

Jesus: Lord of Our Lives

**Book 1:
Lessons 1-4**

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NOT FOR SALE

Bible Study Center

“Jesus: Lord of Our Lives”

Book 1 - Lessons 1-4

Welcome Back!

This is a 12-lesson Bible study course and has been designed to educate, inform, challenge, and inspire people to become active students of God’s Word. It will help you learn many more important things about God and the Bible and at the same time help you become more skilled in Bible study. The reason why we need a study course like this one is the same as the first course. There are STILL more than 38,000 groups claiming to be Christians and each one has its own particular set of doctrines and practices. Since most of these differences in some way relate back to the Bible, it is necessary to study it to find out which teachings today are correct.

This material has been designed to be a real STUDY course. After a general introduction to the theme of our study, you will be asked to find, read, and carefully think about the meaning of hundreds of passages from the Bible. Although there will be a few worksheets to study, as there were in the first course, it will be your responsibility to read each passage in the lesson material and put each into context and decide what it says. We recommend that you purchase a small notebook and each time there is a passage, read it and record the major points of the passage in your notebook. This will help you work out the meaning of the passage and give you a study help for the future!

The way the course works is simple. We will send you the course material in booklets of four lessons at one time. To properly study through the course, you will need the lesson material, a Bible you can use for your reading assignments, the test question answer sheet, and something to write with. Study each lesson carefully. Be sure to stop and read all of the passages carefully¹ and then work through all of the exercises found in the test questions section for each lesson. You have the first four (4) lessons. Once you complete all of the test questions simply return the answer sheet to us for grading. (You only need to return the answer sheet. You keep the lesson booklet for yourself.) Once we finish grading your answers, we will return the graded answer sheet to you along with Book 2 of the course. We will continue this process throughout the course. After completing the 12 lessons of the course we will reward you with a diploma which you can hang on your wall. However, aside from a diploma, the wealth of knowledge you will gain from your study will be considerably more valuable!

We hope that you will learn much from this study. There may be some things in the course which seem “different” from what you might have heard in religion before. We are not asking you to agree or disagree with anything in the course, all we are hoping is that you will study through all of the course material before you make any conclusions.

If at any time you have questions about anything in your study, please feel free to send them in to us. (We have provided the back side of the answer sheet for this purpose.) We will do our very best to help you find the answers you seek. If you have friends whom you think might like to begin a study with us, please send us their names and mailing addresses and we will be very happy to send them the first course, **Jesus: Man of the Bible**, absolutely FREE!.

As a final thought before you start, please remember that we have gone to great lengths to make this study FREE of both cost and obligation. There is no tuition and by agreeing to take this course you are not changing your religion or joining a religious group. All we are asking you to provide is the time to study and a little money for the stamp to mail in your answer sheet. We sincerely hope that you enjoy your study and learn many new things about God and the Bible!

-- The Bible Study Center Staff

¹ NOTE: Unless otherwise stated, all Bible quotations contained in the lesson material come from the Easy-To-Read version.

LESSON ONE

The SCHEME Of REDEMPTION (Part 1)

We are so happy that you have decided to continue your study with us! This course is designed to continue where we stopped in **JESUS: MAN OF THE BIBLE** and discover many more things about Jesus and his life here on the earth. However, before we continue our journey into new territory, we will review the major points learned in the previous material.

We began our study by looking at the religious world of today and noted that there are more than 38,000 different “Christian” religions and that no two of these groups teach the same thing! From what we learned from the Bible, this situation **IS NOT GOOD** and cannot be from God! **God has only ONE church** and it follows the **ONE set of teachings** given by Jesus and his apostles in the time of the New Testament.

We learned that the Bible is God’s book, and that it has come to us through a very interesting past. It contains two messages from God for the people of the world, and the second message (the New Testament) is the specific one God has given for us today! We also learned that the Bible is complete and that we are not to **INTERPRET** it, but rather our goal is to **UNDERSTAND** and **DO** exactly what **HE** says.

We also learned many interesting things about Jesus Christ. We looked at his origin, his humanity, his being God, and at how he was BOTH God and man while he lived on the earth. We looked carefully at his works and his sinless life and discovered that when he lived on the earth, **Jesus was just like us in every way** and that the only thing that made him different from us was his **IDENTITY!** We ended our study with the idea that Jesus came here to become an example for us and that he was the **PIONEER and PERFECTER of THE FAITH!**

Now that we have seen the basic information about Jesus, we will now continue by looking at what Jesus came to build – **TRUE** Christianity – and explore what the Bible teaches about what God instructs men to do in his second message!

Over the next four lessons, we will explore the answers to these and many other questions relating to Jesus and his death. The reason why we will spend so much time on this is the importance of the subject. This subject is often referred to in books as, “**The SCHEME OF REDEMPTION**”. The word “**scheme**” is another word for “**a plan**” and “**redemption**” means, “to exchange something” and so, in simple words, the “**scheme of redemption**” is “a plan to exchange something”. Does this sound a little confusing? In this course, we will research many of the details about this plan by applying the things we have learned about studying the Bible. We hope that the result will be that by the time we are finished you will clearly understand the **Scheme of Redemption**.

In **PART 1** of this material, we will examine the reason why God had to make this **SCHEME**. This will provide us with a foundation on which we will build future lessons.

What Is SIN?

Please stop here and read all of Genesis chapter 3 before going any further.

What do we learn about SIN from this story? The story goes something like this. Adam and Eve were created and placed in a garden. They were given specific instructions regarding what they were to do, especially regarding the eating of the fruit of a certain tree, which grew in the middle of the garden. They were not supposed to eat that fruit. Unfortunately, they did not do what they were told to do and they were punished because they did not obey God. It is a simple story.

As we consider the events of Genesis 3, we cannot help but notice that there was a sudden change in man’s relationship with God because of his decision to eat that fruit. One day, man was walking and talking with God as good friends should and do, and the next day he was sent out from the garden and from the presence of the Lord! What a dramatic turn of events that was, and all because Adam and Eve **disobeyed God’s instruction regarding a piece of fruit!**²

² By the way, did you notice that the fruit they ate **WAS NOT** an apple? It was simply called the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This is an example of how many people **THINK** that the Bible says a certain thing, but in reality, it says something different. Another example from this story is the snake. Does the Bible actually **SAY** that the snake is Satan? No it does not! The snake lost its legs. Did God take Satan’s legs away? No, he did not!

Since this lesson is about **SIN**, let us ask, “**What is sin?**” Several very good passages explain sin and how it happens in the life of a person. **1 John 3:4**, has the closest thing we have to a “dictionary definition” for **SIN** in the Bible. It is described as “living against God’s law”. God gives man laws to follow - as we saw in the case of Adam & Eve. When a person **breaks one of these laws**, this action is called a sin. Many people today misunderstand the meaning of sin because sin is a word we use only when talking about religion. However, **the idea** of sin is very common to us and we live with it every day. The country we live in has laws that every person is supposed to follow. When a person breaks one of those laws, they are said to have “committed a crime”. The idea of **CRIME** and **SIN** are almost exactly the same! Both involve laws and people deciding to break those laws. The main difference is that while crime is based upon breaking laws that **come from man**, sin is breaking laws that **come from God**. God’s laws are not always the same as man’s laws. In other words, not all sins are considered crimes and not all crimes are considered by God to be sins. Please keep this in your mind as we proceed further with this material!

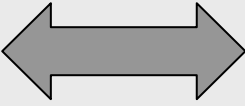
Another passage that helps us understand about SIN is **James 4:17**, where we learn that when a person knows to do something that is good and they do not do it then this is also sin. From this idea, it should be easy to see that God is very serious about the things he wants us to do. Most people only think of sin as doing something that we are **NOT** supposed to do (like Adam and Eve and their fruit) but this passage shows us that it is also a sin if we do not do something **God tells us to do**. Sometimes God tells us to **DO** something and sometimes he tells us **NOT TO DO** something, and so we must be careful to understand what he is saying. From what we have seen so far, we can conclude that sin happens when we do something that God told us not to do (some people refer to this as “**sin of commission**” because you **COMMIT** it), or when we do not do something which God told us to do (some call this the “**sin of omission**” because you **OMIT** doing it.) What about a situation where God tells a person to do several things and they only do some of them (some refer to this as “**partial obedience**”)? Is that also sin? Yes it is!³

“**How does sin actually happen in a person’s life?**” We already know that sin happens because of something called “**temptation**”. The word for temptation in the New Testament is **peirazo**.⁴ You will be surprised to discover that this word can be used either “in a good sense”⁵ or “in a bad sense” and it simply represents the idea of a **challenge**! A challenge can be used to tear something apart or to strengthen it and this word is used in both ways in our Bibles.

Temptation!

“**How does temptation work in our lives?**” If you will remember, we already studied about this topic when we tried to understand how Jesus could be sinless and still be a human. There was a special passage in the Bible regarding the topic of temptation — **1 Corinthians 10:13**. Here we learned several useful things about how temptation works. **First**, we saw that temptation is **regulated** by God. He knows our individual limitations and **promises** that each of us will never receive a temptation that is more than we can resist. Therefore, a person can never look at their sin and say that they were forced because the temptation was more than they could resist. **Temptation is simply a moment where one must choose a course of action from among two or more choices**. You will always have a choice in the matter because of God’s gift of “free will”. Since you have the freedom to choose any option you like then **CAN you choose** to do right thing **EVERY TIME**? Yes, you can! That is what **FREEDOM OF CHOICE** means! Therefore, is it not **POSSIBLE** for a person to freely choose the right each time they receive a temptation and **NEVER** commit even a single sin? Yes, it is **POSSIBLE!** (*Please remember that Jesus was sinless and he was just like you in EVERY WAY!*) If sin happens in your life because you made a freewill choice to do wrong, **when you did not have to do it**, then that means you did it because you wanted to! It was your own decision and **YOU ALONE must bear the responsibility** for your decision before God!

TEMPTATION

A

B

You are free to choose either one!

YOU must choose!

³ Consider the example of the wife of Lot recorded in **Genesis 19:12-26**. They were told **1)** to run away, **2)** to go to the hills, and **3)** not to look back. Lot’s wife did two of the three things correctly. Was she rewarded or punished? She was punished!

⁴ This word is pronounced **pāy-rād'-zō**.

⁵ One example of “temptation” in a “good sense” is found in the case of Abraham, back in **Genesis 22:1**, where it says that God “tested” Abraham. The word in the Greek version of the Bible (Septuagint) is **PEIRAZO**! It is interesting to note that whenever the word **PEIRAZO** is found regarding something God does to a person the Bible translators almost always use the English word “test”, but when **PEIRAZO** is found not referring to God, they use the word “tempt”. However, please understand that it is the same idea.

Does God ever “tempt” a person to do sin? This is a very good question to think about because there are many people in the world who “blame” God for the sin in their lives. Many seem to believe that God **wants** them to fail and that he sends them all sorts of temptations! However, this topic is mentioned by **James in 1:12-15**. Notice that he begins by confidently saying that **God does not** tempt people to sin! Of course this makes perfect sense because how can a God who, publicly, says that he wants everyone to be saved turn right around and, privately, try to make the same people sin? James goes on to explain that most of the sin in a person’s life actually begins inside of that person’s own mind! The thoughts and desires we have **inside of us** often lead us away from God **more often than outside forces do**.⁶ Notice also how James says that when the thoughts of a person **get out of control** then this leads the person to commit sin. How do thoughts become out of control? Do thoughts control themselves? If a person’s thoughts **CAN** get out of control then they can also be kept under control. Once again, we see that it is a matter of freewill choice!⁷

Let us summarize what we have seen so far. **SIN** comes into a person’s life as a result of a freewill decision, so that no one is forced against their will to sin. It therefore **MUST BE POSSIBLE** for a person to live their entire life without ever committing even a single sin! Even tough at first this might sound crazy it is true!⁸ **1 Corinthians 10:13** is very clear! 1) God limits temptation so that a person will **never be tempted beyond what they are able** to bear. 2) “Freewill” means that a person can choose whatever choice they want. If this is correct then I **CAN choose to do right EVERY TIME if I want to!** I **CAN**, because I have the right to choose whatever I want. However, does **having the possibility of being sinless** mean that I will, in fact, **BE SINLESS? NO!** Being sinless is not what is guaranteed by God. God only **guarantees the possibility** of being sinless!

Being Sinless!

There are **TWO** basic requirements for being sinless. One requirement is **a knowledge of what is required**. In other words, you must know the rules! A person has to know what can and cannot be done before he can decide whether to follow them correctly. The second requirement is **a willful decision to follow those requirements EVERY TIME temptation comes!** Since God is the one who determines what is “right” and “wrong” then a person who does not know what God says will be in a situation where they will have to make choices based upon **WHAT THEY THINK IS “RIGHT” AND “WRONG”!** Since what that person thinks may not be the same as what God thinks then it is only a matter of time before that person will make a wrong choice and when that happens, it is sin! The only way to be sinless is to listen to God and do what HE SAYS each and every time the challenge of temptation comes! This is another reason why Bible study is so important, so that **we can KNOW** what God wants us to do when we face temptation! How can we be prepared for temptation if we do not study? **How can we know the way of escape?**

ILLUSTRATION:

Suppose that a certain person contracts with a utility company to get electricity for his house. He knows that each month he will be sent a bill and that he will need to pay this bill by a certain date or else be charged a penalty amount for being “late”. Let us say that for ten years the man faithfully pays his bill **on time**. Now suppose that the company forgets to send the bill out from their office on time one month and, thus, the bill arrives at the man’s house **after the deadline for payment has passed!** Would it be **FAIR** for the electric company to charge the man a late penalty fee in this case?

Imposing a penalty fee on late payers is based upon the idea that **IF** a person 1) **knows** that they must pay their bill before the deadline, 2) **receives the bill** before the deadline, and then 3) they **CHOOSE not to pay** before the deadline, **THEN** this represents a **willful violation** of the contract and a penalty fee would be considered **FAIR!**

How can imposing a penalty in this man’s situation be considered fair? He did not receive the bill until **after** the deadline for payment had passed, so **how could he** pay it on time? Being asked to pay before the deadline is something that was **impossible** for him to do and, therefore, it is not fair to judge him.

