

UNBOXING THE ADVENTIST MESSAGE

The Blessedness of the Christian Experience

1. Today, we are looking at the Christian experience in the light of the Adventist message
 - a. **Rom 4:6-8**—the blessedness of the experience of **righteousness by faith**
 - b. **1 John 1:9**—**forgiveness** and **cleansing** are offered if we confess our sins
 - c. **Eph 2:8**—best of all, salvation by grace through faith, is a free gift; experienced solely on the basis of faith in Christ; it is NOT the result of human effort; it is not reward for good behavior

The New Covenant Is the Basis of the Christian Experience

2. **Q:** and so, the question is, what is the basis of this most blessed experience of pardon, justification?
3. In other words, to what do we owe this great experience of **righteousness by faith**?
4. **Q:** What makes the experience of righteousness by faith even possible?
5. **A:** The most direct answer to the questions is this: -- the **new covenant**
6. **Jer 31:31-34**—In the new covenant are **promises, provisions** and **blessings** that when applied to the life of believers, produce in them the entire Christian experience we call salvation
 - a. The Christian experience is a **blessing** of the new covenant;
 - b. It is the fulfillment of the promise God made in the new covenant **promise**

Why the New Covenant Is Better than the Old

7. But why does the text say “*not according to the covenant God made with Israel?*”
8. It was a dead-end covenant
 - a. It had weaknesses and faults (**Heb 9:7-9**)
9. The old covenant briefly surveyed to appreciate the new (**Exo 19-24**)
 - a. **Exo 19:5-7**--God proposes to make a covenant with the Israel at the foot of mount Sinai
 - b. **Exo 19:8**--The people promise to keep their part of this covenant
 - c. **Exo 20**—the terms of the covenant spelled out in ten commandments
 - d. **Exo 21-23**-the ten commandments broken down into rules and regulations that affected day to day living
 - e. **Exo 24**—the old covenant ratified with the blood of animals and written in a book; the people promise two more times to stay faithful to this covenant
 - f. **Exo 23:20-22**—this covenant started off by not offering pardon for transgressions
10. This explains why was God furious and ready to destroy His people 40 days after it was broken
11. It also explains why Moses said, “*If you cannot forgive their sin, blot my name out. . .*”
12. The Spirit of Prophecy said that the people “*could not hope for favor through the covenant which they had broken*”

. . . The people did not realize the sinfulness of their own hearts, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God's law; and they readily entered into covenant with God. Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, they declared, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." Exodus 24:7. They had witnessed the proclamation of the law in awful majesty, and had trembled with terror before the mount; and yet only a few weeks passed before they broke their covenant with God, and bowed down to worship a graven image. **They could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken;** and now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Saviour revealed in the Abrahamic covenant and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. Now by faith and love they were bound to God as their deliverer from the bondage of sin. Now they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant. **PP 371**

- a. The old covenant started off with no provisions for forgiveness (**Exo 23:20-22**)
13. Why did God make such a terrible covenant with the people to begin with? **PP 371**
14. As a result of the intercession of Moses, the old covenant received an upgrade
 - a. Forgiveness was now added and the Lord told Moses to build a sanctuary so that atonement may be made and sin forgiven (**Exo 25:8,9**)
15. This upgraded version of the old covenant was still not very sinner friendly: only sins of ignorance (**Lev 4:27-28**) and few willful sins (**Lev 6:1-6**)
 - a. Sabbath breakers and blasphemers were stoned to death
 - b. David and Bathsheba no chance under this covenant; there was no sacrifice for their sin (**Ps 51:16**)
16. This was the "fault" of the old covenant Paul talked about in **Heb 8:7-8**
17. Therefore, those who are living under the new covenant are offered a better experience than those living under the Old

Five Stages of the Christian Experience

18. Paul tells us that the new covenant is based on better promises (Heb 8:6)
19. Let's look at the new covenant formula closely:

"I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts. . . I will be their God, and they shall be my people; They shall all know me. . . I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sins no more" (**Jer 31:31-34**);
20. **IMPORTANT:** It is God Himself making promises as opposed to the Israelites making their own promises
 - a. Human promises are like ropes of sand (**SC 47**); but God's promises cannot fail
21. The application of this **five-fold** new covenant promise results in five stages of the Christian experience:
22. **Stage 1 Conviction:** **"They shall all know me. . ."** --this is the starting point of the Christian experience; it is the stage where the sinner moves from ignorance to a saving knowledge of God; from darkness to light and from death to eternal life
 - a. **John 17:3**—"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God. . .".
 - b. Knowledge of God makes one realize that he is a sinner in need of pardon and grace

The experimental knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, transforms man into the image of God. It gives to man the mastery of himself, bringing every impulse and passion of the lower nature under the control of the higher powers of the mind. It makes its possessor a son of God and an heir of heaven. It brings him into communion with the mind of the Infinite, and opens to him the rich treasures of the universe. COL 114.

