

# Growing in the Grace of God #21 - a Covenant of Better Promises Part 1

by Bob Hoekstra

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*The sermon explores the covenant of better promises and the superiority of the new covenant over the old covenant, highlighting the eternal priesthood, better sacrifices, and greater access to God.*

**Duration:** 57:08

**Scripture:** Hebrews 8:7

**Topics:** "Covenant Theology", "Christ's Fulfillment"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the theme of promises in Galatians 3:16-22. He emphasizes that the promises were primarily made to Christ, highlighting the importance of Christ in the fulfillment of these promises. The speaker also explores the concept of the law and its role in the old covenant, explaining that the law calls us to keep God's standards and live a holy life. However, he emphasizes that the old covenant is based on the condition of 'if' - if we can do the law, then we can truly live. The sermon concludes by highlighting the difference between the holy place and the holy of Holies, emphasizing the need for the shed blood of Christ to cover the perfect holy law of God.

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## Transcript

Every time we consider you, there are just countless reasons to give you thanks and praise. You're so good to us, Lord. It seems like the master understatement of all of the universe is, oh, give thanks to the Lord for He is good, for His loving-kindness is everlasting.

And we're learning year by year that there's much more in that simple statement than we've ever grasped. And we do give you thanks, we praise you, we come now with hunger and eagerness, and with thanksgiving we anticipate you feeding your sheep, leading your flock, building up your church, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Study number 11 of 12, A Covenant of Better Promises. By way of introduction, Hebrews chapter 8, A Covenant of Better Promises. Hebrews chapter 8, verses 7 and 8. Notice two covenants are going to be in view.

For if that first covenant, that would be the law of Moses, had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with them, He says, that is, God says, seeing that,

knowing there's something lacking in that original, that first covenant, He says, Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, and I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. And of course, this is a quote from a passage and other similar passages we've looked at.

The promise of the new covenant by God to Israel, given to Jeremiah and others. Before we go any further, is anyone else a little cool besides me? Why don't we cut it for a while, maybe the Lord will steam us up and we'll crank it back on. Well, we suspected that of you.

We appreciate your confession, public confession. We'll see if you can stay cool with that all. So, two covenants.

The first covenant, the law, the law of Moses. The second covenant, the grace of God in Jesus Christ that we've been looking at for ten previous weeks. The new covenant, that is going to be the setting of our study tonight.

Again, a different kind of contrast between the old and new covenants. Hebrews 8.6, but now he, Jesus, has obtained a more excellent ministry inasmuch as he is also mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. And add to that chapter 7 verse 22, by so much more, Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.

These two covenants, law and grace, old and new covenant, one is better than the other one. There's some good things in each. We've looked at that.

We've seen that in the law there are some important things. It just does not provide what man needs. It shows us what man ought to be because it shows us what God is like, but it does not provide any resource to move in that direction.

But the better covenant we've been looking at a lot. The new covenant, the covenant of grace, has better promises and it's just an all-around better covenant. Now we're going to concentrate in this study on the better promises.

It is a covenant of better promises, but just to build the context more and to see that better promises is not the only better aspect of the new covenant, let's just take a few selections out of Hebrews and look at the better aspects of the new covenant. Not just the better promises, but the better aspects in general. Like Hebrews chapter 7 verses 1 through 3, For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated, that is his name Melchizedek, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, meaning king of peace, without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.

Verse 11, Therefore if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood, for under it the people received the law, what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? And once more verse 25, Therefore he, Jesus, is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. One of the better aspects of the new covenant is the priesthood, in particular the high priesthood. The Melchizedek priesthood is eternal.

The Levitical priesthood, Aaronic, after the order of Aaron and then the Levites, it's temporal. It has to be passed on, one priest to another, to another, to another, because these priests come and go. They're born

and they die.

But that's the old covenant. The priesthood is temporal, passed on man to man. The new covenant high priesthood is like Melchizedek.

Remember, there is no record of beginning or ending of days. Some would think he was a Christophany, you know, an appearance of Christ before he was incarnate in the virgin birth. Others that he's just a classic type of Christ, because the records of his beginning and end were not there.

