

Davidic

Mosaic

Abrahamic

Understanding
BIBLE
COVENANTS

Adamic

New Covenant

Noahic



Bruce R. Edwards

Understanding
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COVENANTS

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UNDERSTANDING BIBLE COVENANTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	8
INTRODUCTION	10
CHAPTER ONE - WHY STUDY COVENANTS	13
CHAPTER TWO - GOD IS A COVENANT GOD ...	16
CHAPTER THREE - ALL ABOUT COVENANTS...	21
• The Types of Covenants	
1. Conditional Covenants	
2. Unconditional Covenants	
• The Covenants with Israel	
• The Principle of the Timing of the Provisions	
CHAPTER FOUR - THE EDENIC COVENANT.....	29
• Scripture	
• The Participants in the Covenant.	
• The Provisions of the Covenant	
• The Status of the Covenant	
CHAPTER FIVE - THE ADAMIC COVENANT:.....	34
• Scripture: Genesis 3:14-19.	
• The Participants in the Covenant.	
• The Provisions of the Covenant	
1. The Serpent: Genesis 3:14	
2. Satan: Genesis 3:13	
3. The Woman: Genesis 3:16	
4. The Man: Genesis 3:17-19	
• The Status of the Covenant	
CHAPTER SIX - THE NOAHIC COVENANT:.....	41
• Scripture: Genesis 9:1-17	
• The Participants in the Covenant	
• The Provisions of the Covenant	
• The Status of the Covenant	

CHAPTER SEVEN - ABRAHAMIC COVENANT .. 47

- Scripture
- The Participants in the Covenant.
- The Provisions of the Covenant
 1. To Abraham
 2. The Land -
 3. To the Seed-Israel
 4. To the Gentiles
- The Basis for Development of Other Covenants
- The Confirmation of the Covenant
 1. Conformation Through Isaac
 2. Conformation Through Jacob
 3. Conformation Through the Sons of Jacob
- The Status of the Covenant

CHAPTER EIGHT - THE MOSAIC COVENANT.. 56

- The Participants in the Covenant
- The Provisions of the Covenant
 1. The Totality of the Law
 2. The Blessings and, judgments of the Law
 3. The Blood Sacrifice Added
 4. The Diet Restrictions Imposed
 5. The Death Penalty Expanded
 6. The Sign of the Covenant
 7. The Token of the Covenant
- The Purposes of the Law
- The Status of the Covenant
 1. The Unity of the Law of Moses
 2. The Law of Moses Has Been Rendered Inoperative
 3. The Moral Law
 4. Matthew 5:17-18
 5. The Law of Christ
 6. The Principle of Freedom
 7. The Sabbath

CHAPTER NINE - THE DAVIDIC COVENANT 75

- Scripture
- The Participants in the Covenant
- The Provisions of the Covenant
- The Importance of the Covenant
- The Confirmation of the Covenant

CHAPTER TEN - THE NEW COVENANT 80

- Scripture
- The Participants in the Covenant
- The Provisions of the Covenant
- The Importance of the Covenant
- The Relationship of the Church to the New Covenant
- The Gentile Obligation
- The Status of the Covenant

CHAPTER ELEVEN – DAVID & JONATHAN 91

CONCLUSION 95

ABOUT THE AUTHOR 102

PREFACE

Welcome to *Understanding Bible Covenants*. This book has been a labor of love and deep theological exploration, born out of a passion to illuminate one of the most foundational yet often overlooked aspects of Scripture: the concept of covenants.

I chose to write this book because Bible covenants are not frequently discussed in everyday conversations about faith, yet they should be. They form the bedrock upon which the entire narrative of redemption unfolds throughout the Bible. From Noah to Abraham, Moses to David, and ultimately to the new covenant sealed in Christ's blood, these agreements between God and humanity shape our understanding of God's character and His relationship with His people.

My motivation for writing this book is rooted in a desire to help believers grasp the profound significance of these covenants. Understanding the dynamics between God and His people, as well as the implications for our relationships with each other, is crucial for spiritual growth and maturity. Moreover, comprehending the authority and promises embedded within these covenants is essential for navigating the complexities of biblical interpretation.

Throughout this journey, I have drawn upon over 40 years of ministry experience as a pastor and Bible college teacher. This book is not just a product of scholarly research but also a reflection of real-life interactions with believers hungry to deepen their understanding of God's Word. It is my hope that this exploration

will not only inform but also inspire, guiding readers to a richer appreciation of God's faithfulness and the enduring relevance of His covenants throughout history.

Thank you for joining me on this expedition into the heart of biblical covenants. May your own journey of discovery be as enriching and transformative as mine has been.

In His service,

Pastor Bruce

Introduction

I remember hearing the story of a poor man who saved every penny he had to purchase a ticket on a great ship bound for America. His dream was to start a new life, but his funds were so limited that he could only afford to buy some cheese and a little bread for the long journey. Each day, he would pass by the grand dining halls of the ship, gazing longingly at the tables laden with delicious food. On the morning of their arrival in New York, one of the ship's officers approached him and asked why he had never joined the other passengers for meals. The man, embarrassed, explained, "I didn't have enough money to eat in the dining rooms." The officer looked at him in disbelief and said, "Sir, I'm so sorry. Your meals were included in your ticket!"

This story perfectly illustrates how so many Christians live their lives—subsisting on bread and cheese while God's banquet table is open and waiting for them. They struggle, strive, and settle for less simply because they don't fully understand the terms of their covenant—the divine agreement they have with God through Jesus Christ.

My hope and prayer are that this book will change that for you. I wrote *Understanding Bible Covenants* to help believers like you discover the riches of your covenant relationship with God and the incredible benefits that belong to you in Christ. It is time to move from just surviving to thriving, from merely knowing about God to living in the fullness of His promises.

What Is a Covenant, and Why Does It Matter?

At its simplest, a covenant is a binding agreement between two parties, but biblical covenants are far more than legal contracts. They are sacred, divinely initiated commitments through which God reveals His character, His purposes, and His unfailing love for humanity. From the beginning of time, God has used covenants as the framework to establish and define His relationship with His people.

Studying these covenants is not just an academic exercise; it is essential to understanding the Bible and the redemptive story it tells. Without a grasp of God's covenants, much of Scripture can feel like disconnected pieces of a puzzle. But when you understand the significance of these divine agreements, you'll see how they form the skeleton of the entire Bible, connecting everything from Genesis to Revelation.

What This Book Covers

In *Understanding Bible Covenants*, we'll explore seven major covenants that God made with humanity:

1. **The Edenic Covenant** – God's original agreement with humanity, revealing His intention for creation.
2. **The Adamic Covenant** – God's promise of redemption after the fall of man.
3. **The Noahic Covenant** – God's assurance of preservation and faithfulness to all creation.
4. **The Abrahamic Covenant** – The foundation of God's plan to bless all nations.

5. **The Mosaic Covenant** – The law and its role in preparing humanity for Christ.
6. **The Davidic Covenant** – The promise of an everlasting kingdom through David’s lineage.
7. **The New Covenant** – The culmination of God’s redemptive plan through Jesus Christ.

We’ll examine each of these covenants in detail, exploring their historical context, spiritual significance, and how they point to Christ. Along the way, I’ll share practical illustrations, surprising statistics, and compelling insights to help you grasp their relevance for your life today.

Why I Wrote This Book

After over 40 years of ministry as a pastor and Bible college teacher, I have seen firsthand how understanding Bible covenants transforms lives. This is not just a theological study; it’s a key to unlocking the abundant life Jesus came to give. When you understand God’s covenants, you gain clarity about His character, confidence in His promises, and courage to live the life of faith He calls you to.

My passion is to help believers grow in their faith, reach their full spiritual potential, and walk in the freedom and authority that come from knowing who they are in Christ. Understanding Bible covenants is foundational to all of this. I invite you to join me on this journey, not just to learn but to live the covenant life God intended for you.

It’s time to leave the bread and cheese behind and step into the dining room, where the feast of God’s blessings awaits. Let’s begin.

CHAPTER ONE

GOD IS A COVENANT GOD



COVENANT
GOD

In Psalm 89:34, God said, “My covenant I will not violate, nor will I alter the utterance of My lips” (NASB) It is of tremendous importance that we understand God is a God of covenant and that when He makes a covenant, He will never break it. While this verse refers to God’s covenant with David, it establishes a universal principle of God as a covenant God. He keeps His covenants. He is faithful. You can trust God.