Remember that **FAIRNESS** demands the **CAPABILITY** of “**100% freewill compliance**” so that any “violation”, and subsequent punishment, comes about because of **freewill disobedience**.

⁶ We can see the point of James’ clearly illustrated in what Jesus said in passages such as **Matthew 5:27-28**. You can sin without even doing an action! You can sin with your thoughts!

⁷ This is a very good illustration of the point in **Proverbs 14:12** from our previous course.

⁸ If it is impossible, as many people today teach, for a human to live a sinless life then how can there be any **JUSTICE** in the Judgment? Consider this point. “Fairness” in judgment requires that a guilty person must have had the ability **to be** innocent, and, therefore, **became guilty BY CHOICE**. If mankind does not have the capability to live innocent, then how can it be fair for God to judge him guilty?

WHO Sins?

The next question is, “**Who is guilty of committing sin?**” This is another very good question. From what we hear from religious leaders these days you would think that everyone **MUST become** a sinner⁹ and some people even say that we are all **born sinners!** However, from what we have already learned in this lesson, we know that sin is ruled by a system of **JUSTICE** and we know that justice is a simple idea, which says that **the person who commits a crime is the one who must be punished.** In order for justice to be confirmed, 1) a violation must be proven to have happened, and 2) this violation must be proven to have been committed by the one who will be punished. Once this has been done, then justice is not **fulfilled** until the punishment has been carried out.

Can sin be **inherited?**¹⁰ Earlier, we made a comparison between sin and crime, so a parallel question would be, “Can a **crime be inherited?**” Of course, we know that **it cannot** because that would not be **JUSTICE!** If your father commits murder then the Police cannot arrest **you**, because **YOU** did not murder anyone! If your father is guilty then **HE ALONE** must suffer the punishment for his actions. It would not be **FAIR** for you to be punished for a crime that was committed by someone else! However, this is what would be happening **IF** it were possible to inherit sin! You would be accountable for the sin of your parents! That would not be fair!

That may sound very reasonable by human standards, but what does God say about this matter? Does God make us accountable for the sins of our ancestors? To answer this question let us consider a story we read in **Ezekiel 18:1-20.** In the introduction to the story, God spoke with his prophet about some things the people of that time were saying about the way he seemed to punish people. In verse 2 of the story, we discover that the people of Israel had made up a saying; “*The fathers ate some sour grapes, but the children have the sour taste in their mouths.*”¹¹ God instructed the prophet to **tell them not to say that any longer!** To explain his point God tells a story about **three generations of men** in a certain family. Each man was different in his actions and the good men were accepted and the bad man was punished, and each one was judged by God according to **his own actions.** The resulting idea shows that God will not judge one person for the things another person does. Each person stands before God alone and is accepted or rejected according to **his own actions!**

The same idea is echoed in practically every passage we can find in the Bible regarding the “**Judgment Day**”. A clear example of this is found in **2 Corinthians 5:10**, which explains that each person will be judged, by Christ, according to the things he or she did while they were alive in their body. **Each person is accountable only for his or her own sins!**

⁹ The subject of, “**Who sins?**”, has resulted in a number of popular passages being misunderstood and misapplied. One major example of this is **Romans 3:23.** It is suggested by **many** that this verse is **proof** that the Bible teaches that it is **impossible** for any human to live without sin. After all, it says, “**For ALL have sinned...**”, but is this what the writer intended to say to his readers? Remember our discussion of this verse in our previous course material. Verse 23 is part of a summary Paul made regarding his previous points about the **history of the conduct for the groups of people** called Gentiles (chapters 1-2) and Jews (chapters 2-3). His meaning is simple. It does not matter whether you are from the group called Gentile or from the group known as Jews, **ALL** (groups) **decided to sin** and are lost. Notice that nowhere in this entire section (chapters 1-3) is Paul discussing the topic of the **POSSIBILITY** of man living sinless, but rather is tracing the historical facts of living for these two groups of people.

¹⁰ It should be pointed out that experiencing the consequences of a person’s sins does not mean that we are responsible for (are guilty of) their sin. If the man in the illustration we discussed earlier should destroy the power plant in protest for his late penalty fee, others living in town will lose electricity due to **HIS** destructive act. However, they will not be charged with any crime **because they did not blow up the power plant!** While it would be true to say that we experience **the consequences** of Adam and Eve’s sin (physical death, hard work, pain in child bearing, etc..) it would be wrong to say that **we are guilty** of their sin. Many people like to say that sin is “inherited” from our ancestors and they call it “Original Sin”. It is suggested that this idea is actually taught in **Romans 5:12.** If you look carefully at what is said there, you will see that Paul is comparing the actions of one man (Adam) with those of another man (Jesus). His main point there is that the result of sin was **DEATH** and this death spreads to **ALL MEN.** Notice **HOW** this “death” spreads to all men. **Is it because it is inherited and passed along from generation to generation?** No, it is spread to all men simply **because all men choose to commit sin.**

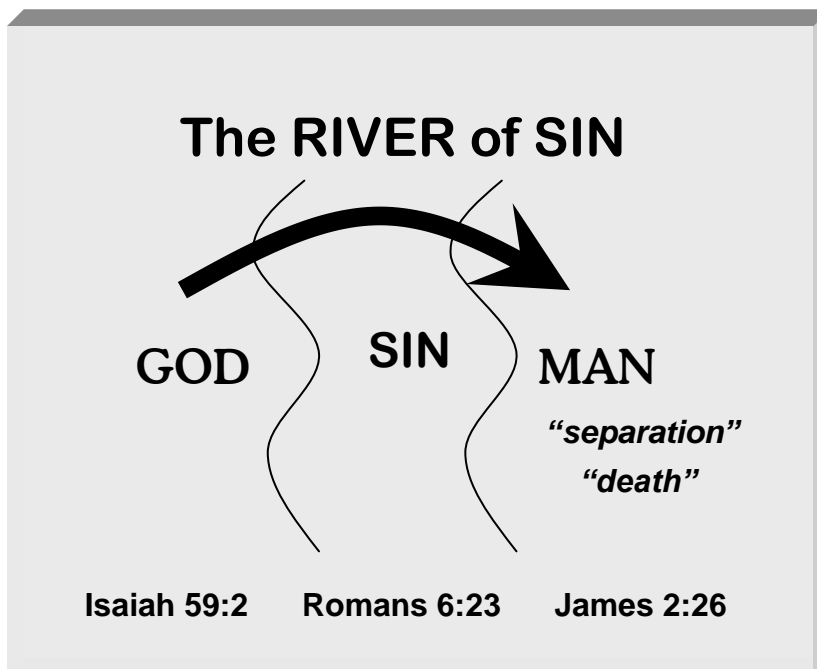
¹¹ It seems that since God’s punishments for the nation of Israel were often great and long lasting in time, the ones who were guilty and those who were innocent **BOTH** suffered the same things! For example, if God punished the guilty people of Israel all over the land with a drought that lasted several years, and there were innocent Israelites living among the guilty, then **ALL** Israelites – **BOTH** the guilty and the innocent – would suffer the effects of that drought. On the other hand, if God decided to punish the people with an invasion by a foreign army, then that army would occupy the whole land of Israel, taking over the property of **BOTH** the guilty and the innocent. After seeing this happen many times, the people of Israel concluded that God was **PUNISHING** the innocent people for the sins of the guilty people! However, the suffering of the innocent was a coincidence. The reality of God’s attitude about the guilt of a person is clarified in this passage through the prophet Ezekiel.

The Consequences Of SIN

Now that we have seen **what sin is** and **how it works**, we will now examine what happens to a person's relationship with God once they have committed sin. We can begin by simply thinking back to the details of the Genesis story, which we discussed earlier. What happened to Adam & Eve after they sinned? They lost their home, their innocence, their immortality, **and**, their relationship with God! The Bible has several passages that help us to better understand this problem. Please turn to and read **Isaiah 59:2**. Here we see that sin causes a person to become **separated** from God. It describes the details of the situation. God turns his back on the person and does not hear him. In short, **sin destroys a person's relationship with God!**

In religion today, we hear people often refer to this separation as something called "**spiritual death**". There is an interesting passage connected with this idea,

Romans 6:23, and it tells us that when a person sins they **earn what sin pays**—death! Is the death mentioned here **physical** death? Most likely it is not because if it were, then the fact that you and I are still alive would be proof that we **must be without sin!** (BOTH of us know that this is just not true, right! **<grin>**) Why did he use the word "**death**" here? Think about the meaning of "**death**". If we read **James 2:26** we see him using the word to emphasize the idea of **separation**.¹² From what we read in this passage, we can conclude that the people of that time understood that death meant "separation" and so then, the idea of "spiritual death" would simply represent a separation between God and man and that agrees with what we learned from **Isaiah 59:2!**



Conclusions About SIN:

As we close this lesson, we will SUMMARIZE what we have learned about **SIN**. First, we learned that sin is something that is "committed"—**a freewill action** (and remember that this "action" can also include a person's thoughts). Sin involves freewill and making choices, and there is no forced action (either for bad or for good). Sin also involves "authority". God is the one who decides what is "right" and "wrong" and we do not know these differences by natural feeling. Therefore, each person must seek to learn what God teaches on these matters and then choose to submit to his will each time a temptation comes. We learned that a person can sin by doing what God said not to do, by not doing what God said to do, **OR**, by not doing **ALL** that God said to do.

Furthermore, we have learned that God has promised all people that he will **NEVER** allow us to be forced into "doing wrong" and that there will **always** be a way of escape so that we can endure it. Therefore, sin really is a matter of personal choice! If a person wants to live without sin, he or she can! If a person has sin in their life then **he or she alone** is to blame because each sin is the result of a situation where the decision was made to do something when a decision could have been made not to do it! We also learned that the **possibility** of a person living their life without committing a single sin **must** also be true because, if not, then there would be **no JUSTICE** on the "Judgment Day". If God requires that a person must be sinless in order to escape being sent to Hell, **and**, if it is impossible for that person to satisfy that requirement, then God would be asking the person to accomplish something that is impossible. It would be **BOTH** unfair and cruel to punish a person for a violation of something that was hopelessly impossible, while **knowing all along that it was IMPOSSIBLE for the person to do!** The Bible says that God is **BOTH** faithful and fair! We also learned some things about accountability. God considers each person responsible for his or her own actions and, consequently, he will "give to each according to his action" in the Judgment. This is a matter that is based upon the principle of **justice**, which teaches us that, "The one who does the crime is the one who must be punished." We also learned that a person cannot inherit **SIN** anymore than a person can inherit crime because that would not be justice!

¹² When a person dies they do not cease to exist. What happens is the body becomes **separated** from the soul and since the soul keeps the body alive, the body dies. Death then is a separation! Therefore, **SPIRITUAL death is SEPARATION from God!**

Therefore, since we see that 1) God is serious in his demand that we not sin, and 2) sin is **from us**, we should make every effort possible to avoid following our **selfish desires** and, instead, seek to learn God's path and follow it without question. **Sin IS A KILLER and people who sin WILL GO TO HELL!** The question that remains is whether you and I will be among them.

As a note about where are going in our study.... **We control whether or not we will sin in our future, but unfortunately, we ourselves cannot do anything to get rid of any sin that we have committed in our past.** We drag our past sins along with us everywhere we go, just like a bunch of old rusty chains!

However, we know that God made a **PLAN** (a **scheme**) to help people get rid of past sins, but he **never** intended for this way out to be used by us (as some today mistakenly teach) as an excuse for our not concentrating on every encounter with temptation in our **PRESENT** and **FUTURE** and choosing the right way every time! Many people reason in their minds, "I'll just do the wrong thing **this one time** because, anyway, Jesus died for me and I can always ask God to forgive me..." **Is this the right attitude for someone who understands our lesson today?** Would **JESUS**, who is our example, say this? As a closing thought for this lesson, please read **Hebrews 10:26-31** and notice the words of the writer of Hebrews as he speaks to his readers regarding the topic of "**deliberate sin**"!

Before proceeding, answer the following test questions for Lesson 1:

Each of the following questions has several possible answers. Read each question and review the lesson material carefully. Choose the answer that best fits the question and fill in the CIRCLE for that answer on the answer sheet.

- The meaning of the word **scheme** is
 - a package of yarn or thread.
 - a plan.
 - a collection of verses from the Bible.
 - a place where religious students live.
- The word **redemption** means
 - to demonstrate something over again.
 - to save something.
 - to ask God to forgive your sins.
 - to exchange one thing for another.
- The passage where we read about the first sin of mankind is
 - Romans chapter 3
 - Matthew chapter 3
 - Genesis chapter 3
 - Hebrews chapter 3
- The fruit Adam and Eve ate was from
 - Satan
 - their vegetable garden
 - an apple tree
 - the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
- TRUE or FALSE: **All** the laws from God in the Bible **are the same** as the laws of man in the world.
 - True
 - False
- Eve received the temptation to eat the fruit from
 - Satan pretending to be a snake.
 - a snake that could talk
 - God.
 - her husband Adam.
- TRUE or FALSE: SIN happens because people **cannot** resist temptation.
 - True
 - False
- When a person **does not do something** God said to do, people often call that a sin of _____.
 - retribution
 - ordination
 - commission
 - omission
- TRUE or FALSE: **SIN** and **CRIME** are almost the same because they **BOTH** involve breaking the law.
 - True
 - False
- The Bible passage that gives us a "dictionary definition" for sin is
 - Genesis 3:15
 - Isaiah 59:2
 - Romans 3:23
 - 1 John 3:4

11. When a person **does something** God said not to do, some people call this a sin of _____.
- retribution
 - ordination
 - commission
 - omission
12. **Partial obedience** is acceptable as long as the percentage of obedience is
- 75%
 - 99%
 - 80%
 - NO! Partial obedience **is not acceptable!**
13. The passage that explains to us that temptation is regulated by God is
- 1 Corinthians 10:13
 - Acts 2:38
 - Genesis 19:12-26
 - Genesis 22:1
14. **James 1:12-15** teaches that temptation most often comes to us from
- Satan.
 - our own minds.
 - God.
 - our friends.
15. TRUE or FALSE: There are times where people are **forced** to sin.
- True
 - False
16. TRUE or FALSE: It **IS** possible for a person to live a sinless life.
- True
 - False
17. The word **temptation** really means
- a challenge.
 - sinning against God.
 - partial obedience.
 - freewill.
18. TRUE or FALSE: We can choose to do the right thing **every time** we are tempted if we want to.
- True
 - False
19. **Matthew 5:27-28** teaches us that
- we need to be careful what we think in our minds.
 - a person can sin with their thoughts.
 - having sexual thoughts about someone can be just as bad as having sex with them.
 - All of the above.
20. TRUE or FALSE: God **will** hold us responsible for another person's sins.
- True
 - False
21. The teaching that is called "**Original Sin**" is
- the idea that we inherit the sin of Adam & Eve.
 - proven wrong by Ezekiel 18:1-20.
 - not correct and not from God!
 - All of the above.
22. TRUE or FALSE: It is **possible** to inherit a crime.
- True
 - False
23. When a person sins they
- become weak and sick.
 - feel guilty.
 - become separated from God.
 - are captured by the police and put in prison.
24. The idea of **death** actually means
- a separation.
 - you cease to exist.
 - justice.
 - husband.
25. TRUE or FALSE: God is fair and will not let you be tempted more than what you can bear.
- True
 - False

LESSON TWO

The SCHEME OF REDEMPTION (Part 2)

After mankind was banished from the Garden and his immortality was taken away from him, God did not totally abandon man. The book of Genesis records God's dealings with various families including many of the great Patriarchs¹³ of the Old Testament. The story eventually comes to a man named **Abraham** who is said to be a very faithful follower of God. So impressed was God with Abraham that he made him some very important promises. Please turn to **Genesis 12:1-3** and read about these promises. Three stand out in the text. One promise indicates that God will make Abraham famous, or, that God will make his name great among the nations. Another promise involved his future descendants. God promised to make them into a great nation. A third promise mentions something about all the families (nations) of the earth being **benefited** through Abraham. Of course, we know that this third promise was fulfilled through one of Abraham's special descendants - Christ - who would one day die on the cross for the sins of all mankind!

