

INSIGHT ON THE COVENANTS - DEUTERONOMY 5:3: WHAT DID MOSES MEAN?

By [Adam Mills](#)

Deuteronomy 5:3

The LORD made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, [even] us, who [are] all of us here alive this day.

Is there no connection between the covenant of Deuteronomy 5:3 and that given to the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Was Moses introducing an entirely new covenant in this verse, which had no connection to those preceding it? Let's see what the Bible says:

1 Chronicles 16:15 -18

Be ye mindful always of HIS COVENANT; the word [which] HE COMMANDED TO A THOUSAND GENERATIONS; [Even of the covenant] which HE MADE WITH ABRAHAM, and of HIS OATH UNTO ISAAC; And hath CONFIRMED THE SAME TO JACOB FOR A LAW, [and] TO ISRAEL [for] AN EVERLASTING COVENANT, Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance;

Many important points are brought out in this psalm of David:

1. This covenant was commanded to a THOUSAND GENERATIONS. We are nowhere near a thousand generations since it was first commanded by God.
2. He then identifies which covenant he is referring to, namely that which "He made with Abraham" - or the Abrahamic covenant.
3. This Abrahamic covenant is then affirmed by God to Abraham's son by an OATH.
4. Then it is later confirmed to Jacob FOR A LAW.
5. Finally it is REALIZED (in part *) by Jacob's descendants Israel, or the Israelites as the land of their inheritance.

In the previous chapter, Moses declared to his hearers,

4:13

And he declared unto you HIS COVENANT, which he commanded you to perform, [even] TEN COMMANDMENTS; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.

Why, then did Moses say that the Lord did NOT make this covenant with their fathers, but rather with those who were presently listening to him?

The next verse gives us the meaning:

5:4

The LORD talked with you FACE TO FACE in the mount OUT OF THE MIDST OF THE FIRE,...

When one reads through the rest of the chapter, it becomes evident that the EXPERIENCE on Mt. Sinai, (the great voice, thick darkness, burning mountain , etc.,see verses 22-26) was that which Moses was particularly referring to that the fathers did NOT experience. Yet, the promise of God to Abraham was the same promise about to be fulfilled to the Israelites at the time of this discourse in Deuteronomy 5, and the ten commandments were the BASIS of the covenant arrangement with Israel. The fathers (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) only received the PROMISE of it, the Israelites received the FULFILLMENT of it.

Now, it was mentioned above (*) that this was but a PARTIAL fulfillment. Why? Because the promise specified an ETERNAL INHERITANCE. The Jews were finally DISPOSSESSED of the Lord as His chosen ambassadors to the world in 34 AD, and largely DISPOSSESSED of the land in 70 A.D. with the destruction of the temple according to the prophetic word of God in Daniel 9:24-27. The modern day Jews which presently inhabit the land do not do so with EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS to it. The holy calling of God's worldwide ambassadors originally granted to the nation of Israel (Exodus 19:5,6) has been committed to the Gentiles as well as repentant Jews who confess Christ BY FAITH (2 Peter 2:9). As Paul explains,

Romans 2:28,29

For he is NOT A JEW, which is one OUTWARDLY; neither [is that] circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: BUT he [is] a Jew, which is one INWARDLY; and circumcision [is that] of the heart, in the spirit, [and] not in the letter; whose praise [is] not of men, but of God.

God, through Christ, has broken down the wall of distinction between Jew and Gentile " to make in himself of twain, ONE NEW MAN " Eph. 2:15, and in Christ,

Galatians 3:28,29

There is neither JEW NOR GREEK (Gentile), there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and HEIRS ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE.

The promise of ETERNAL INHERITANCE belongs to ALL who receive it the same way Abraham received it - THROUGH FAITH in the word and Person of Jesus Christ! Therefore it is plainly evident that the covenant BASIS of ten commandments is ALSO given to ALL THROUGH FAITH in the word and Person of Jesus Christ! PRAISE GOD! None can receive eternal life in order to possess an eternal inheritance without ETERNAL RIGHTEOUSNESS. And that righteousness ALONE which is the BASIS of the Abrahamic covenant is found IN CHRIST JESUS who FULFILLED the ten commandments of love perfectly, " "THAT the righteousness of THE LAW might be FULFILLED IN US" (Romans 8:4. This is the way it was ALWAYS intended, the ONLY WAY it was ever possible! Paul explains that the law was NEVER INTENDED to be the MEANS whereby sinful human beings (whether Jew or Gentile) receive the promise of Abraham (see Gal. 3:14-22).

Therefore, it is evident that Moses did not introduce a new plan of salvation, nor did God introduce an ENTIRELY NEW covenant at Mt. Sinai. That great code OF LOVE in ten commandments are the divine summation of the very principles underlying God's own throne:

Psalm 119:172

My tongue shall speak of thy word: for ALL THY COMMANDMENTS [are] RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Psalm 97:2

Clouds and darkness [are] round about him: RIGHTEOUSNESS and judgment [are] THE HABITATION OF HIS THRONE.

Psalm 119:142

Thy righteousness [is] an EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS, and THY LAW [is] THE TRUTH.

In the heart of this law lies the SIGN Jehovah has appointed to distinguish His people from the rest of the world:

Exodus 31:16,17

Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to OBSERVE THE SABBATH throughout their generations, [for] A PERPETUAL (or everlasting) COVENANT. It [is] A SIGN BETWEEN ME AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL FOR EVER: for [in] six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.

Who is it that constitutes ISRAEL today?

Romans 9:6-8

Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they [are] not all Israel, which are OF ISRAEL: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, [are they] all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are THE CHILDREN OF THE FLESH, these [ARE] NOT the children of God: BUT THE CHILDREN OF THE PROMISE ARE COUNTED FOR THE SEED.

Are you a child of the flesh or a child of THE PROMISE?