

Connections: How the Old and New Testaments Fit Together

Understanding the Titles of the Christian Scriptures Lesson #3

Introduction

- I. The title of a book tells what the book is about.
 - A. The titles of the Christian Scriptures are The Old Testament and The New Testament
 1. This title tells what the Christian Scriptures are about.
 2. The meaning of the Bible is in the title.
 - B. The word “testament”
 1. “Testament” is related to the Greek word “covenant.”
 2. The titles, The Old and New Testaments mean The Old and New Covenants.
 3. In the Bible, a covenant is a promise God makes to have a particular relationship with humans.
- II. The Christian Scriptures are about the covenants God made with humans.
 - A. God made several covenants with humans.
 1. The Old Testament is about the old covenants.
 2. The New Testament is about the new covenant.
 - B. All the covenants are about God having a relationship with humans.
 1. The message of the whole Bible is about relationship.
 2. That message can be expressed in one verse:
“I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people.” (Leviticus 26:12)
- III. We will now look at 3 covenants of the Old Testament and how they relate to the covenant of the New Testament. There are more Old Testament covenants, but we have time in this lesson for only three. The 3 Old Testament covenants we will cover in this lesson are:
 1. The Abrahamic Covenant
 2. The Mosaic Covenant
 3. The New Covenant

Body

I. Old Testament Covenants

- A. The Abrahamic Covenant
 1. God promised to make Abraham a great nation and all people on earth would be blessed through him. **(1. Genesis 12:1-3)**
 2. God would give Abraham’s family the land of Canaan.
 3. God would be the God of Abraham and his descendants. **(2. Genesis 17:1-8)**

B. The Mosaic Covenant

1. Through Moses, God made a covenant with the nation Israel (Abraham's descendants who were slaves in Egypt).
 - a. God promised to be Israel's God. They would be His people and He would give them the land of Canaan (**3. Exodus 6:2-8**)
 - b. God invited Israel to choose to be in covenant with Him. (**4. Exodus 19:3-8**)
 - c. God gave Israel the Ten Commandments, emphasizing that they were to be loyal to Him as their God. (**5. Exodus 20:1-5; Exodus 34:27-28**)
2. Blessings and curses of the Mosaic Covenant
 - a. Blessings for loyalty and curses for breaking the covenant by disloyalty (**6. Deuteronomy 8:18-19; Deuteronomy 11:26-28**)
 1. Exiled from the Promised Land of Canaan for continued disloyalty (**7. Deuteronomy 4:23, 26-27**)
 2. Forgiveness and return to the Promised Land for repentance (**8. Leviticus 26:3-45; Deuteronomy 30:1-5**)
 - b. Israel did not keep the covenant (often called the law). (**9. Psalm 78:10, Hosea 8:1**)
 1. God sent them away from the Promised Land. (**10. 2 Chronicles 36:14-21**)
 2. They repented, and God returned them to the Promised Land. (**11. Daniel 9:4-19; 2 Chronicles 36:22**)

C. The New Covenant – A prophecy

1. The New Covenant will not be like the Mosaic Covenant. (**12. Jeremiah 31:31-34**)
 - a. The Mosaic Law taught good and evil through reward and punishment.
 1. This is how we teach good and evil to children.
 2. (Lawrence Kohlberg, an American psychologist, devised a theory of the stages of human moral development.¹)
 - a. Children learn morality through reward and punishment.
 - b. Mature adults are moral despite reward or punishment.
 3. God taught humans what is good and evil through reward and punishment like children.

¹ "Lawrence Kohlberg's stages of moral development." Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia; Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 29 December 2013. Web 20 Jan 2014. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawrence_Kohlberg's_stages_of_moral_development>

- b. During the New Covenant, God's law will be in the people's hearts.
 - 1. People will do good from their hearts like adults.
 - 2. Not because of reward or punishment like children.
- 2. God will be their God and they will be God's people.
 - a. There will be no more relational separation between God and His people.
 - b. Sins will be forgiven and forgotten.