Either way, the point is powerfully clear. We're talking about the difference between a temporal, temporary priesthood, and one that lasts forever, because the priest is God the Son, an eternal priesthood. But no comparison there as far as how much better that is.

And then another one, another better aspect of the new covenant, Hebrews 9, 12. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood he entered the most holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. With that same thought in mind, contrast between the kind of blood in the two covenants, chapter 7, verse 27.

Speaking of Christ, who does not need daily as those high priests to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people's. For this he did once for all when he offered up himself. And then chapter 10, verse 11.

And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices which can never take away sins. What a contrast when you come to the blood and the sacrifices of the two covenants. It's a contrast between the blood of Christ instead of the blood of animals.

It's a contrast between a once for all sacrifice and daily repeated sacrifices. The once for all sacrifice that takes away sin, the other that cannot remove sin, can never take away sin. What a better covenant when it comes to the sacrifices and the blood of the covenant.

The blood of the old covenant of animals. The sacrifice done again and again and again and it cannot take away sins. The blood of the new covenant, the blood of Christ, not an animal, the precious son of God.

And his sacrifice one time for all. Covers for everyone forever. The sacrifice that all the sacrifices of the old were foreshadowing and picturing and giving a shadowy image of.

And that sacrifice does wash away sins. Not just cover them year by year, but eliminate them. Wash them away.

What a contrast between the old and new covenant. The old covenant preparatory for the new. We'll see that in a little while.

We'll read a very specific verse on that. But oh, that which it was pointing to, the new, so much greater than the old. Again, the better aspect of the new covenant seen in the blood and the sacrifice and the consequences.

Here's another one, another better aspect, and it has to do with the holy place and the holy of holies. You know, the holy place just outside the veil. The holy of holies within the veil.

Not much difference geographically speaking, but immeasurable difference, really, spiritually speaking. Hebrews 9. Hebrews 9, 1 through 3. Then indeed, even the first covenant, the law, had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary. For a tabernacle was prepared, the first part in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary, that is the holy place.

And behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the holiest of all, the holy of holies, verse 7. But into the second part, the holy of holies, the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance. Then chapter 10, verse 19, on the same theme. Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus.

What a contrast. In the old covenant, one person went into the intimate place of the presence of God one day a year. One person, one day a year.

Pretty tight restrictions. We're not talking heaven's open house, really. Serious restriction.

Oh, but what a lesson there. Man just doesn't walk up as we would say, slap God on the back and say, hello buddy. We're not talking about the man upstairs.

We're talking about a God who dwells in light, unapproachable. Major lessons in the old covenant on this, that sin separates man from God and sin involves death and life is in the blood and blood must be shed, a like sacrifice for the consequence of the crime of sin. And there's the difference between the holy place and the holy of holies coming into view here.

The old covenant, one person, one day a year into the very intimate presence of God, where his Shekinah glory was glowing over the mercy seat. What a great picture that is, even itself. There in that arc of the covenant, the perfect holy law of God.

How would you like to meet there with God? Commune with Him on the basis of a message that says, be holy for I am holy. Be as perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect. Be as loving as Christ.

How would you like to meet God there and have some fellowship? That's not. He said, meet me at the mercy seat and there I'll commune with you. Covering that perfect holy law is the mercy seat with the shed blood.

I'll talk to you there. I'll meet you there. There I have nothing against you.

There you're not alienated. There we can commune together. What a picture.

See, the priests would go into the holy place day by day. It was for priests, but it was lacking intimacy. Oh, even the dread and the longing.

Oh, the other side of that veil. Can't get there, can I? But one will go there once, one day a year for me. That was the best.

Oh, serving God, yes. The holy place was a busy place of service. The showbread, the candles, the incense.

Busy place. And it was for God, but it did not involve intimacy with God. And just the other side of that veil.

The holy of holies. Oh, what was in there. Light, the very light of God's presence.

Mercy. Not serving God on one side of the veil. Apprehensive that if you ever had to face Him, you'd be smitten dead.

But you couldn't face Him, really. But inside that holy of holies, mercy through the shed blood. Mercy covering the holy demands of the law.

If you could just dwell there. Intimacy in the holy of holies. And now we in the new covenant, not just one of us one day a year, not just a bunch of us one day a year, not just half of us every other day.

