

I. Review

- A. Ps. 105 tells us that God keeps His covenants forever.
- B. God bound Himself emphatically to Abraham with this covenant. Even the Law, which came later, did not annul that covenant (Gal. 3:17).
- C. That covenant to Abraham included a promise that his descendants would inhabit the land of Canaan. This would happen after a 400-year delay (Egypt).

II. The Mosaic Covenant

- A. After the Exodus from Egypt, God led the people of Israel to Mt. Sinai, where Moses readied the people to be addressed by God.

“⁵Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; ⁶and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” (Ex. 19:5-6)

- 1. This passage is where we get the idea of Israel being God’s “chosen people.”
- 2. Note the Lord’s statement, “all the earth is mine.” His choosing of Israel wasn’t a statement of favouritism, as we might understand it today. He is the Creator of all things; He can choose and use whomever He wants, however He wants.
 - a. Remember: He always chooses one for the benefit of the many. He did not choose Israel at the exclusion of other nations, but for their benefit. They were to be a kingdom of priests – those who function before God on behalf of others.
- B. This covenant does come with a condition: “if you obey my voice and keep my covenant”. Some argue that because Israel didn’t perfectly keep this condition, they have broken the covenant. But this is not the only covenant that comes with human conditions. The covenant with Abraham came with the instruction to “walk before me and be blameless” (Gen. 17:1). The New Covenant also comes with conditions (example: “if you sow according to the flesh, you will reap according to the flesh”, Gal. 6:8).
 - 1. We know that God “unconditionally” keeps the New Covenant with us as believers, even though we don’t perfectly fulfill all its human conditions. Similarly, God unconditionally keeps His covenant with Israel.
- C. **Exodus 6:2-8** – God intervened to deliver Israel from Egypt because He remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (v.5). Not only that, but He delivered and redeemed them out of Egypt to “take you to be my people, and I will be your God” (v.7). He was doing this to bring them into intimate relationship with Himself.

1. The Mosaic covenant was not a separate, new covenant, but was building on the original covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In the same way, we see the promise of this covenant expand beyond the stock of Israel to include people from every tribe, tongue, and nation in the New Covenant. The same premise is stated of the New Covenant at the end of the Bible, linking it to the covenant with Israel:

“And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.” (Rev. 21:3)

2. Note that God’s statement in Exodus 6 reiterates His intention to bring Israel into the land and does not contain any conditions.
- D. God made covenant with Israel at Mt. Sinai – there was ceremony, there were gestures, terms, and consequences for failure to follow through. This covenant is full of consequences, both for obedience (blessing) and disobedience (cursing).
- E. **Leviticus 26** – the blessings and cursings associated with their obedience or disobedience are outlined here (similarly in Deut. 28). In this way, the Mosaic covenant did differ from the Abrahamic: there was now an expectation on the nation of Israel to keep their side of the covenant.
1. The blessings of obedience (v.1-13) were to be somewhat evangelistic in nature: the surrounding nations would see the blessing that comes from walking in His ways.
 2. The cursings for disobedience (v.14-39) increase in intensity the longer they walk in disobedience.
 3. Note that God never states that He will cut Israel off from being His chosen people as a consequence for disobedience. What it does say is that they would be invaded, their cities destroyed, many will die, and ultimately, the remnant would be taken into exile, away from the land of promise.
 4. But the passage does not end with judgment – it ends with *restoration* when they respond with repentance (v.40-45). This pattern is consistent with the prophets!
- “**Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not spurn them, neither will I abhor them so as to destroy them utterly and break my covenant with them, for I am the LORD their God.**” (Lev. 26:44)*
- F. **Deuteronomy 30** – Moses expounds on the promise of restoration after touching on the blessings and the cursings. There are two dynamics to see here:

1. Moses specifies that the promise of restoration includes the exiled remnant being restored to the land they were promised (v.1-5).
2. They would also be “circumcised in the heart” so that they will love Him with all their heart, and live. This is the New Covenant anticipated in the Mosaic Covenant!

“And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.” (Deut. 30:6)

3. All of this is entrenched in the condition of repentance; even that happens by the grace of God and not the inclination of our heart (Rom. 2:4; Jer. 31:18; Lam. 5:21).
 - a. Even in the Law (Mosaic Covenant), His mercy and grace are the basis of the covenantal blessings.

G. Jeremiah 31 – Jeremiah’s prophecy about the New Covenant.

1. Note – the New Covenant was made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah! We are welcomed into it through the blood of Jesus, but the covenant was initially made with Israel.

*“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a **new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah...**” (Jer. 31:31)*

2. Yes, Israel broke their end of the covenant. But God never broke His end of the covenant. The consequence for Israel breaking the covenant was never that God would cut them off. God’s response was to make yet another covenant with them!
3. This new covenant carries the same promise as Ex. 6:7, Ex. 19:5-6 and Deut. 30:6 – God writing His Torah on their hearts is similar to circumcision of the heart, and it’s all so that they would love Him with all their hearts and be His people.
4. Ezekiel basically says the same thing:

“²⁴I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. ²⁵I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. ²⁶And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put in within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷And I will put my Spirit with in you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. ²⁸You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.” (Ezek. 36:24-28)

- a. All three of these passages clearly reference transformation of the heart.

III. Summary

- A. The Mosaic Covenant, in some ways, is an expansion and continuation of the unconditional covenant that God made with Abraham (in Gen. 12, 15, 17).
 1. He was bringing them into the land He had promised their forefathers.
 2. He was taking them as His people, making Himself their God.
 3. This covenant links to the New Covenant when we see that its ultimate aim was to lead them into transformation of the heart (Jer. 31, Ezek. 36). This promise of restoration originated in the Mosaic Covenant.
 4. Through the blood of Messiah, this covenant expands to include people from every people, tribe, and tongue – but the original covenant with Israel is never broken.

*“³⁵Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar – the LORD of hosts is his name: ³⁶If this fixed order departs from before me, declares the LORD, then shall the offspring of Israel cease from being a nation before me forever.’ ³⁷Thus says the LORD: ‘If the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth below can be explored, **then** I will cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done, declares the LORD.’” (Jer. 31:35-37)*