

Dr. Dave Mathewson, New Testament Theology, Session 11, New Covenant Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Mathewson, NT Theology, Session 11, New Covenant, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Mathewson's lecture explores the concept of the New Covenant in the New Testament, emphasizing its fulfillment of previous covenants. The lecture analyzes texts, particularly in Pauline literature such as 2 Corinthians, to show how the New Covenant is already inaugurated through Jesus Christ's death, yet anticipates final consummation. **It contrasts the Old and New Covenants, highlighting the role of the Holy Spirit and transformed lives as evidence of the New Covenant's inauguration.** Further, texts from other books such as Hebrews, 1st and 2nd Peter, 1st John and Revelation are mentioned to demonstrate the explicit and implicit references to the new covenant. **The lecture also touches on the expansion of covenant promises to include both Jews and Gentiles.** Lastly, Dr. Mathewson explains that the new covenant can also be understood as a structure that helps believers understand salvation and the transformed lives that it entails.

2. 12 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Mathewson, NT Theology, Session 11 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament → NT Introduction → NT Theology).



**Mathewson_NTThe
ology_Session11.mp**

3. Briefing Document: Mathewson, NT Theology, Session 11, New Covenant

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. Mathewson's lecture on the New Covenant:

Briefing Document: Dr. Mathewson on the New Covenant in the New Testament

Overview:

This lecture focuses on the theme of the New Covenant in the New Testament, building upon the understanding that the New Covenant fulfills earlier covenants (Abrahamic, Noahic, Mosaic, Davidic). Dr. Mathewson explores how the New Covenant is presented as inaugurated but not yet fully consummated (inaugurated eschatology). He examines both explicit references to the New Covenant (2 Corinthians 3 & 6) and implicit allusions to it (e.g., formation of a new people of God, forgiveness of sins, the presence of the Holy Spirit, and 1 John). He also touches on Revelation and consummation.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. Fulfillment of Prior Covenants:

- The New Covenant is presented as the fulfillment of all preceding covenants. *"We've been looking at the new covenant as sort of the overarching covenant that brings fulfillment to all of the others, the Abrahamic, the Noahic, the Mosaic covenant, and the Davidic covenant."*
- The blessings of the New Covenant are already available due to Jesus's death and inauguration of the covenant, but they anticipate a final consummation. *"That is, we already participate in and enjoy the fulfillment of and the blessings of the covenant under the new covenant...but those anticipate the final consummation of the new covenant."*

1. Inaugurated Eschatology (Already/Not Yet):

- The New Covenant is understood within the framework of "inaugurated eschatology," meaning its blessings are already being experienced, but its full consummation is yet to come. *"The fulfillment of the new covenant and its blessings takes place according to the scheme of inaugurated eschatology."*

1. 2 Corinthians 3 & 6: Explicit References to the New Covenant:

- Paul presents himself as a minister of the New Covenant in contrast to Moses as a minister of the Old Covenant. *"First of all, the burden of this text is to demonstrate that Paul is a minister of the new covenant in analogy with Moses, who is a minister of the old covenant."*
- The New Covenant is a ministry of the Spirit, surpassing the glory of the Old Covenant, which was a ministry of the letter (law). *"He has made as competent as ministries of the new covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit, for the letter kills, but the spirit gives life."*
- The presence of the Holy Spirit is central to the New Covenant and is rooted in Old Testament prophecies (Joel 2, Ezekiel 36). *"The presence of the holy spirit is nothing less than the fulfillment of God's new covenant promises in the Old Testament."*
- Paul's ministry is one of building up, mediating the Holy Spirit, in contrast to Jeremiah's ministry which was one of tearing down to build up. *"Now Paul builds up, rather than tearing down, because the new covenant has been inaugurated and because his ministry is one of mediating the new covenant, the Holy Spirit, to the people."*
- The New Covenant is written on the hearts of believers, contrasting with the law written on stone. *"You show that you are a letter from Christ and the result of our ministry written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone...but on tablets of human hearts clearly seems to allude to Ezekiel chapter 36."*
- Transformed lives are evidence of the inauguration of the New Covenant age. *"Furthermore, in this section, Paul is also convinced that the proof of the inauguration of the new covenant age is the transformed lives that result from it."*
- The discussion in 2 Corinthians climaxes with the covenant formula of God dwelling with his people, connecting to Leviticus 26 and Ezekiel 37. *"Paul's discussion of the new covenant now climaxes in the reference to God, the covenant formula with God dwelling with his people...Part of the new covenant is that God now also takes up residence and dwells with his people."*
- Purity and holiness are essential to the New Covenant relationship, reflected in transformed lives. *"So, as we said, the key feature, the key proof, and the key marker that the new covenant has been realized are the transformed lives of the people and their purity."*