What Is A COVENANT?

However, many centuries after this incident, God kept the **descendant promise** he made to Abraham by making a **COVENANT** with the nation of Israel. This covenant provides the background for the rest of the Old Testament (from Exodus 19 through the last chapter of Malachi) and is still in existence when Jesus comes to the Earth as a man. In this and the next two lessons, we will take a closer look at the history of this covenant. Aside from being a very interesting topic, it will also help us better understand many things about God's **PLAN** for saving man from sin that we will be studying about later from the New Testament.

We begin our search by asking a very simple question, "**What is a COVENANT?**" We do not hear this word very often, except in religious discussions. Sometimes instead of the word covenant, we hear people use the word "**testament**"¹⁴ and that can be even more confusing. Actually, we are very familiar with the **idea** represented by the words covenant and testament. The ways these words are used in the Bible represent what we commonly refer to as **an agreement** or **a contract!** We are very familiar with contracts and agreements because they are found today in all areas of our everyday life. From the simplest agreement, to meet somewhere for an outing, to a complex contract between companies to manufacture and market something on several continents, agreements are all around us every day.

Since understanding how agreements work is so important for our study, we will take a few minutes to mention the basic design of contracts so that we can establish a common understanding for our future explorations in the Bible regarding its covenants.

A covenant, agreement, or contract, is established when two (or more) parties **AGREE** to certain terms and conditions by which they will join together, usually in order to accomplish something. However, sometimes agreements are made to regulate the actions of people. Whatever their purpose might be, **ALL** agreements carry responsibilities for all parties to perform and operate on the basic "**IF – THEN**" principle. **IF** the first party accomplishes their portion of the agreement **THEN** the second party must fulfill their obligation. This "IF – THEN" principle is what is more commonly known as a **CONDITION**. Everything will go smoothly in the agreement as long as **ALL parties** involved in the agreement keep their part of the contract.

How Contracts Work

How do agreements and contracts work? Most agreements pass through **FOUR basic phases** or stages of activity. The first is what we might call the **negotiation** stage, where the parties discuss proposals to determine if there is enough interest to give reason for proceeding farther. If there is a mutual desire to continue then the parties proceed to the phase where the exact **terms and conditions** are decided. This means that a carefully detailed statement of the responsibilities of each of the parties involved in the agreement will be worded and written down. Once this phase is

¹³ The word "patriarch" means **FATHER** and it was used to refer to the head of a family, usually the oldest living male. During the earliest portion of the Old Testament, God would speak to the people of a certain family through these Patriarchs.

¹⁴ The word for "covenant" or "agreement" in the Greek language is **DIATHEKE** (pronounced **dē-ă-thā'-kā**) and is the same word used to represent someone's last will and testament. A **WILL** is a nothing more than a special kind of agreement.

complete, next comes the **acceptance and commencement**—where the agreement is “officially” signed. It is here that the agreement actually begins. This leaves only the final phase of the agreement to follow—what we will call the **TERMINATION phase**. All agreements come to a completion in one way or another. They either successfully terminate (with all parties satisfied), or, the agreement terminates unsuccessfully due to some kind of violation. This is the basic process by which all agreements are made and managed.

AN ILLUSTRATION: BUILDING A HOUSE

To get a better idea of what we are saying let us set up an imaginary contract that we can use as a parallel illustration in our studies. Let us say that I want to build my family a house and that you are in the construction business and that you (along with 10 other construction companies in town) submit to me a bid (estimate) on the cost of the project. After examining all of the bids, I select the company that gives me the best deal and let us say that your company is the one I choose. We must then establish **an agreement** between us. This agreement is important because it contains **all** of the specific details of how you will build the house as well as the details of the money I will pay to your company. These details are based on the IF-THEN principle—**IF** you accomplish your part **THEN** I am obligated to accomplish my part. Once these details are completed, we both sign our names to it and the agreement becomes official on the date we sign it.

For the sake of our illustration, let us assume these specific details are found in the agreement. You must build me a two-storey house with five rooms upstairs, three rooms and a bathroom downstairs, and a covered garage attached to the house that is large enough for two cars. You must paint the outside of the house yellow and the roof green. If you will build it this way then I must pay your company \$100,000.00 plus the cost of materials.

Before we go farther, let us consider some other thoughts about this contract.

If I choose to establish a contract with your company then what happens to all of the other companies who submitted bids for the building of my house? They are rejected and not included in our agreement. Their workers cannot come to the job site and work expecting me to pay them, right? No they cannot, and why not? It is because my contract is with you and your workers, and, since these workers do not work for you, then I do not have any obligation to pay them.

In addition to this, here is another point to consider. If we sign our contract today, then would it be fair for your workers to come to me demanding that I pay them wages for yesterday, or last week, or even last month? No, it would not be fair, because you and I had no contract yesterday, last week, or last month. Our contract started **TODAY** and it goes **forward** into the future, and I am only responsible for things that happen while we have a contract.

What happens if you do not build my house according to the terms of our agreement? Whether the mistake is small or great, intentional or “innocent”, I have the freedom to take action as I desire. On the one hand, I can forgive you and give you a chance to make things right. On the other hand, I can also fire you and get someone new to take your place. **It is my decision alone** and you have no voice in the matter **because**, in such case, you committed the violation against our agreement!

However, if you accomplish your part of the contract and I refuse to pay you then you can take me to court to get your money.

Let us assume that this agreement is acceptable to both of us and we sign with today’s date as the starting point.

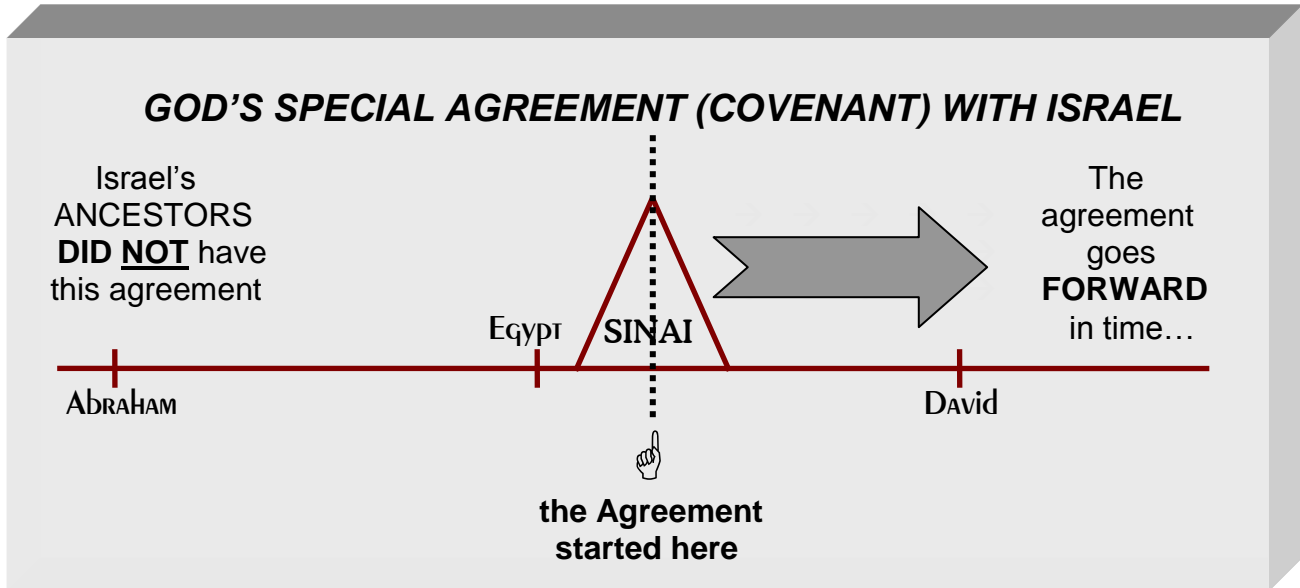
Please keep this sample illustration in mind as you study through the material of this lesson because we will refer back to it from time to time as we proceed.

You might wonder what all of this detail about agreements and how they work has to do with the Scheme of Redemption and Abraham. Actually, this is very important to our research because **there was a very special agreement in the Old Testament of our Bible**. It was between God and the descendants of Abraham, and this agreement has a lot to do with Jesus dying on a cross for the sins of mankind!

God's Special Agreement With Israel

We are first introduced to this agreement in **Exodus 19:1-5**. (Please stop and read this passage.)

It seems that three months after the people of Israel left Egypt, they came to Mount Sinai,¹⁵ where Moses, the leader of the Israelites, acted as a go-between¹⁶ in an agreement between God and the people of Israel. If you look carefully at the text you will notice that the Lord offered the agreement to Israel **with the condition** that **IF** they would obey him **THEN** they would become his "special people, chosen out from all of the people of the earth."



There are additional passages that speak of this agreement. Please read **Deuteronomy 5:2-3**. This passage shows us that the agreement **began there at Mount Sinai** and that it did not exist before that point in time. This means that this agreement did not exist during the time of Adam & Eve, Noah, Abraham, and even those Israelites who died as slaves in Egypt. None of these people had this agreement because it did not exist during their lifetime. Only those alive at Sinai and after could be part of this agreement. The **diagram above** is given to help better understand the situation. Mount Sinai is the key point of reference because it where the agreement started. People who lived and died **BEFORE** Mount Sinai **were NOT included** in the agreement. The agreement started there and continued into the future! Therefore, Abraham the Patriarch was **NOT** included in this agreement, but King David was included.

The two passages we have seen so far have only mentioned the agreement in general terms. What were the **specific details** of the conditions of this agreement? In other words, what were the things that the people had to "obey" so that they could fulfill their portion of the agreement and continue to be God's "special people, chosen from among all the nations of the earth"? Please read **Deuteronomy 4:13**. In this passage, we learn that the agreement included the list of commands more commonly known as "the 10 Commandments".

Please read **Exodus 34:27-28**. This passage states the same thing, but considering the context of what is happening, we must expand our understanding a little. Although this passage specifically mentions "the 10 Commandments", the context tells us that there were more details than just the 10 Commandments. Why can we say this? If we trace Moses' activities, beginning in Exodus chapter 19, we will see that he had many conversations with God while the people of Israel were camped around that mountain. Some of them were in the presence of the people of Israel and some were private—on top of Mount Sinai. During these conversations with Moses, God gave him many different laws and ordinances for the people to follow and all of these were included in the agreement. In fact, someone once counted all of them and found that **the actual number of individual commands included in the agreement is more than 600!** It is very likely that there were many more than just 10 commands written on those two flat stones!

¹⁵ Mount Sinai is also known in the Bible as **Mount Horeb**.

¹⁶ Most Bibles use the term "**mediator**".

A THOUGHT QUESTION:

While we are on the subject of the 10 Commandments, we have a question for you to consider. **“Is Mount Sinai the place where mankind first learned that it is wrong to murder someone?”**

In the Bible we read that it was at Mount Sinai that God gave the commandment, “Thou shall not kill.” Does that mean there was no command against murder BEFORE the giving of the command at Mount Sinai? The answer to that question is, “No!”, because there is evidence in the Bible that **mankind already knew** that murder was wrong long before the people of Israel went to Mount Sinai. We can trace man’s knowledge of murder back to the time just after man left the Garden of Eden. Do you remember the story of Cain and Abel? (If not, then please read Genesis chapter 4.) The Bible says that Cain **“murdered”** his brother, and after he did it, the Bible shows that Cain **knew that he had done something wrong!** Consider his actions very carefully. What did he do **after** he killed Abel? The Bible records that **he hid himself** and then **tried to cover up his crime** when he was confronted by God. Why did he hide? Why try to cover up the fact that he killed his brother?

As you think about this, consider the following point very carefully.

Let us say that a two-year-old child goes into the kitchen and intentionally breaks a glass on the floor **for the first time in his life**. He laughs and perhaps even looks for another glass to break because 1) he likes the sound of the breaking glass and 2) because he does not know that breaking glasses on the floor is “wrong”. He does not even try to avoid stepping on the broken glass and cutting his feet, **because he does this act in complete ignorance!** If the parents come into the kitchen what do they do? Of course, they immediately rescue the child but then they also teach the child a lesson from the event so that the child will, **from that time forward**, know that breaking glasses is wrong! However, **because** the child is innocent and ignorant, the parents’ reaction toward the child’s behavior is not **anger** at disobedience.