II. The New Testament Covenant

- A. Jesus Christ of the New Testament is the fulfillment of the promised Old Testament's New Covenant. **(13. Luke 22:20; 2 Corinthians 3:3-6)**
 - 1. Christ sets us free from the curse of the Old Testament Mosaic Covenant law.
 - a. The old Mosaic Covenant brought a curse, but Christ freed us from it.
 - b. Through His death and resurrection, Christ brings the blessing of Abraham to all people on earth.
 - c. God promises us the blessing of His Spirit through faith. **(14. Galatians 3:13-14)**
 - 2. The Spirit of God empowers us to fulfill the law of the Ten Commandments from our hearts. **(15. Romans 8:1-4)**
 - a. Our weak sinful flesh cannot keep the law of the Ten Commandments.
 - b. Christ's death and resurrection condemned the power of sin and death, that the law of the Old Covenant had over us.
 - c. With the New Covenant, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ, gives us power to keep the Ten Commandments.
- B. The old Mosaic Law prepared us for the New Testament relationship.
 - 1. The old Mosaic Law taught us right and wrong. **(16. Romans 3:20)**
 - 2. The old Mosaic Law was our tutor to bring us to Christ. **(17. Galatians 3:24; Romans 10:4)**
 - 3. Now all the covenant relationships are fulfilled in us, for God is our God and we are His people. **(18. 1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:16)**

Conclusion

I. Our course series is titled, Connections: How the Old and New Testaments Fit Together.

- A. Our first two lessons explained how the Old Testament foretells Jesus Christ.
 - 1. In the first lesson, titled Understanding the Christian Scriptures, we studied how Old Testament **words** foretell Christ through **prophecies**.

2. In the second lesson, titled Understanding the Patterns in the Christian Scriptures, we studied how the Old Testament historical **events** symbolically foreshadow Christ through **types**.

B. This lesson explains how the Old Testament **covenants** prepare us for a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

1. The Abrahamic covenant promised a land and a blessing.
2. The Mosaic covenant promised blessings, curses and forgiveness.
3. The New Covenant promised relationship from the heart.

I. Each of these Old Testament covenants has been fulfilled.

A. The Old Testament's Abrahamic Covenant was fulfilled in the history of Israel.

1. Abraham became the nation of Israel and they received the Promised Land of Canaan.
2. All peoples of the earth are blessed through Abraham's descendants.
 - a. The Bible we now study was written by Abraham's descendants.
 - b. Jesus Christ, our Savior, was a descendent of Abraham.

B. The Old Testament's Mosaic Covenant also was fulfilled in the history of Israel.

1. Israel received the blessing of the Promised Land of Canaan.
2. Israel was disloyal to the covenant and was exiled from the Promised Land.
3. Israel repented and was returned to the Promised Land.

C. The Old Testament's New Covenant was fulfilled in the New Testament.

1. Salvation in Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Testament's New Covenant.
 - a. Jesus Christ took the curse of the Mosaic Law for us.
 - b. Now the Spirit of God empowers us to keep the Ten Commandments from our hearts.
2. Through Christ, all peoples of the earth can become part of God's holy people by faith.

II. As the titles indicate, the Old and New Testaments are about God's covenants with us,

A. The Old Testament covenants and the New Testament covenant are all about God being our God and us being His people. **"I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people."** (Leviticus 26:12)

B. The Bible ends with the promise of this goal accomplished. **(19. Revelation 21:1-4)**

III. Prayer of thankfulness

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Scriptures to Read During the Lesson

(1. Genesis 12:1-3) The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." (NIV)

(2. Genesis 17:1-8) Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram . . . and God talked with him, saying . . . "I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." (NASB)

(3. Exodus 6:2-8) God spoke further to Moses and said to him, "I am the LORD; and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty. . . "I also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they sojourned. "Furthermore I have heard the groaning of the sons of Israel, because the Egyptians are holding them in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant. "Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. . . . 'Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 'I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you [for] a possession; I am the LORD.'" (NASB)

(4. Exodus 19:3-8) Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel: 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and [how] I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself. 'Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel." So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the LORD had commanded him. All the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do!" And Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD. (NASB)

