

Covenant Theology: from a Reformed Baptist Perspective

Lesson 7: The Mosaic Covenant (the Sinaitic Covenant, sometimes referred to simply as “the Law”)

Background to the Mosaic Covenant

- God told Abraham that his descendants would live in a foreign land and be afflicted there for 400 years (Gen. 15:13). God also told Abraham that He would punish the nation that harshly treated his descendants and that He would bring them out of that land with great possessions (Gen. 15:14). God then said that He would bring back Abraham’s descendants to the _____ He promised to give Abraham (Gen. 15:16)
- From this we learn that the Mosaic Covenant flows out of the _____. The Mosaic Covenant should not be viewed as an isolated covenant but as the progression of God’s dealings with His people.
- We see all of this _____ in the first half of the book of Exodus (chapters 1-14). God raised up a deliverer and rescued the people. *“The time that the people of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years. At the end of the 430 years, on the very day, all of the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt”* (Ex. 12:40-41)
- God rescued His people from their enemies. He brought about a total victory for His people that resulted in their _____ (Ex. 13:3), the accumulation of great worldly possessions (Ex. 12:36), and the destruction of their enemies (Ex. 14:28).
- God led the people out of Egypt and brought them through the wilderness to the foot of Mt. Sinai. Here, He would give the people His _____. It was necessary for a nation to have a set of laws by which to govern and guide them. The Mosaic Covenant provided that structure that was necessary for the existence of the nation. God was their King and as such He gave His people a law to live by.

Purpose of the Mosaic Covenant

- The Mosaic Covenant contained promises for the people of Israel that were to be attained if they fulfilled their duty of covenantal _____. The promises of the covenant included entrance into and continued possession of the land, agricultural provisions, protection from enemies, and most importantly the promise to have God be their God and they to be His people (Ex. 19:3-8).
- Thus, we can say, that like the Abrahamic Covenant, the Mosaic Covenant was a covenant of _____. Again, not like the Adamic covenant but in reference to temporal earthly blessings.
“The same kind of arrangement is established through the Mosaic Covenant. God declares the blessings He intends to pour out on Israel, but for the Israelites to enjoy the blessings, they must keep the covenant, the law...Israel swore obedience to the law, the law which God said if Israel kept they would be His treasured possession. This is a covenant based upon obedience to the law.”-Renihan
- The Mosaic Covenant was not a covenant of works for salvation. God did not make the people of Israel obey the law before He delivered them. Deliverance from the land of Egypt came _____ then came the demands for covenantal obedience (Exodus 20:1-2).
- The Mosaic Covenant while being tied to legal obedience did contain within it the mercy and kindness of the Lord. Unlike the Adamic covenant, this covenant did offer the gift of _____ and forgiveness (Leviticus 4).
- The Mosaic Covenant contained both _____ for obedience and curses for disobedience (Deut. 27 & 28).
- If the people obeyed this covenant they would reside in the land and experience the blessing of God’s continued presence the land. However, if they persisted in _____ they would be torn from the land and expelled from it. The Lord tells them through Moses that the latter will happen (Deut. 31:20)
- The Mosaic Covenant was never meant to be _____ but only to rule over God’s people until the time of Christ’s fulfillment.

Content of the Mosaic Covenant

-There is a three-fold division in the covenantal laws (_____, ceremonial, and judicial).

“God gave to Adam a law of universal obedience written on his heart...the same law that was first written in the heart of man continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness after the Fall, and was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai, in ten commandments and written on two tables...Besides this law, commonly called moral, God was pleased to give the people of Israel ceremonial laws...them also He gave judicial laws...” LBC 19.1-4

The Moral Law refers to the Decalogue and this was the _____ aspect of the covenant (which is why these laws were written on tablets of stone and placed in the Ark of the Covenant).

The Judicial Law refers to those laws that were given by God to govern and guide _____ life (ex. how to treat one another, what to do when a person injures another, whether it was alright to charge interest, etc.). These laws are to be seen as the outworking of the moral law into the life of the nation.

The Ceremonial Law refers to those laws that were given by God to govern their _____ of Him (ex. where to worship Him, what sacrifices to offer for specific dates and issues, how to ordain a priest, etc.)

The judicial and ceremonial aspects of the law would be classified as “_____ laws”. Positive laws are those additions to that which is written on our hearts and as such they fade away when the era that they governed ceases (just like the positive law in the Garden).

“The Ten Commandments are themselves a republication of the eternal moral standards that God built into the very fabric of creation and published more generally on the human heart in the Covenant of Works.”-Van Dorn

This “Law” was not merely meant to govern outward actions but to impact the conscience of the individual. A person could keep all of the externals of the Law but could fail to keep the “_____” of the Law. The external aspect of the Law governed the nation while the internal aspect of the Law was to also govern the individual.

“The Sinaitic Covenant in no way interfered with the divine administration of either the everlasting covenant (toward the elect) nor the Adamic covenant of works (which all by nature lie under); it being in quite another region. Whether the individual Israelites were heirs of blessing under the former, or under the curse of the latter, in no wise hindered or affected Israel’s being as a people under this national regime, which respected not inward and eternal blessings, but only outward and temporal interests.”-Pink

The Mosaic Covenant and the Eternal Covenant

1. Preserved the Messianic Lineage

The Mosaic Covenant established the mass of Israelites that left Egypt into a _____, a nation that would endure.

2. Pointing away from sinful man to the Christ who was to come

“Now the chief lesson inculcated by the ceremonial law, proclaimed by numerous rites and ordinances, was that the holy and righteous have access to God’s fellowship and blessing; whereas the unclean, and wicked are excluded...God’s ultimate design under the Mosaic economy was to furnish a clear and full demonstration of the utter inability of fallen man, ever under the most favorable conditions and circumstances, to meet His holy and righteous requirements; thereby making manifest the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the imperative need of an all-sufficient Savior.”-Pink

3. Helps us understand how the Law relates to the believer

The Law points us to our need of Christ. Also, the Law was never given as a means for us to attain salvation. However, after God saves, He expects _____ to His law. The moral law should be a rule of life for the saint.

“The law was given that grace might be sought; grace was given that the law might be fulfilled.”-Augustine