23. **Stage 2: Adoption:**—*“I will be their God and they shall be my people;”* this is called adoption
 - a. The Israelites received the adoption as sons (**Rom 9:4**)
 - b. **2 Cor 6:18**—*“He will be a Father unto you and you will be my sons and daughters”*
 - c. *“Our Father which art in heaven”*
24. *“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will”* (**Eph 1:15**)
25. **Stage 3 Justification:** *“I will forgive their iniquity”*—third stage of the Christian experience
 - a. this is where repentance and pardon and **justification by faith or righteousness by faith** come into being
 - b. the sinner is restored to favor with God on the basis of faith and repentance
26. **Stage 4 Conversion:** *“I will put my laws in their inwards parts and write them in their hearts. . . .”*—this is next stage in the Christian experience
 - a. This is the stage of the Christian walk where the pardoned sinner learns to lovingly obey the Law of God; this life of obedience is also called **sanctification** and is a lifelong process (**2 Cor 5:17**)
 - b. *I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy law is within my heart* (**Ps 40:8**)

Our sanctification is the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is the fulfillment of the **covenant** God has made with those who bind themselves up with Him, to stand with Him, His Son, and His Spirit in holy fellowship. **7BC 908.**

27. **Stage 5 Perfection:** *“I will remember their sins no more”* – This is final stage of the Christian experience
 - a. This includes the final cleansing from sin and the blotting out of sin from the books of heaven
 - b. **Isa 43:25**—*“I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.”*
 - c. This last part of the new covenant promise and is the best of all the promises`
 - a. Called the perfecting of the conscience (**Heb 9:8**)
 - b. No more consciousness of sin (**Heb 10:2**); the conscience no longer accuses of sin
 - c. The mind or the character is perfected to the extent that there is no more awareness or memory of sin whatsoever (**Jer 50:20**)

28. These provisions of the new covenant form the basis of the entire Christian experience from beginning to end-- from conversion, adoption, justification, to daily sanctification and finally to character perfection (glorification)
29. Without the new covenant promises, there would be no such thing as salvation by grace through faith;
30. No conviction of sin, no faith, no repentance, no forgiveness, no change of heart, no righteousness by faith, no change of status from children of wrath to children of God
31. Without the new covenant promises, there would be no gospel, no power of God unto salvation, no righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith (**Rom 1:16-17**)

The Fulfilment Center of the New Covenant

32. **Heb 9:1**-- it is only through the sanctuary service that the blessings of the covenant are bestowed
 - a. The old covenant with its limited benefits were mediated through the services done in the earthly sanctuary
 - b. The new covenant with its better provisions and blessings are mediated by Jesus as High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary (**Heb 8:6**)
33. The covenant and the sanctuary service go hand in hand; they cannot be separated from one another
34. The work of Jesus as Mediator is to approach the Father with gifts and sacrifices in order that the blessings of the new covenant may be obtained in behalf of those who need them (**Heb 5:1; HEB 8:1-3**); He obtains only what the Father has promised
35. This work of offering gifts and sacrifices for sin to obtain covenant favors is called a work of **making atonement (Heb 2:17)**
36. Therefore, the sanctuary service in which the Mediator makes atonement is the only means by which the blessings of the new covenant can be imparted
37. THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY IS THE **FULFILLMENT CENTER OF THE NEW COVENANT**
38. Every aspect of the Christian experience, whether it is **conversion, repentance, justification, forgiveness, sanctification, growth in grace**, etc., are derived as applications of the new covenant promises through the powerful ministration of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary as Mediator and High Priest
 - a. **1 John 1:9**—forgiveness of sin offered
 - b. **Acts 13:38-39**--Jesus forgives sins which could not be forgiven through the old covenant
 - c. **Heb 9:15**--Sins committed under the old covenant dispensation are forgiven only through the new; the benefits and blessings of the new covenant are retroactive!
 - d. David and Bathsheba would find forgiveness for their sin through the new covenant!
39. Why does **Heb 7:25** say that Jesus ever liveth to make intercession. . .? because we are **constantly** sinning, Jesus has to **continuously** offer His own blood in the heavenly sanctuary so He can continuously claim the promises God has made in the new covenant in our behalf

