**Covenants in the Bible**

**Introduction:**

A covenant is an agreement between two parties. Other similar words are treaty, contract, testament, will. The Bible reveals several covenants God has made with mankind. Misunderstanding these covenants has led to much confusion in the religious world. That is why we need to carefully study these covenants.

**Body:**

1. **God’s Covenant with Noah** Genesis 6:17-19 “And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark – you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you. And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female.” NKJV This covenant included Noah’s family as well as the animals on the ark. God would preserve them during the terrible ordeal of the flood. Then after the flood, God made a promise to Noah and his descendants. Genesis 9:8-17 “Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying: ‘And as for Me, behold, I establish My covenant with you and with your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you: the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth. This I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.’ And God said: ‘This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud, and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.’ And God said to Noah, ‘This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth.’ ” NKJV This covenant was unconditional.
2. **God’s Land Covenant with Abraham** Genesis 15:18-21 “On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying: ‘To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates – the Kenites, the Kenezzites, and Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.’ ” NKJV Jehovah promised the land of Canaan to Abraham’s descendants as a place to live. But this covenant was conditional based upon the obedience of God’s people. Leviticus 26:27-28, 31-33 “And after all this, if you do not obey Me, but walk contrary to Me, then I also will walk contrary to you in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. 31 I will lay your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries to desolation, and I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas. I will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it. I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.” NKJV
3. **God’s Seed Covenant with Abraham** Genesis 22:18 “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.” NKJV God promised him that through his seed all nations would be blessed. Genesis 17:4-7 “As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. 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.” NKJV This was fulfilled in the coming of Christ. Acts 3:24-26 “So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: ‘Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them,’ who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: ‘Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things? The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the Lord and against His Christ.’ ” NKJV Galatians 3:15-16 “Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man’s covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. 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.” NKJV This covenant was unconditional.
4. **God’s Covenant with Israel** Exodus 34:10, 27-28 “And He said: ‘Behold, I make a covenant. Before all your people I will do marvels such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation; and all the people among whom you are shall see the work of the Lord. For it is an awesome thing that I will do with you. 27-28 Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Write these words, for according to the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.’ So he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.” NKJV

* This covenant was sealed with the sprinkling of animal blood. Exodus 24:8 “And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, ‘This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you according to all these words.’ ” NKJV
* It was given only to the children of Israel. Deuteronomy 4:7-8 “ For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the Lord our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him? And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day?” NKJV Ephesians 2:11-12 “Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh – who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands – that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.” NKJV
* This covenant was conditional. Exodus 19:5 “Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.” NKJV
* It was only a temporary covenant. Galatians 3:19 “What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.” NKJV Jeremiah 31:31-33 “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah – not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. 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 in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” NKJV

1. **God’s Covenant with Both Jew and Gentile** Ephesians 2:11-13, 19 “Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh – who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands – that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.” NKJV

* This covenant came through Christ. Hebrews 8:6 “But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.” NKJV
* This covenant is for everyone. Galatians 3:26-29 “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew now Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” NKJV
* This covenant is conditional in order to receive its promises. Acts 2:38-39 “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.’ ” NKJV

**Conclusion:**

As we have seen, God has made several covenants through the years. We must make a clear distinction especially between the covenant given on Sinai to Israel and the Covenant given through Christ. Our source of authority for all we believe and practice must come from the New Covenant. The promises of this covenant are available to you right now – forgiveness, salvation, eternal life in heaven.

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