There are many covenants found in the Bible. Covenants God makes with man and covenants made between men and between nations. In this book, we cover seven of God’s covenants including the covenant God made with David and one covenant between men.

God Will Be True to His Covenant Promises

God is always faithful and true. He is faithful to His Word and to His people. God expresses his faithfulness to us through covenants that he makes with his people. God does not lie. Thus, he is always true to his Word. In the following chapters, we will explain what a covenant is and why covenants are relevant. God makes unbreakable promises to His people. He is a promise keeper, He is a covenant God.

All of us have experienced the pain of broken promises at some point in our lives. Whether it is disappointment and hurt when a trusted friend betrays our confidence or the devastation of adultery in a marriage, we know what it is like to have promises broken. In fact, much of our lives are characterized by broken promises, from the empty words of politicians to the lies we often read and hear in the media. These days, being true to one’s word is a rare quality.

In the midst of this myriad of broken promises we face in this

sinful world, we often find it difficult to trust God, but I want you to know you can trust God. He is a covenant God and He keeps His promises. God is the only One who truly and perfectly keeps his promises, all of the time. Because he is infinitely good, he is faithful and true to all his promises. In fact, the Hebrew word *'êmêt*, which is often translated as “faithfulness” in the Old Testament, also means “truth.” Faithfulness and truth are therefore inextricably connected. God’s promises are true, because he is faithful. God does not lie. Thus, he is always true to his word.

You Can Trust God

Here are two more Bible verses where God reiterates to us that His covenants are lasting, lasting. 1 Chronicles 16:15 “He remembers his covenant forever, and the word that he commanded for a thousand generations.” Psalm 105: 8 “He remembered his covenant forever; From the word that he sent for a thousand generations ”.

Christ is the One in whom all God’s covenant promises find their ‘yes and amen.’ 2Cor. 1:20) Ultimately, through understanding the covenants in the Bible, we see that God fulfils his promise to save sinful people for himself, to forgive our sins and reconcile us to him through Christ. Through Christ, the only perfect covenant-keeper, God shows himself to be the One who is faithful, good, loving, holy and entirely trustworthy. He has covenanted to never break his promises to us, that we will be his people and he our faithful God forever. God is a covenant God.

CHAPTER TWO

WHY STUDY COVENANTS

WHY STUDY



COVENANT

You may be asking, why should we study covenants in the Bible? Are covenants important? Are Bible covenants even relevant for us today? Let me just simply say Bible Covenants are relevant to us today and they are very important. Here are two compelling reasons why we should study covenants:

1. Studying God’s covenants helps deepen our understanding of God’s character.

In the last chapter, we shared how God is a Covenant God. He is a covenant-keeping God. He enters into a binding agreement with His people and always keeps His promises. We never have to worry about whether He will uphold His word because He has proven that He is a God who keeps covenant! He is forever faithful—no matter what.

As Deuteronomy 7:9 says, “Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments...”

Even when the people with whom God enters into covenants are faithless, God proves to be faithful: “If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself” (2 Timothy 2:13). When we understand God’s covenants, we begin to see more clearly than ever that we can trust Him—He is our faithful covenant-keeping God!

2. Studying God’s covenants helps broaden our understanding of the storyline of the Bible.

The covenants God makes with people in Scripture are crucial to the big-picture storyline of the Bible. In Genesis, for example, God makes a pivotal covenant with Abraham to advance His plan

of redemption. In an incredible act of love, God promises great blessings to Abraham and his descendants. These promises are carried forward all the way into the New Testament when God fulfills them for the people of God in a new covenant made through Jesus' blood.

God's Plan of Redemption – The Story of the Bible

When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden they lost their relationship with God and their authority on the earth. Think about it, Adam and Eve one day were in perfect harmony with the Father. They walked with and talked with God. Every need they had was perfectly provided. They lacked nothing. They ruled over all of creation. Then they committed high treason and surrendered to the devil what God had created for them and all mankind.

The consequences of their sin impacted all man and all of creation. You can read the details of God's judgment Adam, Even, Satan, and all of mankind in Genesis 3. Verses 23 and 24 say, " So the Lord God banished them from the Garden of Eden, and he sent Adam out to cultivate the ground from which he had been made. ²⁴ After sending them out, the Lord God stationed mighty cherubim to the east of the Garden of Eden. And he placed a flaming sword that flashed back and forth to guard the way to the Tree of Life."

Everything looked lost, all hope seemed to be gone, and the devil became the God of this world. He now had the authority on the earth that God had given man. But God had a plan to restore man back to Him. This is the story of the Bible, God's plan of redemption. However, for the next 4000 years, the devil would

raise havoc (hell) upon the earth and the human race.

However, God's plan to redeem man was His son Jesus, the savior of the world. He is a "redeemer". Jesus came to earth to redeem us. Galatians 3:13 tells us, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree")," Jesus hung on that tree (the cross) for us, for you, and for me.

The Bible tells us He defeated the devil and regained the authority Adam surrendered to Satan. Colossians 2:15 says, "Having disarmed principalities and powers, He (Jesus) made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it." Jesus defeated the devil and regained the authority Adam lost. In Revelation 1:18 Jesus said, "I *am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death." Keys represent authority. And in Matthew 28:18 we read, "And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth."

Jesus then delegates that authority to the Church. As believers in Christ and His finished work on the cross, we now have the authority. Whatever we bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatever we loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (Matthew 18:18) It is the story of redemption.

To understand the Bible, it's crucial we study God's covenants! Covenants are a key thread woven throughout Scripture. From beginning to end, the story of redemption told in the Bible is the story of a God who makes and keeps covenants. Covenants play a central role in the biblical narrative. They

reveal God's redemptive plan to restore His relationship with humanity through Jesus Christ.

God's Relationship with Humanity

God's relationship with humanity is deeply rooted in love and commitment, as illustrated through various biblical covenants and the signs of His unwavering affection. Understanding this relationship provides insight into God's character and His desire for a personal connection.

Covenant and Promises

The Covenants of the Bible define God's promises to humanity, emphasizing His commitment. We will be studying each of these covenants and how they reveal not only God's faithfulness but also His desire for a relationship with you. They illustrate that God actively engages with humanity across generations, offering hope and assurance. The study of covenants helps us better understand each of these significant truths about who God is, His plan of redemption, and His relationship with us

CHAPTER THREE

ALL ABOUT COVENANTS

WHAT ARE
COVENANTS
ALL ABOUT?

Since much of God's relationship is based upon covenantal relationships, a study of the Bible Covenants is key to correctly understanding the Bible. The common way to divide the Bible is by dispensations – Old and New. These dispensations are based upon specific covenants, and knowledge of these covenants will help Bible readers to “rightly divide the word of truth” (II Tim. 2: 15) Although the dispensations may come to an end, the covenants themselves often continue.

The Types of Covenants in the Bible

Understanding biblical covenants is essential for grasping the overarching narrative of Scripture. The Bible presents two main types of covenants: **conditional** and **unconditional**. Distinguishing between these two helps illuminate God's relationship with humanity and His faithfulness through history.

1. Conditional Covenants

A **conditional covenant** is a bilateral agreement between God and humanity. It operates under the principle: **"If you will, then I will."** In this type of covenant, God promises specific blessings contingent upon humanity's obedience to the conditions laid out. Failure to meet these conditions results in consequences, often in the form of divine punishment.

- **Blessings** under a conditional covenant are secured through obedience, requiring humanity to fulfill their part before God fulfills His.
- **Curses** or punishments result from disobedience, highlighting the serious nature of this covenant type.

Two of the seven major biblical covenants fall into this category:

- **The Edenic Covenant**, which outlined humanity's responsibilities in the perfect world God created.
- **The Mosaic Covenant**, where God gave Israel the Law and required their obedience to receive His blessings.

2. Unconditional Covenants

An **unconditional covenant** is a unilateral commitment by God. In these covenants, God obligates Himself to fulfill the terms, regardless of human action or inaction. The defining principle is: "**I will.**" God's grace is the foundation of these covenants, ensuring their fulfillment through His sovereignty alone.

- While these covenants may include conditions for humanity to follow out of gratitude or devotion, these conditions are not the basis for God's promises being fulfilled.
- **Blessings** in unconditional covenants are secured entirely by God's grace and faithfulness.

Five of the seven covenants in Scripture are unconditional:

- **The Adamic Covenant**, which contains the promise of redemption following humanity's fall.
- **The Noahic Covenant**, assuring that God would never again destroy the earth by flood.
- **The Abrahamic Covenant**, promising blessings, land, and descendants to Abraham.

