One of the reasons you may have lived with defeat, discouragement or low self-esteem is because you haven't totally seen yourself through God's eyes. You've only seen yourself through the mirror of your past, what others have said about you, or your own experiences….As you daily feed yourself from God's Word, His Holy Spirit will show you clearly who you are as a new creation in Christ Jesus.

Phil Faraone

Prayer Study #518

HEWBREWS CHAPTER 8

First Love Ministries, Inc., of Perry, GA USA

A Better Covenant

8 *Now the main point of what we have to say is this: we have such a High Priest, [the Christ] who is seated [in the place of honor] at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty (God) in heaven,* **2** *a Minister (Officiating Priest) in the holy places and in the true tabernacle, which is erected not by man, but by the Lord.* **3** *For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; so it is essential for this One also to have something to offer.* **4** *Now if He were [still living] on earth, He would not be a priest at all, for there are priests who offer the gifts [to God] in accordance with the Law.* **5** *They serve as a pattern and foreshadowing of [what has its true existence and reality in] the heavenly things (sanctuary). For when Moses was about to erect the tabernacle, he was warned by God, saying, "See that you make it all [exactly]*

*according to the pattern which was shown to you on the mountain.” **6** But as it is, Christ has acquired a [priestly] ministry which is more excellent [than the old Levitical priestly ministry], for He is the Mediator (Arbiter) of a better covenant [uniting God and man], which has been enacted and rests on better promises.*

Jesus is the sinless, spotless, undefiled, holy High Priest, seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, as an equal to the Father. He was sinless, but He knew what it is like to live in a sinful world so He understands our temptations and infirmities and struggles. In the Old Testament the priests could approach God only after having made the appropriate sacrifices. Christ Jesus also approach the Father only after He gave the appropriate sacrifice. The sacrifice was Himself. Thus Jesus is a unique example of divine majesty and divine service combined. He was the bridge between God and man, the mediator bring the two together and removing the barriers and allowing mankind to be in the holy presence of God.

The earthly temple and worship system were mere shadows or types of the real or heavenly temple. Christ came to allow mankind a more excellent way or new covenant relationship

between God and man.

A New Covenant

The New Relationship

7 *For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion for a second one or an attempt to institute another one [the new covenant].* ***8*** *However, God finds fault with them [showing its inadequacy] when He says,*
“Behold, the days will come, says the Lord,
When I will make and ratify a new covenant
With the house of Israel and with the house of Judah;
9 *Not like the covenant that I made with their fathers*
On the day when I took them by the hand
To lead them out of the land of Egypt;
For they did not abide in My covenant,
And so I withdrew My favor and disregarded them, says the Lord.
10 *“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel*
After those days, says the Lord:
I will imprint My laws upon their minds [even upon their innermost thoughts and understanding],
And engrave them upon their hearts [effecting their regeneration].
And I will be their God,and they shall be My

people.
11 *"And it will not be [necessary] for each one to teach his fellow citizen,Or each one his brother, saying, 'Know [by experience, have knowledge of] the Lord,'For all will know [Me by experience and have knowledge of] Me,From the least to the greatest of them.*
12 *"For I will be merciful and gracious toward their wickedness,And I will remember their sins no more."*
13 *When God speaks of "A new covenant," He makes the first one obsolete. And whatever is becoming obsolete (out of use, annulled) and growing old is ready to disappear.*

<u>What is a Covenant?</u> (Kevin Conner and Ken Malmin, *The Covenants)*

A covenant is an interpersonal arrangement made by one person for or with another. God originates covenants with men which man may accept or reject but cannot alter. Man does not come to God with a proposal seeking God's approval, rather God comes to man declaring His will and seeking man's adherence and obedience to that will. The purpose of a covenant is to provide a binding sense of commitment to an interpersonal relationship.

<u>Difference between a Contract and a Covenant</u> (Bill Gothard, *The True Significance of the Wedding Covenant)*

1. A covenant is based on trust between parties. A contract is based on distrust.

2. A covenant is based on unlimited responsibility. A contract involves limited liability.
3. A covenant cannot be broken if new circumstances occur. A contract can be voided by mutual consent.

Ratification of a Covenant

Because a covenant involved a life and death commitment, it was ratified in Biblical times by the shedding of blood. The blood represents life and was used to symbolize a life commitment to those entering the covenant. There had to be a sacrifice to obtain this blood. We see this in Genesis 15:7-17 when God passed between the pieces to "cut the covenant" with Abraham. In Genesis 22 God called for the sacrifice of Isaac, Abraham's only son, but provided a substitute, a ram, at the last minute. This foreshadowed the act of incredible love that our Father later did when He gave His only son for the sacrifice so that we could legally enter into covenant relationship with Him.