But any and all of us can boldly enter in and live there. And we can be intimately aware of His presence by faith, not by sight, though He does things that we see His hand at work at times. But by faith, we can dwell in the intimacy of His presence.

What a better covenant. Just looking at access to the holy place, then contrasted, superseded by access into the very holy of holies. We can now live behind that veil.

That's what we're called to live in fellowship every day. And come in there boldly. I don't ever remember any place I ever was growing up that I couldn't just go in and see my dad.

And he was in some pretty scary places for a little kid, even for a young guy, even for a teenager. Sometimes early on pastoring and then conducting crusades across the country. When we were in elementary school and thousands of people and big meetings that looked to me like real important, you know.

But always able just to walk up, you know. Hey, Dad, I need this. Hey, Dad, I need that.

Dad, can I talk to you a minute? Well, we can do that with our Heavenly Father. Go right into the very presence of God. Every day, anytime, nothing preventing us except our own doubt or unwillingness or fleshy rebellion or whatever else.

But the door is wide open, you know. The veil has been torn. And strategically from which direction? From the top to the bottom.

This wasn't a work of man. This was a work of God. What a better covenant.

And then Hebrews 10. Here's a beautiful one. I love this one.

Hebrews 10, verse 1. Look at this contrast. It shows us what a better covenant we have in the grace of Jesus Christ. For the law having a shadow of the good things to come and not the very image of the things can never with these same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year make those who approach perfect.

The law, it had a shadow of the good things to come and not the very image of the things. The law, shadow of the good things to come. The good things to come, the very substance, the very image, the very reality.

The law had great messages, some in precept, some in sort of a demonstrated action story by God in the high holy days and the temple itself and the sacrifices and the priesthood and all that. Great message of

God there mainly about His holiness and man's sinfulness and the need for sacrifice and the shedding of blood. But the thing is, it was all just shadows.

It wasn't real substance there. You had to see what the shadows were all about. This image that cast the shadow and then put your faith there.

Not, you know, even David said, Lord, I see you weren't after sacrifices and the animal's blood. That's not what you, you're looking at how all that impacts the heart. You wanted a broken heart, a contrite spirit.

He wanted faith and humility and confession of need and trusting in God to provide the ultimate provision behind all those shadows. What was casting that shadow back into the Old Testament? The Lord Jesus Christ. You can look at the temple, you can look at the priesthood, you can look at the sacrifices.

It doesn't matter what you look at. It's all about Him. Just different parts of the outline of His shadow.

It was all about Him. He was casting the shadow, light shining out of heaven across the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ into ages past, a shadow of the good things to come. But they were just shadows.

But there is something that causes a shadow, light and a reality of something. Light shining against the reality. Many, many Christians are trying to live up to a shadow, trying to be Christ-like.

They look at the shadow, you know, the do's, the don'ts, what to say, what not to say, and they're trying to fill the shadow. It won't work. We're not to relate to a shadow.

The shadow is to point us to the person himself. What if I went home and my wife is in the front yard and they're in the driveway where I park. She couldn't see me and I walk around and the sun is shining and my shadow precedes me.

What if I walk around there and she falls on the ground hugging and kissing my shadow? Oh, long awaited, you know. How frustrating for her and for me, unfulfilling to both. How many Christians in their Christian life are really trying to hug a shadow? They're into the do's and the don'ts, trying to perform better.

They're devoted to getting it down, trying harder. That's what the shadow was all about, showing us a perfect outline of perfection, God himself, God the Son ultimately, who himself is holy and who himself would become the sacrifice to deal with our unholiness. The Lord wants us to get into the image himself.

You know a great verse on this, or two verses, Colossians 2, 16 and 17. Colossians 2, 16 and 17. So let no one judge you in food or drink or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

How many Christians measuring themselves and each other by how they stack up to the law, do this and don't do that? They're just a shadow of things to come. The substance that cast all that shadow, the substance is Christ. See the old covenant pointed to this glorious Redeemer.

The new covenant delivers him right into our very hearts and lives. This radical difference. What a better covenant we have.

