

RADICALLY DIFFERENT COVENANTS

HEBREWS 8:7-9

How did you see God working in your life this week? (Romans 1:11, 12)

BACKGROUND: Throughout the Scriptures we see God making several covenants with man. A covenant is an “Oath-bound promise whereby one party solemnly pledges to bless or serve another party. Sometimes the keeping of the promise depends upon the meeting of certain conditions by the party to whom the promise is made. On other occasions the promise is made unilaterally and unconditionally. The covenant concept is a central, unifying theme of Scripture, establishing and defining God’s relationship to man in all ages...The heart of that relationship is found in the phrase, ‘I will be their God and they shall be My people.’” Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary, p. 355, 356.

BOTH ARE SOVEREIGNLY GIVEN. Before the New Covenant was given, God made most of the covenants specifically with the Jews, not Gentiles. “Everything under the old economy was primarily external. Under the Old Covenant obedience was primarily out of fear of punishment. Under the New it is to be out of adoring love and worshipping thanksgiving.” John MacArthur, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Hebrews, p. 215. (Hebrews 8:7, 8, Romans 1:16[2nd], John 4:22, fn 4:22, Romans 9:1-6, fn 9:6, I John 4:7-16, fn 4:13, Romans 13:8-10, fn 13:8) *How are you obedient to the Lord?*

THE OLD COVENANT IS A COVENANT OF LAW. “God put it (Israel) under laws and regulations. If Israel behaved itself, it was rewarded, and if it misbehaved, it was punished. Israel was taught by object lessons as one would teach a child, for instance, the tabernacle, priesthood, offerings, the gorgeous vestments of the high priest.” Kenneth S. Wuest, Word Studies in the New Testament, Volume II: Hebrews, p.145. (Hebrews 8:9, John 1:17, Deuteronomy 5:1-3, fn 5:1, Romans 3:19, 20, fn 3:20, 21, II Corinthians 3:7-18, fn 3:13-18) *What is the function of the Law?*

THE NEW COVENANT IS A COVENANT OF GRACE. If you have trusted Christ as your Savior, then you are born again and are under the New Covenant of grace. You now have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Justified by faith you are also Abraham’s descendant and a blessed child of Abraham under the New Covenant! (Hebrews 8:9, fn 8:8-12, John 1:11-13, fn 1:12, 13, Galatians 3:6-9, fn 3:6-9, 3:21-29, fn 3:29, Romans 10:4, fn 10:4, Titus 2:11, 12) *If the covenants were given to the Israelites, how could a Gentile be saved and be a recipient of the New Covenant?*

As you daily study the truths about Jesus, in what ways is the presence of the Holy Spirit revealing to you God’s majesty and glory?