However, let us consider a different situation. Suppose that **a sixteen-year-old** child walks into the kitchen, takes a glass off the shelf, and intentionally breaks it on the floor. What does he do? He immediately looks around to make sure that no one saw what happened and then quickly sweeps up the pieces and throws them in the trash, hoping that no one saw or heard what happened. He also prepares a “good story” to explain to his parents how that glass was broken **just in case** his action is discovered. When the parents discover what happened what will they do? Will they act the same as they did for the two-year-old? No, they will not. They will become very angry, disappointed, and filled with disbelief because the sixteen-year-old **KNOWS** that it is “wrong” to break glasses on the floor. He is definitely **NOT ignorant!** He **knew** it was wrong and he **knew** he would be in trouble if his crime was discovered.

If we return to the story of Cain and Abel, which of these two broken glass situations best matches what Cain did after he killed Abel, the two-year-old or the sixteen-year-old? Cain’s actions match the sixteen-year-old and show that he had **a prior knowledge** regarding the evils of murder. **His actions show that he KNEW that what he had done was wrong!** This means that, even though we do not have a record of it, there was already at that time a law from God prohibiting murder, and **Cain KNEW this law!**

If there was already a prohibition against murder at the time when Cain killed Abel, then what about the other “commandments” that were given at Mount Sinai? Is it possible that they also already existed BEFORE Mount Sinai? Other stories found in the book of Genesis show that many of the other commands were already known by the people. It seems likely that the only one of the 10 Commandments that was **NEW information** for the people at the time of Sinai was the one mentioning the keeping of the Sabbath. *(To confirm that this statement is true please stop here and read **Nehemiah 9:14** and notice that the text says that God “made known” to Israel the teaching about the Sabbath at Mount Sinai! That has to mean that **they did not know about the Sabbath before** Mount Sinai.)*

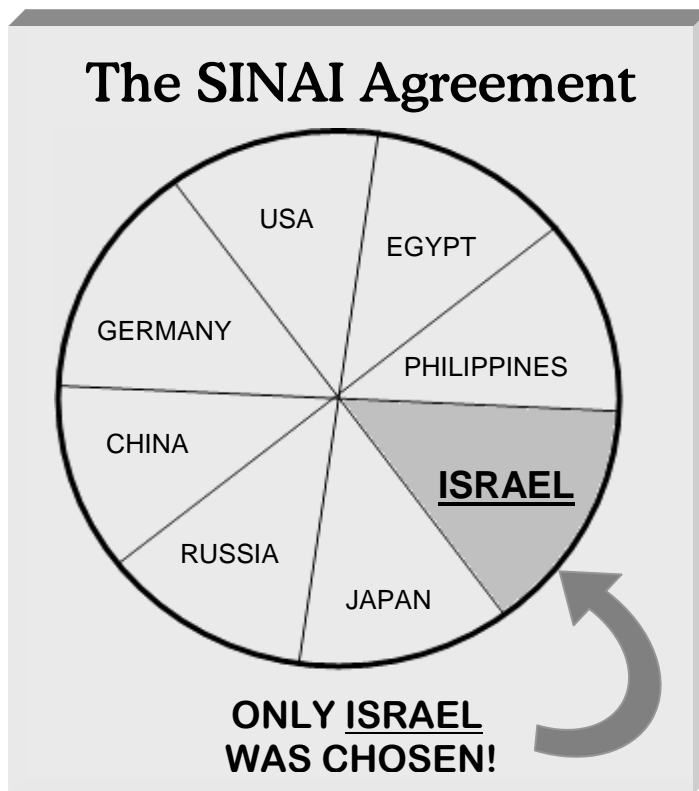
Therefore, **WHY** did God give the Israelites the 10 Commandments if it was not to reveal **NEW instructions** to the people? The 10 Commandments were **NOT** given because they represented **NEW instructions**; rather, they were given because with these commands the God of heaven offered a special agreement to a single nation of people with the reward being the status of “special people chosen from among all nations of the earth”! This had not been done before Mount Sinai! *(Remember **Ex. 19:5**. If the people of Israel would keep the agreement then they would be the special people of God.)*

So what does this mean? **Murder was wrong a long time before** there were the “10 Commandments” and, also, that **if there were suddenly no longer** any “10 Commandments” then **that would not mean that murder, adultery, and lying would suddenly become “legal”!** Of course, they would not!

WHO Was Included In This Agreement?

Let us go on to other details in our research about this agreement. **“Were any OTHER nations included in this agreement?”** In searching for an answer, we will begin by reviewing the information learned from all the passages we have already read. **Exodus 19:1-5** indicated that the agreement was **for Israel only** - “special people chosen from all nations of the world” **Exodus 34:27-28** mentioned **only Israel** - “with you [Moses] and Israel”. Finally, in **Deuteronomy 5:2-3** we saw that the agreement was **only with the ones who were “alive” at Mount Horeb**.

Were there any other people present there at Mount Sinai other than the people of Israel? No, there were not.



We will now look at some additional passages that speak of this matter and see what else we can find. Please read **Deuteronomy 7:6**. This is part of a speech made by Moses to the people of Israel. Notice that he once again indicates that the agreement was **with Israel ONLY** and that God chose the Israelite people “out of all the nations of the earth”. If we search further into the Old Testament books, we find that the understanding on this matter does not change. Please read **Psalms 147:19-20**. This passage is very precise and states that God **did not** reveal his laws to **any other nation**. Even when we arrive at the last book of the Old Testament, the Book of Malachi, nothing has changed. Please read **Malachi 4:4**. Here we find a reminder for the people of Israel to remember the Law of Moses¹⁷ and mentions it as being, “for **all ISRAEL**”, not for all the nations of the earth!

Whether we like it or not, God chose the nation of Israel to be the exclusive recipient of his special agreement! In much the same way, remember that I **chose YOUR** construction company to build my house and when I did

that, I **rejected** the other companies. They **were not invited** to be included in our agreement. They were **left out** of any arrangements between us, **even if they sincerely WANTED to be included**. I **CHOOSE YOU!** That was my right and in the same way, God **CHOOSE ISRAEL** to be included in the Sinai agreement. **He chose ONLY Israel! All other nations were rejected!**

WHY Did God Choose Only Israel?

Since God rejected the other nations of that time, we need to go farther in our research and ask, **“WHY DID GOD MAKE THE AGREEMENT ONLY WITH ISRAEL?”** After all, we are told in other places in the Bible that God **wants ALL people to be saved** and that **he does not show favoritism toward anyone**. Why, then, would God make an agreement, which determined who **would** be accepted as his “special people” and then offer that agreement only to Israel? This action does not sound very fair to the other nations. Surely, there must be an explanation.

Do you remember back in **Genesis 12:1-2**, where God made some promises to Abraham? The answer to our question has something to do with those promises. Please read **Deuteronomy 7:6-8**. Here, Moses is making a speech to the people of Israel and as he speaks, he mentions **two reasons** why God chose Israel as his people. **First**, he points out that it is because **God LOVES them**, and, **second**, because **God is keeping the promise made to Abraham** (and passed to Isaac and Jacob). From this, we can conclude that one important reason why God did this for Israel was because of the promise to Abraham back in Genesis chapter 12.

Of course, there is nothing wrong with this. In fact, it is a comfort to know that God keeps his promises! However, it is still a little disturbing to think that God would discriminate against **innocent nations** in order to keep a promise. There **MUST** be more to learn about the situation!

¹⁷ In later Old Testament times, and in the New Testament, the Sinai Agreement is often called **“the Law of Moses”** because Moses was the one who received it and gave it to the people of Israel. However, it was NOT a law Moses made up.

We need to continue reading Moses' speech. Please read **Deuteronomy 7:9-11**. Moses explains how God evaluates people. He said that God accepts people who love him and keep his commands, but punishes those who hate him and do not obey. Of course, this is not surprising because all the other prophets of God also state this same point as being one of the consistent characteristics of God throughout time! God is FAIR! This is an important point for our study because it indicates that **IF** God is going to reject someone then they must have done something to go against him.

With this in mind, please read **Deuteronomy 9:4-5**. Moses makes another speech to the people of Israel and speaks about this very point and how it relates to the "other nations" of that time. He tells the people of Israel that God **did not choose them because they were "so good"** but rather, **because the other nations were "so bad"**. This is the evidence we have been searching for! It seems that **during this period of history**, Israel might very well have been the only "nation" that believed in God. We know from the details revealed in the history books of the Old Testament that the other nations, which Israel would eventually destroy or kick out from their "promised Land", were people who followed all kinds of different gods, but NOT ONE of them followed the one true God! Therefore, God was not showing favoritism when he chose Israel. He was simply offering the agreement to those who believed in him! That is fair!

We can easily confirm what Moses said about the way those other nations lived by reading passages like **Deuteronomy 18:12** and **Leviticus 18:24-25**.

Summary:

God made a special agreement with the nation of Israel. It was for Israel **ONLY** and started at Mount Sinai. It was **CONDITIONAL** and contained more than 600 individual laws and regulations. It was given to Israel because of the promise God made to Abraham, and, because the other nations of that time did not believe in God.

We have several other questions that need to be answered, but we will stop for now. As we prepare for the next lesson, think about this question: "**How long was the agreement supposed to last?**"

A FINAL THOUGHT QUESTION FOR THIS LESSON:

"Are WE to keep the 10 Commandments TODAY?"

If we consider the common belief found in most "Christian" religious groups today, then this seems like the correct answer should be, "**YES! Of course we are supposed to keep the 10 Commandments!**" However, is "**YES!**" really the correct answer?

We have seen a lot of evidence in this lesson and, unless we find either, an **amendment to the Sinai agreement from God**, or, a **different agreement from God**, that says ALL NATIONS are to keep the 10 Commandments, then the answer to the question **must be, "NO!"**, because the evidence we found shows that the 10 Commandments were part of an agreement for Israel. **NO OTHER NATIONS WERE INCLUDED!**

A person today might come to believe that there is a God, have a desire to serve him, and, finding the 10 Commandments written in the Old Testament, decide to follow them because he reads, in **Exodus 19:5**, that if these are kept faithfully then the result will be the status of being one of God's "chosen people"! A person cannot, however, simply invite themselves to join this agreement, keep the Commandments, and expect to be accepted by God any more than a construction worker who works for a different company can come to our construction site, desire to join because he needs the work, start working with our crew, and then expect me to have to pay him. Agreements do not work that way!

We must remember that the 10 Commandments were part of an agreement and that the agreement included not ONLY the 10 Commandments, but **more than 600 laws and regulations!** If you say that we must keep the 10, then **we must ALSO keep the rest of the 600** because it was all given as one agreement.

Therefore, unless we find an explanation somewhere in the Bible that expands the recipients of the Sinai agreement beyond Israel, then **the only nation** that was **EVER given the 10 Commandments Israel**. (PLEASE do not forget what we found written in **Psalms 147!**) Other nations cannot simply join the agreement without God inviting them. Contracts do not work that way!

Before proceeding, answer the following test questions for Lesson 2:

Each of the following questions has several possible answers. Read each question and review the lesson material carefully. Choose the answer that best fits the question and fill in the CIRCLE for that answer on the answer sheet.

26. The man that God originally made the “great nation” promise to was
- Abraham.
 - Isaac.
 - Jacob.
 - Moses.
27. The word **covenant** means the same as
- testament.
 - contract.
 - agreement.
 - All of the above.
28. The kind of agreement that includes an “IF..., THEN...” statement is called
- a will.
 - a conditional agreement.
 - a land title.
 - the 10 Commandments.
29. The word **patriarch** means
- brother.
 - mother.
 - uncle.
 - father.
30. TRUE or FALSE: Our **sample agreement** was for the purpose of building a house.
- True
 - False
31. TRUE or FALSE: Once an agreement has been finalized, people who were not **originally included** can simply join themselves in the agreement and receive the benefits.
- True
 - False
32. TRUE or FALSE: If an agreement is violated, then it has to be cancelled **immediately**.
- True
 - False
33. TRUE or FALSE: Mount Sinai and Mount Horeb are the **same place**.
- True
 - False
34. The one who represented Israel in the negotiations for their agreement was
- Abraham.
 - Isaac.
 - Jacob.
 - Moses.
35. TRUE or FALSE: God made the Mount Sinai agreement with **ALL nations** of the world.
- True
 - False
36. Which of the choices below **is not** a reason why God chose only Israel to be included in the Sinai agreement.
- God loved the people of Israel.
 - The other nations were evil.
 - God made a promise to Israel's ancestors.
 - Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden.
37. When did God make his agreement with the nation of Israel?
- Right after Adam and Eve were sent out of the Garden of Eden.
 - A little more than three months after Israel was released from slavery in Egypt.
 - During the time of Abraham.
 - During the time of King David.
38. TRUE or FALSE: A **mediator** is a person who serves as a go-between for people.
- True
 - False
39. TRUE or FALSE: Abraham lived **during** the time of the Mount Sinai agreement.
- True
 - False
40. TRUE or FALSE: King David lived **during** the time of the Mount Sinai agreement.
- True
 - False
41. The **specific details** of the Mount Sinai agreement included
- the 10 Commandments.
 - more than 600 individual laws and regulations.
 - Both A and B.
 - None of the above.