Again, you want to say with those who want to live under the law, Galatians 4, 21, tell me you who want to live under the law, do you not hear what the law is saying? It's saying be perfect and I'll show you how

perfect. Here's the perfect outline as it were of the reality of God's holiness and man's sinfulness, you know. You want to live by that? Just a perfect outline of God's perfection and our imperfection? Or do you want to live by the presence and the relationship that can be developed with that one right inside our hearts? I mean, how do you even measure how much better the new covenant is? But where we're going to dwell the rest of the evening is on one aspect of the betterness of the new covenant.

Let's go back to chapter 8, verse 6, Hebrews 8, verse 6. But now he, Jesus, has obtained a more excellent ministry inasmuch as he is also mediator of a better covenant which is established on better promises. And we'll concentrate here the rest of the study time. The fact that the new covenant is a covenant of better promises.

Sure, the old covenant had its promises, and that'll be our next heading in a moment, the old covenant promises. But then we'll flip over and see the astounding difference between those promises and the new covenant promises. And then, probably be about break time then maybe, we'll spend a great chunk of our time on our last heading, exceedingly great and precious promises.

To take a phrase right out of 2 Peter chapter 1. All right, a covenant of better promises. Let's go again to one of our all-time favorite books here, Leviticus. Probably ranked right down the bottom of the church's hit parade.

And yet some glorious things here. But one thing you can see in Leviticus is the kind of promises that were contained in the old covenant, in the law of Moses. There were promises there, sure.

But notice the character of them, how they're put together. Leviticus 18, 5. You shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them, I am the Lord. The law calls us to keep or obey the standards of God and His judgments and His ways, which commandments and statutes and judgments, if a man can do them, he can live by them.

See, if a man can live by God, he's really living. Why? Because they're about holiness instead of sinfulness. They're life that reflects the character of God.

If you can do them, hey, you're living. You're really living if you can do them. If you can do them.

Enormous word, that little if. But that's the way the old covenant promises are put. If you can do, then you'll live.

If you can do this, you'll find it's life. Do this and live. Deuteronomy 4, verse 1. Deuteronomy, second giving of the law as they're going into the promised land.

Deuteronomy 4, 1. Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments, which I teach you to observe that you may live and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers is giving you. Again, pay attention to the statutes. Do them that you may live.

Do this and live. The law commands. Deuteronomy 28, verse 1. Deuteronomy 28, verse 1. Now it shall come to pass if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God to observe carefully all his commandments, which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth.

If you diligently obey, then the Lord will do this. Do this and live. When we were in Dallas, Texas, most of the 14 years, the Lord had us broadcasting there on radio.

And in fact, that's where the name Living in Christ Ministries came from. It was the name of our radio broadcast that became the name of the tape ministry that eventually became the ministry that I'm fully involved in now. We're sitting around one day asking the Lord to give us a ministry name that just caught some of the essence and heart of the Christian life and being in Christ.

And two or three guys that were working with us on the radio program and one of the music ministries, just a bunch of us, one or two of the elders, were just talking and praying that night. And I can remember Charles Anderson. I remember the brother still in touch with him in Dallas.

And he said, hey, how about living in Christ? And it's just like, ding, all discussion is over. I mean, that is it. That's what we're looking for, living in Christ.

And our radio theme for the broadcast was one I really love. In fact, someone from the Last Grace class tracked this down and got me a copy of it. Can't find it anymore.

It came out of a musical that John Fisher wrote. He was the music director at the Peninsula Bible Church in Palo Alto, where Ray Steadman was the pastor for 30-some years. And in ways only God could work and ordain, Ray had become a real important person in our lives and a real friend and was the first one in the church anywhere, in person or in writing, that ever taught us about the New Covenant, myself and 11 other pastors that were at his church for that 16-day kind of intensive internship.

When we heard this musical that this John Fisher had written called The New Covenant, I just fell in love with it. And there's a kind of a chorus that comes up again and again through the whole thing. And it goes like this beautiful kind of a lilting melody.

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And it goes like this beautiful kind of a lilting melody. A gal from the church there sang. Do this and live the law commands, but gives us neither feet nor hands.

A better way His grace does bring, it bids us fly and gives us wings. That's a powerful, simple little way to compare and contrast the two. Do this and live the law commands.

