

Why the Old Covenant?

Covenant: an arrangement made by one party (the greater) which the other party (the lesser) involved could accept or reject, but could not alter.

God is a covenant God.

“Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His loving-kindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments.”
(Deuteronomy 7:9, NAS)

Biblical Covenants

“All that God has ever done for His people in making a covenant was always to bring them to Himself as their chief, their only good, to teach them to trust in Him, to delight in Him, to be one with Him. It cannot be otherwise. ... In entering into covenant with us, God's one object is to draw us to Himself, to render us entirely dependent upon Himself, and so to bring us into the right position and disposition in which He can fill us with Himself, His love, and His blessedness.”

(Andrew Murray in *The Two Covenants*)

Biblical Covenants

They fall into two classes:

1. **CONDITIONAL:**

A covenant which guarantees that God will do His part when the human requirements stipulated in that covenant are met. Conditional on the lesser.

2. **UNCONDITIONAL:**

Distinguished from a conditional covenant by the fact that its ultimate fulfillment is promised by God and depends upon God's power and sovereignty for its fulfillment. Not conditional on the lesser.

Biblical Covenants

1. The **EDENIC** covenant (**conditional**)

Gen. 1:26-31; 2:16-17

- Made with Adam in which life and blessing or death and cursing depended on the faithfulness of Adam.
- Adam and Eve failed, died spiritually and physically and their sin plunged the whole human race into its pattern of sin and death.

Biblical Covenants

2. The **ADAMIC** covenant (**unconditional**)

Gen. 3:16-19

- Here God declares to man, after the fall, what his lot in life will be because of his sin.
- It includes the promise of the Redeemer (Messiah – God become flesh)!

Biblical Covenants

3. The **NOAHIC** covenant (**unconditional**)

Gen 9:1-18

- made with Noah and his sons after the flood, introducing human government to curb sin.
- the normal order of nature reaffirmed (Gen. 8:22; 9:2)
- the permission for man to eat the flesh of animals
- His promise to the earth to never destroy all flesh again by water.

Biblical Covenants

4. The **ABRAHAMIC** covenant (**unconditional**)
Gen. 12:1-4; 13:14-17; 15:1-7; 17:1-8
- This covenant is one of the great revelations of God concerning future history. Abraham would have immense posterity, personal blessing, his name would be great, and he, personally, would be a blessing.
 - Through Abraham would come a great nation (Israel) and through him (via that nation) all the nations of the earth would be blessed (Messiah).
 - Through Abraham's descendents (the Jews) came the prophets of God, the writers of God's written Word (the Bible) and Christ/Messiah according to the flesh.

Biblical Covenants

6. The **LAND** covenant (**unconditional**),
Deut. 30:1-10
- It is the land of Israel because it was divinely covenanted to Abraham's descendents through Jacob (Israel). It is an unconditional promise regarding Israel's final possession of their ancient land.
 - (It is erroneously called by theologians the "Palestinian Covenant." However, the Bible does not recognize the land by that name.)

Biblical Covenants

7. The **DAVIDIC** covenant (**unconditional**)
2 Sam. 7:4-16; 1 Chron. 17:3-15
- God promised David an unending, royal lineage, throne, and kingdom.
 - The Davidic covenant guarantees an everlasting Throne, King and Kingdom connected to the Jews and the land.
 - Jesus Christ, the Son of David, is the rightful heir of this promised Throne (Matt. 2:2; Lk. 1:32-33) and on it He will reign over this literal, promised, earthly, future Messianic Kingdom from Jerusalem at His second advent. (Rom. 9-11)

Biblical Covenants

5. The **MOSAIC** covenant (OC) (**conditional**)
Ex. 20:1 - 31:18 (and elsewhere)
- It was temporary (it officially terminated at the cross of Christ – the sacrifice of the Messiah)
 - Though it had gracious elements it was basically a covenant of works.
 - It could not impart life to the sinner in Adam (Gal. 3:21) but it served as a tutor which would lead those who were under its jurisdiction to the only One who could impart LIFE (Christ Jesus, Gal. 3:24).

Why the Old Covenant?

The Old Covenant (MOSAIC) was God's first stage of our education concerning a restored relationship with Him.

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Exodus 19:4-6

1. It was **CONDITIONAL** (v.5 – IF)
2. They (lesser) had a part in the condition
 - a. v.5 **obey** His voice and **keep** My covenant...
 - b. v.8 "All that the Lord has spoken **we will do!**"
 - c. **Deuteronomy 4:13** – performance!
 - d. **Deuteronomy 7:12** – keep and do!

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Exodus 19:4-6

3. Then, they would be God's possession – *lit.* a special treasure
4. Then, they would be a kingdom of priests with access to God!
5. Then, they would be a holy nation.

Why the Old Covenant?

The lessons of the OC was absolutely necessary!

1. to call forth our impotent efforts
 - Ex.19:8, Deu.4:13, **2 Corinthians 3:5**
2. to demonstrate that our efforts fall far short from His perfect mark
 - **Philippians 3:3**
3. to convince us of the complete bankruptcy and wickedness of our hearts
 - **Matthew 15:8-9; Jeremiah 17:9**
4. to arouse and awaken sin within us
 - Romans 5:20

Why the Old Covenant?

"The great work of the law was to discover what sin was: its hatefulness as accursed of God; its misery, working temporal and eternal ruin; its power, binding man down in hopeless slavery; and the need of a Divine interposition – **as the only hope of deliverance.**"

(Andrew Murray in *The Two Covenants*)

Why the Old Covenant?

"He gave it [OC] that it might convince man of his sin, and might so waken the confession of his impotence, and of his need of a New Covenant and a true redemption."

(Andrew Murray in *The Two Covenants*)

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The lessons of the OC was absolutely necessary!

5. to prepare us for lesson two (the NC):
HE HAS TO DO IT! WE CAN'T DO IT!
 - we have to constantly depend on Him to lead and guide our every effort!
 - **Isaiah 53:6; Galatians 3:24; Hebrews 12:1,2**
 - **MATTHEW 11:28**