The Major Biblical Covenants

1. **EDENIC COVENANT**

   The Words: Man would be made in God's image, be fruitful and multiply, would subdue the earth, would have dominion, would eat herbs and fruit, would till the ground, and would be cursed if he ate of the forbidden fruit (Genesis 1 and 2).

   The sacrifice: Adam sacrificially lying down in a deep sleep while God opened his side and taking the rib from which He fashioned a bride. This well may have involved the shedding of innocent blood and

certainly foreshadows the bridegroom and bride of redemption.

The sign: The tree of life, the tree that Adam was allowed to eat of before the fall

2. **<u>ADAMIC COVENANT</u>**

The Words: The seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head.

Curses were unleased on the serpent, on the Devil, on the earth, and on the animal kingdom(that became wild and carnivorous). Judgment came to the woman(sorrow in child birth, subservient to husband), and to the man(sweat, toil and sorrow in laboring on a cursed earth until his death). There would be spiritual and physical and eternal death. God expelled them from the Edenic Paradise because He loved them so much and did not want them to eat of the tree of life and thus live forever in an unredeemable state (Revelations 2:7; 22:14)

The sacrifice: Substitutionary, sacrificial death of innocent animals

The sign: The animal skins that covered Adam and Eve's nakedness

3. **<u>NOAHIC COVENANT</u>**

The Words: God promised to never flood the earth. This covenant introduced human government to curb sin, the normal order of nature reaffirmed(Genesis 8 and 9), and the permission of man to eat the flesh of animals. Man was not to eat blood, not to commit murder, and the allowing of the death penalty for murderers.

The sacrifice: Animal sacrifices of clean animals(Genesis 6,7,8)

The Sign: The rainbow

4. **<u>ABRAHAMIC COVENANT</u>**

The Words: God gave personal promises to Abraham to bless him and make his name great(Genesis 12, 13, 15, & 17). He gave national promises to Abraham to make Abraham's descendants a great nation(Genesis 12). He gave a universal promise to Abraham that all the families of the earth would be blessed through Abraham's lineage(Genesis 12, 22, 28)

The Sacrifice: Bread and Wine of communion from Melchisedek; the five specific offerings(heifer, a she-goat, a ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon)(God Himself walked between the division as a burning lamp and smoking furnace) (Genesis 15:78-17); and the sacrifice of Isaac.

The Sign: Circumcision, Multiplicity of stars

5. **<u>MOSAIC COVENANT</u>**

The Words: Israel would be the chosen people of God, a kingdom of priests, to be used to bring the nations of the world to God(Exodus 19:6), and a holy people who would live their lives following His laws (Exodus 19:6)

The Sacrifice: This is known as the Blood Covenant because of the elaborate ritual sacrifices of animals to atone for sin in general and for specific sins.

The Sign: Sabbath-This reminded the Israelites that they were separate from the nations of the world and taught them to trust God since they could not work on the Sabbath(Exodus 31). The fourth commandment of

the Ten Commandments to keep the Sabbath holy(Exodus 20:8) is the only one of the Ten Commandments not repeated in the New Testament.

6.PALESTINIAN COVENANT OR DEUTERONOMIC COVENANT

The Words: God promised a promise land of fruitfulness, mineral wealth, former and latter rains, etc. He promised many specific blessings for those who obeyed Him and specific curses for those who disobeyed.

The Sacrifice: The Mosaic sacrifices on the altar

The Sign: The Sabbath Rest and the Former and Latter Rains

7.DAVIDIC COVENANT

The Words: David's lineage would endure forever (2nd Samuel 7, Psalm 89), the people of Israel will never be eliminated, David's kingdom will be established forever (2nd Samuel 7, Luke 1:32-33), David's seed would build the temple, the Messiah would come through David's lineage, God would be merciful to David's seed.

The Sacrifice: Animal sacrifices and the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving

The Sign: The sun, moon and stars-God promised that as long as these existed, David's throne would continue to exist-and Jesus Christ

8.NEW COVENANT

The Words: God promised regeneration (Jeremiah 31:33, Ezekiel 36:26), forgiveness of sins (Jeremiah 31; 34, Ezekiel 36:25), the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Ezekiel 36:27), knowledge of God (Jeremiah

31:34), salvation(safety, security, preservation, deliverance, and wholeness), pardon, sanctification, justification, adoption, and glorification. God promised His people would obey Him (Ezekiel 36:27; 37:23-24, Jeremiah 32:39-40) and He promised certain national promises (Ezekiel 34-37). This was totally unconditional. God indicated that He gave it because of Israel's inability to obey(Ezekiel 26:21-22)and that He would eventually bring them to a place of obedience. It is eternal and can never be annulled. It is in contrast with the Mosaic Covenant(which called Israel to obtain redemption through animal sacrifice and obedience to the law) in the New Testament in 2nd Corinthians 3 and Hebrews 8:7-13. It made available through the cross salvation for the whole world(Jeremiah 31, Hebrews 8, Matthew 26). He also promised curses on the Jews who reject Christ, on the wicked nations, and those who never come into covenantal relationship with Christ.