1. Implicit References to the New Covenant:

- **Formation of a New People of God (Ephesians 2:11-22):** The uniting of Jew and Gentile into one new humanity through Christ is linked to the restoration promised in Isaiah. *"Ephesians 2, 11 through 22 seems to draw on restoration texts, the restoring of God's people, in finding its fulfillment in the uniting of Jew and Gentile into one new humanity, into one new body, the church, through Jesus Christ."* This also climaxes with God's temple dwelling with his people.
- **Forgiveness of Sins (Romans 3:24-25, Galatians 1:4, Ephesians 1:7):** Christ's death atoning for sins assumes New Covenant language, fulfilling promises of cleansing. *"So, the fact that Christ's death now deals with the problem of sin and brings about forgiveness of sins through the sacrifice of atonement...clearly underlying Christ's death on the cross, dealing with the sins of humanity, and fulfillment of the promises of the new covenant."*
- **The Holy Spirit (Romans 8, 1 Corinthians 12, Galatians 5, Ephesians 1:13-14, Acts 2):** The gift and presence of the Holy Spirit are considered the fulfillment of the New Covenant promises (Ezekiel 36, Joel 2). *"Clearly, in 2 Corinthians, we see Paul link the promised Holy Spirit with the new covenant...the references throughout the New Testament to the Holy Spirit and his different roles and manifestations, etc., probably all go back to and assume, at least assume, the fulfillment of the new covenant."*

1. Hebrews 8:7-13:

- The author of Hebrews explicitly quotes Jeremiah 31 to demonstrate the inadequacy of the Old Covenant due to Israel's sinfulness. *"In Hebrews chapter 8, 7 through 13, the author explicitly quotes at length Jeremiah chapter 31, verses 31 through 34...The author does this to demonstrate the inadequacy of the old covenant and establish the need for a new covenant."*
- A new covenant necessitates a new tabernacle/temple, sacrifice, and priesthood, all fulfilled in Christ. *"The author argues that Jesus Christ has fulfilled all of those as part of the establishment and inauguration of the new covenant salvation that Christ now brings."*

1. 2 Peter 1:3-11 (Possible Reference):

- Hafeman suggests that this passage reflects the structure of a covenant: prologue (God's provision), stipulations (actions to add to faith), and promises/curses.

1. 1 John:

- 1 John, while not explicitly mentioning the New Covenant, assumes its blessings through emphasis on forgiveness of sins, the Holy Spirit, and new birth/regeneration. *"1 John, without specifically mentioning the new covenant, contains a number of the blessings associated with the new covenant that are inaugurated or that are present because of the inauguration of the new covenant. Forgiveness of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit, being given new birth and regeneration."*

1. Revelation:

- **Revelation 1:5-6, 5:9:** Christ's blood frees people from sin and creates a new, international people, a kingdom of priests, assuming the New Covenant. *"So even the book of Revelation begins with this picture of Jesus Christ's own blood, freeing his people from their sins, to become a new people, a kingdom of priests...this idea of purchasing people by the blood of Christ, the blood of Christ, again, that which inaugurates a new covenant and now creating a new people, but an international people."*
- **Revelation 1:3, 22:18-19:** These passages frame the entire book within the context of covenant blessings and curses. Obeying (keeping) the word brings blessing, while adding to or subtracting from it (disobeying) brings curses. This is linked back to Deuteronomy 4. The warning is addressed to the churches as the covenant people of God. *"So, we are to read Revelations 22, 18, and 19 in connection with chapter 1, verse 3. Chapter 1, verse 3 says, there is blessing for hearing and obeying. But now, chapters 22:18 and 19 remind us there is cursing for refusing to obey. I think adding and subtracting doesn't have as much to do with writing extra sentences or leaving books or paragraphs out. It has to do with failing to obey the word of God."*

Conclusion:

Dr. Mathewson emphasizes the importance of understanding the New Covenant as a fundamental structure for understanding God's relationship with His people. The New Covenant, inaugurated by Jesus's death and resurrection, brings salvation, the Holy Spirit, transformed lives, and a new community of believers, all rooted in Old Testament promises. The consummation of the new covenant is found in the book of Revelation.