- **The Davidic Covenant**, establishing an eternal throne through David's lineage.
- **The New Covenant**, fulfilled in Jesus Christ, offering redemption and eternal life to all who believe.

Covenants with Israel

Of the seven biblical covenants, four are made exclusively with Israel:

1. **The Mosaic Covenant** (conditional).
2. **The Abrahamic Covenant** (unconditional).
3. **The Davidic Covenant** (unconditional).
4. **The New Covenant** (unconditional).

Four Key Truths about Israel's Covenants:

1. **Literal Interpretation:** These covenants must be understood literally. The promises are specific and concrete.
2. **Eternal Nature:** These covenants are everlasting and not restricted or altered by time.
3. **Unconditional Fulfillment:** Despite Israel's disobedience, the unconditional covenants remain valid because their fulfillment depends solely on God.
4. **Israel's Unique Role:** These covenants were made specifically with Israel, as affirmed by Paul in **Romans 9:4**:

“...to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises.”

Paul reiterates in **Ephesians 2:11-12** that Gentiles were once excluded from these covenants:

“...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.”

While five covenants are connected to Israel, the New Covenant invites all believers—Jew and Gentile alike—into God’s redemptive plan.

Timing of Covenant Provisions

When a covenant is established, its provisions do not necessarily take effect all at once. The fulfillment of a covenant’s promises unfolds in three distinct phases:

1. **Immediate Fulfillment:** Some promises are realized as soon as the covenant is made.
2. **Near-Future Fulfillment:** Certain provisions come into effect within a specific timeframe, which could range from years to centuries.
3. **Distant Prophetic Fulfillment:** Some aspects remain unfulfilled, awaiting God’s perfect timing in the prophetic future.

This unfolding process underscores God's sovereignty and the progressive revelation of His plan for humanity. By studying these covenants, believers gain a richer understanding of God's faithfulness, grace, and ultimate purpose in history.

In sum, the covenants of the Bible provide a powerful framework for understanding God’s unchanging character and His unwavering commitment to His promises. Whether conditional or unconditional, they reveal His plan to redeem and restore humanity through His grace and faithfulness.

The Types of Covenants

There are two main types of covenants in the Bible: conditional and unconditional. It is important to distinguish between these two types of covenants in order to have a clear picture of what the Bible teaches.

1. Conditional Covenants

A conditional covenant is a bilateral covenant in which a proposal of God to man is characterized by the formula: if you will, then I will whereby God promises to grant special blessings to man providing man fulfills certain conditions contained in the covenant. Man's failure to do so often results in punishment. Thus, one's response to the covenant agreement brings either blessings or cursing's. The blessings are secured by obedience and man must meet his conditions before God will meet His.

Two of the seven covenants we discuss here are conditional: the Edenic Covenant and the Mosaic Covenant.

2. Unconditional Covenants

An unconditional covenant is a unilateral covenant and is a sovereign act of God whereby He unconditionally obligates Himself to bring to pass definite blessing and conditions for the covenanted people. The covenant is characterized by the formula: "I will" which declares God's determination to do as He promises. Blessings are secured by the grace of God.

There may be conditions in the covenant by which God requests the covenanted one to fulfill out of gratitude, but they are not themselves the basis of God's fulfilling His promises.

Five of the seven covenants are unconditional: the Adamic Covenant, the Noahic Covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant.

The Covenants with Israel

Four of these seven covenants were made exclusively with Israel while the others were made with mankind in general. Only one of the four covenants made with Israel is conditional: the Mosaic Covenant. The other three covenants with Israel are all unconditional: the Abrahamic Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant.

Four things should be noted concerning the nature of the unconditional covenants made with Israel. First: they are literal covenants, and their contents must be interpreted literally as well. Second: the covenants that God has made with Israel are eternal and are not in any way restricted or altered by time. Third: it is necessary to re-emphasize that these are unconditional covenants that were not abrogated because of Israel's disobedience; because the covenants are unconditional and totally dependent upon God for fulfillment, their ultimate fulfillment can be expected. Fourth: these covenants were made with a specific people: Israel.

This point is brought out by Paul in Romans 9:4: ***“who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and¹ the promises;”*** This passage clearly points out that these covenants were made with the covenanted people and are Israel's possession.

This is brought out again in 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—¹² 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.***”

Five of the seven Bible covenants belong to the people of Israel and, as this passage notes, Gentiles were considered *strangers from the covenants*,

The Principle of the Timing of the Provisions

A covenant can be signed, sealed, and made a specific point of history, but this does not mean that all the provisions go immediately into effect. In fact, three different things happen once a covenant is sealed: first, some go into effect right away; second, some provisions go into effect in the near future, which may be twenty-five years away or five hundred years away; and third, some provisions go into effect only in the distant prophetic future, not having been fulfilled to this day.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE EDENIC COVENANT



Scripture: Genesis 1:28-30:

And God blessed them. and God said unto them Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth. And God said Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. ³⁰ Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food”; and it was so.

Genesis 2:15-17:

Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

Hosea 6:7:

But they like Adam have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me.

The Participants in the Covenant

The Edenic Covenant was made between God and Adam in which Adam stood as the representative head of the human race. Thus, the actions of Adam are attributed to the whole of humanity.

The Provisions of the Covenant

Altogether, there were a total of seven provisions in the Edenic Covenant.

First: man was told: *Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth* {Gen. 1: 28a. The earth was created for the purpose of being the habitation of man, and then man was created on the sixth day. Man was told to populate the earth; so, the increase in population is part of his commission. The earth was to be filled with humanity.

Second: man was told to *subdue* the earth (Gen. 1:28b). Previously, authority over the earth had been given to Satan (Ezek. 28:11-19a. But when Satan fell, he lost his authority over this earth. That is the reason Genesis 1:2 describes the earth as being covered by water and *darkness* being over *the face of the deep*. Hence, God began to form and fashion the earth anew to make it habitable for man, and this time He would give man the authority over the earth. Man was to *subdue* it; he was to use the natural resources and energies of the earth that God had provided for him. However, this did not mean he was allowed to pollute it!

Third: man was given *dominion* over all living things (Gen.1:28c). The earlier provision gave man authority over the earth as far as nonliving things were concerned. This provision extended man's authority over all living creatures. The entire animal kingdom on the earth, in the air, and in the sea was put under the authority of man. The first exercise of this authority was man's naming of the animals (Gen. 2:19-20}.

Fourth; this provision concerned man's diet (Gen. 1:29-30; 2: 16). At this point man was to be a vegetarian. There is nothing in this covenant that allowed him to eat of the animal kingdom although he was to exercise authority over it. No blood of any kind was to be shed.

Fifth: this provision directed man *to dress and to keep* the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2: 13). Even in his unfallen state, man was not to lead a life of pure leisure; work was part of the human ethic even before the Fall. However, labor was easy, and the land would produce easily; it was not toilsome.

Sixth: the sixth provision forbid man to eat of *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil* (Gen. 2:17). This was the only negative commandment in the entire Edenic Covenant and was the one point that would test man's obedience. He was free to eat of all the other trees of the garden but was to refrain from eating of that one. This was the one test to see how man would respond to the will of God; it was a test of the recognition of and the submission to the will of God. Man was not to assume that, because he was given authority over the earth and the animal kingdom, he himself was independent of God and exempt from God's law. The question that raises is, "Will man, like Satan before him, reject God's right to rule and declare himself independent of God?"

Seventh: this provision contained the penalty for disobedience: spiritual death (Gen. 2:17b). This does not refer to physical death because man did not die on the very day that he disobeyed the commandment. So, the death spoken of here is talking about spiritual death. In the day that he eats of *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*, he will be separated from God and will die spiritually.

The Status of the Covenant

The Edenic Covenant was the basis for what many call the Dispensation of Innocence. The record of the Edenic Covenant's being broken is found in Genesis 3:1-8.

Satan appeared in the Garden of Eden as a fallen creature. This shows that man was not created in a perfect universe, for sin was already in existence. Although it was not yet existent in man, it was already present in Satan. The devil did his work of tempting man in the same three areas as set forth in I John 2:16.

Eve gave in to the temptation and disobeyed the one negative commandment. Adam recognized what had happened, but he still chose to join his wife in disobedience. Their first reaction was an attempt to hide from the presence of God, which only illustrated the truth of Genesis 2:17. Man at that very moment died spiritually and could no longer share the same communion with God he had experienced before his disobedience. With that act, the Edenic Covenant, being conditional, came to an end.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ADAMIC COVENANT:



Scripture: Genesis 3:14-19

¹⁴ So the LORD God said to the serpent:

“Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life.

