



bb-TBC-22

☰ Associations	Mike Coles RW2
📎 Attachments	
☰ Come via Zoom whenever you can. short notice is fine.	
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☰ Status	Ready
📅 Target Date	@Jun 3, 2021
☰ Type	Bible Series NLR Preaching
☰ Working Title	Conflict among the Covenants
Σ days left	-1
☰ with Allan H	
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bb-TBC-22 Conflict among the Covenants

▼ Introduction

We have arrived at Chapter 8 in 'The Better Covenant' and we begin to discover some of the tensions that can develop between the advocates of different covenants.

We are developing quite a collection of covenants and we have seen that not all covenants are 'water-tight'. Some covenants are absolutely 'stand-alone' covenants, but others seem to co-exist quite happily. In fact... they didn't always co-exist happily and tensions developed among the different covenants along the line of 'party interests'. Different groups quoted different covenants to justify their positions.

▼ Conditional and Non-conditional Covenants

Some Christians make a strong distinction between two 'kinds' of covenant. The divisions between Calvinism and Arminianism are part of this struggle. Some, wishing to emphasize the power and rule of God describe some covenants as being one-directional, or non-conditional. They make the point that many ancient covenants were not 'mutual' but usually had a pattern where the ruler or conqueror imposed his will upon the conquered. Others wishing to emphasize man's accountability stress the required faith/obedience of the other covenant party. This emphasis on the mutual nature of a covenant is a 'conditional covenant'.

In case you haven't noticed I have been taking the second route in these studies. It is true that the covenant that followed the Flood was not a mutual agreement. That covenant is later described as "an everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth"

▼ Gen 9:15-17

and I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.

And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.
(Genesis 9:15–17 ASV)

but even here there were 'conditions'

▼ Gen 9:4-6

But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

And surely your blood, the blood of your lives, will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it; and at the hand of man, even at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man.

Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. (Genesis 9:4-6 ASV)

▼ Revelation 18:24 - judgment sometimes takes a long time in coming

And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth."

(Revelation 18:24 NKJV)

The Abrahamic Covenant is described as a stand-alone, or non-conditional covenant. But on closer examination, we discover that this covenant had conditions. Abraham had taken many 'steps of faith' before we arrive at the record in Genesis 15. This is the covenant that undergirds the truth of Justification by Faith. It is a proof text, quoted frequently in the New Testament, and has its origin in the events of Genesis chapters 15-17.

▼ Conditional Covenants with Abraham

▼ Genesis 15 - God's 'covenant' with Christ

And he believed in Jehovah; and he reckoned it to him for righteousness. (Genesis 15:6 ASV)

¶ And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. (Genesis 15:17 NKJV)

But as we saw in Studies 14 and 15 this covenant was not really between God and Abraham but between God and Abraham's Seed

▼ Genesis 15:18 cf Galatians 3:16-19

In that day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, (Genesis 15:18 ASV)

Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ. (Galatians 3:16 NKJV)

¶ What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; (Galatians 3:19 NKJV)

▼ Genesis 16 - the Ishmael Saga

Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. And she had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar.

So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai. (Genesis 16:1-2 NKJV)

▼ Genesis 17 - The Covenant sealed by circumcision

It was 15 years later, after the disaster of Ishmael, that God entered into the Abrahamic Covenant. and this required Abram to commit to a 'blameless walk' before God.

▼ Genesis 17:1-2

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless.

And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly." (Genesis 17:1-2 NKJV)

That is not Justification by works, but the Covenant does have conditions.

▼ I will not forsake you... I will forsake you...

If we recall the last few chapters of Deuteronomy they contain several sections which have become sources of blessing and encouragement for God's people, the saints, in all ages. The words ring with absolute certainty;

▼ Deuteronomy 31:6-8

Be strong and of good courage, fear not, nor be affrighted at them: for Jehovah thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; **he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.**

And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all

Israel, Be strong and of good courage: for thou shalt go with this people into the land which Jehovah hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it.

And Jehovah, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.

(Deuteronomy 31:6–8 ASV)

Surely there can be no doubt. That settles the matter... well it might have done if a few verses later God had not said..

▼ Deuteronomy 31:17

Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and **I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them**, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall come upon them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us? (Deuteronomy 31:17 ASV)

There can be no doubt in what is being said, the same Hebrew word is used in both places. So how do we get from "I will not forsake you" to "**I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them**" in 10 verses?

In Studies 19 and 20 we saw Moses' final words to the Covenant Nation of Israel. We saw Jehovah's anticipation and delight in the people he had made his own by covenant. We saw to his plan for their destiny as Jeshurun, My Upright One. (Deut 32:15; 33:5,26; Isaiah 44:2) But as the record continues it shows the nations 'becoming fat and kicking against' God's purpose for them. It predicts that they will become complacent in their blessings and will forget God. They will forget Jehovah and the Covenant and turn to other Gods.

