether in the modern language the word testament has any meaning when we say Old Testament.

Because if Christ made a testament and will, which he did, he did not make a new one.

There was never, therefore, an old one.

We must understand, and looking at the Bible, therefore, we are dealing with two parts of a book which human beings over the centuries have defined after Christ came as defining the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

When we turn to the book of Deuteronomy, we are really turning into that section of the Bible which we should call the Old Covenant section.

But testament did have that meaning initially, and it does retain that as one of the older meanings that would be used.

Now, in common terminology, we don't think clearly on the subject if you were forced to read Webster's for everything you wanted to define, you would discover that your mind would interpret that as referring to the Covenant at Sinai.

Because testamentum is the Latin form of covenant.

Now we get to the background of why the terms are used.

Our word covenant is derived from the Latin, and we used originally the word testament for covenant, but now we use the more modern accepted term.

The word testament derives from the Latin testamentum, which was an attempt to render in Latin what the Greeks had as dia feke, meaning also a covenant from the Hebrew word beret, you know, bene beret, the organization, the sons of the covenant.

Now, the Latin had as a part of the meaning of this, interestingly enough, not just the sense of covenant as we know it, but of the last will, derived from a root like testari, to be a witness, from testis, meaning a witness.

The Oscan or an Italic language, Latin was an Italic language, had to form testis, from place, three, and stari, to stand.

Because any agreement, whether a will or a covenant, involved two parties and a third who stood as witness.

So the document represented the document which attested to the standing there of a third party as a witness.

And that gives you something of the background of how words have developed.

In a sense, in the modern world, we generally draw up a will or a testament with one party, the one who has something to bequeathed, and the witness.

We normally do not involve those who are the recipients or heirs, later inheritors.

In some countries, as in Germany, very often, as the legal department wrote me happily when I asked the question as to whether anyone did know, in some countries of Europe it is common to arrange as a portion of the will, let's say, an agreement, which might be perceived as a covenant.

But in reality, it is in structure a will, but in which the recipient or heir meets certain agreements on his own part in the lifetime.

Whereas in America, if there is something that is to be agreed upon, essentially the court would make such a decision, that is, does the person agree to that upon the opening up of the will for discussion following the death of the testator.

So anciently, there were differences, and even around the world today, there are differences.

And the fact that often a will and an agreement involve a witness and two parties, traditionally, though not always today, with respect to a will or testament, this is why generally the same word was used.

That is, there is no doubt in Greek that when the *atheche*, which is the Greek word we translate covenant or testament, is used, that the Greeks use that word to define either a working covenant or a will, which takes effect only after the death of the testator.

And nobody questioned the distinction.

In other words, the same word had two separate and distinct meanings.

We shall note these meanings clearly when we look especially in Hebrews chapter nine, which we will now not turn to.

That's where we will end to see the distinction.

We will go back into the earlier part of the Bible.

In ancient days, it was common, a little different from today.

Today, of course, where our word is not very good, we don't merely make an agreement and shake hands and not put it in writing, today, if it isn't in writing, and in duplicate, in one file the way somewhere where you can't tamper with, and where you have lawyers to represent either party, you can be sure that most covenants won't be kept.

But in times past, if you verbally agreed in the presence of a witness and you shook hands, that was sufficient.

And if anything happened, the party who was aggrieved and the witness could come to present it to the judge at the gate.

Remember the old expression in the Bible.

And we're too agreed why the judge made a rendering.

Well, in ancient times, you didn't have the concept of writing that was far more honored.

But today, of course, writing is a poor substitute for it because lawyers have learned how to solve the problems in writing and get around the law anyway.

Not all of them do.

We have those who defend it, happily, who are here.

But this is one of the great problems.

However, originally, there were some interesting things pertaining to covenants.

For instance, we'll start in the story, and I'll use the R.A.V. or New King James Version here.

Just to let you read a little something different if you have the other two.

In Genesis 15, we're going to begin our story here.

You know, of course, or you should know the background.

Not my purpose here to repeat everything from Adam to Abraham in order to clarify where we are.

I would assume that if children don't know all the background, it's parental responsibility.