(5. Exodus 20:1-5; Exodus 34:27-28)

[Exodus 20:1-5] And God spoke all these words: "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them . . ." (NIV)

[Exodus 34:27-28] Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel. "Moses was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights . . . And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant--the Ten Commandments. (NIV)

(6. Deuteronomy 8:18-19; Deuteronomy 11:26-28)

[Deuteronomy 8:18-19] "But you shall remember the LORD your God, . . . that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as [it is] this day. "It shall come about if you ever forget the LORD your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I testify against you today that you will surely perish. (NASB)

]Deuteronomy 11:26-28] "See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, which I am commanding you today; and the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way which I am commanding you today, by following other gods which you have not known. (NASB)

(7. Deuteronomy 4:23, 26-27) Be careful not to forget the covenant of the LORD your God that he made with you; do not make for yourselves an idol in the form of anything the LORD your God has forbidden. . . . I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you this day that you will quickly perish from the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess. You will not live there long but will certainly be destroyed. The LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and only a few of you will survive among the nations to which the LORD will drive you. (NIV)

(8. Leviticus 26:3-45; Deuteronomy 30:1-5)

[Leviticus 26:3] " If you follow my decrees and are careful to obey my commands, I will send you rain in its season, and the ground will yield its crops and the trees their fruit. Your threshing will continue until grape harvest and the grape harvest will continue until planting, and you will eat all the food you want and live in safety in your land. I will grant peace in the land, and you will lie down and no one will make you afraid. I will remove wild beasts from the land, and the sword will not pass through your country. You will pursue your enemies, and they will fall by the sword before you. . . . " I will look on you with favor and make you fruitful and increase your numbers, and I will keep my covenant with you. . . . I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people. . . . " But if you will not listen to me and carry out all these commands, and if you reject my decrees and abhor my laws and fail to carry out all my commands and so violate my covenant, then I will do this to you: I will bring on you sudden terror, wasting diseases and fever that will destroy your sight and sap your strength. You will plant seed in vain, because your enemies will eat it. I will set my face against you so that you will be defeated by your enemies; those who hate you will rule over you, and you will flee even when no one is pursuing you. . . . " If in spite of these things you do not accept my correction but

continue to be hostile toward me, I myself will be hostile toward you and will afflict you for your sins seven times over. And I will bring the sword on you to avenge the breaking of the covenant. . . . I will scatter you among the nations and will draw out my sword and pursue you. Your land will be laid waste, and your cities will lie in ruins. You will perish among the nations; the land of your enemies will devour you. . . . "But if they will confess their sins and the sins of their ancestors--their unfaithfulness and their hostility toward me . . . I will remember my covenant with Jacob and my covenant with Isaac and my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land. Yet in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them or abhor them so as to destroy them completely, breaking my covenant with them. I am the LORD their God. But for their sake I will remember the covenant with their ancestors whom I brought out of Egypt in the sight of the nations to be their God. I am the LORD.' " These are the decrees, the laws and the regulations that the LORD established at Mount Sinai between himself and the Israelites through Moses. (NIV)

(Deuteronomy 30:1-5) "So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call [them] to mind in all nations where the LORD your God has banished you, and you return to the LORD your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, then the LORD your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you. "If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back. "The LORD your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. (NASB)

(9. Psalm 78:10, Hosea 8:1)

[Psalm 78:10] [T]hey did not keep God's covenant and refused to live by his law. (NIV)

[Hosea 8:1] "Put the trumpet to your lips! An eagle is over the house of the LORD because the people have broken my covenant and rebelled against my law. (NIV)

(10. 2 Chronicles 36:14-21) Furthermore, all the officials of the priests and the people were very unfaithful [following] all the abominations of the nations . . . and they defiled the house of the LORD which He had sanctified in Jerusalem. The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent [word] to them again and again by His messengers, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place; but they [continually] mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, until there was no remedy. Therefore He brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or infirm; He gave [them] all into his hand. . . . Those who had escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia. (NASB)

(11. Daniel 9:4-19; 2 Chronicles 36:22)

