

Shayla: What is the meaning of the “will” in Hebrews 9:15-18?

Hebrews 9:15-18 HCSB Therefore He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance, because a death has taken place for redemption from the transgressions *committed* under the first covenant. (16) Where a will exists, the death of the testator must be established. (17) For a will is valid only when people die, since it is never in force while the testator is living. (18) That is why even the first covenant was inaugurated with blood.

Midrash:

The word “covenant” is used in the sense of a person’s last will and testament, the dictates of which only come to fruition upon the author’s death. Jesus’ death having been confirmed by many witnesses, His will (the promise of eternal inheritance in v.15) now applies to His beneficiaries – us. The beauty of a “last will and testament” is that “no one sets aside even a human covenant that has been ratified, or makes additions to it.” (Galatians 3:15) So if that is true of human wills, how much more the will of the Son of God? The beneficiaries of the promise of eternal inheritance also receive the promises made to Abraham (Galatians 3:16) since we are co-heirs with Jesus.

- **Romans 8:16-17 HCSB** The Spirit Himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God's children, (17) and if children, also heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ--seeing that we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

Adam’s sin brought death into the world (Genesis 2:17; Romans 5:12) and Hashem immediately began trying to teach that lesson by causing the death of an animal in order to cover Adam and Eve’s shame and nakedness (Genesis 3:21). That only through atoning sacrifice and blood could our sin be atoned for was understood from the very beginning (Genesis 4:4) for “life is in the blood” (Genesis 9:5; Leviticus 17:11, 14; Deuteronomy 13:23; Ezekiel 3:18; 33:5; John 6:53-54). So, both the Old and the New covenants had to be inaugurated by blood (Hebrews 9:7, 12-14, 18, 20-22) for without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.