But you remember, Abraham came out of Mesopotamia and entered the land of Palestine.

He was in his son of 75.

That's what the Hebrew literally means.

When his father died and he went to the land of promise, briefly went down to Egypt because there was a drought, returned to the land of Canaan, which was the land of promise, and we now are introduced to chapter 15.

The word of the Lord came to Abraham in a vision.

So Abraham had a vision at this point, not in his presence.

Was there a manifestation, but in a vision? Do not be afraid, Abram.

I am your shield.

You're exceeding great reward.

And Abraham said, Lord God, what will you give me? Seeing I go trial-less, and the heir of this house is Eleazar of Damascus.

For presumably, coming from Heran and Mesopotamia, going through the site of ancient Terca, where we are involved through AICF and excavation, he would have passed from there through Damascus to the land of Canaan, the normal inland route.

The neighbor said, look, you have given me no offspring.

Indeed, one born in my house is my heir.

And behold, the word of the Lord in this vision came to him saying, this one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir.

Then he brought him outside in this vision, and he was looking into the heavens.

And the story goes on, and I will not fulfill all of that.

Now, you remember, a vision is not a dream.

You want to know the distinction.

A vision is not a dream.

Peter had a vision.

Peter was awake, and he was hungry, and he was smelling what was cooking.

And the vision occurred while he was very awake on a house top.

A dream occurs usually during sleep.

But a vision occurs when one is awake, and there is actually something that is seen.

But it is not like you would have an individual manifested, as at another time, when God directly appears with angels.

You remember the story of Abraham just before the account of Sodom and Gomorrah? But the story goes on.

Then he said to him, verse 7, I am the Lord who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees to give you this land to inherit it.

And he said, Abraham speaking, Lord God, how shall I know that I will inherit it? So he said to him, bring me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtle dove, and a young pigeon.

Now, right at this point, there's no real connection between long-range promises and all these things being brought.

That is, until you realize that this was one way of defining a covenantal relationship, God is making a promise.

God is making a promise to Abraham.

There is no commitment at this point as to what Abraham is to do, except to have faith.

That's all we are given as an implication.

He is to have faith that someone born between himself and Sarah.

No, he really didn't see it quite that way yet, because in the end, it was going to be, as he thought, between himself and Hagar.

But it did turn out to be between himself and Sarah.

Anyway, God is the one who gives here a promise.

Here is a covenant about to be entered into in which the superior makes a promise to the inferior.

This is like the king and vassal of the nations in the Middle East.

Usually, when there was such an arrangement where the king was pleased to give a benefit to a vassal who had served him well, they made an agreement.

The king would promise something.

Here the king is promising Abraham a certain manner which we won't go into here, except that he would be greatly rewarded, exceedingly great, and it would be compared in terms of the children he should have to the stars of heaven.

Then he brought all these, verse 10, to him and cut them into, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other, but he didn't cut the birds into.

Now, anciently, to make a covenant was called to cut a covenant, a very strange word.

You would never properly translate it to cut a covenant, but it meant that you cut the covenant or you actually divided certain sacrifices or offerings, animals or fowl, and you cut them in two, and you divided them to show that this is my part, that's your part.

We agree each to our respective parts, and that's the way it was done.

When the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abraham drove them away, and when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abraham.

He got tired chasing the vultures away, and I guess he sat down at these warm afternoons in the Middle East, and he fell asleep, and behold, horror and great dread, the darkness fell upon him.

That's what it seemed in his dream, and then in the dream, what Abraham was perceiving, Yahweh appears again to Abraham, saying, no, certainly, that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them 400 years.

When Abraham was dead, we begin this affliction, 400 years.

Isaac had his problems over the wells with the Philistines.

Jacob had his problems not only with his dear uncle Laban, he had his problems before with his brother Esau.

He actually didn't know it, but he had his problems with his wife.

He had his problems with his sons, and their descendants had problems with the Egyptians, and also the nation whom they serve, I will judge.

Some people have foolishly concluded that the 400 years refers to the time they would serve the nation, but the 400 years is introduced before the nation is mentioned.

