

2. The covenant via Moses had a condition attached to it

2. **The covenant via Moses had a condition attached to it.** This is not a covenant of sheer generosity (which also requires obedience but after God's oath is given it is unconditional). God is not the one taking an oath. It is not like the unconditional promise of Genesis 9:21 or Genesis 22:15–18. It is not that kind of covenant. From the very beginning there is a condition to be met before the blessings of the covenant will come¹.

1 19:5

Life in the Holy Spirit is not identical but it is parallel. It also has a condition attached to it. Israel was given its national redemption but there was a condition to experiencing God's fullness of blessing in their national life. Similarly, the Christian is given his or her redemption but there is a condition to experiencing God's kingdom in its fullness. Only **if** we sow to the Spirit shall we reap back from the Holy Spirit the full blessings of eternal life. **If** we mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live. **If** we keep coming to Jesus and keep drinking from Him, we shall experience His 'rivers of the living water'.

3. The covenant has promises attached to it

3. **The covenant has promises attached to it.** If they will obey their divine King, He will bring three things about in their lives. (i) They will be God's special treasure. *'Now therefore if you will listen ... if you will keep my commandment, then you will be my own special treasure among all the peoples, for all the earth is mine'*¹.

1 19:5

• *Obedience will bring about three things in their lives*

(ii) The entire nation will be a nation of priests. *'... and you shall be a kingdom of priests...'*

And (iii) the nation will be a nation specially consecrated to God: *'... a kingdom of priests and a holy nation'*¹.

1 19:6a

Moses had to put this matter to Israel¹. Moses then takes the message back². The people respond to what God has said. *'Everything that Yahweh has said we shall do'*³. This leads to Moses' going for the third time some distance up the lower slopes of the mountain⁴.

1 19:6b

2 19:7

3 19:8a

4 19:8b

So far, what is happening is simply preliminary. The covenant demands have to be given; we have them in Exodus 20:1 – 23:19. Then the actual covenant will have to be made by the people's giving their oath¹. At present Yahweh is simply telling the people through Moses what will be involved.

1 24:3

(i) The obedient people of God are His 'special possession'

The obedient people of God are His 'special possession'. The word 'special possession' was used in the ancient world to speak of a king's private money. If Christians will obey God's Spirit, God will treasure them. They will reap back rich spiritual experience from the Holy Spirit. The Christian will belong to God and be honoured by God. God is the Lord of the entire earth, but He will relate very personally and intimately to that one who gives heed to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

God will prize such people. They will be used by God. He will use them to further His purpose; no other people will be used in such a way. They will be protected by Yahweh, cared for by Yahweh – just as a king guards his personal treasure.

(ii) The obedient people of God are a 'kingdom of priests'

The obedient people of God are a 'kingdom of priests'. The promise was held out for Israel. It refers not just to the tribe of Levi but to the whole nation. The entire nation would have a priestly function towards the world. In Israel, priests gave sacrificial offerings and

interceded with God; they were the teachers of the people. If Israel will be obedient they will be intercessors for the world and will be teachers of the world.

• *Effective intercession is linked to obedience*

The obedient Christian inherits the promise. His or her obedience to the Holy Spirit results in God's being attentive to his intercessions. Because they obey God, all God's obedient people become 'a kingdom of priests'. They intercede and God hears their prayers. They find that they are able to minister to others. God uses them as the teachers of His word, not in a professional manner but simply as those who are being honoured by God. They have something to say and they say it with conviction and with authority.

• *The offer to Christians at a higher level*

This is an unusual promise. Obedience to the law would lead to the royal priesthood of all Israelites. It never really happened because the Israelites never were very obedient to the law. The offer is held out to the Christian at a higher level. For those obedient to the voice of the Spirit the 'priesthood of all believers' will take powerful effect in their lives.

(iii) *The obedient people of God are a 'holy nation'*

The obedient people of God are a 'holy nation'. Israel, if obedient to the law, would stand out in distinctiveness and uniqueness among the nations of the world. In the event, Israel gradually lost its distinctiveness and became like the other nations. At times they were even consciously ambitious to be like the other nations. Yet God was offering them uniqueness and distinctiveness. Again the church inherits the promise at a higher level. 'You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession', said Peter to his people scattered through the Roman provinces around the east end of the Mediterranean Sea¹².

• *Distinctive among the nations*

• *Offered to the church at a higher level*

¹ 1 Peter 2:9
² 1 Peter 1:1

4. The covenant has a mediator in it

4. **The covenant has a mediator in it.** God is not speaking to the people directly. He is speaking through Moses. Equally the people are not speaking to God directly. They are speaking through Moses as well. Moses is a two-way mediator.

• *Moses – Jesus the parallel*

This too is different but parallel in the case of the gospel of Jesus. It is different in that the mediator is Jesus. It is parallel in that there is no contact with God except through Jesus. God does not speak to us except through Jesus, and we cannot speak to God except through Jesus. 'No person comes to the Father except through me', He said¹.

¹ John 14:6

		<p>Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His <i>Preaching Through The Bible (PTTB)</i> books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.</p>	
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