



THE COVENANTS

INTRODUCTION:

Down through history God has dealt with man in various ways during specific periods of time, which we sometimes call dispensations. For example, man has labeled the period from Adam to Moses as the _____ Age (dispensation). The word “patriarchal” comes from the Latin and means “rule of the fathers”. During this time God dealt directly with the heads of households such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God’s revelation was rather dim and His requirements few. This is sometimes called the “Starlight Age” of God’s revelation to man.

The second period of Bible history is called the _____ Age (dispensation) and extends from Moses at Mount Sinai to Christ on the Cross. God revealed His will for the Israelites both as individuals and as a nation through the Law. Revelation was clearer and God’s requirements were higher and more specific. This period of history is sometimes called the “Moonlight Age” of God’s revelation to man.

The third period of Bible history is the _____ Age (dispensation). It began on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), and will continue until Christ returns. This has been called the “Sunlight Age” of God’s revelation to man. This revelation is full and clear.

Corresponding with these different ages have been certain agreements or covenants that God has made between Himself and His people. Some people are surprised to find out that God has made several covenants but the following scriptures will show this to be true.

- Covenant with Noah (Genesis 6:18; 9:16)
- Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15:18)
- Sinai Covenant with Israel (Exodus 19:5-6; Exodus 20)
- Covenant with David (II Samuel 23:5; II Samuel 7:12-16)
- New Covenant with Christians (Luke 22:20; Heb. 8 & 9)

The English word “covenant” comes from two Latin words, *con*, “together”, and *venio*, “to come.” The word literally means, “a coming together.” The Greek word for covenant is *diatheke*. It is used 33 times in the New Testament.

I. Is the Old Testament (Covenant) still binding on Christians today? The answer can be stated very clearly – _____.

A. The “NO” answer:

1. The textual “proofs” were given as Ex. 12:14, 17, 24 (forever, permanent, lasting).
2. The key word is “_____” or “_____,” depending on the translation.
3. The explanation: it is from a root meaning to hide or conceal, and it was used to refer to “hidden” periods of time, whether in the past or in the future.
4. The conclusions therefore include Passover, Pentecost, Sabbath, Tabernacles, sacrifices, new moons, and all the intricate details of the Mosaic legislation for _____.
5. The Basic Principle: The Mosaic Covenant was made _____ with Israel. Only the covenants made with representatives of all mankind, or with special fulfillments in Christ are still binding

B. The “Yes” Answer.

1. Read Genesis 3:14-19
 - a. Gen. 2:16, 17 was the covenant about eating; cf. Hos. 6:7. Stipulations are given, etc.
 - b. Three parties were involved in the consequences:
 1. The _____, 3:14, 15
 2. The _____, 3:16 (still in effect)
 3. The _____, 3:17b – 19 (still in effect)
2. Conclusions:
 - a. We must recognize the different covenants and their durations.
 - b. We must also recognize the inspiration and the teachings of the Old to lead us to the New.
 - c. We must not be led astray by sincere, but erring people. We must not only “enter,”

but we must also “_____” the terms of the New Covenant.

II. Weaknesses of the Mosaic Covenant.

- A. It is assumed that you believe that all Scripture is inspired. Cf. 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.
1. The equality in inspiration does **not** mean that all of scripture is _____ on all mankind.

Note. A difficulty in working with other religious groups involves this very point. The people are sincere, but they tend to apply texts indiscriminately, without consideration for the context or the dispensation for which it was intended.

- B. The Bible itself provides adequate instruction about what our attitude should be toward the Mosaic Law that was the covenant made between God and the nation of Israel—not between God and all mankind.
1. Jesus regarded the Law as _____ and preparatory.
 - a. During His ministry He established Himself as superior to the Mosaic Law.
 - b. He had come to _____ it. Matt. 5:17
 - c. The expression, “But I tell you, demonstrating superiority, is found six times in Mt. 5: vv. 22, 28, 32, 39, 39, and 44.
 2. The weaknesses of the Mosaic Law are clearly stated.
 - a. The Law did not reveal the sinfulness of sin. Rom. 7:7, 24, 25
 - b. It did not provide a _____ sacrifice. Heb. 7:11, 26; 2:10
 - c. The Law put all men under a curse. Gal. 3:10, 11; 2 Cor. 3:7. (Note. Keeping the covenant is as important as entering it, according to Gal. 3)
 - d. The Law was preoccupied with the _____ man. Heb. 9:9, 10; Col. 2:16, 17
 - e. There was no Christ in it. Gal. 4:4, 5
 - f. It taught men the very sins that it prohibited. Rom. 7:7
 - g. It had no Holy Spirit in it. Gal. 3:2, 5

- h. It could not impart _____.
Gal. 3:21
- i. It could not give eternal life. Jn. 5:39, 40

III. Elements of the New Covenant.

Someone has said that there are three types of covenants.

- a. _____-sided. One party declared promises; there are no conditions.
- b. _____-sided. Two parties negotiate and agree to keep the terms.
- c. _____-sided. This is an agreement offered by God to man who may accept or reject it, but he cannot negotiate or alter it. When accepted, it binds both parties.

- A. The basic elements of any covenant are parties, stipulations, and promises.

Note. It must be remembered also that most of the covenants of the Bible were sealed with blood, usually the blood of an animal. The original Mosaic covenant had the blood sprinkled on the people (Ex. 24:8), or by having the participants walk between two halves of a slaughtered animal (Gn. 15:10-17).

- 1. The parties: in every case the covenant making God, the Lord, was one of the parties!
 - a. In the covenant with Abram, the parties were Abram, and it extended to include his descendants spiritually through faith. That is the argument of Gal. 3:9, 14. Those promises find fulfillments in you and me.
 - b. The parties of the New Covenant are _____—those who voluntarily, of their own free will determine to do two things:
 - 1. _____ the covenant—by baptism, when you are baptized into Christ’s death/blood.
 - 2. _____ the covenant.
- 2. The stipulations:
 - a. The primary stipulation for the physical covenant with Abraham included circumcision.
 - b. For Israel it involved keeping the Ten Commandments.

- c. For the Christian it involves several things:
 - 1. To _____ the Lord, Heb. 8:11
 - 2. To _____ the Lord—what have been called the “terms of pardon”: to hear, believe, repent, confess Christ, being baptized, and living faithfully.
 - 3. To _____ the death of the One Who made this New Covenant possible.
- 3. The promises:
 - a. For Abraham they involved a promise, a possession, and a people.
 - b. For Israel keeping the covenant meant prosperity, the presence of God, and a place (the Promised Land, or Canaan).
 - c. For the Christian the promises are tremendous!
 - 1. _____!
 - 2. He or she is “in” Christ!
 - 3. The promise of eternal life with Christ means that He has overcome the curse that has doomed man ever since Adam and Eve broke the very first agreement in the Garden of Eden.