The 400 years is the story of Abraham's descendants after his death.

The story of the lifetime of Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph, and the generations that were in Egypt.

This is not the time they were in Egypt, it is the time before and during.

Also that nation whom they serve, I will judge.

Afterward they will come out with great possessions.

Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace and be buried at a great or a good old age.

But in the fourth generation they will return here after they have left here.

The iniquity you see of the Amorites is not yet complete.

So it came to pass when the sun was down and it was dark, and behold there was a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces.

That showed that God's presence was there.

On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham, and these things that were laid out on either side represented Abraham's willingness.

He brought the tokens, so to speak, of the covenant in this case.

That was required traditionally, something that was offered.

And to your descendants, God said, I will give you this land from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates and the people whom you were to there occupy our name.

Then again in chapter 17 we will pick up a story.

Now here we are not given the details so much of the covenant.

We are given the principles that now I want to address that are within this agreement.

But now we have seen the background of how covenants were often entered into at that time.

Abraham was the son of 99, that's the literal meaning.

The Lord appeared to him.

This is an appearance.

This is not a vision.

This is not a drink.

I am El Shaddai, God Almighty.

Walk before me and be blameless.

Here we are clearly introduced to what is undoubtedly the best English translation of this word.

Blameless.

You see, to be perfect is like something that we might say has never been imperfect.

God is perfect in the sense that both in the past and in the future he has been without flaw.

Abraham was not without flaw.

It is therefore better to render this word blameless.

I accept the sense of perfect into the future as the goal and hence we find in the last verse of Matthew chapter 5 the word perfect used.

And without a doubt, blameless is a very good term in this place.

Walk before me and be blameless.

And I will make a covenant between us and will multiply you exceeding it.

Now in the first covenant that was made, without a date, no date is given there, we are merely told that God makes a promise.

And Abraham, of course, might have been expected to exercise a measure of faith till a promise was performed.

But now this one differs somewhat.

It is fundamental in one point that it is dated.

The implication is that if it is dated it therefore has some special meaning in terms of other events related to it.

Hence the book of Galatians much later will tell you that the covenant at Sinai was made 430 years after this covenant had been made.

430 years after a covenant that has no date would never tell you either date.

The covenant referred to in the book of Galatians is the covenant mentioned in Genesis 17, not the one briefly alluded to in 12, not the one in Genesis 15 either.

So here we have in the 17th chapter put together with Galatians the evidence that this covenant when Abraham was a son of 99 was 430 years before the covenant made at Sinai.

In fact the exact date was not the time the covenant at Sinai was made, the exact date was the departure of the children of Israel.

And so the covenant was essentially something like seven weeks later.

But 430 years after for sure.

Here we have an agreement.

God said I will make a covenant but Abraham is asked to do his part and he is asked to do it first in the discussion to walk before God to have contact with him.

You can't be walking in his presence unless you have some agreement with him.

And to conduct yourself in a blameless manner.

And God said if you do that I will make my covenant between me and you and multiply you exceedingly.

So now God makes it quite clear Abraham must have more than faith.

He must also have works.

He has to conduct himself in a manner that is without flaw.

Now Abraham wasn't perfect.

And when he sinned he must be forgiven.

He had to therefore pray as Jesus said forgive us as we forgive our transgressors.

So Abraham fell on his face which was an act of worship.

We don't do that in our western world but in the Middle East that is the way you do it.

And that's the way Abraham did.

It is interesting to what extent the customs that we know from ancient time in the Middle East still are to be found in the Islamic society.

And God talked with him thereafter saying as for me behold my covenant is with you and you shall be a father of many nations.

No longer shall your name be called Abram but you shall now be Abraham for I have made you a father of many nations.

And I will establish my covenant between you.

I'm skipping to verse 7.

You and your descendants after you in their generations for an everlasting covenant.

Here the word seed in the English word translated in this version is descendants without any question must be construed in the plural because of the usage of their generations for an everlasting covenant to be to you and to your descendent God to you and your descendants after you.

And I will give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger.

Now Paul interpreted it also interestingly because in another sense of the word we discovered that God purposely chose to use a singular word to convey two meanings here.

