



PREACH THE  
**WORD**  
It's Still All About  
**Jesus**

# The New "Testament"

Isaiah 55:1-13 Heb 8:6-13 Luke 22:14-23

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For the next few minutes, you need to **forget** that the books of the Bible as a collection are called the "Old and New Testaments". When you think about the biblical idea of "**Testament**", we are not talking about just the 39 books of the *Old Testament* nor the 27 books of the *New Testament*. The books of the Bible are extremely important, but the Biblical idea of **Testament** is much more than just a name given to the collection of books in the Bible.

The **Old "Testament"** began during the days of Moses. God had rescued the Israelites from Egypt through the 10 Plagues; He led them through the Red Sea on dry ground; and He took them to Mount Sinai. It was at Mount Sinai where God made an agreement with the Israelites --> that agreement is the **Old "Testament."**

The **Old Testament** was really a mutual, bi-lateral **covenant<sup>1</sup>**, where the people had to do their part, and then God would do His part. It was an agreement and an arrangement. It was pure **LAW**, "*do this or you will die.*" This **Old Covenant** included a place to worship God: the Tabernacle, and later the Temple in Jerusalem. It included Levites to teach the people, and Priests, and a High Priest to serve before God; it included many different kinds of blood sacrifices: lambs, goats, birds, and bulls were sacrificed to God. It included the 10 Commandments; and it laid out the Civil and Ceremonial laws of the Israelites. It directed every aspect of Israelite life: what they could eat, who they could associate with, and how they were to live. **Circumcision** brought you into the **Old Covenant**; the **Sabbath Day** was the sign that you were loyal to the **Old Covenant**.

The problem with the **Old Covenant** was that **it could never take away sins**. It revealed sin, but it could not forgive it. All the rituals, all the laws, all the sacrifices could not forgive sins, cleanse consciences, nor give eternal life. In addition, the **Old Covenant** required **perfect obedience** to God's laws, but it *did not give the power* to overcome sin and actually obey God's Law. Note how Hebrews teaches it:

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<sup>1</sup> The "Old" Testament was more like a bi-lateral covenant, where Israel had to do their part in obeying God. Of course, they failed, because of sin. The "New" Testament is truly a "*last will and testament*" where God freely gives His gifts through the death of His Son, Jesus. Since Jesus died, God's "*last will and testament*" is now in effect. That "*last will and testament*" is the "**New Testament**"; and your "inheritance" is all the Gospel blessings that freely come from the work of Jesus! All the gifts and blessings of Christ are frequently summarized simply by the word "forgiveness."

The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless (for the Law made nothing perfect), Hebrews 7:18-19a

By calling this testament "New," He has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear. Hebrews 8:13

The Old Covenant was set aside, it was weak, useless, and inadequate to save people. The Israelites failed miserably trying to keep the Old Covenant: the Exodus generation died in the desert; and later, both Israel and Judah were destroyed by God's wrath<sup>2</sup>.

We learn in the New Testament, that everything in the Old Covenant **ultimately pointed forward to Jesus!** The Old Covenant was a foreshadow of better things to come in Christ!

With Jesus, the New Testament is *no longer* a bi-lateral covenant that depends on your faithful obedience; but it is truly a "*last will and testament*" where you are given an **eternal inheritance** because of His death on the cross. Jesus dies, and you are showered with all of God's good gifts. The New Testament is 100% dependent on Jesus, not on you. The New Testament is pure grace, not works. The New Testament is Gospel Good News; not law, effort, wrath, nor judgment.

Jesus has become the guarantee of a better Testament. Hebrews 7:22

But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the Testament of which He is Mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises. Hebrews 8:6

By calling this testament "New," He has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear. Hebrews 8:13

Christ is the Mediator of a New Testament Hebrews 9:15

The "New Testament" is not a collection of books! Those 27 books in your Bible explain the New Testament to you! The New Testament is God's "*last will and Testament*" and is based solely on Jesus: **because Jesus died, you receive tremendous blessings as an "inheritance."**

"Behold, the days are coming," declares the Lord, when I will make a New Testament with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. . . . I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will **NEVER EVER REMEMBER** their sins again." Hebrews 8:8,12

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<sup>2</sup> The Old Testament books of I & II Kings (as well as the majority of the Prophets) document the dreadful death spiral of Israel and Judah. If you want to see a concise overview of the Old Testament Storyline, email me (dbolte@trinitylcs.org) and I will send you a chart I made for an Oasis class. It is helpful to give you the "big picture" and the flow of the OT storyline, and how the books of the OT fit together.