40. **IMPORTANT:** Again, without the sanctuary service, there is no mechanism by which the new covenant blessing of righteousness by faith can be imputed and imparted to the believer
41. **WARNING:** Therefore, those who try to minimize the sanctuary or do away with it entirely, do not realize the foolishness of their undertaking! They are trying to do away with the only means by which the blessings of the new covenant are bestowed on them; this mistake is fatal!
- a. There is no sanctuary in heaven
 - b. Everything was finished at the cross
42. We dare not put away the only means by which the new covenant blessings are provided to us; to attack the sanctuary is to forfeit the blessings of the new covenant through which they are obtained! **It is like shooting one's self in the foot!**

Why Two Services in the Sanctuary?

43. Why were there two services in the sanctuary?
- a. The daily
 - b. The yearly service on the Day of Atonement
44. This is so because the benefits of the new covenant are not applied in the Christian experience all at once; the blessings of the new covenant are dispensed in stages;
- a. The promise to forgive sin (in pardon and justification) is fulfilled daily (**1 John 1:9; Eph 1:7**)
 - b. and the promise to “write my Laws in their hearts (in daily sanctification) is also fulfilled daily (**1 Thess 5:23**)
 - c. But the promise to remember their sins no more, is saved until the final atonement on the Day of Atonement! (**Lev 16:30**)
45. Why is the best part of the new covenant promise saved for last?
46. Before sins can be blotted out of the books of heaven, the forgiven sinner must have satisfied all the demands of the Law and owe the Law nothing (Bank loan analogy); his life must be and total harmony with the Law before the record of his sins are blotted out
47. **Lev 16:30**—This is why the High Priest makes a final atonement to cleanse the people from all their sins first, so that their lives may be in harmony with the Law of God and so that their sins which are before the Lord (in the books) can be blotted out (**Ps 90:8**)

All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; **as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life. GC 483.**

48. **Dan 8:14**—an announcement that Jesus is about to claim the last part of the new covenant promise; Jesus saved the best for last! Jesus is standing before the Father to ask for the complete fulfilment of the new covenant promise
49. Jesus has been making His final atonement for the dead in Christ since 1844 (**Rev 6:9-11**)

50. The final atonement for the living is still future! No man knows the day or the hour when this will be

Laodicea, the Most Privileged Church of the Ages

51. Jesus is now in the most holy place, presenting gifts and sacrifices for sin and asking the Father to fulfill the new covenant promise fully and completely:

52. When the sins of the faithful believers are blotted out and the sanctuary is cleansed, then the five-fold new covenant promise will finally receive a full and complete application:

Thus, will be realized the **complete fulfillment of the new-covenant promise**: "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found." Jeremiah 31:34; 50:20. **GC 485**

53. The Seventh-day Adventist church was raised to be the people who will experience the complete and final fulfillment of the new covenant promise, including the blotting out of sin

54. Previous generations of believers never had the privilege of receiving the full application of the new covenant promise in their lives; they never experienced the blotting out of sin while alive

55. Adventists today have the glorious privilege of going through what others before them could not experience

56. Jesus is holding out to every Seventh-day Adventist the possibility of receiving the **benefits** of the full application of the new covenant. The question is, do we just want a partial application of the new covenant promise, or do we want the entire package?

57. Do we just want to sin and be forgiven all the time? And sin again. There is so much more Jesus is offering us in the new covenant!

58. Do we just want to leave off a few bad habits like smoking and drinking, gambling, or do we want our entire defective characters removed in the final atonement?

59. "Take away their filthy garments and give them a change of raiment" (**Zech 3:5**), is what Jesus is offering us so that our lives can be in complete harmony with the Law of God and our sins blotted out.

60. The righteous go through the time of trouble with no memory of any sin

Those who have delayed a preparation for the day of God cannot obtain it in the time of trouble, or at any future period. The righteous will not cease their earnest agonizing cries for deliverance. They cannot bring to mind any particular sins, but in their whole life they can see but little good. Their sins had gone beforehand to judgment, and pardon had been written. Their sins had been borne away into the land of forgetfulness, and they could not bring them to remembrance. **3SG 134**

61. **Rev 16:19; Rev 18:4-5**--The wicked have their sins remembered at the falling of the plagues.