

# Blood of the Covenant

Mark 14:12—26

## Introduction

*“This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many” (Mark 14:24).* These are the words of Jesus in the upper room found in the **Gospel of Mark**. Here is what we say in the Words of Institution during Holy Communion: *“This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.”* This is a compilation of Jesus’ words in **Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, and 1 Corinthians 11**. The key element and teaching here is that Christ’s blood was shed to forgive sins and seal the new covenant.

## Covenant

The first thing to know is an understanding of “covenant.” A covenant is an agreement made between two parties that is legal and binding. It has stipulations and requirements on the part of both parties. And it is usually sealed with an oath. It is more than a promise, which is informal and not legally binding.

## The Old Covenant

When God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, one of the first things He did was give them the Law on Mount Sinai. But this Law wasn’t just a list of dos and don’ts. It was a covenant, a legally binding agreement between God and Israel. It wasn’t a contract, which is negotiated between equals. It was a covenant set by a superior God for His inferior people. This is reinforced in **Leviticus**, when God says: *“I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people” (Leviticus 26:12)*. In the book of **Deuteronomy**, God gives lists of curses for disobedience and blessings for obedience.

## The Old Covenant Broken

But Israel failed their end of the covenant. They strayed after other gods. God was forced to abandon the old covenant.

## The New Covenant

So, through the prophet Jeremiah, the Lord says that He will make a new covenant with Israel (Read **Jeremiah 31:31—34**). The problem with the old covenant was that it was broken by sin. And we are sinners. We have sinned yesterday; we sin today; and we will sin tomorrow. But the Lord has worked out a way to forgive our sins, not to ignore them or tolerate them, but to forgive them and take them away.

## Christ’s Blood and the New Covenant

The old covenant was sealed with the blood of bulls and lambs. But no matter how many bulls and lambs were sacrificed, they couldn’t take away the sins that got in the way of keeping the covenant.

But it is Christ's blood that seals the new covenant. And through His blood, we have forgiveness of sins, so His blood seals the new covenant perfectly.

## Drinking His Blood

The Passover lamb was the archetype of all the sacrificial lambs. Its blood was placed on the doorposts to keep the angel of death at bay. It was this Passover meal Jesus was eating with His disciples when He instituted the Lord's Supper. His blood causes eternal death to "Pass over" us. When we receive His body and blood, our participation in the new covenant is sealed, as He forgives our sins and strengthens our faith.

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*And the peace of God,  
Which surpasses all understanding,  
Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

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