The wording in this verse is **intentional**; “forgiveness” is **emphasized** in the text. God promises to **never ever remember** your sins again! Jesus’ death on the cross forgives your sins; forgiveness -- as well as eternal life and salvation -- is your inheritance! To assure you of this, God promises to **never ever remember** your sins again! He will never bring them up; He will never ask you about them; He will never punish you for your sins; He will never use them against you!

Jesus took your place under your sins; He was punished for them and faced the wrath of God; He died on the cross instead of you. Because of Jesus, the promise to you in the **New Testament** is that God will **never ever remember your sins again!** Because Jesus died, **forgiveness** is your “**inheritance**”.

### **Be sure to apply this to yourself!**

- ⇒ Whenever Satan tries to accuse you of your sin, remember that God will **never ever remember your sins again!**
- ⇒ When something triggers a memory about past sin, stop the memory in its tracks by telling yourself that God will **never ever remember your sins again!**
- ⇒ If someone reminds you of your sin, let them know that you trust in God and His promise: He will **never ever remember your sins again!**

This is the **powerful promise** of the **New Testament!** There is nothing like this in the **Old Covenant** with all of its blood sacrifices and elaborate rituals. In the **New Testament**, because of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, your **inheritance** is that God will **never ever remember your sins again!**

One special way that God fulfills that promise to forgive your sins, and to forget all about them forever, is in **Holy Communion**. **Holy Communion** is the **blood that was shed** in God's **last will and New Testament**<sup>3</sup>; **Holy Communion** proclaims Jesus’ death that inaugurated God's **last will and “New Testament”**.

The **mystery** of **Holy Communion** is that you share in the death of Christ -- and receive all the benefits -- when you **take and eat** and **take and drink** His Body and Blood in the bread and wine. The **miracle** of **Holy Communion** is that God gives you your

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<sup>3</sup> A Testament differs from a promise in that it is made by a person who is about to die. In a Testament, the person names his heirs and designates his bequest to them. Thus the words that Christ spoke at the Last Supper were *the words of Christ's (last will and) Testament*. As Christ's (last will and) Testament, the Lord's Supper bequeaths Christ's eternal inheritance to His heirs gratuitously as a sheer gift by granting the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. Hebrews, J.W. Kleinig, p. 465 clarified

inheritance through this Meal; all the gifts of salvation are freely given to you, including the wonderful promise that God will *never ever remembering your sins again!*

Notice how Jesus describes **Holy Communion**:

This cup is the **New Testament** in My blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of Me. 1 Corinthians 11:25

This is My blood of the **Testament**, which is poured out for many *for the forgiveness of sins.* Matthew 26:28

Jesus has placed the gifts of His sacrifice in **Holy Communion**; the **inheritance** you receive from God's *last will and "New Testament"* are given to you in Holy Communion.

The chief of these gifts is the forgiveness of sins. God will *never ever remember* your sins again; and with that your *conscience is cleansed*, your **relationship** with God is restored, you are *empowered* to live a holy and godly life, and you will *live forever* in the Kingdom of Heaven!

Because Jesus died, you get an **inheritance!**

That is what the word "*testament*" means in the Bible.

The **Old Covenant** was a bi-lateral agreement, where the Israelites had to do their part or else they would die. The **Old Covenant** was set aside<sup>4</sup> because it can only expose sin and demand perfection --> it can never forgive sins.

So God sent Jesus to die in order to execute God's *last will and "NEW Testament."* In this **NEW Testament**, everything depends on Jesus and His life, death, and resurrection. In this **NEW Testament**, you are given gifts – like an **inheritance**. The chief of these gifts is the forgiveness of sins: God will *never ever remember* your sins again!

Amen<sup>5</sup>!

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<sup>4</sup> Elsewhere in Scripture, we learn that Jesus actually fulfilled the Old Covenant for us and in our place. As the Son of God, His perfect obedience did what we could never do!

<sup>5</sup> When you think about the last 27 books of your Bible, make a mental note to yourself that they are not the "New Testament" but "The Books that *explain* the New Testament" to us! The "New Testament" is a Gospel image to explain the work of Christ as a "last will and testament" where we get an inheritance from God: F O R G I V E N E S S !

# The Old Testament Storyline

GENESIS → EXODUS → NUMBERS → JOSHUA → JUDGES → SAMUEL → KINGS → EZRA/NEHEMIAH →

Chapters 1-11 teach us about the early history of the world; Chapters 11-50 teach us about the "Patriarchs"; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The promises God made to Abraham and that He kept through succeeding generations is called the Abrahamic Covenant.

Chapters 1-18 teach us about the Israelites in slavery to Egypt, the 10 Plagues, the Passover, and the Exodus; Chapters 19-40 teach us about the 10 negative spies. At the end of the book, the Israelites are on the edge of the Promised Land. Moses and Aaron are the key people in this book. Joshua and Eleazar are introduced.