¹⁵ And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed;

He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”

¹⁶ To the woman He said: “I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.”

¹⁷ Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’: “Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. ¹⁸ Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. ¹⁹ In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; For dust you are, and to dust you shall return.”

The Participants in the Covenant

God and Adam are involved in this covenant in which Adam again represented the whole human race. Thus, the judgment on Adam is the judgment on all humanity.

The Provisions of the Covenant

God individually addressed the serpent, Satan, Eve, and Adam.

1. The Serpent: Genesis 3:14

There are three provisions concerning the serpent.

First: he is cursed above all other creatures of the animal kingdom. All creatures now fall under a curse, but there is a special curse upon this one member of the animal kingdom. Normally, an animal is not held morally responsible for its actions. However, if it causes any harm to man, then it is held responsible (Gen. 9:5). Animals were created for the benefit of man, and when this principle is violated, it then incurs the Judgment of God.

Second: the serpent is to crawl on its belly. This shows that originally the serpent moved in an erect position. This led to the debate whether or not the serpent originally had legs, but that question is irrelevant to the issue. The only point is that in place of moving erectly, the serpent now crawls on its belly.

Third: dust shall be the serpent's food. Bible critics have had a field day with this pointing it out as an error of the Bible since reptiles do not eat dust. However, this was simply a Hebrew idiom meaning to be especially cursed (Mic. 7:1 7). The curse will continue to be there even in the Messianic Kingdom (Is. 65:25a)

2. Satan: Genesis 3:15

Four provisions are given in relationship to Satan.

First: there would be perpetual hatred between Satan and the woman.

Second: this hatred was to culminate between Satan's seed, the Antichrist, and the woman's Seed, the Messiah.

Third: the serpent would bruise the heel of the woman's Seed; this happened at the Crucifixion.

Fourth: this first prophecy of the Lord's victory over Satan goes on to say that the woman's Seed will crush Satan's head; this occurred initially with the Resurrection (Heb. 2:14-15). But the final crushing of Satan was still future when Paul wrote Romans 16:20; it will come when Satan is cast into the Lake of fire (Rev. 20:10a).

The main point of this prophecy is that the Messiah would be of the Seed of woman. This goes against the biblical norm that teaches that genealogy is traced through the male line, not through the female line. The reason for this exception will not be known for centuries until Isaiah 7:14 revealed that the Messiah will be conceived and born of a virgin. The prophecy of Genesis 3:15 led to the events of Genesis 6:1-4 when Satan tried to corrupt the seed of the woman and will lead to the future supernatural conception of the Antichrist.

3. The Woman: Genesis 3:16

Eve and all women were made subject to three provisions.

First: there would be multiplication of menstrual Main and *conception*. Apparently, the nature of conception before the Fall was quite different than what it was after the Fall. Since the Fall, a woman generally is able to conceive at least once a month. Furthermore, a woman's menstrual periods are accompanied with discomfort and pain.

Second: the woman was to give birth in pain. Before the Fall, she would have been able to conceive and give birth without pain, but this was no longer true. However, once birth takes place, there is joy Jn. 16:21). In this way, the woman is saved (I Tim. 2: 13). She is not spiritually saved through childbirth, but she is saved from being in a demeaning position through her ability to produce children, for in this way she guarantees the continuity of the human race not subject to physical death.

Third: the wife was to be in subjection to the husband. This was already true before the Fall, but the new element was that she would now have a desire to rebel against that subjection and choose to try to rule him.

4. The Man: Genesis 3:4 7 4 9

Adam and all men and the entire human race were subjected to five provisions in Genesis 3: 1 7-19.

First: since Adam stands as the representative head of the human race, the judgment on Adam is the judgment on the whole human race. It is Adam, not Eve, who is held responsible for the human condition.

Second: the earth was cursed. Working was not something new with the Adamic Covenant, it had already been provided for in the Edenic Covenant. The difference was in the earth's response. Under the Edenic Covenant, the earth was to respond readily to man's working and tilling. But now the earth would not respond so easily; there would be thorns, thistles, and weeds.

Third: human diet continues to be vegetarian as it was under the Edenic Covenant; it is not clear if the same was true for the animal kingdom. Animals were used for dairy products, wool for clothing, and sacrifices, but not for eating.

Fourth: man's work was to be characterized by hard labor. Working conditions under the Edenic Covenant were easy, simple, and enjoyable. Now, *sweat* was to characterize the work of man and labor was to be hard and toilsome.

Fifth: physical death was introduced. Whereas under the Edenic Covenant man died spiritually, under the Adamic Covenant man would ultimately die physically (Rom. 5:12-21) Thus far there have only been two exceptions to this rule: Enoch and Elijah. There will be others in the future at the time of the Rapture.

The Status of the Covenant

The Adamic Covenant became the basis for the Dispensation of Conscience. As an unconditional covenant, it is very much in effect today.



Here are a few discussion questions that will help you review the Edenic and Adamic Covenants -

1. Compare and contrast the promises and conditions of the Edenic Covenant with those of the Adamic Covenant. How do these covenants set the stage for God's redemptive plan?
2. Discuss the significance of God's promise regarding the seed of the serpent and the seed of Eve in the context of the Adamic Covenant. How does this promise point forward to Christ's ultimate victory over sin and Satan?
3. How do the Edenic and Adamic Covenants collectively contribute to our understanding of God's overarching plan of redemption throughout Scripture?

CHAPTER SIX

THE NOAHIC COVENANT



Scripture: Genesis 9:1-17

“So, God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.”² And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand.”³ Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.⁴ But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.⁵ Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast, I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man’s brother, I will require the life of man.

⁶ “Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.”⁷ And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth and multiply in it.”

⁸ Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying:

⁹ “And as for Me, behold, I establish My covenant with you and with your ^[a]descendants after you,¹⁰ 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.¹¹ Thus 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.”

¹² 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: ¹³ I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the

earth. ¹⁴ It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ 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.” ¹⁷ 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.”

The Participants in the Covenant

This covenant was made between God and Noah. Like Adam, Noah stood as the representative for the entire human race. As a result of the flood, not only is all humanity descended from Adam, but also from Noah. Found in Genesis 9:11, *"I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth."* This covenant included a sign of God's faithfulness to keep it—the rainbow. The Noahic covenant is an unconditional or unilateral covenant. Responsibility to fulfill the covenant lies entirely upon one party, rather than both parties in the agreement. In this case, the only responsible party is God. God's promise in the Noahic covenant is sealed with the sign of the rainbow (Genesis 9:8-17).

The Provisions of the Covenant

First: man was to repopulate the earth (vv. 1, 7}. With the exception of eight people, the entire human race was destroyed by the Flood. Man had vastly increased in numbers, but *the wickedness of man was great in the earth* (Gen. 6:5. Thus God brought universal judgment upon the earth. After the Flood, the earth was essentially empty again. Only eight people remained to re-populate the entire earth. just as with the Edenic Covenant, man was again commissioned to repopulate the earth, but the command to subdue the earth is not repeated. With man's fall, he lost his authority and Satan usurped it. Thus, Satan is */5r prince of this world* Jn. 12:31 and the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4. Satan has authority over all the kingdoms of this world and can offer them to whomsoever he will (Lk. 4:6. He made that offer to the Seed of the woman, Yeshua Jesus, who turned it down. He will offer it someday to the seed of Satan, the Antichrist, who will accept it (Rev. 13:1-3).

Second: the fear of man was put into animals and man was to dominate them (v. 2). While man had lost authority over the earth, he was still to dominate and have authority over the animal kingdom. For this reason, the fear of man was placed in animals. This fear was a means of self-preservation due to the next provision.

Third: man's diet was to consist of both all moving things and *the green herb* (v.3). Previously, his diet had been vegetarian, but now all animals were included. No limitations whatsoever are given in the passage; thus, all animals were fit for food.

Fourth: man was forbidden to eat blood (v. 4). All creature life, both man and animal, is blood sustained. Blood is the symbol of life, and the shedding of blood is the symbol of death. Because blood is the symbol of life, God commanded that it not be eaten or drunk.

Fifth: capital punishment became a part of the human economy for the first time in (vv. 5-6). When Cain killed Abel, Cain was not executed because capital punishment had not yet been instituted. The provision for capital punishment came with the Noahic Covenant and all murderers were to be executed.