One that the gifts that were to go to Abraham could be passed on to his descendants in their respective generations.

What Abraham was to inherit as a promise could be inherited by succeeding generation but they were not to start to inherit it until the fourth generation in Egypt left.

But as Isaac should not and Jacob should not Joseph should not two more generations should not and Moses and Aaron would not know if you were they're not all the same lineage but they're the different generations.

Now in that case those were excluded from the actual inheritance God already having set up the term in the previous covenant of chapter 15 that the first 400 years were excluded.

But after that even though it was passed as a promise for each of these generations you remember Jacob blessed the children of Joseph Jacob blessed his own sons Isaac blessed Jacob Abraham blessed Isaac in each of these cases the blessing we will see was a part of what we might call the will or testament conveying what was now offered to Abraham in a covenant of promise.

Now this is not a covenant of law this is a covenant of promise because God just simply makes a promise that's why we properly call it a covenant involving a promise.

In this covenant of promise ultimately there would be people who would inherit in their generations but at the same time the singular word is used hence the word descendants here is not adequate.

We now normally limit the word seed to grain or something like that grass seeds offspring would be better why because like the Hebrew offspring are and offspring is depending on your use of the term that is it's a word that can have plural meaning our offspring are or our offspring meaning one is and that allows for God to bring up a very important point that as it turned out all of the offspring plural forfeited their right by sin because the right to all of this was dependent upon being blameless but all the offspring forfeited their right they had a chance and sometimes lived in it from the days of Joshua to the days of Zedekiah the king of Judah but each one died and in a sense forfeited his right to continue to live through through his own sin not to mention the fact that we all die because we are descendants of Adam anyway but there was one offspring of Abraham even later than that who in his generation inherited this promise because he was born of the line of Abraham and he was without sin the testimony has been recorded the father in heaven said of him you are my beloved son in whom I am well pleased something he could never say of any human being because he was without sin Jesus posed the question much later which one of you convicts me of sin and they kept their mouths shut because in reality they had not ever found him to go contrary to the written law of God and every time they accused him of Sabbath breaking he merely showed what the example of the Bible was and all he was breaking were their rules which they instituted in order to quote guard unquote the Sabbath that is to protect it from sin and they in fact had violated it in any case it is important to see here that now we have a covenant of promise in which various generations should inherit this wonderful blessing of a land of promise after 400 years should he last from that time till now they could have been there I'm going to cut the story right here and merely say it is interesting that the children of Israel from Joshua through Zedekiah and from let's say the rubble bell through the Herod's actually were on the land for a shorter period of time as a nation than the Arabs have been since and that's because of the sin of the descendants of Abraham who descended through Jacob God allowed a people who did not even enter into this covenant Abraham's children either through Esau or through Ishmael even the Canaanites, Smobites, Ammonites not to mention the Greeks and the Armenians and the Crusaders from Europe the Philistines and all the others he's allowed them to be on the land and then came the Turks the Turkmen finally the British came there and now the Israelis are back but he allowed these other people to be there for essentially 18 centuries whereas the children of Israel off and on were there not longer than 15 and a half centuries before that's quite a study in itself of the importance of that part which says walk before me and be blamed that is you can't have all the good things when you decide to do something else but in any case this is a covenant now the covenant is made how is Abraham going to convey it to Isaac well answer he does it by a will if the covenant is a promise of God God says to Abraham I want you to give this to Isaac I promised it to you and I want you to promise it to him I'm not asking you to give it to Ishmael I'll take care of him separately so Isaac inherited it by a will or testament the promises of the covenant how did Isaac convey it to Jacob well you remember the story Isaac's dear wife overheard Isaac telling he saw I want to convey the blessings to you that God has promised to Abraham and to me and you know how Jacob stole that that is he entered into an agreement with