Wonderful, but where are the hands? Where are the feet? Where is the holiness? Who can do that? These commands are perfect. Yeah, there's a better covenant. It doesn't say do this and live and give us no help.

It bids us fly and says hear wings, the wings of the Holy Spirit, the life of Christ in us to lift us into heavenly places. Old Covenant promises do this and live, but that's the trouble. Men can't do it.

There's only one who ever measured up to the law of God in every way. Only one. And who's that? The Lord Jesus Christ.

But again, to get back to last week and New Covenant obedience, that one who never disobeyed, always measured up, He lives in us. Boy, it's almost like Christ in you would be a hope of glory. Almost.

If we'd only believe, right? That's right. And oh, He's willing to work on us, in us, with us, developing our faith. We'll talk about that a little later on.

Okay, the Old Covenant promise, do this and live, but there's the rub, we can't do it. So trying we die and we try till we kill ourselves. I'm going to do this if it kills me, it will.

Christianity by the letter of the law, don't even need the gift of prophecy or the gift of the word of knowledge. This will kill you. It only took me two years as a pastor, trying to do it by the letter of the law, I was, as they say, deader than a doornail.

Discouraged, frustrated, worn out, despairing, all my great dreams in a shambles, I was going to build God a great church. There's only one church builder and he made it very clear when he said, I will build my church. The amazing thing is he wants to use us, but he's not up there wringing his hands, wondering if we'll do it for him, you know.

Boy, I need a church, will they build me one? No, he's the only one who can ever be the builder of the church. Oh, how many people trying to live the Christian life on Old Covenant promises, do this and live. Trying their hardest, do this and live, and they're dying.

How many pastors are functioning that way? I talk to a lot of pastors every month. The Lord sends me out to hang out with pastors, and I'm on the phone with pastors, and now I'm emailing pastors. And I tell you, there are a lot of them wearing themselves out, trying their hardest to do this and live.

Can't be done. Can't be done. The Lord has told us in his word it can't be done, and most of us eventually believe it.

After we try hard enough and long enough to be the only exception. You know, pushing that car, do this and live, shoving that Christian car. Either not aware there's an engine, or never relying on it.

Old Covenant promises, but look at this, New Covenant promises. Watch the change in tone in these promises. Oh, I love this.

Jeremiah 31, New Covenant promises. Jeremiah 31, verse 31-34, Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt.

My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days. By the way, just so we don't even for a moment think this is only talking about Israel.

We've already gone through much of Hebrews and elsewhere, like Hebrews 10, 19 and 20. It says that covenant, New Covenant, is inaugurated for us now, the church. Look at this, here's the covenant, verse 33.

I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, all in his kingdom. From the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity and their sin.

I will remember no more. You see all the promises in there? Who's making them? God. I will, I will, I will, I will, they shall.

I mean, this is God doing the promising now. It's not man, if you can do this, you'll live. It's God making some promises that he's going to keep, so man can live.

How many, I will, I will put my law in their minds, I will write it on their hearts, I will be their God, they shall be my people. They shall know me, I will forgive them, I will remember their sin no more. This is God doing the promising.

A little bit different. The difference between man's promises and God's, by the way, too, a major difference. We'll talk about that in a few minutes again.

Galatians 3, New Covenant promises, Galatians 3, well, we didn't read Ezekiel, did we? I'm sorry, we should do that. Ezekiel 36, 25. Ezekiel 36, 25.

God speaking again. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you and you shall be clean. I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.

I will give you a new heart and I will put a new spirit within you. I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh, a soft heart. I will put my spirit within you.

I will cause you to walk in my statutes. In result of that, and you will keep my judgments and do them. Not do this and live, but I'll do this so you can live.

What a difference. Major difference. Galatians 3, Galatians 3, 16 through 22, hits this theme of promises again and again and again and again in just that tight little part of a paragraph.

Relentlessly driving home this issue of promises, promises, and relating it to us. Galatians 3, 16. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made.

He does not say unto seeds as of many, but as of one as unto your seed who is Christ. So the promises were primarily to Christ. Of course, we're now in Christ, so we're the recipients of those promises.