How true that old saying is...

God gives and forgives

While man gets and forgets

They are warned that God will heap disasters upon that would result in them being scattered among their enemies. It is a sobering fact that for all the wonderful promises held out to Jeshurun, there are more curses threatened than promises given in the book of Deuteronomy.

▼ I have loved you...

Does this imply that God will run out of patience and withdraw his love from them? Not at all. The Old Covenant record will begin and end on the same

note. Moses declares God's heart in giving the Law;

▼ Deut 33:1-3

¶ And this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death.

And he said, Jehovah came from Sinai, And rose from Seir unto them; He shined forth from mount Paran, And he came from the ten thousands of holy ones: At his right **hand was a fiery law for them. Yea, he loveth the people;** All his saints are in thy hand: And they sat down at thy feet; Every one shall receive of thy words.

(Deuteronomy 33:1-3 ASV)

The Law was the gift of his love for Jeshurun, but we have already seen the epitaph of the final Old Covenant book;

▼ Mal 1:2

¶ **I have loved you, saith Jehovah.** Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother, saith Jehovah: **yet I loved Jacob;**

but Esau I hated, and made his mountains a desolation, and gave his heritage to the jackals of the wilderness. (Malachi 1:2-3 ASV)

▼ Mal 1:10

Oh that there were one among you that would shut the doors, that ye might not kindle fire on mine altar in vain! I have no pleasure in you, saith Jehovah of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. (Malachi 1:10 ASV)

Those who held the responsibility to guard and guide in the Covenant of Levi failed in their God-given responsibility and God had continued to speak through 'prophets', originally known as 'seers'. Men and women who had God's perspective and 'saw' as God 'sees'. They brought God perspective to the present time. God's urgency in getting his word to his people through the prophets is captured in the prophet Jeremiah in a pointed idiom. Jeremiah frequently remarks that God was in the habit of "getting up early and sending his messengers"; Jer 7:13, 25; 11:7; 25:3-4; 26:5; 29:19; 32:33; 35:14-15; 44:4. The picture of a hands-on ruler who starts the day by sending out his heralds personally.

▼ The Descent into Decadence

The monarchy that began with such high hopes had brief flashes of the glory that God had promised. Saul crashed and burned and David's own sin brought the judgment of a sword into his own family. His last years were plagued with inter-family factions. Solomon started so well but betrayed all the instructions of Deuteronomy in a lavish life-style and squandered his gifts. In the next generation Rehoboam moved another step closer to a despotic monarchy and God tore the nation from him leaving only a tattered remnant in his hands.

The nation split into two distinct nations. The house of Israel in the North and the house of Judah in the South. God made an astonishing promise to Jeroboam the son of Nebat;

▼ 1Kings 11:37–38

And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel.

And it shall be, **if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that which is right in mine eyes, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and will build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee.** (1Kings 11:37–38 ASV)

God replicated the promises he had given to David and offered them to Jeroboam. It is one of the great 'what ifs' of Bible history.

This is a startling prophecy and promise. God offers a replica covenant to Jeroboam; **a sure house (dynasty) 'as I built for David, and will give Israel (the Northern State) unto thee.**

▼ A Confusion of Covenants

We now have two covenants running side by side that seem to be incompatible. How are we to understand this? "Israel" had been 'given away'; David's dynasty will reign over a mere rump of a nation.

Bible readers will be familiar with a description of Jeroboam; his frequently described as "Jeroboam the son of Nebat who caused Israel to sin". He becomes a new standard for idolatry and false religion so that many a later king is measured against either David or Jeroboam.

As it happened Jeroboam's 'sure and enduring' dynasty lasted for a very short time. He reigned for 22 years during which he took the northern Kingdom, the House of Israel, further and further away from the Covenant.

His son reigned for 2 years and was assassinated in a palace coup. The northern nation state of Israel was on a flight path to disaster and in spite of God rising up early and sending his messengers', the prophets, to his Covenant people. The House of Israel stayed on the same bearing and the nation state of Israel, the House of Israel ended 200 years later when the Assyrians super power moved in. Its 10 tribes, as one historian described it, "passed from history into myth". Its people were assimilated into wider empire of Assyria.

▼ Amos 5:2

The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise: she is cast down upon her land; there is none to raise her up. (Amos 5:2 ASV)

The Southern Kingdom of Judah, the House of Judah, was on a similar trajectory but travelling at a slower speed but will leave their story until next week...