

TWO COVENANTS

(Part 2)

The Old Covenant

Our Bibles are divided into two sections what we call the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The Old Testament can be summarized as a series of covenants - God with mankind generally, God with individuals, God with Israel as a nation, individual with individual, and nation with nation.

The New Testament bears the details of the New Covenant that God established with mankind and is the born-again believer's covenant. If you do not believe in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, and accept Him as Lord and Savior then you cannot be a party to this New Covenant. [“that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation”. (Romans 10:9-10NASB).]

If you do accept Jesus as Lord and Savior you will subsequently receive the person of the Holy Spirit who is the seal. In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation--having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, (Ephesians 1:13NASB) See also Ephesians 4:30),

Each of the old covenants has an indirect bearing on the New Testament believer (excluding members of the Jewish nation through which Jesus came directly) in that they all relate to conditions still affecting the earth today and the believer's relationship with God through the coming Messiah. Following are brief notes on the more widely mentioned covenants:-

The Edenic or Adamic Covenant – promised the Messiah and was sealed with the shedding of the blood of an animal with which God clothed Adam and Eve. (Genesis 3)

The Noahic Covenant – promised that the earth would never again be destroyed by a flood and was the beginning of governmental order for the new civilization.

The Abrahamic Covenant – (Genesis 12:1-3, 6-7; 13:14-17; 15; 17:1-14; 22:15-18) promised several things to Abraham and spiritually links the Gentile nations to the promised Seed:-

- God would make Abraham's name great (Genesis 12:2).
- Abraham would be the father of a multitude of nations (Genesis 17:4-6). He would have numerous physical descendants (Genesis 13:16; 12:2). God promised Abraham that He would make a great nation out of him even though Abraham, was 75 years old and childless (Genesis 12:4). This promise is expanded in Genesis 17:6 where God promised that nations and kings would be his offspring. This promise not only included kings of Israel, but also New Covenant kings – people who accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior would become priests and kings in God's kingdom. (Revelation 5:10; 1 Peter 2:5)
- God also made promises regarding a nation called Israel. The geographical boundaries of the Abrahamic covenant are mapped in the book of Genesis (12:7; 13:14-15; 15:18-21). God called Abraham to a land that He would give him (Genesis 12:1). The land promised is literal.
- The families of the world will be blessed through the physical line of Abraham (Genesis 12:3; 22:18). The covenant was reaffirmed to Isaac (Genesis 21:12; 26:3-4) and to Jacob (Genesis 28:14-15).
- The covenant promised that the "Seed of Abraham," would bring blessing to the whole world and produce spiritual kings. (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:6-13)

The Mosaic Covenant is an extension of the Abrahamic Covenant and, as it relates to the nation of Israel, is hinged on that nation's reconciliation to God and their continuing fellowship with Him. It defines the conditions under which Israel would remain God's chosen people, be beneficiaries of His blessing and establish His Kingdom on earth.

The Covenant was agreed by the people in Exodus 18:8 and Exodus 24:3 (Moses was the mediator of the Covenant). This was followed by animal sacrifices and the "sprinkling of the blood" (Exodus 24:6-8). The covenant meal was eaten (Exodus 24:11) at which all the tribes of Israel were represented.

The New Covenant

Most people associate themselves with the Mosaic covenant – the covenant made between God and the nation of Israel at the foot of Mount Sinai. Even though all scripture is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. (2 Timothy 3:16), the Gentile nations were never bound by the Mosaic Law. (Acts 15) By faith, the Gentiles believe on the Lord Jesus and His death, burial and resurrection and become righteous through the saving grace of God.

Abraham, a Gentile himself, was never bound by the Law because the Law was not yet formally given and the nation of Israel was not yet formed. The law was written in his heart and through faith, he was counted as righteous.

Abraham, Noah, and the other patriarchs functioned as priests (offering sacrifices and ordering the spiritual aspects) as well as kings – ordering the socio-economic structures of their households or tribes. It was only when the nation of Israel was born at Sinai that God Himself became King to the Nation of Israel and ordered the Levitical Priesthood to provide an avenue for sacrifices and atonement to be made for the sins of the Jewish people. Tragically, Israel chose to have a human king and from the outset (even as Moses was on Mount Sinai) repeatedly committed idolatry.

Gentile nations are linked to the Abrahamic Covenant through Jesus, who was a Jew. The Gentiles were “grafted in” through the New Covenant along with those Jews who believed on the Messiah and the two became one Church of Jesus Christ under the New Covenant

All that we were as sinners, Jesus has taken and paid the price for. We can have His strength in exchange for our weakness. He took our sickness for His healing, our poverty for His wealth, our brokenness for His wholeness, our death for His life, our fear for His faith, our hatred for His love, our mental instability for soundness and wholeness of mind.

Our obligation is summed up in the commandment of love. When we walk in love, all else falls into place, because faith (and by extension all that comes by faith) works by love.

Next time, we will look at how the covenant process is applied to the New Covenant.

God has already given all – are you willing to receive all?

34 My covenant will I not break or profane, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips. (Psalm 89:34 Amp.)