But notice, to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. Verse 17, and this I say that the law which was 430 years later, after the promises to Abraham, which are the roots of the new covenant of grace, 430 years later comes the law. The law which was 430 years later cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ.

The law does not displace the promises to Abraham, to end the verse, that it should make the promise of no effect. The promises to Abraham clearly here in Galatians 3 are not superseded by the law. It's not God

gave promises and that wasn't working well, you know, so let's crack down with some law, you know.

That's not it. Now on the other hand, God didn't look at the law then and go, oh boy, didn't put enough in that, you know. Better get some grace back in there.

I mean, that's the way man would do it, you know, kind of fumbling through trying to find something that works. All of this was eternally foreordained of God with his purposes in mind to provide in Christ Jesus all that we would ever need for time and eternity, and to lead man into that by what man needed to learn it. But he started out with promises to Abraham.

Verse 18, For if the inheritance is of the law, if we get from God the things he wants his children to have by law and performance, it is no longer of promise. But God gave it to Abraham by promise. What God has for you and me through time and eternity, it's by promise.

God's promise. Verse 19, What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions. Why was the law added? Because of the sinfulness of man needing a forthright statement, Romans 3 says, through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

And the law then clearly describes sin and Romans 5 and 7 also say that the law provoked sin. It stirred the rebellion of man's heart out in the open. We've all gone through it personally.

Someone lays down the law and inside we quietly say, well, we'll just see about that. We'll just see about that. And with God doing it, we do see about that.

He's right, we're wrong. And that rebellion is sin. But the law describes sin and flushes it out in the open.

That's why the law was added. Verse 21, Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not. It isn't that the law is against the promises.

The law helps coax, tutor, point, herd man toward the promises. That's our only hope. It's not that the law is against the promises, certainly not.

For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. These aren't contrary to one another, one aids in the fulfillment of the other. Verse 22, look at this, But the scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

The promises to Abraham, they are at the root of the new covenant. Those are gracious promises. Get out of there, go here, I'll make of you, I'll do this for you, I'll provide, I'll guard, I'll guide, I'll meet your needs, and through you all the families, all the nations of the earth will be blessed.

In fact, Romans 9, 10, 11, there where the Gentiles get grafted into the tree, the olive tree, the root of that tree, as it were, are the promises of God to Abraham. We get grafted into that. Some people have asked, how can you be applying these new covenant promises to Gentiles and to the church? In fact, I've got a standing dinner invitation from someone, they want to talk just about that.

They don't go here, they've gone through one of the home classes on video and went through a seminary, well he went through a seminary, a similar one like I did, and taught him you can't mix those two. Well I agree totally, there's a major distinction in the scripture between Israel and the church, I agree totally with that. In fact, we'll be under those who blur that distinction, it messes up God's plan and the whole

prophetic unfolding message of the scriptures for the last days and all that.

God's not through with Israel, Romans 9, 10, 11 makes that very clear, and he promised them the land, they're going to be in that land. Not as agnostic, atheistic, humanist like they are now, mostly, there's a little remnant there looking for Messiah. Boy, they're going to be surprised when he comes and they think it's visit number one, and it's visit number two.

But, they'll see him whom they've pierced, and it says there at the end of the tribulation, Zechariah, kind of match it up, they will respond to him whom they have pierced, and then all Israel will be saved. At that time, every Jew left that hasn't been kind of judged in the tribulation and perished will turn to the Messiah. But we're not getting into all the eschatology of it, just the new covenant aspect of it.

How can we apply any of that to Gentiles in the church? Because we're grafted into those promises, I mean Romans 9, 10, 11 make it very obvious. We're grafted into those promises, and though the land isn't promised to the Gentiles, basically we're still going to be there and enjoy the land. You're going to enjoy Israel in the millennium, I sure am.

I've never visited in a glorified body. I enjoyed it in this kind of fallen apart tent, but it's going to be great to trek through it, you know, glorified body and be part of God's millennial administration as we serve the King of Kings, as his people, that would be great. But here's the thing, the scriptures make it very clear, those basic promises of a kind of life and a kind of relationship, we're grafted into those.