42. TRUE or FALSE: Murder was wrong **a long time before** the Commandment was given at Mount Sinai.
- True
 - False
43. According to **Nehemiah 9:14**, what was the one Commandment that was revealed for the first time to the people at Mount Sinai?
- The one about lying.
 - The one about stealing
 - The one about murder.
 - The one about the Sabbath Day.
44. The passage that clearly **shows us the CONDITION** of the Mount Sinai agreement between God and Israel is
- Genesis 12:1-3.
 - Exodus 19:1-5.
 - Exodus 34:27-28.
 - Deuteronomy 5:2-3.
45. What did **Psalms 147:19-20** add to our study about the Mount Sinai agreement?
- It showed us that no other nations were given the agreement.
 - It said that Israelites who lived before Sinai were not included in the agreement.
 - It showed us that Israel was chosen because they were a small nation.
 - It told us that Moses was the go-between for the people of Israel.
46. TRUE or FALSE: The fact that God made the Mount Sinai agreement with only Israel **proves** that he shows favoritism.
- True
 - False
47. TRUE or FALSE: God **was fair** when he rejected all the other nations from being part of the Mount Sinai agreement.
- True
 - False
48. What did the passage **Deuteronomy 9:4-5** add to our study about the Mount Sinai agreement?
- It showed us that the people of Israel were slaves before they came to Mount Sinai.
 - It said that Israelites who lived before Sinai were not included in the agreement.
 - It showed us that God rejected the other nations because they were bad people.
 - It told us that Moses was chosen to lead the people of Israel.
49. What did the passage **Leviticus 18:24-25** add to our study about the Mount Sinai agreement?
- It showed us that God rejected the other nations because they were bad people.
 - It showed us that the people of Israel were slaves before they came to Mount Sinai.
 - It said that Israelites who lived before Sinai were not included in the agreement.
 - It told us that Moses was chosen to lead the people of Israel.
50. TRUE or FALSE: **People today** should keep the 10 Commandments because they are for **ALL nations** of the world.
- True
 - False

LESSON THREE

The SCHEME of REDEMPTION (Part 3)

Welcome back! We are in the middle of a very interesting study about the agreement God made with the nation of Israel. We learned that this agreement made them God's special people and that they were the only nation who had this status. We also learned that the agreement was conditional and built around more than 600 laws and regulations, of which the "10 Commandments" are the most well known in religion today. The agreement was for Israel **ONLY** and no other nation was included! We also learned that God made this agreement with Israel because 1) he loved them and was keeping the promise he made to Abraham, and 2) the other nations believed in other gods and did evil things in their lives.

The most important thing to remember at this point in this study, so far, is that this was the first time in recorded history where God took his laws, packaged them into a contract, and offered them to a single nation with the condition that **IF** they fulfilled their portion **THEN** they would be his special people. Israel accepted the offer and became the "chosen people" of God.

Even though we have covered most of the basic details of this agreement, we still need to study about the **TERMINATION** of the agreement. To do this, we will look at the history of Israel during the time of the agreement and see what happened to them.

How Long Was The Agreement To Continue?

To answer this question we must review what we learned about Israel's special agreement in our previous lesson. Remember that their agreement was **CONDITIONAL**. (*IF..., THEN...*) As long as Israel would be faithful in their portion of the agreement then God would be faithful in his portion. There was no time limitation mentioned in any of the passages we studied and so it had the **POTENTIAL** for continuing forever! In fact, the people of Israel today claim that their agreement is still continuing and this is the main reason why they claim that the modern land of Israel is supposed to be theirs; by right of an agreement with God.

Is their claim true? **Are they STILL God's ONLY chosen people?** Does the Sinai agreement still exist today? We need to do more research from the Old Testament.

Please turn to and read **Jeremiah 11:3-5**. Here we jump into the future several hundred years after the time of Moses and the Book of Exodus. God has sent his prophet, Jeremiah, with a message. These first few verses review what we already know about the agreement - that it is for Israel as long as they keep it. However, there is more to his message. Please read **Jeremiah 11:6-10**. We discover something here something that is very important to our research. It seems that Israel **HAD BROKEN** the agreement many times and did not remain faithful to their portion. We have no problem understanding this because if you take a careful look throughout the books of the Old Testament, **you will notice MANY times** when Israel did not keep the agreement and God became upset with them. Often, he sent sickness and drought upon them as punishments until they repented of their sins and renewed their commitment to be faithful to what they had promised. There were even times when God used other nations as his instruments to come in and win battles against Israel as punishment for their disobedience! Therefore, this prophet's message is not something Israel is hearing for the first time. However, there **IS** something different in this prophet's message.

Please stop and read **Jeremiah 31:31-34**¹⁸ at least three times. Take a piece of paper and write down the main points mentioned in this passage.

This passage reveals something new. It seems that God **has a limit** to his patience and he has finally reached that limit with Israel! If we list the major points of this passage, we find that 1) God is speaking here about the Sinai agreement, 2) God says that he had taken good care of Israel, 3) Israel had **BROKEN** the Sinai agreement, and 4) therefore, God announces that the agreement is over and that he will make a **NEW AGREEMENT** with Israel at some time in the future.

The NEW AGREEMENT Comes!

Please read **Hebrews 8:6-13** three times. Take a piece of paper and write down the main points mentioned in this passage.

As you read the passage, did any of it sound familiar to you? Yes, it did. In fact, most of it is a quotation of **Jeremiah 31:31-34**. This is very interesting! What does the writer say to his readers? He introduces the idea that Jesus is the **mediator**¹⁹ of the **NEW AGREEMENT**, which he says is a **BETTER** agreement. He says that the **FIRST AGREEMENT** had flaws in it and even shows that the flaw was that the people did not keep their part of the agreement. This supports everything we learned about the history of Israel and their actions under the agreement. As he explains what he means, he then quotes the Jeremiah passage. He ends his explanation by pointing out that when God spoke of a **NEW AGREEMENT** then **the first one became "OLD"** and that anything **OLD** is going to be replaced by the **NEW!**

Perhaps the most important thing we learn from this passage is that God's promise of a **NEW AGREEMENT**, which Jeremiah predicted in his time, **was fulfilled by Christ!** Christ stood between God and the people and he gave the **NEW AGREEMENT**. In Lesson 2 of **Jesus: Man of the Bible** we learned that the Bible is divided into **TWO parts** and

¹⁸ The prophet Jeremiah is often called "the weeping prophet" because his message was so sad. He was the prophet sent to tell Israel that their agreement with God had been cancelled, because God lost his patience with them due to their continued disobedience.

¹⁹ Remember that a **mediator** is a go-between, or a person who helps people in their relationship with one another.

that these two parts are actually two messages²⁰ and that Jesus gave the second message. Now, we learn that these **two messages** were actually **TWO AGREEMENTS** – or **TESTAMENTS!**²¹

Since we now understand that there are **TWO** agreements in the Bible and that **the first one was replaced by the second one** there is a very important question we need to ask.

Is The **NEW AGREEMENT** Going To Be The **SAME** As The Old?

There are many places in the New Testament where we see comparisons between specific details of the first and second agreements. However, we first need to look closer at the message given in **Jeremiah 31** and quoted in **Hebrews 8**. This was God’s original announcement of a future **NEW AGREEMENT**. What are some basic differences mentioned in these passages? We hope that the chart below will help you understand the points a little easier.

From what the two passages tell us, we can see that the **NEW AGREEMENT WILL NOT** simply be a revision or expansion of the **OLD AGREEMENT**. Jeremiah mentions specifically that the new one “**will not be like the agreement I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand and lead them out of Egypt**”. How will the **NEW AGREEMENT** be different? There are two areas mentioned in the text.

God said something about the laws of the **NEW AGREEMENT** being **written on the heart**. We need to first stop and think about the laws of the **OLD AGREEMENT**. Where were they written? They were written **on tables of stone**. We therefore can conclude that the laws of the **NEW AGREEMENT** are not going to be on tables of stone! However, it is not very likely that this actually means the laws will be “physically” written on a person’s heart because that would not

help the person much. Therefore, it must be speaking in a figurative way. In figurative language, when we speak of something being on a person’s heart, we usually mean that it is something that is special and important to the person. The way this applies to what God said about the laws of his **NEW AGREEMENT** is not difficult to understand. When laws are only words written on paper (or stone) then people will read them and follow them, but often they only follow them when some authority is watching. However, if laws are **written on a person’s heart** then the person considers them to be special and important and they will obey those laws no matter if an authority is watching or not. Laws that are written on the heart of a person become a part of who that person is! And they help shape and mold how that person thinks!

OLD AGREEMENT		NEW AGREEMENT
Mediator		BETTER Mediator
Promises	↔	BETTER Promises
Written on tables of Stone	↔	Written on the Heart
Enter First then Learn	↔	Learn First then Enter

If we closely examine the laws of the **OLD AGREEMENT**, we notice they emphasized the **EXTERNAL ACTIONS** of a person. It was possible for people to have evil hearts and still do what the law required. It was possible, for example, for a person to have the heart of a murderer and not be guilty of murder, because, under the first agreement, a person could only be considered guilty of murder if he or she actually did the act of murder. The **NEW AGREEMENT** is very different! It emphasizes the **INTERNAL THOUGHTS** of a person. This is a very good thing because we know that the **REAL PROBLEM** inside of a person is not their actions, but their thoughts.²² We know that a person’s actions **come from** the person’s thoughts. Therefore, the only way to control the actions of a person is to **first** control the thoughts!

Notice the differences between the following **OLD AGREEMENT** teachings and those of Christ in the **NEW AGREEMENT!**

Please read **Mathew 5:21-22**. What is the difference between the **OLD AGREEMENT** teaching and the teaching in the **NEW**? The “commandment” only prohibited **the act** of murder. If you thought about killing someone, you were not guilty off anything. On the other hand, under the **NEW AGREEMENT**, a person can be guilty of murder without ever touching the victim! That is very different from the original commandment!

²⁰ We read and discussed **Hebrews 1:1-2**, where we learned that the two parts of the Bible are two messages from God given in different times, through different people, and to different recipients.

²¹ This is where the term Old **TESTAMENT** and New **TESTAMENT** come from. Please go back and review Footnote #9.

²² This is what we learned in **James 1:12-15!**

Another example of this is found in **Mathew 5:27-28**. What is the 10 Commandment Jesus speaks about this time? **ADULTERY!** Once again, we see that the original commandment only mentions **the ACT** and does not say anything about the **THOUGHTS!** However, Jesus emphasizes the **THOUGHTS** and not just the action itself. This is very different from the **FIRST AGREEMENT**.

If we go deeper into the matter, we see passages like **Romans 12:1-2**. Please stop and read this passage carefully, get a piece of paper, and list the major points. He explains to us that the main goal of Christianity is to get us to offer our lives as “living sacrifices” to God. While we will study this idea in detail in future lessons we can easily understand that this “living sacrifice” is another figurative statement. God does not say that we should physically kill ourselves! Verse 2 clearly explains what the “living sacrifice” is. It tells us to **CHANGE THE WAY WE THINK** and that if we do this then we will become “transformed”! We “sacrifice” our old self and become someone new and different!

Another important passage that speaks about “our thoughts” is **Romans 8:5-8**. Please stop and read this passage carefully, get a piece of paper, and list the main points. Here we learn that the way to eliminate sin in our lives is through changing the **THOUGHTS** inside of minds. A person acts according to the way they think and so a mind that is not focused upon the things of God cannot live a life of service to God. It brings out the relationship between thought and action, and shows us that the beginning point of action is the **THOUGHT!** Changing a person’s thoughts is what the **NEW AGREEMENT** laws are designed to accomplish and this is what God meant when he said that they would be written on the hearts of the people!

A second major difference that is described in the Jeremiah announcement is that it will no longer be necessary for the people to teach other people who are already included in the **NEW AGREEMENT** to “**know the Lord**” because everyone in the Agreement will already know the Lord! What does this mean? Since we have no explanation we can only guess, but if we make a careful analysis of the details that we discovered about the **OLD AGREEMENT** we can already see one possible application.

How did a person become a part of the **OLD AGREEMENT**, and **when** did this happen? Since you had to be an Israelite to be part of that agreement then that happened when an Israelite baby was born! This means that people became part of the agreement **BEFORE** they actually knew and understood their responsibilities as participants of the agreement! It therefore became necessary for the other (older) Israelites to **TEACH** them their responsibilities as they grew so that they would know what they were supposed to do. Therefore, under the **OLD AGREEMENT**, it could be said that **a person entered into the agreement first and then learned about it later!**

It seems that this will no longer be the case for the **NEW AGREEMENT!** Every person who enters this agreement will already know their responsibilities **BEFORE** they become part of it! Therefore, in the **NEW AGREEMENT**, **a person will know first and then enter!**

If you consider what we have learned in this lesson, you will agree that these two agreements are as different as night is different from day. The 10 Commandments have no place in the **NEW AGREEMENT**. Instead, **WE SEE** Jesus building a new idea of morality! He **CHANGES** the ideas represented by the original commandments so much that the original wording of the original commandments do not adequately communicate the teaching of the **NEW AGREEMENT**. Besides that, Jesus only specifically refers to **TWO** “commandments” inside his teachings. **(Please read Matthew 22:36-40.)**

Still, many sincere people in religion today believe that the “10 Commandments” are the **moral foundation** of Christianity and they insist that people today should devote themselves to memorizing and following these Commandments! However, as we discovered in our discussions about contracts and agreements, the 10 Commandments were not given by God for educating mankind about morality. With the exception of the command about the Sabbath, there was nothing in the 10 Commandments that mankind did not already know **BEFORE** the time of Mount Sinai! Please do not forget that the 10 Commandments were **PACKAGED** together by God to form an agreement, that this “package” contained some 600 PLUS laws and regulations, and that this “package” was offered to **ONLY** Israel! **NO OTHER NATION RECEIVED THE MOUNT SINAI AGREEMENT!** In all fairness to context, if a person wants to bring the 10 Commandments over from the **OLD AGREEMENT**, wouldn’t they also have to bring the other laws with it since it was all **ONE package?** Today, many people try to go around this difficulty by simply making a distinct separation between the 10 Commandments, which they call “**the moral law**” and all of the other laws, which they call “**the ceremonial law**”. According to their teachings, only the **ceremonial law** (the sacrifices and the priesthood) has passed away! They say that the **moral law** (the 10 Commandments) still remains inside of the **NEW AGREEMENT!** In response, we must ask where the Bible teaches this! There is no such teaching in the Bible! The Bible never divides the 600 PLUS laws and regulations into these two groupings! The Bible does not teach that the **ceremonial law**, of the **OLD AGREEMENT**, **has passed away** and that the **moral law**, of the **OLD AGREEMENT**, remains today and that it has been expanded to include **ALL NATIONS** of the world!

One of the great difficulties in saying that the 10 Commandments are for all people today is regarding the commandment that speaks of keeping of the Sabbath? How can this fit into the practice we see of **NEW AGREEMENT** people meeting together on SUNDAY? The Sabbath Day is Saturday, not Sunday and this fact cannot be changed, and yet it is amazing to see that people will simply say, "The church changed the Sabbath Day to Sunday." We learned in our first lessons of **Jesus: Man of the Bible** that no person has the authority to change the things God has said. Therefore, if it is true that the Sabbath Day was changed, then where can we find this **in the Bible**? We cannot and more than that, we found all of those warnings from the early writers telling their people **NOT TO CHANGE** the original message - **even if angels might come down from heaven** and tell them something different from the original message they received. If it was true that God changed the Sabbath Day from Saturday to Sunday, we would be able to read about that in the pages of the New Testament. The fact that we do not read any such teaching is proof that the Sabbath Day remained the same in the time of the New Testament and that the practice of people in the **NEW AGREEMENT** meeting together on Sunday is something completely different from the Sabbath Day of the 10 Commandments! (We will study about the Sunday meeting in our later lessons.)