The Sacrifice: The sacrifical lamb slain from the foundation of the World which is Jesus on the cross

The Sign: The Body and Blood of Jesus; The Lord's Supper, and specifically the cup which Jesus said in Luke 22:20 was the "New Covenant in My Blood" (This is repeated in 1st Corinthians 11;25. The New Covenant was promised by God to Israel in Jeremiah 31. Of course we know that we have been grafted in the vine and *first the natural and then the spiritual,* therefore we are spiritual Israel and heirs to this promise); Spiritual sacrifices(a. Sacrifice of righteousness-Psalms 4:5, 51:19); b. Sacrifices of

joy(Psalm 27:6); c. Sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit (Psalms 51:17); d. Sacrifice of thanksgiving (Psalms 107:22, 116:17); e. Sacrifice of our bodies as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2); f. Sacrifice of praise (Hebrews 13:15); g. Sacrifice of good deeds (Hebrews 13:16); h. Sacrifice of fellowship (Hebrews 13:16).

9.<u>THE EVERLASTING COVENANT</u>

"The Everlasting Covenant is that Covenant made in Eternity, before Time began, in the counsels of the eternal Godhead, between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It was made before the creation of man and the entrance of sin into the human race. It embodies, as an all-encompassing Covenant, God's complete plan involving Creation and Redemption. It is the heavenly foundational Covenant in eternity for all Covenants revealed in Time. Man was not a party to it but the object of it." Kevin Conner and Ken Malmin

This covenant is possible because of God's Essential Attributes-He is eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, immutable, self-existent; because of His moral attributes-God is holy, righteous, love, faithful; and because He is the eternal. The Father is the originator or word giver of the covenant; the Son is the sacrifice or mediator of the covenant; and the Holy Spirit is the sign or seal of the covenant.

The Word: God in this covenant promises everlasting life(1st John 2:25), immortality(2nd Timothy 1:9-10), an everlasting kingdom(Psalm

145:13), an eternal inheritance(Hebrews 9:14), everlasting love and kindness and mercy(Isaiah 54:8), everlasting righteousness(Daniel 9:24), an everlasting habitation or dwelling place (Luke 16:9), everlasting joy (Isaiah 61:7), everlasting strength (Isaiah 26:4), everlasting name(Isaiah 56:5; 63:12,16), everlasting promises to the overcomers-tree of eternal life(Revelation 2:7), not be hurt by the second death(Revelation 2:11), Hidden manna and a white stone with a new name(Revelation 2:17; John 6:53-63); power over the nations(Revelation 2:26-28, 22:16); white raiments and name confessed before the Father and angels(Revelation 3:4,5); pillar in the temple of God and the name of the Father, the bride-city and the Son's new name written upon you(Revelation 3:12); restored dominion lost in Adam(Revelation 3:12); all the promises of God(Revelation 21:7).

God also promises those who are not in covenant relationship with Him that they will have everlasting shame and contempt(Daniel 12:2); everlasting lake of fire and brimstone(Matthew 18:8, Revelation 14:10, 11; 19:20; 20:14,15; 21:8); everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:41, 46); everlasting destruction(II Thessalonians 1:9); Everlasting chains of darkness(Jude 6; II Peter 2:4); perdition(utter destruction or eternal damnation) (Revelation 17:8, 1st Timothy 6:9); the second death(Revelation 2:11; 20:13-15; 21:8)

The Sacrifice: The Blood of Jesus

The Sign: The seal of the Holy Spirit and the Glorified Body

Will You Be Poured Out

Will you be poured out like wine
Upon the altar for Me?
Will you be broken like bread
To feed the hungry for Me?
Will you be so one with Me
That I may do just as I please?
So My life, My light, My love,
My word fulfilled.

Yes, I'll be poured out like wine
Upon the altar for You.

Yes, I’ll be broken like bread
To feed the hungry for You.
Yes, I’ll be so one with You
That You may do just as You please.
I’ll be Your life, Your light, Your love,
Your Word fulfilled.