Sixth: the promise of the covenant is that humanity would never again be destroyed by a worldwide flood (vv. 8-11). While there would be local floods that would destroy portions of humanity, never again would there be a worldwide flood. In the future, there will be a passing away and destruction of earth's present system, but it will not be by means of a universal flood. This shows that the Noahic Flood was universal, not local.

Seventh: the token of the covenant was the rainbow {vv. 12-17). Not every covenant came with a sign or token, but this one did. This was the first time in human history that the rainbow ever appeared. Rain did not exist before the worldwide flood and the earth was watered by a mist that came daily upon the vegetation. Rainbows come in conjunction with rain. So, for the first time in human experience the rainbow appeared, and God's promise that humanity will not be destroyed by a flood again should come to remembrance every time a rainbow is seen.

The Status of the Covenant

The Noahic Covenant became the basis for the Dispensation of Human Government. Although this dispensation has been superseded, the unconditional Noahic Covenant is still very much in effect. The judgments of the Tribulation against the Gentiles will come because of violations of the Noahic Covenant. According to Isaiah 24:5-6, the judgment comes because humanity has violated *the everlasting covenant*, a name given to the Noahic Covenant in Genesis 9: 16. For that reason, the prophet used the Noahic Flood motif, *the windows on high* and *foundations of the earth* in Isaiah 24: 18. But next time, God will destroy the masses of humanity by fire.



Here are two discussion questions to help you review key points about the Noahic Covenant:

1. How does the unconditional nature of the Noahic Covenant reflect God's character and His relationship with creation?
2. What is the significance of the rainbow as the sign of the Noahic Covenant, and how does it serve as a reminder of God's promise to humanity and the earth?

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT



Scriptures – 6 passages

Genesis 12:1-3: *“The LORD had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.”² “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.”³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”*

Genesis 12:7: *“The LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So, he built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him.”*

Genesis 13:14-17: *“The LORD said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, “Look around from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west.”¹⁵ All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever.”¹⁶ I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted.”¹⁷ Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you.”*

Genesis 15: 1-21: *“After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.”² But Abram said, “Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?”³ And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.”⁴ Then the word of the LORD came to him: “This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.”⁵ He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be....” to vs 21.*

Genesis 17:1-21: *“When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. ² Then I will make my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers.” ³ Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, ⁴ “As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. ⁵ No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. ⁶ I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. ⁷ I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. ⁸ The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.”⁹ Then God said to Abraham, “As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. ¹⁰ This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised....”* And on to verse 21

These lengthy segments of Scripture contain many provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant. The emphasis of Genesis 15 is first, Abraham would father one nation in particular and second, he would father many nations in general. While the emphasis of Genesis 17 is on the symbol of the covenant: physical circumcision on the eighth day of a boy's life. Just as the rainbow was the sign of the Noahic Covenant, so circumcision is the sign of the Abrahamic Covenant.

Genesis 22: 15- 18: *“The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time ¹⁶ and said, “I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, ¹⁸ and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed¹ because you have obeyed me.”*

The Participants in the Covenant

God and Abraham are involved in this covenant, in which Abraham stood as the representative head of the whole Jewish nation, not for all humanity.

The Provisions of the Covenant

A list generated from these passages shows a total of fourteen provisions in this covenant –

1. a *great nation* was to come out of Abraham, namely, the nation of Israel (Gen. 12:2; 13: 16; 15:5; 1 7: 1-2, 7; 22: 1 7b).
2. he was promised a Land; specifically, the land of Canaan (Gen. 12: 1, 7; 13: 14- 15, 17; 15: 1 7-2 1; 17:8). (See below)

God promises Abraham land and then hundreds of years later through Moses He reaffirms that promise making clear the title deed to that Land belongs to Israel and no one else. Understand, the conditional Mosaic Covenant did not lay aside the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant. The promise of the land was and always has been unconditional even though because of Israel's

unfaithfulness and disobedient they would be removed from the land for a time. However, the right to the Land would never be taken from her. The Abrahamic Covenant teaches that ownership for the Land is unconditional while the Mosaic Covenant teaches that the enjoyment of the Land is conditioned on obedience.

3. Abraham himself was to be greatly blessed (Gen. 12:2b)
4. Abraham's name would be great (Gen. 12:2c)
5. Abraham will be a blessing to others (Gen. 12:2d)
6. those who bless Israel will be blessed (Gen. 12:3a).
7. those who curse Israel will be cursed (Gen. 12:3b)
8. in Abraham all will ultimately be blessed (Gen. 12:3c; 22:18).
9. Abraham would receive a son through his wife Sarah (Gen. 15:1-4; 17:16-21)
10. his descendants would undergo the Egyptian bondage { Gen. 15:13- 14}.
11. other nations as well as Israel would come forth from Abraham (Gen. 12:3-4, 6; the Arab states are some of these nations.
12. his name was to be changed from *Abram*, meaning “exalted father,” to Abraham, meaning “father of a multitude” (Gen. 17:5}.
13. *Sari* name, meaning “my princess,” was to be changed to Sarah, meaning “the princess” (Gen. 17:15).

14. circumcision was to be a token of the covenant (Gen. 17:9-14); thus, according to the Abrahamic Covenant, circumcision was to be a sign of one's Jewishness. The practice of circumcision did not begin with Abraham since others in the ancient Near East practiced the ritual either at birth or puberty. The uniqueness of Jewish circumcision is not the act, but the timing of the act: on the eighth day. Circumcision would show this to be a blood covenant and hence emphasized its solemnity. It would also show that this sign of Jewishness is passed on through natural generation.

The provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant can be categorized in three areas: to Abraham; to the Seed, Israel; and to the Gentiles.

1. To Abraham

Abraham was to be the father of a great nation, Israel. He was to possess all of the Promised Land. Other nations, including the Arab states, were ultimately to descend from Abraham. Many of his descendants would become kings, both Jewish and non-Jewish kings. Abraham was to receive personal blessings. Abraham was to be a blessing to others. His name was to become great, and so it is among Jews, Moslems, and in all Christendom.

2. To the Seed, Israel

The nation of Israel was to become great. It was ultimately to become innumerable. It was to possess all of the Promised Land. It was to receive victory over its enemies. The fact that the promises were made to both Abraham and his seed shows that these blessings have not yet received complete fulfillment but await the Messianic Kingdom.

3. To the Gentiles

The Gentiles would be blessed for blessing Israel and cursed for cursing Israel. Also, they were to receive spiritual blessings, but ultimately these were to come through one specific Seed of Abraham, the Messiah. The Abrahamic Covenant contains both physical and spiritual promises. While the physical blessings were limited to the Jews only, the spiritual blessings were to extend to the Gentiles, but only through the Messiah.

The Basis for Development of Other Covenants

The Abrahamic Covenant can be summarized into three basic elements: 1) the Land, 2) the Seed, and 3) the Blessing. The details of the land are explained and developed further in the Mosaic Covenant or what some call the Land Covenant. The Seed aspect is covered in the Davidic Covenant. The Blessing aspect is presented in the New Covenant.

The Confirmation of the Covenant

1. Confirmation Through Isaac

Abraham had eight sons by three different women, and the question arose: through which son would the Abrahamic Covenant be confirmed? God revealed that it was to be only through Sarah's son, Isaac. God's appearance to Isaac is recorded in Genesis 26:2-5:

Then the LORD appeared to him and said: "Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land of which I shall tell you. ³ Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and your

descendants I give all these lands, and I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. ⁴ And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; ⁵ because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.”

The covenant was later reconfirmed to Isaac in Genesis 26:24: *And the LORD appeared to him the same night and said, “I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham’s sake.”*

2. Confirmation Through Jacob

Isaac had two sons, and God chose to confirm the covenant with Jacob, as seen in Genesis 28: 1 3-1 5:

And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: “I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. ¹⁴ Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. ¹⁵ Behold, I am with you and will keep^[c] you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.”

3. Confirmation Through all the Sons of Jacob

Next, it was confirmed through all of Jacob's twelve sons (Gen. 49a, who fathered the Twelve Tribes of Israel).

F. The Status of the Covenant

Because the Abrahamic Covenant is unconditional, it is still very much in effect even though it has remained largely unfulfilled. The ultimate fulfillment will come during the Millennial Age.

The Abrahamic Covenant was the basis for the Exodus, for giving Israel the Land, for the Jewish survival in spite of disobedience, and for the coming of the Messiah, for the resurrection of the dead, and for Israel's final redemption and restoration.