4. Study Guide: Newman, Synoptic Gospels, Session 11, New Covenant

New Covenant Theology: A Study Guide

I. Quiz

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. According to Mathewson, what is the overarching covenant that brings fulfillment to the Abrahamic, Noahic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenants?
2. Explain the concept of "inaugurated eschatology" in relation to the fulfillment of the New Covenant.
3. In 2 Corinthians 3, what Old Testament texts does Paul draw on to describe the New Covenant?
4. How does Paul contrast his ministry with Moses' ministry in 2 Corinthians 3?
5. According to Mathewson, what is "the proof of the inauguration of the new covenant age?"
6. According to Mathewson, what are the key features of Paul's understanding of the new covenant?
7. What is significant about the fact that the New Testament authors see promises from Ezekiel 36 and Jeremiah 31 fulfilled not just in national Israel, but in all people?
8. In Ephesians 2:11-22, what Old Testament book does Paul allude to?
9. According to Mathewson, what is the main argument made by the author of Hebrews in chapters 8-10?
10. In Revelation 22:18-19, what Old Testament book is alluded to, and what is Mathewson's main point about the meaning of that passage?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The New Covenant is the overarching covenant that brings fulfillment to the Abrahamic, Noahic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenants. It represents the culmination of God's covenantal promises throughout history.

2. Inaugurated eschatology means that we already participate in and enjoy the blessings of the New Covenant, as it has been enacted through Jesus Christ's death. However, these blessings also anticipate the final consummation of the New Covenant in the future.
3. In 2 Corinthians 3, Paul draws on language from Jeremiah 31, Ezekiel 36, and Ezekiel 37 to describe the New Covenant. These texts emphasize the writing of the law on the heart and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
4. Paul contrasts his ministry with Moses' by highlighting the surpassing glory of the New Covenant over the Old. While Moses gave the law, Paul mediates the New Covenant through the Holy Spirit.
5. The transformed lives of God's people are proof of the inauguration of the New Covenant age. This transformation is linked to the receiving of the Holy Spirit and aligns with prophecies in Ezekiel and Jeremiah.
6. The key features of Paul's understanding of the new covenant are: God's relationship to His people, the people's possession of salvation, the transformed lives and the holiness and purity that he wants to see his people live out, and the work and role of the Holy Spirit in their lives.
7. It's significant because it shows how the New Covenant expands beyond ethnic or national boundaries to include all believers in Christ, Jew and Gentile alike. This expansion demonstrates the universal scope of God's saving work in Christ.
8. In Ephesians 2:11-22, Paul alludes to concepts and specific texts from the book of Isaiah.
9. The author of Hebrews argues that the Old Covenant was inadequate because of Israel's sinfulness and lacked the means to overcome it. Consequently, he asserts that Jesus inaugurated a New Covenant linked with a new tabernacle, temple, sacrifice, and priesthood.
10. Revelation 22:18-19 alludes to Deuteronomy, and Mathewson's main point is that "adding and subtracting" from the scroll represents failing to obey God's word.

II. Essay Questions

1. Discuss the role of the Holy Spirit in the New Covenant as presented in 2 Corinthians 3 and other Pauline epistles. How does the Spirit's presence relate to the promises of Jeremiah and Ezekiel?
2. Analyze how the New Covenant fulfills and transforms the Old Covenant. What are the key differences between the two covenants, and how do New Testament authors use Old Testament texts to support the superiority of the New Covenant?
3. Explore the concept of the "people of God" in the New Covenant. How does the inclusion of both Jews and Gentiles into one body (the Church) relate to the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies regarding the restoration of Israel?
4. Examine the concept of "inaugurated eschatology" in relation to the New Covenant. How do New Testament authors balance the "already" and "not yet" aspects of the covenant's fulfillment?
5. Discuss the significance of the covenant structure (prologue, stipulations, promises/curses) in 2 Peter 1:3-11, as suggested by Hafeman. How does this structure shed light on the nature of the New Covenant and its implications for believers?