If anyone doubts the new covenant is for the church today, this cup is the new covenant in my blood. Oh yeah, I have taken that about a thousand times, that's a pretty good reminder. 2 Corinthians 3, 6, God has made us servants of the new covenant, we, the church, servants of the new covenant, okay, I guess we're new covenant servants, that's, you know.

The major emphasis of over half of the book of Hebrews quotes the new covenant, applies it to the church, and Galatians contrasts the old covenant, new covenant, promises of God and works of the flesh, and puts us in the new covenant. I mean, it's overwhelmingly clear that this new covenant is where we live and how we live now. And Galatians 3, 16-22 just drives it home, the root of the new covenant are the promises to Abraham.

The law doesn't set that aside, we get what God has for us, not by performing under the law, but by believing the promises of God. Faith in Jesus Christ receives the promises of God. Let's look at one more, we've just alluded to it, it's in Galatians 4, contrast between Ishmael and Isaac, between the flesh and the promises of God.

Promises of God versus man's ingenuity, a lot of contrasts here. Galatians 4, 21, tell me you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? The law isn't saying try harder, get better, go harder and further than others. It says, be holy, be perfect, be as loving as Christ.

Tell me you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one a bond woman, the other by a free woman. One by a bond woman, one by a free woman, but he who was of the bond woman was born according to the flesh, who's that? Ishmael, and he of the free woman through promise, who's that? Major message in those two sons. Look at this, verse 24, which things are symbolic? There's a spiritual message locked in there beyond just the historical experience of Abraham and Sarah and those two boys.

If you have a different translation, which things are symbolic? There are different translations for that. Anything besides that? Those things are an allegory. Now, we sure don't want to allegorize all the scripture, make everything there kind of a spiritual story that we come up with and we are convinced is built in there.

There are a lot of things like that built in scripture. The safest ones are when God tells you, I built an allegory in there. This is pretty safe.

This is pretty strong typology here. What makes you think that's a type? Well, it's not a type. Well, let's see, which things are an allegory? Okay, that's sufficient.

Yes, there are allegories in scripture. And some are even pointedly, some are also without saying they are an allegory or a type, are overwhelmingly clear. You know, you look at the life of Joseph and you come up with dozens of indications of Christ, his person and his work.

You go, I think this is beyond coincidence. I think God was building all of this into history. Certainly here, those two, they are symbolic.

They are a spiritual symbolism. They are an allegory. They were real and historical, but they were teaching us something too.

For these are the two covenants. The one from Mount Sinai, which gives birth to bondage. That's Ishmael.

Which is Hagar of Hagar. For this Hagar is Mount Sinai, the law. Verse 28.

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. But as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now. Oh, the contrasts in there.

You have Ishmael, born of the flesh, contrasted with Isaac, born of promise. You have the built-in implication of the difference between the promise of God and the ingenuity of man. I mean, how many of us haven't fostered our Ishmael? Even knowing the promises of God, you know.

Yeah, I know God promised this, but come on. I mean, look at Sarah. Look at me.

I mean, let's be practical. I mean, come on. Let's use some common sense.

One of the great traps of the church. One-two punch. Our practical common sense, you know.

I'd like to learn to live by uncommon sense. You know, the mind of Christ. How impractical to believe that God could give a child to someone of parents 190, you know.

So the ingenuity of man went to work, and Sarah had a great idea, and she made the motion, and Abraham seconded it, you know. Yeah, this makes sense. God will be very blessed, I'm sure.

Takes a lot of pressure off God, you know. He won't have to do anything, but just watch us give him a child, and it'll be his. What a farce.

Good question that comes here. Is our Christian living and serving more like Isaac or Ishmael? Ishmael was a product of man's resources and ingenuity. Isaac could only come if God fulfilled this promise.

There was no other way. The only way Isaac could come was if God fulfilled his promise. Do we live the Christian life, do we minister by our resources and our wits? Or do we walk and serve all hinged on this one thing? God fulfilling his promises.

God doing what we cannot do. Oh, what a contrast. This is a powerful section of scripture in Galatians.

Really shows the difference between the old covenant and new, and how much better the new is. These new covenant promises. Okay, let's take a break right there.

A ten minute break, come back, and we'll look at exceedingly great and precious promises.

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