

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

THE GOD OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

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PART 5: THE COVENANTS OF PROMISE

THE COVENANT LAWS

There were several covenants between God and mankind prior to Moses.

Covenant with Noah

The first covenant was with Noah, his descendants, and every living creature after the flood. God promised to never again destroy all life on earth in such a manner and set a rainbow in the clouds as a visible reminder. This covenant revealed God's mercy and faithfulness, showing His enduring commitment to preserve life and maintain order in the world. **Genesis 9:8-17**

Covenant with Abraham

The second covenant was between God and Abraham. Jesus assured him that his offspring would inherit and instructs Abraham to look at the stars, promising that his descendants will be just as numerous. Abram decides to believe God, and it is counted to him for righteousness. Jesus promised to give Abram's descendants the land from Egypt to the Euphrates. To seal the covenant, Abraham is instructed to prepare animal sacrifices. He falls into a deep sleep and God reveals that his descendants will be strangers in a foreign land (Egypt), oppressed for four hundred years, but they will come out with great substance afterwards. When darkness falls, a smoking furnace and a burning lamp pass between the divided pieces, symbolizing God's presence and His binding commitment. **Genesis 15:1-21**

Affirmed with Isaac

God reconfirmed the Abrahamic covenant with Isaac. There was a great famine similar to the one that occurred in Abraham's day. Isaac traveled to Gerar, where King Abimelech of the Philistines reigned. Jesus commanded him to remain there and renewed the covenant promises given to his father. Isaac obeyed and remained in Gerar, showing his trust in God's word and faithfulness to the covenant. **Genesis 26:1-6**

Affirmed with Jacob

God reconfirmed the covenant with Jacob after he returned to Bethel. Jesus appeared and gave him a new name – Israel – affirming the covenant promises made to his father and grandfather. Jacob set up a stone pillar afterwards and poured a drink offering and oil upon it, naming the place Bethel (House of God) in remembrance of the renewed covenant and blessing. **Genesis 35:9-15**

When God called Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt, He began revealing new laws for Moses to teach and for the Israelites to obey. Most of them dealt with everyday life, sacrifices, and the setup of the tabernacle.



But God also gave Moses a universal moral law to govern mankind which became known as the Ten Commandments. These laws formed the foundation of Jesus' covenant with Israel, expressing His holiness and His will for how His people are to live with respect to God and with one another. **Exodus 20:1-17**

COVENANT BETWEEN GOD AND ISRAEL

All the aforementioned covenants were made between God and individuals. It was in the wilderness after the exodus from Egypt that God made a covenant with the people of Israel that came to be known as "The First Covenant."

Jesus instructs Moses, along with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy elders, to come up the mountain to worship from a distance, while only Moses is allowed to come closer to the Son of God. Moses reports all the Lord tells him and the people respond in unity that they are going to obey.

Moses writes down all the Lord's commands, builds an altar at the foot of the mountain, and sets up twelve pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Young men offer burnt offerings and peace offerings unto the Lord. Moses collects the blood from the sacrifices, sprinkling half on the altar and half upon the people. This final act at Mount Sinai seals the covenant, signifying Israel's commitment to obey God's law and His acceptance of them as His people. **Exodus 24:1-8**

Moses renewed the covenant between God and Israel in the land of Moab, in addition to the one made at Horeb (Sinai). **Deuteronomy 29:1-15**

The First Covenant was initiated 920 years after Noah and consisted of two parts:

1. The Atonement
2. The Promised Land

THE ATONEMENT

Jesus foretold the ongoing conflict between Satan and mankind. Ultimately it would come down to a showdown between Satan and the coming Redeemer – the promised Seed who would defeat sin and the Devil.

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Genesis 3:15)

Job expressed his deep faith and hope in God despite his suffering, revealing his assurance of a Messiah and a future resurrection. His powerful declaration conveyed a strong belief of life beyond death.

"Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!

For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." (Job 19:23-27)

Jesus instructed Moses and Aaron regarding the first Passover, marking Israel's deliverance from Egypt, and the beginning of an annual tradition. **Exodus 12:2-27**

The high priest entered the holiest of holy in the tabernacle once a year and offer the blood of the sin offering on the altar's horns for himself and the people, showing that atonement is only attained through the shedding of blood. **Exodus 30:10**

THE PROMISED LAND

God promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that the land of Canaan would be the homeland of their descendants. However, this covenant was conditional, in that it depended upon the behavior of the people. If they turned away from God's laws and lived in sin, God would cast them out from the land because they had broken the covenant and rejected the divine commandments.

"But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee..."
(Deuteronomy 28:15)

"Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee. Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the LORD bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed. And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the LORD thy God.

And it shall come to pass, that as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it.

And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.

And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life:

In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear,

and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. And the LORD shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you.” (Deuteronomy 28:60-68)

SUMMARY

The land covenant is no longer in force.

- ❖ The ten northern tribes lost their land and capitol of Samaria in 721 B.C. to the Assyrians.
- ❖ The tribes of Judah and Benjamin lost their land and capitol of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. to the Babylonians.

After 70 years in captivity in Babylon, King Cyrus decreed that any Jews who wanted to return to Judea and Jerusalem could do so. There were more than one million Jews living in Babylon and Persia but only 42,360 took advantage of the offer.

“The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore, Beside their servants and their maids, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven: and there were among them two hundred singing men and singing women.” (Ezra 2:64-65)

The Jews never regained political control over the Promised Land. They hoped the future Messiah would remove all foreigners and re-establish the Kingdom of Israel. The disciples were infected with this type of thinking and Jesus rebuffed them when they asked Him about restoring the Kingdom of Israel.

“When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.” (Acts 1:6-7)

There is a contrast with the old covenant made through Moses compared to the new covenant established by the Messiah, whose ministry is superior because He is the mediator of a better covenant, founded upon better promises. The old covenant, based on laws written on stone and external observance, proved insufficient because the people did not remain faithful.

God therefore promised a new covenant, one in which His laws would be written in the hearts and minds of His people. Everyone would know Him personally from the least to the greatest. He would show mercy through this covenant and remember their sins no more.

The old covenant becomes obsolete and vanishes away, replaced with a new and everlasting covenant through Christ.

But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. (Hebrews 8:6-13)

Under the old covenant, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies once each year with the blood of animals for his own sins and those of the people. This ritual was symbolic, revealing true access to God the Father was not yet open because while those sacrifices could cleanse outwardly, they failed to purify the sinful soul.

Jesus did not enter into an earthly tabernacle, but heaven, to offer His sinless blood and obtain eternal redemption for mankind. His sacrifice cleanses your conscience from sin so you can serve the living God with all your mind, heart, soul and strength. Jesus is the mediator of the new covenant, and we receive the promise of eternal inheritance through His death.

A testament only takes effect after death and the new covenant required the death of the Testator. Practically everything was purified by blood in the old covenant, foreshadowing the necessity of the Messiah's blood for true cleansing.

Christ's sacrifice was a one-time event. He was not going to offer Himself repeatedly as the priests did continually year after year. He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Just as people die once and then face judgment, Jesus was offered once to bear the sins of all, and He will appear a second time to bring salvation to those who eagerly wait for Him.

But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this

signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood.

For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for

us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. (Hebrews 9:7-28)

The First Covenant does not exist anymore. It came to an end when Jesus died on the cross and will never be revived again. Any Jew trying to keep it alive is laboring in vain.

Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!

Do you have an ear to hear with?