Here are four discussion questions to help you review some of the key points about the Abrahamic Covenant:

1. How does the unconditional nature of the Abrahamic Covenant demonstrate God's sovereignty and faithfulness in fulfilling His promises?
2. What is the significance of the land promise in the Abrahamic Covenant, and how does it relate to God's broader plan for His people and the world?
3. How does Galatians 3:13-14 show the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant's promise of blessing and redemption for both Jews and Gentiles through faith in Christ?
4. In what ways does the Abrahamic Covenant anticipate the Messiah's return and the ultimate blessing of peace and prosperity for the whole world?

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE MOSAIC COVENANT



Scripture

The Mosaic Covenant contains very extensive detailed information, and the Scriptural account of the covenant extends from **Exodus 20:1 to Deuteronomy 28:68.**

The Participants in the Covenant

The parties involved in this pact were **God and Israel.** The covenant was made with Israel and not merely with Moses acting as a representative of Israel. This is clearly brought out in Exodus 19:3-8:

“Then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, “This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: ⁴ ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. ⁵ Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, ⁶ you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.” ⁷ So Moses went back and summoned the elders of the people and set before them all the words the LORD had commanded him to speak. ⁸ The people all responded together, “We will do everything the LORD has said.” So, Moses brought their answer back to the LORD.”

The covenant was not made with the Gentiles or the Church, but with Israel only, a point also made in Deuteronomy 4:7-8; Psalm 147: 19- 20; and Malachi 4:4.

The Provisions of the Covenant

The key provision of the Mosaic Covenant was the Law of Moses, which contained a total of **613** commandments. Involved in these provisions of the Law were blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience. It was signed and sealed, confirmed, by God revealing Himself in His glory – recorded in Exodus 24:1-11.

To summarize the provisions and implications of the Mosaic Covenant here are 7 observations to help you better understand.

1. The Totality of the Law

There was a total of 613 specific commandments, not just ten, a rather common misconception. Of these, 365 were negative commandments, things which were forbidden; 248 were positive commandments, things that should be done.

2. The Blessings and Judgments of the Law

Second: this was a conditional covenant, which meant that there would be blessings for obedience, but judgment for disobedience (Ex. 15:26; 19:3-8).

3. The Blood Sacrifice Added

The key element of the entire Mosaic Law was the blood sacrifice, brought out in Leviticus 17:11,

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul”

There were five different offerings detailed in Leviticus 1-7. The Hebrew word for atonement does not mean the removal of sin but merely the covering of sin. While the blood of animals covered the sins of the Old Testament saints, it never took those sins away; only the blood of the Messiah can remove sin (Heb. 10:1-4). However, the blood sacrifice did provide for the forgiveness of sin and the restoration of fellowship.

4. The Diet Restrictions Imposed

For the Jews, it restricted some of the provisions of the Noahic Covenant. Beasts had to be both cloven hoofed and those that chewed the cud; fish had to have both fins and scales; concerning fowls, no birds of prey were allowed; and concerning insects, only one type of locust was permitted.

5. The Death Penalty Expanded

For the Jews, it added the death penalty for other sins such as idolatry, adultery, cursing God, cursing parents, breaking the Sabbath, practicing witchcraft, among others.

6. Purpose of Circumcision Modified

The practice of circumcision is reaffirmed (Lev. 12:3), but not for the same reasons. Under the Abrahamic Covenant, circumcision was the sign of the covenant, and it was mandatory for Jews only. Under the Mosaic Covenant, purpose of circumcision is modified to signify submission to the Law of Moses, and it was mandatory for all Jews, but also for Gentiles who wished to become part of the Commonwealth of Israel. That is why Paul warned the

Gentile Galatian believers that, if they submitted to circumcision, they would be obliged to keep the *whole law*, not just this one commandment (Gal. 3:3).

7. The Sign of the Covenant

The sign of the Mosaic Covenant was the Sabbath. Concerning the Sabbath, five specific observations can be made.

First: as the sign of the Mosaic Covenant, it was a sign between God and Israel; it was a sign that Israel had been set apart by God (Ex. 31:12-17); it was a sign of the Exodus (Deut. 5:12-15; Ezek. 20:10-12; and it was a sign that Jehovah was Israel's God (Ezek. 20:20a. Every reason given for the observance of the Sabbath has relevance only to Israel, **not to the Gentiles or the Church.**

Second: the Sabbath was not a creation ordinance; it began only with Moses. Genesis 2:1-3 states only what God did on that day, but there is no command to observe that day. The word Sabbath is not even used in the Genesis account and that day of the week is just called *the seventh day*. From Adam to Moses, there is no record of anyone's keeping the Sabbath. While God listed a number of obligations upon humanity in the previous covenants, keeping the Sabbath was not one of them. Sabbath observance begins with Moses in Exodus 16:23-30 and was made part of the Law of Moses in Exodus 20:8-11.

Third: the Sabbath was a day of rest, not a day of corporate worship, which is another common misconception. As the Sabbath commandment was further developed in other parts of the Law of Moses while certain restrictions were made nothing was said about corporate worship. In the Law of Moses, the Sabbath was a day of rest and cessation of labor, not a day of corporate worship.

Fourth: the Sabbath as the sign of the Mosaic Covenant is that it was intended only for Israel and not the Church.

Fifth: as a sign of the Mosaic Covenant, it is in force as long as the Mosaic Covenant is in force. When the Mosaic Covenant comes to an end, so does mandatory Sabbath keeping. In fact, Jesus has become the Sabbath. (Mark 2:28)

The Purposes of the Law

We need to make it very clear that the Law of Moses was not a means of salvation. If that were true it would mean salvation is earned or gained by means of works. Salvation was and always is by grace through faith. The Law was not given to serve as a means of salvation (Rom. 3:20, 28; Gal. 2:16; 3:11, 21). It was given to a people already *redeemed* from Egypt, not in order to redeem them. However, there were several purposes for the giving of the Law. There are many purposes for law found in both the New and Old testaments. Here are seven of the key **purposes** for the Law of Moses.

1. The first purpose was to reveal the **holiness of God** and to reveal the standard of righteousness that God demanded for a proper relationship with Him (Lev. 11:44; 19: 1-2, 37; I Pet. 1: 15- 16).
2. To provide the guideline **(rules) of conduct** for the **Old Testament** saints and to provide occasions for individual and **corporate worship** for Israel. The seven holy seasons of Israel - Lev. 23 is one example of this
3. The Law served as the “**middle wall of partition**” as stated (Ephesians 2:11-16). It kept the Gentiles from participating in the blessing promised to the Jewish people. Those unconditional covenants provided the Jewish people God's blessings, both physical and spiritual, but because of how the Jewish people respond to the unconditional covenants, a conditional covenant was also added, the Mosaic Covenant, containing the Law of Moses. The only way Gentiles could enjoy the spiritual blessings of the Jewish covenants during the period of the Law was to take upon themselves the obligation of the Law, undergo the rite of circumcision, and then live like every Jew had to live. Because of this purpose, Gentiles were both alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise.
4. To keep the Jews **a distinct people** (Lev. 11:44- 45; Deut. 7:6; 14: 1-2. This was the specific reason for

many of the laws, such as the dietary laws and the clothing laws. The Jews were to be distinct from all other people in a variety of ways, such as their worship habits (Lev. 1, 7, 16, 23), their eating habits (Lev. 11:1-47), their sexual habits (Lev. 12) their clothing habits (Lev. 19: 19), and even the way they cut their beards (Lev. 19:27).

5. **To reveal sin.** Three passages in the Book of Romans point this out.
 - a) Romans 3:19-20, where Paul emphasized that there is no justification by means of the Law. The Law was given to provide the knowledge of sin, to reveal exactly what sin is.
 - b) The second passage is Romans 5:20, where the Law was given so that what is sin would be made very clear. How does one know he has sinned? He knows because the Law spelled out in detail - what was permitted and what was not permitted.
 - c) The third passage is Romans 7:7 where Paul again emphasized the fact that the Law was given so that sin might be made known. Paul became aware of his sinful state by looking into the Law and knowing that, on the basis of the Law, he fell short.
6. The law shows the sinner that there was nothing he could do on his own to please God; he had no ability to keep the Law perfectly or to attain the righteousness of the Law (Rom. 7:14-25a).
7. Ultimately the law **leads one to faith** according to

Romans 8:1-4 and Galatians 3:24-25. The final purpose of the Law was to bring one to saving faith in the Messiah.

