

COVENANT

COVENANT: a contract or agreement between two parties.

In the Old Testament the Hebrew word: *berith*.

In the New Testament Greek: *diatheke*.

Rendered often as “testament” in the KJV. Better rendered “covenant.”

COVENANTS

God’s covenant with Adam.

The contracting parties were God and Adam, a free moral agent.

The promise was “access to the tree of life.”

The condition was to abstain from eating the fruit of the “tree of knowledge of good and evil.”

The penalty was death Gen.2:16, 17

God’s promise (covenant) to Noah after the Flood. Gen.9; Jer.33:20

God’s covenant with Abraham. Gen.17 cf. Lev.26:42

Covenant of Sinai. Exo.34:27, 28; Lev.26:15

Covenant or compact between men. Gen.21:32

Covenant between tribes or nations. 1Sa.11:1; Jos.9:6, 15

Marriage is called “the covenant of God.” Pro.2:17, because it’s made in God’s name.

THE NEW COVENANT

Jesus. His death represented the shedding of the blood of the new covenant. People who partake of the Lord’s supper drink the blood of the new covenant, remembering His death as the sacrifice for sins and looking forward to His return. Mat.26:28; Mar.14:24; Luk.22:20; 1Co.11:25

Peter told the Jews that they were children of the covenant with Abraham and that Christ had come first to them to fulfill the promise of blessing to Abraham by turning them away from their sinful ways. Act.3:25

“It is you who are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed’”

Stephen reminded his accusers that the covenant of circumcision with Abraham continued (during the time of the Sinai covenant) as part of God’s history of salvation leading to Jesus. Act.7:8

“And He gave him the covenant of circumcision; and so Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs.”

Paul affirmed that just as a human last will and testament could not be changed by another person, so God’s covenant with Abraham could not be changed or annulled by another covenant (Law) given later. Gal.3:15-17:

Brethren, I speak in terms of human relations: even though it is only a man’s covenant, yet when it has been ratified, no one sets it aside or adds conditions to it. Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as referring to many, but rather to one, “And to your seed,” that is, Christ. What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.

He was a minister of the new covenant, a ministry of the Spirit and of life. 2Co.3:6:
who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Hebrews: covenant is a central theme.

Jesus, the perfect High Priest, providing a new, better, superior covenant.

Heb.7:22:

so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.

Heb.8:6:

But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.

Jesus fulfilled Jeremiah's new covenant promise.

Heb.8:8,10:

For finding fault with them, He says, "behold, days are coming, says the Lord, when I will effect a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah . . . For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and I will write them upon their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

Heb.10:16:

"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws upon their heart, and upon their mind I will write them . . ."

Jesus was the perfect covenant Mediator.

Heb.9:15

And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Jesus' death on the cross satisfied the requirement that all covenants be established by blood.

Heb.9:18,20:

Therefore even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood . . . saying, "this is the blood of the covenant which god commanded you."

Christ's blood established an everlasting covenant Heb.13:20

Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord.

Note: If Israel suffered for breaking the Sinai covenant, (Heb. 8:9-10), how much more should people expect to suffer if they have "counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing." Heb.10:29