The modern teaching, that the 10 Commandments are included inside the **NEW AGREEMENT**, is another example of how man has chosen to do things his way instead of taking the time to research from God's word to find and understand the explanation God has given in his book. Please remember what we learned about man doing things in a way that **seems right** to him! (**Proverbs 14:12**)

WHO Can Join The **NEW AGREEMENT**?

By now, we hope that your understanding of the **TWO agreements** of the Bible is becoming clear. The only thing that still remains in our study for this lesson is to see **WHO** can be part of this **NEW AGREEMENT**. The first agreement was very exclusive - for Israel only - and we already know from the passages we studied in Jeremiah and Hebrews that Israel will also be invited to join the **second** agreement. **What about the OTHER nations?** Will they also be invited to join?

The answer to this is found in a letter that Paul wrote to a group of Christians living in the Gentile city of Ephesus. Please read **Ephesians 2:11-22** three times very carefully, take a piece of paper, and list the major points.

This passage is important because of who the readers of the book were. The writer refers to them as "Gentiles". Who were the Gentiles? This word and the word "Jew" were groupings of people that represented **the membership** in the **OLD AGREEMENT**. The "Jews" were the people of Israel, the ones who had the agreement, while the "Gentiles" were the people of all the other nations, those who did not have the agreement! If we understand these words then the meaning of the passage is very easy to understand.

In this passage, we know that Paul is speaking to Christians who come from Gentile families and he begins by taking them back to the time in history when the **OLD AGREEMENT** was still present. He speaks to them about all the things that **WE HAVE LEARNED** in our research.

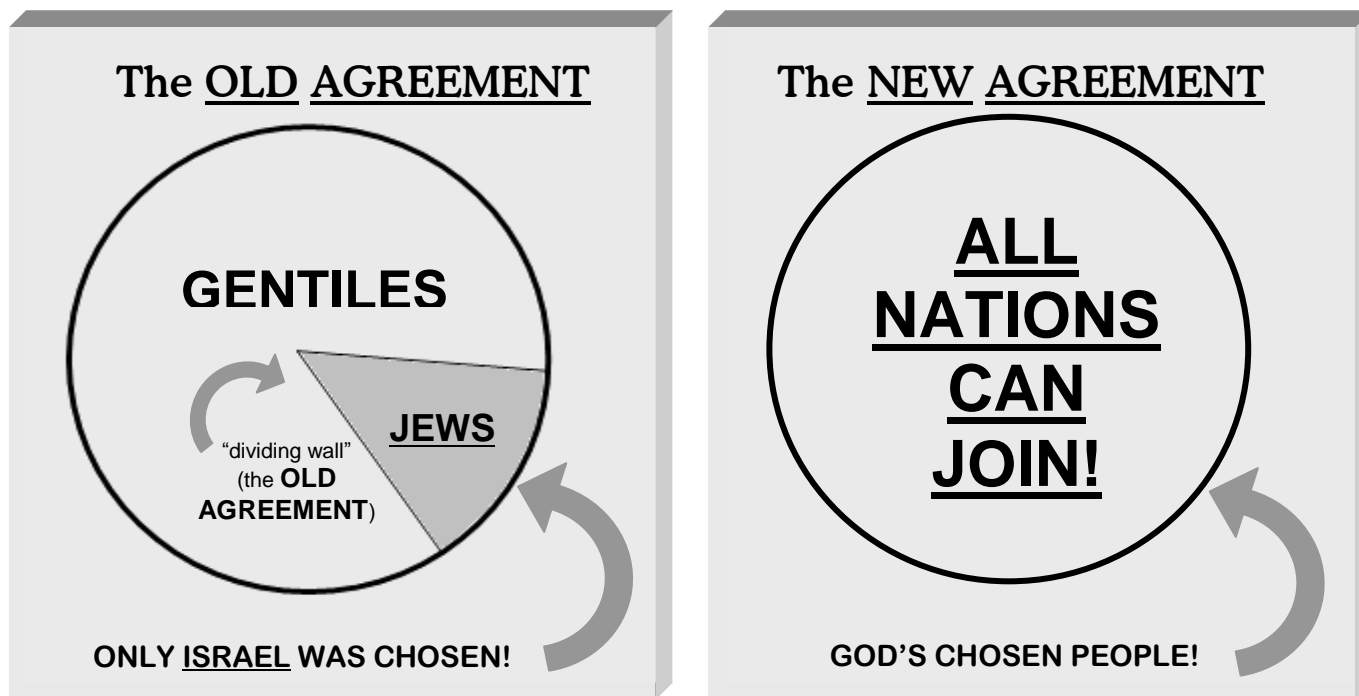
He points out that under the **OLD AGREEMENT**, Gentiles were people who were "strangers", "without hope", and "without God"²³ in the world. However, he continues by explaining that Gentiles are very fortunate **NOW** because Christ came and helped them. He helped them by "taking away" that thing, which divided between the Gentiles and the Jews. That thing **was like a great wall** between them. **What was that dividing wall?** Paul explains that the dividing wall was the **OLD AGREEMENT** – with all of its commands and regulations. The problem was that the Jews had the agreement and the Gentiles did not have it. Only those who had the agreement could be God's people and so this is why the Gentiles did not have God. Paul says that Jesus took that dividing wall (the **OLD AGREEMENT**) away with his death on the cross.

He went on to say that the result of Christ's death was a situation where God no longer chooses his people by "nationality". There are no longer these groupings of the people of the world, called Jews and Gentiles, and that **anyone from any nation can be part of the NEW AGREEMENT!** He says that this only happened because Jesus came and died! When he died, the **OLD AGREEMENT** died with him and the **NEW AGREEMENT** was born!

His point is very simple. **Look at the diagram at the top of the next page.** If the **OLD AGREEMENT** was still existing, then those Gentile people would still be hopeless and without God. However, **IT IS NOT still existing** and so instead of being "strangers", Paul says that the Gentiles are now "fellow citizens"!

²³ In the original language, he uses the word *atheist*! An *atheist* is a person who has no god!

This is one reason why the writer of Hebrews said that the **NEW AGREEMENT**, which Jesus has, is a much **BETTER** one! It is certainly much better for **US TODAY** because people who are not Jews **CAN** join this agreement! They were left out of the **OLD AGREEMENT** because that agreement was only given to the Jews!



In our next lesson, the last one on the topic of the “Scheme of Redemption”, we will continue our comparison between the two agreements and learn even **MORE** amazing things!

Before proceeding, answer the following test questions for Lesson 3:

Each of the following questions has several possible answers. Read each question and review the lesson material carefully. Choose the answer that best fits the question and fill in the CIRCLE for that answer on the answer sheet.

- 51. TRUE or FALSE: The Agreement that God made with the Israel **also included** other nations.
 - a) True
 - b) False
- 52. **How long** was the agreement that God made with Israel supposed to last?
 - a) Until the nation found a king.
 - b) Until they reached the promised land.
 - c) As long as Israel was faithful.
 - d) As long as God wanted it to.
- 53. Which of the following statements **is NOT** found in **Jeremiah 11:3-5**?
 - a) Bad things will happen to any person that does not obey the Agreement
 - b) God made the agreement with Israel when he brought them out of Egypt.
 - c) God told the people that if they obey and did his commandments they would be his people.
 - d) God said this agreement will never end no matter what they did.
- 54. Which of the following statements **is NOT** found in **Jeremiah 11:6-10**?
 - a) God gave a warning to their ancestors
 - b) Their ancestors listened to God and obeyed all his commandments.
 - c) Their ancestors refused to listen to God’s message.
 - d) The family of Israel and the family of Judah have broken the Agreement God made with their ancestors.
- 55. TRUE or FALSE: The Israelites have **ALWAYS** kept the Agreement God made with them.
 - a) True
 - b) False

56. Which of the following statements **IS** found In **Jeremiah 31:31-34**?
- The time is coming when I will make a **NEW AGREEMENT** with the family of Israel...
 - I will put my teachings in their minds and I will write them on their hearts...
 - All people from the least to the greatest will know me...
 - All of the above.
57. TRUE or FALSE: In **Hebrews 8:6-13**, the writer of the book says that the work of Jesus **is the same** as the work given to the priests.
- True
 - False
58. What does **Hebrews 8:6-13** say about the **NEW AGREEMENT**?
- It is much greater than the old one.
 - It is based on better promises than the old one.
 - Jesus brought it from God
 - All of the above.
59. According to **Hebrews 8:6-13**, what was **the flaw** in the First Agreement?
- The people did not follow it.
 - It was impossible to follow.
 - It was incomplete.
 - It had too many laws.
60. What is a **mediator**?
- A spokesperson.
 - An enemy.
 - A go-between.
 - None of the above.
61. TRUE or FALSE: The **NEW AGREEMENT** that Jeremiah predicted would come **was fulfilled** by Christ.
- True
 - False
62. When we compare the **OLD AGREEMENT** with the **NEW AGREEMENT** we see that:
- It has a better mediator.
 - It has similar promises.
 - It is written on scrolls.
 - All of the above.
63. The **OLD AGREEMENT** emphasized **external acts** but the **NEW AGREEMENT** emphasizes...
- The internal thoughts of a person.
 - That only what you DO is important.
 - That you must follow the 10 Commandments.
 - None of the above.
64. Which of the following ideas **is NOT** found In **Matthew 5:21-22**?
- If you are angry with someone, you are guilty of sin.
 - You should not call another person a fool.
 - Murder is only consider a sin if you actually kill someone.
 - You should not say bad things about another person.
65. **ROMANS 12:1-2** tells us that we should offer our lives as what?
- An act of obedience to God.
 - An animal sacrifice.
 - An example to others.
 - A living sacrifice.
66. Which of the following **is NOT** found in **Romans 12:1-2**?
- Do not change to be like the people of the world.
 - Change to be like the people of the world.
 - Change inside yourselves with a new way of thinking.
 - Offer your lives as living sacrifice.
67. TRUE or FALSE: **Changing the way we think** can help us to change the way we act.
- True
 - False
68. To become a recipient of the **OLD AGREEMENT** you had to:
- Follow every one of the laws of the **OLD AGREEMENT**.
 - Be born into the Israelite nation.
 - Be a Gentile.
 - None of the above.
69. Which of the following verses contains the **"TWO commandments"** Jesus gives us?
- Matthew 5:27-28
 - Romans 12:1-2
 - Romans 8:5-8
 - Matthew 22:36-40
70. TRUE or FALSE: The **"10 Commandments"** **are included** in the **NEW AGREEMENT**.
- True
 - False
71. Who were the **Gentiles**?
- Sinful people.
 - People of all nations who were not Jews.
 - The cousins of the Jews.
 - The people under the **OLD AGREEMENT**.

72. **Who** can be part of the **NEW AGREEMENT**?

- a) The Jews.
- b) The Gentiles.
- c) All nations.
- d) All of the above

73. In **Ephesians 2:11-22** we read that **BEFORE Christ came**, the Gentiles...

- a) Had no hope.
- b) Were without Christ.
- c) Were far away from God.
- d) All of the above.

74. What was **the thing that separated** the Jews and Gentiles before Christ came?

- a) The peoples hatred for one another.
- b) Their nationality.
- c) Their lack of faith.
- d) The **OLD AGREEMENT** (The Law).

75. Because Christ came, **ALL** people can now have a relationship with God.

- a) True
- b) False

LESSON FOUR

The SCHEME of REDEMPTION (Part 4)

In our previous two lessons, we studied about the **special AGREEMENT** that God made with the people of Israel and we discovered that;

- 1) the agreement was **for Israel ONLY**,
- 2) the agreement was for only the Israelites who were alive at Mount Sinai and their children who would live after them,
- 3) the agreement was a conditional one, meaning that **IF** the people of Israel would keep it, **THEN** they would continue to be God's special people,
- 4) the specifics of what Israel was to obey involved a complex list of over 600 rules, laws, and regulations,
- 5) God made this agreement with Israel because he loved them, because he was keeping the promise to their forefathers (**Genesis 12:1-3**), and because the other nations existing at that time were evil,
- 6) even though God did all of these things for Israel they did not keep their agreement and so they were disowned by God and at the end of the Old Testament they were returned to slavery,
- 7) God announced that there would someday be a **NEW AGREEMENT**, which would be for **ALL NATIONS!**
- 8) God fulfilled this promise of the **NEW AGREEMENT through his son, Jesus**, and that Jesus completely put away the **OLD** in order to being in the **NEW!**

That was an amazing study! In this lesson, we will continue where we left off and examine material that will show us that there were other reasons why God gave the **OLD AGREEMENT!**

The OLD AGREEMENT Was Temporary

The writers of the New Testament spent a lot of time talking about the agreement between God and Israel. The books of Galatians and Hebrews are especially important in this area. From them, we can understand many important things about that agreement.

We begin our lesson in the book of Galatians.²⁴ Please read **Galatians 3:24-29** three times, get a piece of paper, and list the main points. Here Paul is talking about something he refers to as "the Law"²⁵. What does he say here about "the Law"? He describes the law as a **guardian**²⁶ whose purpose was to lead people to the time of Christ (faith). The

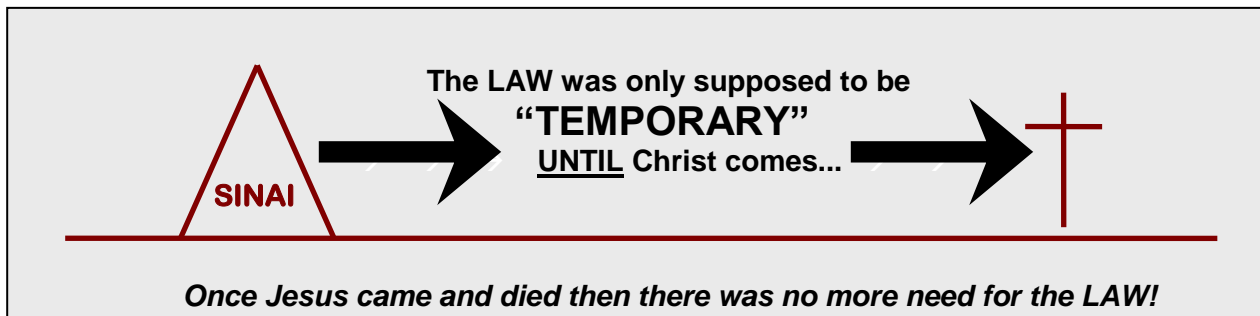
²⁴ This is a letter written to Christians living in different towns located within the geographical region of that time called Galatia. This region was located in the northern part of the modern day country of Turkey.