We can arrange the purposes of the Law of Moses into four applications:

1. **In relation to God**, to reveal His holiness and to reveal His righteous standards.
2. **In relation to Israel**, to keep Israel a distinct people, to provide a rule of life for the Old Testament saint, and to provide for individual and corporate worship.
3. **In relation to Gentiles**, to serve as a middle wall of partition and thus keep them strangers to the unconditional Jewish covenants so as not to partake of Jewish spiritual blessings as Gentiles, but only as proselytes to Mosaic Judaism.
4. **In relation to sin**, to reveal and show what sin is, to make one sin more, to show that a man cannot attain the righteousness of the Law on his own, and to drive one to faith.

The Status of the Covenant

This is the biggie for most. Is the Old Covenant still in force? Unfortunately, this has caused much confusion and misinformation within the church. So, we are going to spend a little time here covering this point.

Here is the short answer. The Mosaic Covenant is the only Jewish covenant that was conditional, and it ultimately **came to an end**

with the death of Jesus on the cross. (Rom. 10:4; II Cor. 3:3-11; Gal. 3: 19-29; Eph. 2: 11- 18; Heb. 7: 11- 12, 18 **Therefore, the Mosaic Law is no longer in effect.**

There are **7** points that can help us better understand the status of the Mosaic Covenant -

1. The Solidarity of the Law of Moses

Two teachings have developed over the years which have contributed to much of the confusion over the Law of Moses.

- a) One - is the practice of dividing the Law into “ceremonial,” “legal,” and “moral” commandments. On the basis of this division, many have come to think that the believer is free from the ceremonial and legal commandments but are still under the moral commandments.
- b) Second - is the belief that the Ten Commandments are still valid today while the other 603 commandments are not.

It must be understood that the Mosaic Law is viewed by the Scriptures as a unit. In order to have a clear understanding of the Law of Moses and its relationship to the believer, Jew or Gentile, it is necessary to view it as the Scriptures views it: a unit that cannot be divided into parts that have been done away with and parts that have not. Nor can certain commandments be separated in such a way as to give them a different status from

other commandments.

It is the principle of the solidarity of the Law of Moses that lies behind the statement found in James 2:10,

“For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.”

The division of the Law of Moses into ceremonial, legal, and moral parts is convenient for the study of the different types of commandments contained within it, but it is never divided in this way by the Scriptures themselves. Neither is there any scriptural basis for separating the Ten Commandments from the whole 613 and making only the Ten Commandments perpetual. All 613 commandments are a single unit comprising the Law of Moses.

2. The Law of Moses Has Been Rendered Inoperative

The New Testament makes it very clear; the Law of Moses has been rendered obsolete with the death of Jesus; in other words, the Law no longer has authority over any individual. This is proven from a number of passages. Here are 5 -

The first passage is **Romans 7:5-6**: ***“For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death. ⁶ But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and***

not in the oldness of the letter.”

Here Paul clearly explains how the believer has been discharged from the law. The Greek word used is “katargeo”, which means “to render inoperative.” The Law has been rendered inoperative insofar as being the rule of life over the believer.

The second passage is Romans 10:4:

“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”

The word end here means the “termination” of. Christ has terminated the law. Since Jesus is the end of the Law, this means that there is no justification through it (Gal. 2: 16). Furthermore, there is no sanctification or perfection through the Law (Heb. 7:19a). Therefore, it becomes clear the Law has come to an end in the Messiah and cannot function in justification or sanctification. For the believer it has been rendered inoperative.

The third passage is 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”

In this context, Paul explains here how the Law of Moses was an addition to the Abrahamic Covenant (vv. 15-18). It was added for the purpose of making sin very clear so that all will know that they have fallen short of

God's standard of righteousness. It was a temporary addition until the seed, the Messiah would come; now that He has come, the Law is finished. The addition has ceased to function with the cross. The Law was never meant to be a permanent but temporary.

The fourth passage is Hebrews 7:11-18:

“...For He testifies: You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.”⁸ For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, ¹⁹for the law made nothing [e]perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God...”

There is a new priesthood according to the Order of Melchizedek, not according to the Order of Aaron. The Law of Moses provided the basis for the Levitical Priesthood and there was an inseparable connection between the Law of Moses and the Levitical Priesthood. Thus, a new priesthood required a new Law under which it could operate according to Hebrews 7:11-18. For the Levitical Priesthood to be done away with and to be replaced by a new priesthood, the Priesthood of Melchizedek, required a change of the Law. As long as the Law of Moses was in effect, no other priesthood was valid except the Aaronic or Levitical Priesthood (Heb. 7:13-17). If the Mosaic Law were still in effect, Jesus could not function as a priest. But because the Mosaic Law is no longer in effect, Jesus can be a priest after the Order of Melchizedek. Consequently, the Law of Moses

has been disannulled” in favor of a new Law, which is the basis for the priest according to the Order of Melchizedek.

The fifth passage is 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.”

In this passage, the Law is looked upon as a tutor to help bring one to a mature faith in the Messiah (v. 24). Having become a believer, he is no longer under this tutor, which is the Law of Moses (v. 25). As clearly as it could be stated, this passage teaches that with the Messiah's coming, the Law is no longer in effect.

To summarize section, the Law is a unit comprised of 613 commandments, and all of it has been rendered inoperative. There is no commandment that has continued beyond the cross of the Messiah. The Law is there and can be used as a teaching tool to show God's standard of righteousness, as well as man's sinfulness and need of a substitutionary atonement. It can be used to teach many spiritual truths about God as a man. It can be used to point one to the Messiah (Gal. 3:23-25). However, it has completely ceased to function as an authority over the individual. It is no longer the rule of life for believers.

3. The Moral Law

The third point in the status of the Mosaic Covenant deals with the question, “What about the moral law?” It is this part of the Law of Moses that many generally try to retain and, therefore, conclude that the Law of Moses is still in effect. However, the moral law preceded the Law of Moses. The moral law is not identical to the Law of Moses. Adam and Eve broke the moral law long before Moses. Satan broke the moral law even before Adam. The Law of Moses embodied the moral law, but it did not originate the moral law. Now the moral law is embodied in the Law of Christ.

4. The Jesus Argument - Matthew 5:17 18

The fourth point in the status of the Mosaic Covenant concerns the objection to the teaching of the termination of the Law of Moses, based on a statement Jesus made.

***“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.
¹⁸ For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.”***

First it is obvious that Jesus was speaking of the Law of Moses – all of 613 of them. Second, He made this statement while He was alive. Third, He made it very clear the law would be in force UNTIL it was fulfilled and finally, He tells us He is the one who would fulfill it.

The Law of Moses did not end with the coming of the Messiah or by His life, **but by His death**. As long Jesus was alive, He was under the Mosaic Law and had to fulfill and obey every commandment applicable to Him, not in the way that the rabbis had reinterpreted it. When Jesus died on the cross, He fulfilled the law. He said. “It is finished”.

5. The Law of Christ

The fifth point in the status of the Mosaic Covenant is that the Law of Moses has been disannulled and believers are now under a new Law. This new Law is called the law of Christ in Galatians 6:2 and the law of the Spirit of life in Romans 8:2. This is a brand-new Law, totally separate from the Law of Moses. The Law of the Messiah contains all the individual commandments from the Messiah and the apostles that are applicable to a New Testament believer. The details on this period will be discussed under the New Covenant.

6. The Principle of Freedom

The sixth point in the status of the Mosaic covenant is that those who are in Christ are free from the Law of Moses. This means the believer is free from the “REQUIREMENT”, (the have to), that exist under the law. Now he is free to keep the law – it now is (get to) not have to.

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death” Romans 8:2

The biblical basis for this freedom to keep the Law can be seen in the actions of Paul, who was the greatest exponent of freedom from the Law. His vow in Acts 18:18 is based on Numbers 6:2, 5, 9, and 18. His desire to be in Jerusalem for Pentecost in Acts 20:16 is based on Deuteronomy 16:16. The strongest passage is Acts 21:17-26, where we see Paul himself, the apostle of freedom from the Law, keeping the Law. The believer is free from the Law, but he is also free to keep parts of it. Thus, if a Jewish believer feels the need to refrain from eating pork, he is free to do so. The same is true for all the other commandments.

However, there are two dangers that must be avoided by any believer who volunteers to keep commandments of the Law of Moses. One danger is the idea that by doing so he is contributing to his own justification and sanctification. This is false. The second danger is in one's expecting others to keep the same commandments he has decided to keep. This is equally wrong and borders on legalism. The one who exercises his freedom to keep the Law must recognize and respect another's freedom not to keep it.