[Daniel 9:4-14] I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed and said, "Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances. . . . Indeed all Israel has transgressed Your law and turned aside, not obeying Your voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him. . . . As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth. Therefore the LORD has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the LORD our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice. . . . O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.'" (NASB)

[2 Chronicles 36:22] Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia--in order to fulfill the word of the LORD . . . the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout his kingdom, and also [put it] in writing, saying, "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up!'" (NASB)

(12. Jeremiah 31:31-34) "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. "This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. . . . "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."(NIV)

(13. Luke 22:20; 2 Corinthians 3:3-6)

[Luke 22:20] Likewise He also [took] the cup after supper, saying, "This cup [is] the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you. (NKJV)

[2 Corinthians 3:3-6] Clearly, you are a letter from Christ showing the result of our ministry among you. This "letter" is written not with pen and ink, but with the Spirit of the living God. It is carved not on tablets of stone, but on human hearts. . . . He has enabled us to be ministers of his new covenant. This is a covenant not of written laws, but of the Spirit. The old written covenant ends in death; but under the new covenant, the Spirit gives life. (NLT)

(14. Galatians 3:13-14) But Christ has rescued us from the curse pronounced by the law. When he was hung on the cross, he took upon himself the curse for our wrongdoing. For it is written in the Scriptures, "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." Through Christ Jesus, God has blessed the Gentiles with the same blessing he promised to Abraham, so that we who are believers might receive the promised Holy Spirit through faith. (NLT)

(15. Romans 8:1-4) Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God [did:] sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and [as an offering] for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (NASB)

(16. Romans 3:20) Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin. (NIV)

(17. Galatians 3:24; Romans 10:4)

[Galatians 3:24] Therefore the Law has become our tutor [to lead us] to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. (NASB)

[Romans 10:4] For Christ [is] the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. (NKJV)

(18. 1Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:16)

(1Corinthians 3:16) Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? (NIV)

(2 Corinthians 6:16) ... For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." (NIV)

19. (Revelation 21:1) Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them [and be] their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." (NKJV)

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Suggested Readings:

I. Details of the Covenants:

A. Abrahamic Covenant

1. Genesis 12:1-3 – Galatians 3:6-9
2. Genesis 13:14-17
3. Genesis 15:1-21 – Romans 4:1-8
4. Genesis 17:1-27
5. Genesis 18:1-19 – Romans 4: 9-25
6. Genesis 22:15-18
7. Genesis 26:1-6 – Abrahamic Covenant extended to Isaac
8. Genesis 28:18-22 – Jacob’s vow
9. Genesis 35:6-15 - Abrahamic Covenant extended to Jacob
10. Exodus 3:1-22 - Abrahamic Covenant extended to nation of Israel

B. Mosaic Covenant

1. Exodus 19:3-6
2. Exodus 20:1-17
3. Exodus 24:1-8
5. Exodus 29: 42-46
6. Leviticus 18: 1-5 and 24-28
7. Leviticus 20:7-8
8. Leviticus 25:38
- 9. Leviticus 26:1-46 Blessings and curses**
10. Deuteronomy 4:1-40
11. Deuteronomy 6:1-9:6
12. Deuteronomy 11: 8-32
- 13. Deuteronomy 28:1 through Deuteronomy 30:20 Blessings, curses and return**

C. New Covenant

1. Jerimiah 31:31-34; Isaiah 42:6-7
2. Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 15:23-26
3. 2 Corinthians 3:3-18
4. Ephesians 3:14-21
5. Hebrews 8:6-13
6. Hebrews 12:24
7. Hebrews 13:20
8. Revelation 21:1-7

II. Other Old Testament Covenants

We will study these covenants in the coming lesson.

A. Noahic Covenant

1. Genesis 6:5-22
2. Genesis 8:20-22
3. Genesis 9:1-17

B. Davidic Covenant

1. 2 Samuel 7:1-29
2. I Kings 2:1-4
3. 2 Chronicles 3:1; 6:1-43; 7:1-3

Do an Internet search for:

1. Kohlberg's theory of moral development