²⁵ This is a very common term used in the New Testament to represent the Matthew Sinai agreement between God and Israel.

²⁶ The word for "**guardian**" here in the verse is like a baby sitter who watches over a small child who cannot take care of himself. Are baby sitters permanent in the lives of the children they watch over? Do they still watch over the child when he becomes an adult? No! Baby sitters are **TEMPORARY!**

idea here is that **until Christ came**, there was a need for a guardian, but once Christ arrived, the need for that guardian would cease. If the **OLD AGREEMENT** (the Law) was that guardian then once Christ came then there would be no more need for the Law.

This shows that there was purpose for the **OLD AGREEMENT** that went beyond the “great nation” promise God made to Abraham and his choosing Israel as his special people.



What we discover is that God giving Israel their agreement was part of his “**SCHEME of REDEMPTION!**” Please turn once again to **Acts 2:22-23** and review what Peter told the crowd of people. He said that **God had a PLAN**, which he made a long time before Jesus ever came to the earth, and **that PLAN** was for Jesus to come and die! In the book of Galatians, Paul makes a connection between this **PLAN** of God and the **OLD AGREEMENT**. In **Galatians 4:4** he mentions something about a timetable, “**when the time was right**”, suggesting that God **PLANNED** for Jesus to die **at that particular time and in that particular place!**

Okay, so **what part** did the **OLD AGREEMENT** have in **God’s PLAN?** **HOW** did it **guide the people** to Christ? Was it only through the 10 Commandments and the other laws on morality? We need to go deeper in our study!

Forgiveness For Sin In The OLD AGREEMENT

The people in the Old Testament committed many sins! They were told that **their sins made them LOST!**²⁷ **HOW** did they get rid of those sins once they got them? If we go back to the Old Testament, we find some very interesting instructions about this matter. The book of Leviticus, chapters 4-6, contains many details of what we commonly know as “animal sacrifices”. It turns out that sacrificing animals was the way in which the people of Israel were told by God to get rid of their sins. If you read this section, you will notice that **there were different KINDS of sins** and that **each different KIND of sin had a slightly different sacrifice**. The details of the sacrifice ceremony might differ a little from one kind of sin to another but **two things are ALWAYS consistent**. There is always **DEATH** and there is always **BLOOD!** The procedure for getting rid of sin **ALWAYS** included the death of an animal and **ALWAYS** included the placing of the blood of that animal upon a special altar!

We will look closely at one example. Please read **Leviticus 4:27-31** three times, get a piece of paper, and list the main points.

This passage records the details of what to do if a person commits a sin without knowing it and then later realized what he or she had done. The person was instructed to bring a certain animal to the priest, who would then kill it and put its blood upon the altar, Please pay special attention to the portion that says that when the blood of the sacrificed animal was placed upon the special altar then the sin of the person was said to have been paid for! This is how the people of Israel paid for their sins under the **OLD AGREEMENT**.

Animal Sacrifices

Can you imagine what it might have been like to live during that time? **How often did the people have to make these animal sacrifices?** Since each kind of sin had a specific kind of sacrifice to be performed then it would seem that a sacrifice would need to be made **every time a person sinned!**

²⁷ Remember what we read in **Isaiah 59:2!**

The New Testament book of Hebrews helps us better understand just how difficult this was for the people and so we will spend some time researching these details. The passage back in Leviticus mentioned **PRIESTS**. These priests were the ones who had the job of making these sacrifices on behalf of the people. **Hebrews 10:11** tells us that the **priests did their work on a DAILY basis**. It was a bloody and smelly business! The temple was not a beautiful clean quiet place where people could go to meditate and pray. It was filled with the cries of dying animals and the smell of blood and burning flesh. It was a place of death! **It was a place of MUCH death!** Please do not forget that the nation of Israel had a population of over 2,000,000 at any one time throughout their history. Individuals would most likely have to wait in long lines to have their chance to make their sacrifices and receive their forgiveness, and who knows, they might have to stand in line **again** the very next day for the same sin!

What was the cost of sin for the people of Israel living in that time? Each person had to bring their own animal and, unless they raised them, had to buy them from a livestock merchant. If this were happening today, then we would have a very difficult time affording the cost of forgiveness! Suppose that you commit a sin that requires the sacrifice of a goat for the sin offering and suppose that a live healthy goat costs 500.00 Pesos in the market. Let us suppose also that you commit one of these sins every three days and so you will need one goat for your sin offering every three days, month after month during the year! If we add the money needed for all of those goats, then the total cost would come to around 60,500.00 Pesos in a year's time! What if you do something that requires you to sacrifice a larger animal, such as a bull? A live healthy bull will cost around 15,000.00 Pesos in the market! If you only need one bull each month it will still cost you 180,000.00 Pesos for the year! If we add the projected costs for the goats and bulls together, **we would need a yearly budget of 240,500.00**, or right at 20,000.00 each month, **JUST to get the forgiveness of our sins and maintain our relationship with God!** Can you imagine how difficult that would be?

BLOOD: The Only Thing That Can Pay For Sin

Why did God make it so difficult for the people? **Why was it necessary to kill animals as sacrifices for sins?** Why didn't God just ask the people to say that they were sorry or something simple like that? Once again, the book of Hebrews will help us understand.

Please read **Hebrews 9:22** very carefully. This passage tells us that **BLOOD** was very important in the time of the **OLD AGREEMENT** and that **without BLOOD there can be no forgiveness of sin!** We must think carefully about this because it seems that there is **only ONE THING that can get forgiveness of sins and that thing is blood!** If we go back to the time of the **OLD AGREEMENT** and look at some other passages perhaps we can get a clearer picture. Please read **Leviticus 17:11**. This passage speaks about a prohibition from God for eating blood, but in the process of explaining the rule about eating blood, he also explains the relationship between the shedding of blood and the forgiveness of sins. This agrees with what we just read in **Hebrews 9:22**.

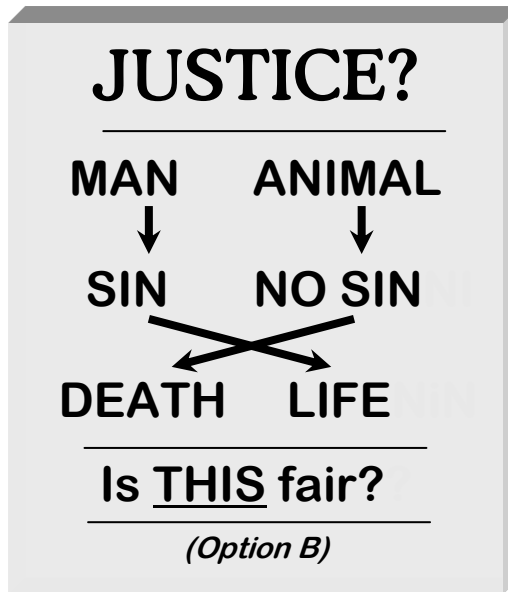
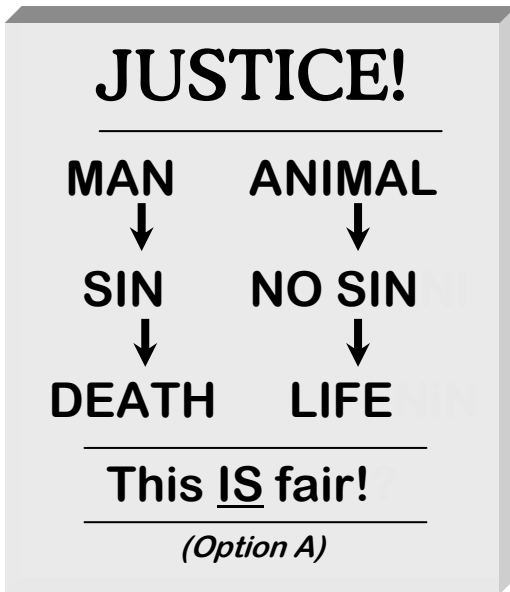
If we summarize what we have seen so far in this lesson, here is what we have. The people committed sins and were instructed by God to kill animals and throw their blood upon a special altar in a special place with the assistance of special priests in order that they could receive the forgiveness of their sins. It was complicated, and very expensive!

The next question we will ask may seem strange. **"Did the blood of the animals really forgive the people's sins?"** Why ask a question like that? After all, didn't God tell the people to offer those sacrifices, and didn't he say to them that if they made the sacrifices that their sins would be forgiven? Nevertheless, THIS is a matter discussed by the writer in the book Hebrews. Let us now look at a very interesting passage where he speaks about those animal sacrifices. Please read **Hebrews 10:1-4** three times, get a piece of paper, and list the main points. He begins by mentioning something about the **OLD AGREEMENT** containing **only a shadow**²⁸ of things to come and not the **reality** of these things. He goes on to suggest that an example of this shadow/reality point is the animal sacrifices. It is surprising to read what he writes as he points out that it is **IMPOSSIBLE** for the blood of those bulls and goats to take away sins! WOW! Isn't this a direct contradiction of what we read earlier in **Leviticus 4:31**? How can this be? What is the problem?

If we stop and follow the reasoning of the writer then the problem is not so difficult to see. The problem with sacrificing animals is **JUSTICE!** Consider the two diagrams on top of the next page as you read on.

²⁸ A **shadow** is a shaded image projected onto a surface by light shining from behind an object. The shaded area has a shape like the object the light shines upon but the shadow **IS NOT** the object, but only a copy of object!

What does justice say? “**The one who does the crime is the one who must be punished!**” This is illustrated in the diagram “Option A”. If a man commits a sin and the punishment is death then justice demands that he die! It is a simple idea. However, if an animal has no sin then he should live! This creates a problem. **Where is the justice in sacrificing animals for the sins of people?**



Consider the diagram “Option B”. An **innocent animal dies as a substitute in place of a guilty human!**

Will justice **accept THIS**?

Certainly NOT, because it is **definitely NOT FAIR** for the animal and the **REAL CRIMINAL** gets away!

Where is the **JUSTICE** in that? Justice demands that if a **HUMAN** commits a sin and if the law says that the punishment for that sin is the shedding of his blood (death) then **the human who committed the sin MUST DIE!** You cannot

satisfy the requirement for **HUMAN blood** by **substituting ANIMAL blood!** **JUSTICE will not accept that!** It must be **HUMAN blood!**

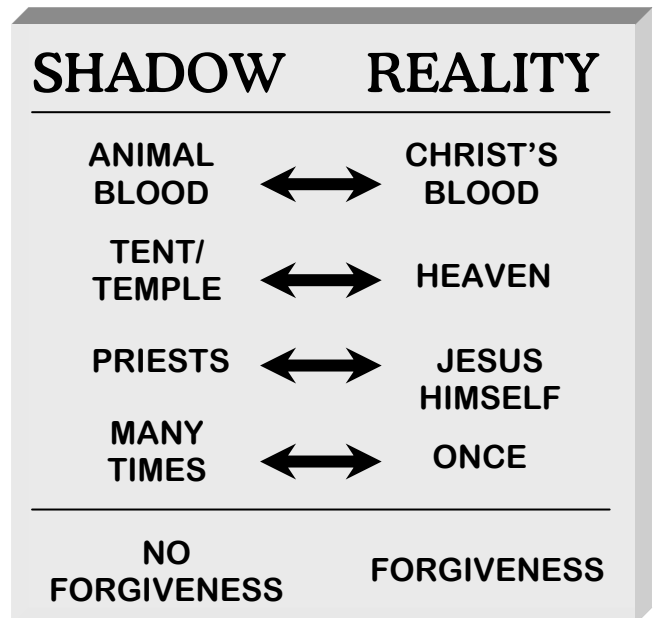
The SHADOW - vs - The REALITY!

How then was the problem of the animal blood solved? We need to go deeper still in our study.

Please turn to **Hebrews 9:11-12** and read it, get your piece of paper, and list the main points mentioned. According to the explanation, the problem of the animal sacrifices is solved with **the death of Jesus**, and it seems logical. With Jesus’ death, we have a **HUMAN** death for human sins, and so it is the right **KIND** of blood!

That sounds good, but what about the sacrifice of Jesus? Our study of the **OLD AGREEMENT** showed that every sin had to have an individual sacrifice. The animal sacrifices were offered again and again – on a daily basis! Therefore, should Jesus also be **sacrificed MANY times** for the many sins of the people? Again, we must go to the writer of Hebrews for the answer. Please read **Hebrews 10:12-18**, get your paper, and record the main points. The most outstanding thing he says is that **the sacrifice of Jesus was “once for all time”!**

Notice also how the writer of Hebrews, in these passages, helps us better understand how the sacrifices of the animals in the **OLD AGREEMENT** were only a “shadow” of what was to come. He mentions the animal blood, and how it was offered in a tent that was made with human hands and he then compares those things to Christ’s human blood that was offered in the real place where God lives.



If we summarize all that the writer of Hebrews says in chapters 8-10 of his book, all the details of the **OLD AGREEMENT** sacrifices represented and symbolized the future event of Christ’s **NEW AGREEMENT** sacrifice! Christ **fulfilled those symbols** and **made them real!** The animal sacrifices were only shadows projected into this world by God’s light shining behind the works that Jesus would some day come

and do! This is what the Hebrew writer was talking about in **10:1**, where he said that **the OLD AGREEMENT was only a shadow of the good things to come.**

There can be **NO forgiveness** through the “shadow” sacrifice of animals, but only through the “real” sacrifice of Jesus!

ONCE FOR ALL!