III. Glossary of Key Terms

- **New Covenant:** The overarching covenant established through Jesus Christ, fulfilling and superseding previous covenants, promising a renewed relationship between God and humanity based on grace, forgiveness, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
- **Inaugurated Eschatology:** The understanding that the end times have already begun in the present age through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, while also anticipating a future consummation of these events.
- **Mediator:** One who intercedes between two parties to reconcile them; in the New Testament, Jesus Christ is seen as the mediator of the New Covenant between God and humanity.
- **Restoration:** The act of returning something to its original or ideal state; in the context of the New Covenant, it refers to the renewal of God's people and the creation.
- **Transformation:** The process of being changed or converted into something new; in the New Covenant, it refers to the change in believers' lives brought about by the Holy Spirit, leading to holiness and obedience.
- **Explicit Texts:** Passages that clearly and directly mention the New Covenant or related themes.
- **Implicit Texts:** Passages that do not explicitly mention the New Covenant but suggest its presence through related concepts and blessings.
- **Covenant Formula:** A phrase or statement that summarizes the essence of a covenant relationship, such as "I will be their God, and they will be my people."
- **Atonement:** The act of making amends for sin or wrongdoing, typically through a sacrifice; in the New Covenant, Jesus' death on the cross is seen as the ultimate act of atonement for humanity's sins.
- **Regeneration (New Birth):** The act of being spiritually reborn or renewed by the Holy Spirit, resulting in a new life and relationship with God.

5. FAQs on Newman, Synoptic Gospels, Session 11, New Covenant, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ on the New Covenant in the New Testament

- **Question 1: What is the overarching idea of the New Covenant in relation to previous covenants?**
- The New Covenant is presented as the covenant that fulfills all previous covenants (Abrahamic, Noahic, Mosaic, and Davidic). It is considered the overarching covenant in which the promises and blessings of the older covenants find their ultimate realization and meaning. It is not merely an extension of the old, but a transformation that addresses the shortcomings inherent in the old system, primarily the inability of the people to consistently uphold their end of the covenant.
- **Question 2: How is the New Covenant inaugurated, and what does "inaugurated eschatology" mean in this context?**
- The New Covenant is inaugurated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. His blood ratifies and enacts the covenant, making its blessings available to believers. Inaugurated eschatology means that believers already participate in and enjoy the fulfillment and blessings of the New Covenant in the present, but this participation anticipates the final consummation of the covenant in the future. It's the "already, but not yet" reality of experiencing covenant blessings now while looking forward to their complete fulfillment.
- **Question 3: How does Paul use the Old Testament, specifically Jeremiah and Ezekiel, to explain the New Covenant?**
- Paul explicitly draws upon Old Testament texts, especially Jeremiah 31 and Ezekiel 36-37, to explain the nature of the New Covenant. He sees his ministry as analogous to that of Moses, but mediating the New Covenant through the Holy Spirit, unlike Moses who mediated the Old Covenant through the Law. He emphasizes that the New Covenant involves God writing His law on the hearts of believers, empowering them to obey through the Holy Spirit, which directly fulfills the prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

- **Question 4: What is the role of the Holy Spirit in the New Covenant, according to Paul?**
- The Holy Spirit plays a central role in the New Covenant. Paul argues that the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in believers' lives is a direct fulfillment of the New Covenant promises in the Old Testament. The Spirit gives life, transforms believers into the image of Christ, and enables them to live out the righteous requirements of the law. The Holy Spirit is not a later Christian add-on, but the very mechanism by which the New Covenant operates.
- **Question 5: How are transformed lives evidence of the New Covenant's reality?**
- Paul argues that the transformed lives of believers are proof of the New Covenant's inauguration and fulfillment. The New Covenant promises cleansing from sin, a new heart, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, all of which result in a life characterized by holiness and purity. Therefore, a tangible change in a person's conduct and character is seen as evidence of their participation in the New Covenant.
- **Question 6: How does the New Covenant extend beyond national Israel, and who are now included in it?**
- While the Old Testament prophecies of the New Covenant are initially given in the context of the restoration of national Israel, the New Testament authors see those promises fulfilled in Jesus Christ and extended to all people, both Jew and Gentile, who believe in Him. The New Covenant is not limited by ethnicity but embraces all who are united to Christ through faith. This inclusive nature is a key characteristic of the New Covenant's fulfillment.
- **Question 7: Besides Paul's letters, where else in the New Testament is the New Covenant discussed or assumed?**
- The book of Hebrews explicitly quotes Jeremiah 31 to demonstrate the superiority of the New Covenant over the Old. The author of Hebrews argues that the Old Covenant was inadequate because of Israel's sinfulness and that Jesus has inaugurated a new covenant. Other books such as 1 John and Revelation make arguments that assume the blessing of the New Covenant.

- **Question 8: How does the Book of Revelation frame the New Covenant?**
- Revelation frames the entire book within the context of covenant blessings and cursings. It presents Jesus Christ as the one whose blood has freed people from their sins and created a new, international people for God. The blessings are for those who read, hear, and obey the prophecies in the book, while the curses are for those who add to or subtract from it, signifying disobedience and compromise of faith. The book as a whole is therefore seen as calling believers to maintain their covenant faithfulness in the face of opposition.