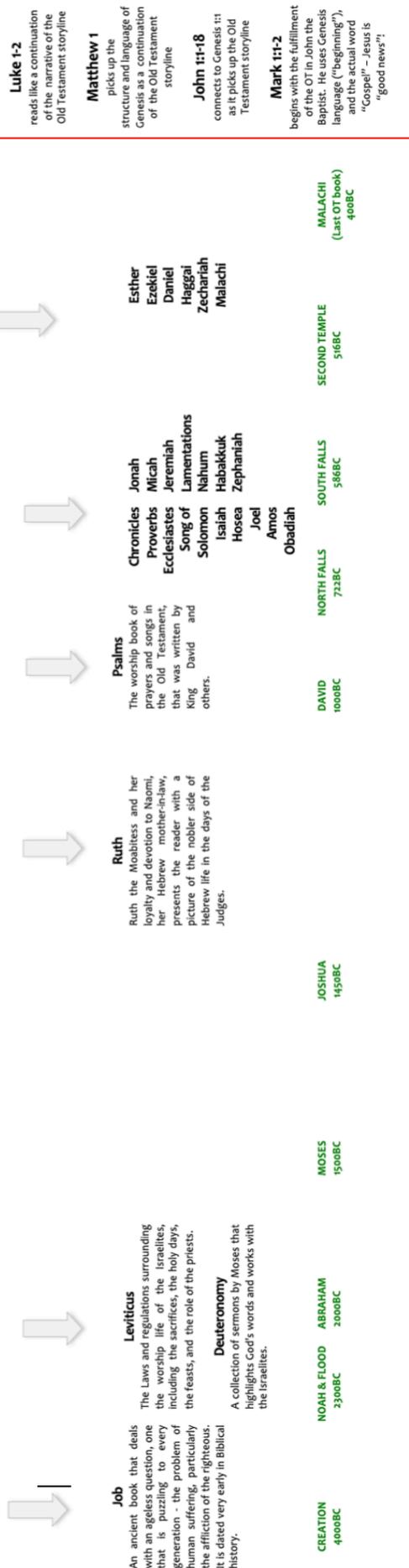
This book records some of the events while the Israelites were in the wilderness for 40 years after disobeying God and listening to the 10 negative spies. At the end of the book, the Israelites are on the edge of the Promised Land. Moses and Aaron are the key people in this book. Joshua and Eleazar are introduced.

This book accounts events in the promised land during the 350 years after Joshua dies. It is a disturbing book of disobedience and idolatry interlaced with godly leaders called "Judges".

The Old Testament storyline is picked up at the end of the Period of Judges with the Prophets Eli and Samuel, and transitions into the beginning of Kings ruling over the people of Israel. The focus of 1 and 2 Samuel is King David.

The Books of Kings were originally one document. It traces the storyline from the reign of Solomon, into the "divided kingdom", and finally the fall and exile of both Israel (falls to Assyria in 722BC) and Judah (falls to Babylon in 586BC). It is said that the Book of Kings begins and ends with the Temple: it traces the history of Solomon's Temple from construction to destruction, a time span of almost 400 years.

God promised that His people would return from exile after 70 years. This promise was kept with the people of Judah, because of the Messianic prophecies associated with this tribe. In 538BC, Cyrus the Great allowed Jews to return to Jerusalem. In 3 waves of returning exiles, over a time period of nearly 100 years, God's people follow Zerubbabel the royal descendant, Ezra the priest, and Nehemiah the layman back to Jerusalem during the reign of the Persian Empire. The "second" temple is built, the walls of Jerusalem are rebuilt, and the Old Testament canon is established.



**NEW TESTAMENT**

**In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son . . .**  
Galatians 4:4

**Luke 1-2**  
reads like a continuation of the narrative of the Old Testament storyline

**Matthew 1**  
picks up the structure and language of Genesis as a continuation of the Old Testament storyline

**John 1:1-8**  
connects to Genesis 1:1 as it picks up the Old Testament storyline

**Mark 1:1-2**  
begins with the fulfillment of the OT in John the Baptist. He uses Genesis language ("beginning"), and the actual word "Gospel" - "Jesus is 'good news!'"

The Books in **BLUE FONT** are the *Old Testament Storyline*. The books underneath are *supporting books* that give further details, insights, and teaching about that period of time. The bottom row in **GREEN FONT** is a rough Old Testament timeline. Of course, **ALL THE OLD TESTAMENT** books are the inspired and inerrant Word of God whether they are part of the storyline or supporting books. This chart is meant to help give you the **"big picture"** of the Old Testament, and to see how the books of the Old Testament fit together..