

Lesson Four: God's Covenant with Israel

Introduction

In the previous lesson, we looked at God's covenant with Abraham; a covenant that extend to Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants. While this covenant was first physical in nature, it's true spiritual fulfillment would come through Jesus Christ.

One aspect of God's covenant with Abraham contained the following promise: *"And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, **to be God to you and your descendants after you**"* (Genesis 17:7). Four hundred and thirty years later, God said to Moses, *"Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. **I will take you as My people, and I will be your God.** Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians'"* (Exodus 6:6-7).

In this lesson, *God's Covenant with Israel*, we will examine some important aspects of God's covenant with the nation of Israel.

God Established a Covenant with the Israelites

- A. Abraham's descendants moved to Egypt during the life of his grandson, Jacob, the son of Isaac. (Genesis 46)
 1. The Israelites, the descendants of sons of Jacob (Israel) became slaves in Egypt. (Exodus 1:1-14)
 2. The Israelites cried out to God for deliverance. (Exodus 2:23-25)
 3. The Lord God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He called Moses to deliver the Israelites from Pharaoh. (Exodus 3:1-22; cf. 6:1-5)
 4. God delivered the Israelites from their slavery in Egypt. (Exodus 12:31-

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God's Covenant with Israel

Man and Sin

God's Promise to Abram

God's Everlasting Word

World Filled with Sin

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- 42; 13:17-22; 14:1-31; 15:1-27)
5. Israel arrived at Mount Sinai in the third month after the Lord had delivered them out of Egypt. (Exodus 19:1-25)
- B. God established a covenant with the Israelites.
1. The covenant God established with the nation of Israel did not “annul” His everlasting covenant with Abraham. The law “was added because of transgressions.” (Galatians 3:16-20)
 2. God’s covenant required Israel to obey His commands and laws. (Exodus 19:5; 24:7)
 3. The basics of the ten commandments. (Exodus 20:1-17)
 - a. “You shall have no other god's before me.” (vs 1-3)
 - b. “You shall not make for yourself a carved image.” (vs 4-6)
 - c. “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.” (vs 7)
 - d. “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” (vs 8-11)
 - e. “Honor your father and your mother.” (vs 12)
 - f. “You shall not murder.” (vs 13)
 - g. “You shall not commit adultery.” (vs 14)
 - h. “You shall not steal.” (vs 15)
 - i. “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.” (vs 16)
 - j. “You shall not covet.” (vs 17)
 4. The Lord elaborates on other laws of His covenant. (Exodus 20 - 23)
 - a. The law of the altar. (20:22-26)
 - b. The law concerning servants. (21:1-11)
 - c. The law concerning violence. (21:12-27)
 - d. The law concerning controlling certain animals. (21:28-36)
 - e. Responsibility for property. (22:1-15)
 - f. Moral and ceremonial principles. (22:16-31)
 - g. Justice for all. (23:1-9)
 - h. The law of Sabbaths. (23:10-13)
 - i. Three yearly feasts. (23:14-19)
- B. The people of Israel affirmed God’s covenant.
1. Before the Lord came to the mountain, the people agreed to obey His voice and keep His covenant. (Exodus 19:1-9)

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2. After the Lord stated His commands and covenant, the people once again affirmed their commitment to obeying the Lord. (Exodus 24:1-8)
 - a. After this second affirmation of the people, the Lord called Moses up to the mountain. (Exodus 24:9-18)
 - b. It is tragic to note that by the end of Moses' forty days on Mount Sinai, the people of Israel had broken their covenant with the Lord. (Exodus 32:1-35)
3. After forty years wandering in the wilderness, while in the plains of Moab, Israel again committed to obeying the voice of the Lord. (Deuteronomy 26:16-19)
4. Some years later, after beginning the conquest of Canaan, Joshua challenged the people to serve the Lord. The people reaffirmed their willingness to serve the Lord. (Joshua 24:14-27)

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Blessings and Cursings

- A. The Lord God was very clear on Israel abiding by His covenant.
 1. God told Israel what would happen if they disobeyed His word. (Deuteronomy 27:11-26)
 2. God explained the blessings that would come from obedience. (Deuteronomy 28:1-14)
- B. Despite God's warnings, the Israelites would repeatedly disobey His commands. The Lord told Moses the people would "play the harlot with the gods of the foreigners of the land." (Deuteronomy 31:14-18)
- C. God told Moses to write a song and teach it to Israel. This song would serve as a witness for God against the children of Israel. (Deuteronomy 31:19-22; 31:30 - 32:47)

Conclusion

God remembered His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God heard the cry of Jacob's descendants and delivered them from Egyptian bondage. The Lord God made the children of Israel His people and He was their God.

Sadly, the children of Israel would disobey God's covenant with them. In our next lesson, *God's Disobedient People*, we will consider examples of Israel's disobedience and how God dealt with His disobedient people. ◀