his father posing as he saw he was a cheater he had as much honor in that day as the American societies as a whole have conveyed in Central America where we made our banana republics to serve our own selfish interests Isaac conveyed it to Jacob by a will Jacob conveyed it to his 12 sons it did not go through we saw and in the 12 sons something was divided the royal line was to go through Judah the birthright was to go through Ruben Ruben made some very serious mistakes so great in Jacob's eyes that he removed it from that firstborn and gave it to the firstborn not the secondborn but the firstborn of another wife who was Joseph and indeed Joseph children have done with it what few nations would have even if we've made banana republics elsewhere we have had our conscience problems and we've tried to undo these things the British have had their conscience problems and they have done things for India beyond even what India has done for Britain but that's getting far down the line that is what was promised in a covenant was conveyed in each successive generation by a testament then there came Sinai God wanted to address the question of a new generation that really didn't know very much about him they had spent more time stamping mud and introducing straw into it than they had reading the word of God which in a sense wasn't written yet so God said now I want to explain to you why Abraham was blameless we'll call this explanation the law the law is what defines whether you're blameless or not I mean that's about as simple an explanation as I can give God said Abraham I want you to be blameless I'm going to give you all this God says to the children of Israel at Sinai I want you to be blameless here is how to be and then he explains the Ten Commandments then he explains because the people didn't want to hear him directly explains the subsidiary portions of the law we might say the Ten Commandments represent the overall policy if we want to use a modern term the overall policy the basic principles that shall govern the relationship of the people to God expounding them or the stipulations which clarify that overall policy are those found in Exodus 21 through 23 and now a covenant is entered into and in 24 and 25 we have the following story Moses came down all the words of the law which were written he had brought that God had told him and he read it to the people he asked the people in 24:3 you like what you hear after I read it to you all the words which the Lord has said we will do so they all vocalized either individually or through their leaders that they were in agreement and Moses wrote all of these words of the Lord and he rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain 12 pillars or stones according to the 12 tribes so we sent young men who offered burnt offerings sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord and Moses took now in this case what you have here is the offering like in Genesis 15 in those days they didn't have the stamp of approval so much as they presented something they presented an offering something they would give as a token of appreciation of the fact that a covenant was being arranged but they still divided matters and so Moses took half the blood and put it in basins and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar the altar represents God and the other half of the blood in the basin he took for another purpose he took the book of the covenant and read in the hearing of the people and said all the little and they said all of the Lord has said will we do and be obedient this was in the final ceremonial conclusion so Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people so him you know whether he probably did this like Jesus baptized that is he started it and then those who were themselves sprinkled with the blood took the basins and went through the children of Israel and they all had a little bit of blood sprinkled from the animals on their garments and it says here Moses took the blood and said behold the blood of the covenant very which the Lord has made with you according to all these words that if you've agreed he's told you his part and we all know that the practice in our day says Moses is that we should cut the covenant which is symbolized here by blood and the blood was therefore cut or divided one covered the altar that represented God the other covered the people so indeed the covenant now was ratified today we often think of death not necessarily the shedding of the blood but death as fulfilling I should say as instituting a testament or a will but in the Old Testament times even a covenant was dealt with in this manner that a covenant required the shedding of blood that is

