

Evangelistic Newspaper
“All Honour to God”
“Daar is Lig in die Wapad” 101

Evangelistic Newsletter

Covenants basics 101

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In this part of looking at some requests for some basic information, we look at some of the basics regarding covenants.

The word, “Covenant” (Hebrew - Berith) is central to Biblical revelation. The best way to understand salvation is to understand the story of covenants between God and his people (NCRS, 2016).

A covenant is a solemn agreement between human beings and God in which mutual commitments are recognised (NCRS, 2016). The fulfilment of these mutual obligations constitutes “righteousness”, thus in this sense, to be in “right relationship with God”.

Israel stood in a covenant relationship with God. To be considered righteous, Israel had to fulfil her obligations towards God and this included obedience to the Law. God was the initiator, preserver and defender of the covenant (Singer-Towns, 2009).

The covenant relationship was prior to the Law of Moses and therefore God alone upheld it. Only God could therefore nullify it (Psalm 89: 28-37).

There are five main covenants in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament): Adam and Eve (Gen. 1-2), Noah and his family (Gen. 6-9), Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 12, 15, 17); Moses and the Israelites (Ex 20-34; Deut 5-11) and David and his Kingdom (2Sam 7).

Of significance to Apostolic Christians are the two covenants of which the first is the covenant between God and the ancient people of Israel. This was made by God at Sinai with Moses also called the Old Testament or old covenant (Ex 20-34; Deut 5-11)). The second is the New Covenant, which was established by Jesus, our Lord and Saviour, through His sacrificial death and resurrection.

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It is important to note that the Old Testament is an indispensable part of Sacred Scripture as its books are Divinely inspired and one needs the “old” to understand the “new” in context. Scripture interprets Scripture.

So in terms of the overarching theme of the Bible, God created human beings to be in perfect union with God and one another but sin removed humanity’s original holiness and justice (Singer-Towns, 2009). The Bible after this event relays how God, throughout human history, **works to restore the relationship of love and trust that was lost through original sin** (Singer-Towns, 2009).

God did this by entering into covenants (special relationships based on mutual promises with people such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and David).

A New and Everlasting Covenant is promised by the prophet Jeremiah (31:31-34):

³¹ *The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.*

³² *It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.*

The covenant affirmed through the Old Testament, comes to its completion and fulfilment in the New Covenant through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who after the last supper seals it with his blood on the cross. Through Jesus’ suffering, death and resurrection we receive salvation, forgiveness of our sins, and destruction of the power of sin and death over us and the promise of eternal life with God .

Our understanding of our participation in the New Covenant is explained on page 51-52 in the Understanding Our Faith Book (Flor, 2013).

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Old Testament Covenant Sacrifices

(The Bible Project, 2015)



New Testament Covenant Sacrifice

(The Bible Project, 2015)

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Groete hier en daar

Fluit-Fluit, my storie is uit

Nag Ou Grote!

Theo Ph.D