Notice also that the writer indicates that the result of Jesus’ one-time sacrifice is the **complete** payment and that it brings salvation **for all time**, or as the writer said in **Hebrews 9:12**, “**eternal REDEMPTION!**”

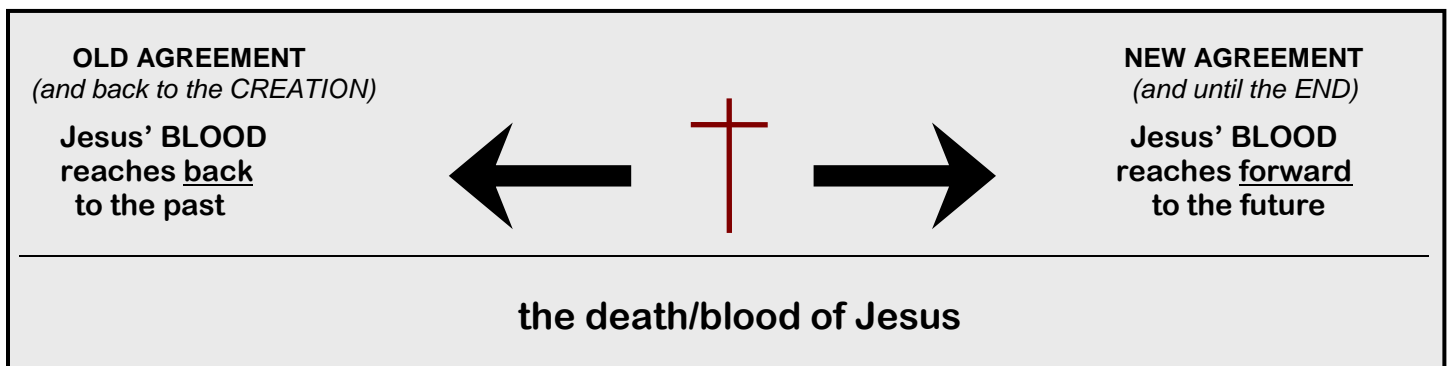
Please read **Hebrews 9:25-28**, get your paper, and list down the main points. This passage echoes the idea that Jesus’ sacrifice was a “**ONE TIME**” sacrifice. In fact, this passage tells us that **IF it was necessary to repeat the sacrifice of Christ** then he would have had to come to the earth in a human body and repeat the sacrifice, **LITERALLY**, again and again **EVER SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD!** However, the writer assures us that Christ died **one** time and that his one single death was enough for all time!²⁹

WHAT HAPPENED To Israel’s Sins?

Before we close this lesson, we still need to answer one final question. “**What happened to the sins of the people of Israel?**” They were told by God to sacrifice animals; however, we have since learned that it is **impossible** for the blood of animals to take away sins – **because of justice!** Therefore, does this **CONTRADICT** what God told the people of Israel in Leviticus? **Were their sins NOT FORGIVEN?** If the sacrifices of the **OLD AGREEMENT** could not forgive the sins of the people then **what happened to their sins?**

Please read **Hebrews 9:15** very carefully!

It seems that the death of Jesus **forgives the sins of the people of the OLD AGREEMENT!** As the diagram below illustrates, aside from Jesus’ death **reaching forward** to those people who would live after him, his death also has some kind of **RETROACTIVE**³⁰ effect - meaning that it **reaches back** to pay for the sins of people who lived before the time he came to the earth and died on the cross!



²⁹ There are some teachers in religion today that claim that the sacrifice that Christ made on the cross was **lacking** something and that he needs to be sacrificed again, and again, every day until the end of time. These same teachers also claim that Jesus taught this and left behind a priesthood to carry out his **continuing sacrifice**. They deny that Jesus must come down physically in the form of a man for these sacrifices. They teach that he only comes down from heaven and becomes present in the form of bread and wine! They say that when this bread and wine are broken and consumed that Jesus is sacrificed! However, the writer of Hebrews is very clear. He insists that **IF** the sacrifice of Christ were lacking in any way then Jesus would have to come back physically again and again and die a real death, ever since the beginning of time and to the end of time! The writer says, however, that the sacrifice of Christ **WAS NOT lacking anything!** It was complete and good enough for all time! Therefore, these modern teachers and their claims are different from what the writer of the book of Hebrews says. Which one will you believe? You cannot accept **BOTH** because they are saying different, and opposite things!

³⁰ This word carries the idea of some condition **reaching backward** to a time before the condition actually came into existence.

SUMMARY: The SCHEME OF REDEMPTION

As we end this series of four lessons, we need to put everything into focus.

SIN came into the world when Adam and Eve **decided** to disobey God! Since that time, all people in all times have been facing temptations of all kinds. However, **God's promise** to man has been there through all generations and **no person has ever been FORCED to sin**. Sin happens in a person's life because **they choose to sin**. They could just as easily have chosen **NOT** to sin.

When a person sins they earn what sin pays; **DEATH!** This death is **separation from God** and unless they can get rid of that separation, **they will be LOST forever**.

However, God does not want people to be lost and so **he made a PLAN**. He made a **PLAN for people to EXCHANGE** their sin for the blood of his own son, Jesus. **He made a "SCHEME OF REDEMPTION!"**

God's plan was put into action over a long time. He used **TWO AGREEMENTS** and **thousands of years** to bring his plan to completion. Remember that the **FIRST AGREEMENT** was a temporary **SHADOW** agreement and was only designed to last **until the time would be right for God to send down his son** to make those shadows become realities! That was God's **PLAN!**

When that time arrived, Jesus came down from heaven and became a human! He became just like us in every way! He lived his life as a human, fought against temptation as a human, he was completely obedient as a human, and he died a human death, **giving his human blood as the real payment for sin to complete God's PLAN!**

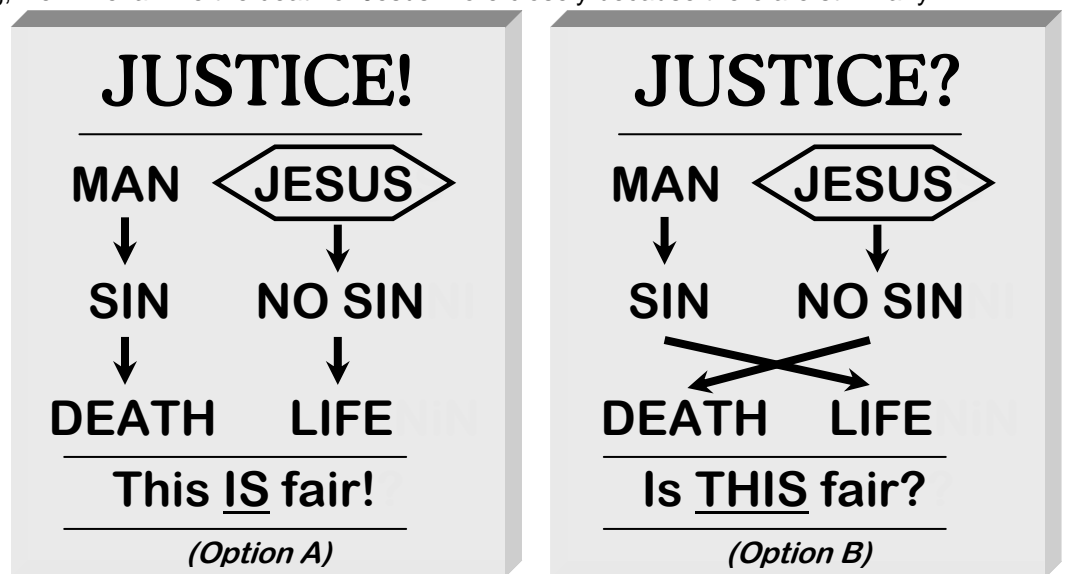
He also brought the **SECOND AGREEMENT**, in which **all people from all nations CAN³¹** become God's chosen people!

Anyone who has their sins forgiven - **in any time** - will have those sins forgiven **through the BLOOD of Jesus!** Why is this so? It is because God has made the rule that states that **ONLY BLOOD TAKES AWAY SIN** and, he made the **PLAN** that **ONLY the specific blood OF JESUS** can pay for sins!

Perhaps we can now better understand passages that many teachers today like to quote when they speak about the subject of man being forgiven of his sins **only through** Christ. **Acts 4:12** says that **there is NO ONE ELSE who can save us** and **1 Timothy 2:4** tells us that **there is only ONE MEDIATOR between God and man**. This is because only Jesus offers the one unique thing that can save us... **HIS BLOOD!**

In our next lesson, Lord willing, we will examine the death of Jesus more closely because there are still many unanswered questions left to explore.

Consider the diagram below. The situation we have with "Option B" is the same as the animal sacrifices, except **JESUS** is in place of the **ANIMAL**. Many teachers today explain that God's **PLAN** was for Jesus to **substitute for us** in death. They say that **HE takes our death so that WE can have his life!** However, if **JUSTICE** will not allow the **substitution of an innocent person** to suffer punishment in place of the guilty one, then how can Jesus (who was



JUSTICE WILL NOT ACCEPT AN INNOCENT TO SUBSTITUTE IN PLACE OF THE GUILTY!

³¹ The **NEW AGREEMENT**, like the **OLD**, is conditional. Just because Jesus died, that does not mean that everyone is automatically saved. We will study about the conditions of the **NEW AGREEMENT** in our remaining lessons of this course.

innocent and sinless) die in the place of man (who is the guilty one)? This is exactly the same problem we had with the animals!

“Option B” IS NOT the answer!

HOW then can Jesus die and his blood pay for the sins that were done by other people in a way that JUSTICE can accept?

Do not worry because there IS an answer to this question in the Bible!

Before proceeding, answer the following test questions for Lesson 4:

Each of the following questions has several possible answers. Read each question and review the lesson material carefully. Choose the answer that best fits the question and fill in the CIRCLE for that answer on the answer sheet.

76. In **Galatians 3:24-29**, Paul describes the LAW as being
- A shadow.
 - A guardian.
 - True.
 - Holy.
77. TRUE or FALSE: The **OLD AGREEMENT** was only **temporary**.
- True.
 - False.
78. According to **Hebrews 9:22**, what is the **ONLY thing** that can take away sin?
- Holy Water.
 - Good works.
 - Blood.
 - Burning candles.
79. **How often** were animal sacrifices made during the time of the **OLD AGREEMENT**?
- Once a year.
 - 2 times each month.
 - As often as a person sinned.
 - Never.
80. According to **Hebrews 10:1**, the **OLD AGREEMENT** is a _____ of the **NEW AGREEMENT**.
- Copy.
 - Shadow.
 - Example.
 - Symbol.
81. **How many times** is it necessary for Jesus to sacrifice himself?
- As often as people sin.
 - Once for all time.
 - 6 times each year.
 - Daily.
82. According to **Hebrews 9:15**, **how** are the sins of the people under the **OLD AGREEMENT** forgiven?
- They are not forgiven.
 - The animal sacrifices they made.
 - Jesus' blood reaches back to pay for them.
 - None of the above.
83. **What** is the thing that removes sin in the **NEW AGREEMENT**?
- Animal blood.
 - Jesus' blood.
 - Mary's intercession.
 - Keeping the 10 Commandments.
84. **What was the job** of a PRIEST in the **OLD AGREEMENT**?
- Blessing newborn babies.
 - Saying Mass.
 - Forgiving people's sins.
 - Offering sacrifices for the people.
85. What were the animal sacrifices **a shadow of**?
- The sacrifice of Christ.
 - The place where God lives.
 - Jesus as a priest.
 - Jesus' blood.
86. What was the blood of the animals **a shadow of**?
- The sacrifice of Christ.
 - The place where God lives.
 - Jesus as a priest.
 - Jesus' blood.
87. What was the Temple **a shadow of**?
- The sacrifice of Christ.
 - The place where God lives.
 - Jesus as a priest.
 - Jesus' blood.

88. What were the Priests a **shadow of**?
- The sacrifice of Christ.
 - The place where God lives.
 - Jesus as a priest.
 - Jesus' blood.
89. TRUE or FALSE: We **are supposed to offer** animal sacrifices in the **NEW AGREEMENT**.
- True
 - False
90. Which of the choices below **satisfies JUSTICE**?
- Innocent animal dies in place of guilty man.
 - Man pays money to receive forgiveness.
 - Guilty man dies for his own sin.
 - None of the above.
91. The animal sacrifices the people of Israel had to make were
- Costly.
 - Required much time.
 - Not able to take away their sins.
 - All of the above.
92. According to **Isaiah 59:2**, **what happens** when we sin?
- We are killed physically.
 - We become separated from God.
 - We must make an animal sacrifice.
 - Jesus must come and die again.
93. TRUE or FALSE: The people of Israel **today** are supposed to make animal sacrifices.
- True.
 - False.
94. **What kind of sin** is mentioned in **Leviticus 4:27-31**?
- Killing someone.
 - A sin you do not know about until later.
 - Lying.
 - Stealing.
95. The **main problem** with animal sacrifices was
- They were costly.
 - They required much time.
 - Justice.
 - None of the above.
96. According to the idea of JUSTICE
- An innocent person can substitute to take the punishment for the guilty person.
 - The one who does the crime is the one who must be punished.
 - Both A and B.
 - None of the above.
97. TRUE or FALSE: Jesus' death was **once for all time**.
- True.
 - False.
98. According to **Hebrews 9:25-28**, **IF** the sacrifice of Jesus **was not complete** then
- We would have to die for our own sins.
 - God would have to send one of the angels to die for man's sins.
 - Jesus would have to come back and die again many times.
 - We would all be lost.
99. The **OLD AGREEMENT** was temporary, **until**
- Israel violated their agreement.
 - All of the animals were killed in sacrifices.
 - The end of the world.
 - Christ would come.
100. TRUE or FALSE: The terms, "The Law", "The Law of Moses" mean the same thing as the Mount Sinai agreement.
- True.
 - False.

You have completed **Book 1** of our course **Jesus: Lord Of Our Lives**. If you have any questions, or need assistance in any way, please contact your instructor here at the **Bible Study Center**. As soon as we receive and grade your answer sheet, we will send you **Book 2** of this course.

Do not forget that we offer these and other courses at the Center. We highly recommend that you enroll next session so that you can continue your journey through the Bible in a personal study with us.