a sacrifice in Genesis 15 the blood was incidentally animals were divided here the blood is critically important for symbolic reasons and the blood is divided between the two parties God and the nation now this covenant's purpose was not to replace the covenant made earlier with Abraham it is rather to confirm to a nation the promises that had been made by way of the law that is if the people could keep the law you see and be blameless by doing the law in their own strength without the promise of the Holy Spirit then they could inherit the land like Abraham's descendants were promised and so the covenant made at Sinai God didn't say I'm going to make an old covenant with you he said I'm going to make a covenant this covenant was to confirm but it turned out not to confirm it it turned out to condemn them all and so we read in Galatians chapter 3 that the law which came to expound right and wrong which should have if the people had been perfect like Jesus Christ should have made inheritance by the law possible but it turned out that merely reading the law was not enough that in the end the law served one basic purpose and that is to reinforce the fact that the people were not blameless but were full of sin and hence unmeriting the promise they in fact had proven in each generation that they didn't merit him but God in his mercy introduced the law so that they could continue to live in the land as long as they were repentant of their sins and felt sorry that they had done it but the works of the law gave them no power to overcome sin I think that's reasonably simple if that's not clear to you I think there's a problem but brethren I think that we can understand this in a way the world doesn't have the faintest picture they have at all mixed up and especially do the traditional fundamentalist Protestants you will find much of this even clearer in the liberal theologians because they at least understand what a covenant is they at least understand what law is and the works of the law so the covenant at Sinai was made to clarify the covenant of promise each generation in a sense if it inherited land as in the days of Joshua passed on his part of God's blessing to Abraham to Isaac to Jacob and to the 12 sons he passed it on to his descendants each one inherited a part of that blessing by a will or a testament and to know whether indeed this was going to remain in the nation God had made this covenant so that they could live up to the kind of standard that God had expected of Abraham and not a one of them did as it says if these things could have been inherited by law there would have been no need for a promise but in the end we know it had to come by promise which means by faith because God started it all by promise when he promised it to Abraham and he didn't promise it to Abraham by giving him a law and telling him to see if he could live up to him he expected Abraham to exercise faith and to perceive that what he needed was contact with the Almighty to walk before him and be perfect and to worship him to be truly repentant not merely sorry for but not willing to change sorry for and willing to change is what the difference was between Abraham and as a whole the nation of Israel many generations later the house of Israel forfeited alright each generation had passed on the promise to the next and finally God decided they can pass it on but they can pass it on among the Gentiles and wait for the second resurrection Judah remained until Zedekiah and they were sent into exile but enough of them repented in exile interestingly enough of them had been in a repentant state that whereas none of the children of Israel ever came back if they remained a part of the house of Israel in the north yet a significant number of the house of Judah came back and even some who couldn't come back have remained faithful because for instance the Jews we met in Bukhara in Central Asia who speak Hebrew they were there since the days of Nebuchadnezzar the Jews in the Republic of Georgia have been there since the days of Sennacherib 130 years before nearly 120 might be better they didn't even know of the Talmud developed in Mesopotamia they have been there and still keeping what they knew of the written law long before the Talmud this is a remarkable thing now of course they've heard about the Talmud among their brethren but anciently they did not even have that but they have kept it in a way the children of Israel didn't when the children of Israel turn up in Northwestern Europe you know they're going around the maypole they're celebrating Halloween under another name they're doing all the marvelous things that their Gentile neighbors had always enjoyed because

they had forgotten you see Ruth and Esther then there came a son of Abraham who was without sin he is Jesus Christ he had a right to inherit the promises forever he didn't have to die he was not under the penalty of sin but he was born for this purpose to be under the penalty of sin which sins were ours and so he offered himself and died in our step but before he did he proposed to fulfill the beginning of Jeremiah 31 31 where God promises that is the God who promised was the one who came as Jesus Christ the one who spoke at Sinai the one who was speaking all the way through to the patriarchs he was going to make a new covenant that's a very clear term a new covenant or to use the old English a New Testament to replace not the one God promised sorry not the one which we call the covenant of promise but the covenant at Sinai the Sinai did not adequately prepare the children of Israel to inherit these things as Abraham was prepared because he did it by faith the children of Israel did it by works Abraham did it by faith and works the children of Israel had works without faith they really didn't trust God they were relying on their own strength that's what works all all the works of the law and involve so Jesus came to explain what this new covenant is to be and it is expounded in Matthew 5 in its summary verse the last one walk before me and be perfect and further clarified in Matthew 6 and 7 that is the outline verbalized 19th centuries and more ago by Jesus Christ then he said you can inherit all of these things if you become my disciples he said it is not enough he said it through John and he said it through himself it's not enough that you're born of Abraham you're going to have to be born again you see at first these things were to come through Abraham's descendants but now he said you're going to have to be born again whether your Abraham descendants are not and since it isn't enough to be born of Abraham that is how the Gentiles have their right to it so all who may be born again in the true biblical sense of the word which is not of course what I'm addressing here but all who so ever may in the future which means all who lived in the past and weren't will have such an opportunity each in his turn a few now many in the millennium and a significant host after that Jesus proposed in making the terms of the new covenant knowing in making them knowing he proposed that if we are his disciples that is if we serve him like Abraham was willing to serve him we can also inherit it and so we we we turn now to the book of Hebrews in chapter 8 we are introduced to the covenant for if the first covenant verse 7 had been faultless then no place would have been sought for a second but finding faults as this translation with them he says behold the days are coming that I'll make a new covenant now this was clearly a covenant this was not a will but it will be unlike the previous one where they had the law on tables of stone and in a book this one God will arrange in which the law will be written in their hearts and minds therefore through the Holy Spirit as it was in Abraham because Abraham by faith perceived this though it isn't all so stated they will actually know God in a way that the children of Israel then didn't although today a lot of people say they do and don't to know God is very simple and anybody who says I know God says John is a liar if he doesn't keep his commandments because knowing God means you must keep his commandments if you don't you don't walk in his presence spiritually and he doesn't know you and therefore you've never contacted him now in that he said a new covenant verse 13 he made the first obsolete prophetically and now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away the new however is not yet fulfilled in its final structure which will take place at the wedding of Christ in the church and an arrangement with the children of Israel and of all nations indirectly through them chapter 9 for even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and an earthly sanctuary so the first covenant had these and so the new covenant relationship will involve our relationship to heaven because the first covenant had a tabernacle which was a symbol of heaven so our relationship also has in a sense a tabernacle which is heaven itself there the high priest function within and certain priests and now Jesus Christ does that's a separate subject I just want to finish the thought here in the rest of the chapter number nine Christ is a high priest of things to come verse 11 you see the real fulfillment of the second covenant is yet to take place in all of its benefits we do know that in the meantime however he has been a mediator

verse 15 of the new covenant by means of death now he mediated the new covenant like Moses mediated the covenant at Sinai which is now called the old and he did it by means of death in order to redeem all the transgressions that were under the first covenant not to mention redeeming all the gentiles who have been under sin without the law that those which are called now a few more later may receive the promise that God made to Abraham of eternal inheritance that promise was eternal not temporary you see even Abraham hasn't yet received it because the resurrection hasn't occurred God had not chosen to give it before the first resurrection now where there is listen carefully same Greek word now where there is a testament here the word is correct where there is a will there must also of necessity be the death of the testator the man who made the will the a faking is the root for testament here for a testament this is not a covenant is in force after men are dead since it has no power at all while the testator lives but the covenant at Sinai had authority because it wasn't a testament or will and it had authority when men were living who made it but Christ not only mediated the terms of the new covenant yet to be finished but he also died in order to put in motion his will his will involves his giving of everything that he inherited from Abraham and promised to Abraham to his disciples he said if you you see our my disciple this is what the whole issue is if you're my disciples you can inherit everything that Abraham promised me through succeeding generations which actually I originally had promised him that's what it amounts to the New Testament that we call the books the Greek books of the Bible Matthew through Revelation convey Christ's intent which is summarized one place that who so ever will may in other words whereas originally the covenant excluded anyone who didn't descend from Abraham now in the end who so ever will may that is a part of Christ's testament or will that what he inherited from Abraham can now be shared by all people some misunderstood Mr.

I said that now who so ever will can inherit it I didn't say that I said the terms and condition involved who so ever will but each in it is or her time but no one people is excluded because the racial descent that is the point I make Christ now opened it to everyone John the Baptist pointed out the same thing and so here we discovered that when Christ said if you will be my disciples and follow me I will give you this and that and the rest that in a sense represents Christ's testament or will and it is going to be confirmed by the covenant that we call the new covenant and so very clearly we see for a testament is in force after men are dead since it has no power at all while the testator live that's true Christ died the testament is in force and whoever repents those whom God is calling now are the ones who do whether they descend from Abraham or not may inherit the promise therefore not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood so now we see here the word covenant correctly used in the R. A. V. to point out that just as the first covenant did not come in force without blood so the final enactment of the second did not will not come into enactment without someone's blood having been shed which of course has already taken place but the new covenant is yet to be finalized but Christ in this life conveyed what had been part of the covenant had promised conveyed to him through each previous generation of the house of Judah and David he now has conveyed all of that to us and to our descendants who repent and walk before God and become blame