7. The Sabbath

And the seventh point in the status of the Mosaic Covenant is that the Sabbath was the sign, seal, and token

of the Mosaic Covenant. As long as that covenant was in effect, the Sabbath law was mandatory. Since the Law of Moses has been rendered inoperative, then the Sabbath command no longer applies. Those with their inconsistent insistence that the Law of Moses is still in effect, also insist that the Sabbath law applies. However, they totally ignore what Moses wrote about how to keep the Sabbath and they even change the day of the week, something that the Law of Moses does not allow. Many Jewish believers also insist on mandatory Sabbath keeping. Though they inconsistently base it on the Law of Moses, at least they retain it with the seventh day of the week. The apologetics used for mandatory Sabbath keeping are almost exclusively based upon the Old Testament for obvious reasons: there is no New Testament commandment for believers in general or Jewish believers in particular to keep the Sabbath. The claim that Sabbath observance is part of the New Covenant is nowhere supported by the New Covenant Scriptures themselves. In fact, if anything, they would teach the opposite.



Here are four discussion questions to help you review some of the key points about the Mosaic Covenant:

1. How does the conditional nature of the Mosaic Covenant highlight the relationship between obedience to God's law and Israel's role as a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation"?
2. In what ways did the Mosaic Covenant prepare the way for the New Covenant in Christ? How do the two covenants contrast with each other?
3. What is the significance of God choosing Israel to receive His divine law, and how does this connect to His broader plan of redemption through Jesus Christ?
4. How does the fulfillment of Jeremiah 31:31-34 in the New Covenant demonstrate the superiority of the New Covenant compared to the Mosaic Covenant?

"For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

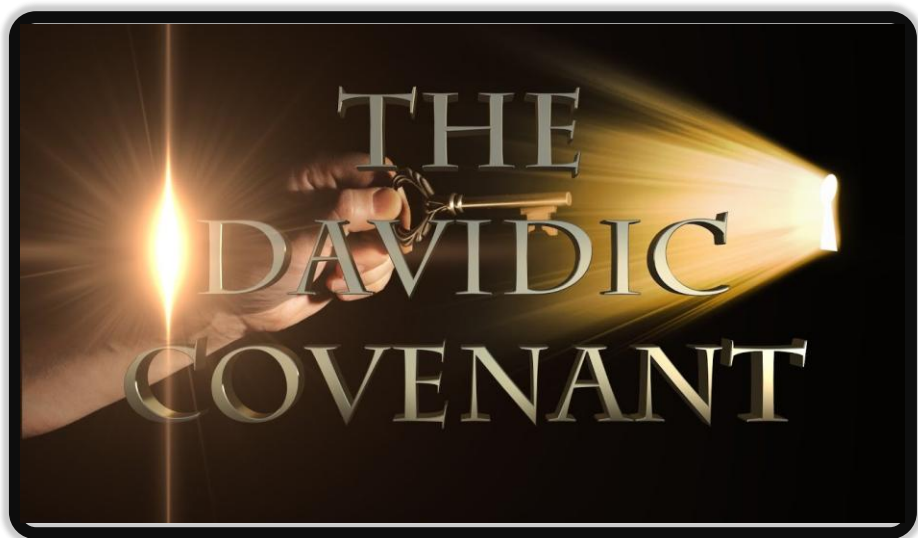
Romans 10:4

"For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

John 1:17

CHAPTER NINE

THE DAVIDIC COVENANT



Scriptures

There are two key verses.

The first passage is focused on Solomon’

2 Samuel 7:11-

“The Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”

The second passage is focused on Jesus, the Messiah.

1 Chronicles 17:10b-14 -

Furthermore, I tell you that the LORD will build you a house. ¹¹ And it shall be, when your days are fulfilled, when you must go to be with your fathers, that I will set up your seed after you, who will be of your sons; and I will establish his kingdom. ¹² He shall build Me a house, and I will establish his throne forever. ¹³ I will be his father, and he shall be My son; and I will not take My mercy away from him, as I took it from him who was before you. ¹⁴ And I will establish him in My house and in My kingdom forever; and his throne shall be established forever.”

The Participants in the Covenant

This covenant was made between God and David, who stands as the head of the Davidic House and Dynasty, the only rightful claimant to the Davidic Throne in Jerusalem.

The Provisions of the Covenant

When you study both these biblical accounts you find seven provisions of the Davidic Covenant.

First: David is promised an eternal dynasty. There is nothing that will ever destroy the House of David; it will always be in existence.

Second: David's own sons, specifically Solomon, was to be established on the throne after David (II Sam. 7:12) Absalom and Adonijah, two of David's other sons, tried to usurp the throne; but Solomon, and Solomon alone, was to be established on David's throne.

Third: Solomon would build the Temple (II Sam. 7:13a). Although David had greatly desired to build God's Temple, but because he was guilty of murder he would not be allowed (forbidden) to build the Temple, and it would be assigned to his son, Solomon.

Fourth: the throne of David's kingdom would be established for ever

(II Sam. 7:13b, 16). It was not Solomon that was promised to be established forever, but rather, the throne upon which he would sit.

Fifth: Solomon would be disciplined for disobedience, but God would not remove His “mercy”. (II Sam. 7: 14-15). Solomon does commit idolatry, the worst sin possible in Scripture yet God does not remove His favor from him. Why? Because of the unconditional covenant God makes with David.

Sixth: The Messiah will come from the Seed of David (I Chr. 17:11a) The emphasis in the II Samuel passage is on Solomon, but in the I Chronicles passage, is on the Messiah. In this passage, God is not speaking about one of David's sons being

established upon the throne forever, but the **Seed** of one of sons coming many years later.

Seventh: The Messiah and His *throne*, *house*, and *Kingdom* will be established forever. (I Chr. 17: 12-15). In this passage, it is the Person Himself that is established upon David's throne forever, not merely the throne. Clearly, the emphasis in the I Chronicles passage is not on Solomon, but on the Messiah. The Messiah, as well as His *throne*, His *house* and His *Kingdom* are to be established forever.

To summarize the Davidic Covenant, God promised David four eternal things: an eternal House or dynasty, an eternal Throne, an eternal Kingdom, and an eternal Descendant. The eternality of the House, Throne, and Kingdom is guaranteed because the Seed of David culminates in the One who is Himself eternal: Christ the Son of God!

The Importance of the Covenant

The importance of the Davidic Covenant is that it amplifies the Seed aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant. According to the Abrahamic Covenant, the Messiah was to be of the Seed of Abraham. This merely stated that He was to be a Jew and could be of any of the Twelve Tribes. Later, in the time of Jacob, the Seed aspect was limited to a member of the Tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:10a). Now the Messianic Seed is further narrowed to one family within the Tribe of Judah, **the family of David**.

Notice how through the covenants there has been a gradual narrowing of the Seed. According to the Edenic Covenant, the Messiah must be of the **Seed of the woman**. According to the Abrahamic Covenant, He had to come out of **Jewish descent**, which meant He could come out of any tribe of Israel. With the confirmation of this covenant, through Jacob's twelve sons, He now had to come out of the **Tribe of Judah**, but this permits Him to come

from any family of Judah. With the Davidic Covenant, the Messiah had to come from the **seed of David**.

The Confirmation of the Covenant

In several verses, the Davidic Covenant received further confirmation: II Samuel 23: 1-5; Psalm 89: 1 -52; Isaiah 9:6-7; 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5-6; 30:8-9; 33: 14- 17, 19-26; Ezekiel 37:24-25; Hosea 3:4- 5; Amos 9:11; Luke 1:30-35, 68-70; and Acts 15: 14- 18.

The Status of the Covenant

The Davidic Covenant is also an unconditional covenant and is still very much in effect as an eternal covenant.



Here are three discussion questions to help you review the key points about the Davidic Covenant:

1. How does the unconditional nature of the Davidic Covenant emphasize God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promises, regardless of human actions?
2. Why is the promise of an eternal kingdom through David's lineage significant in understanding the role of the Messiah and God's redemptive plan?
3. In what ways does the Davidic Covenant provide hope for believers today, knowing that Christ will one day establish His eternal reign?

Chapter Ten

The New Covenant



Introduction

We have covered six different covenants of God; 1) the Edenic, 2) the Adamic, 3) the Noahic, 4) the Abrahamic, 5) the Mosaic (old), 6) the Davidic and now 7) the New Covenant.

The new covenant was made between Israel and God just like the old, however the new covenant is a better covenant than the old with better promises. (Hebrews 8:6) The Old Covenant was established between God and the people of Israel and mediated by Moses, whereas the New Covenant was ratified through Jesus's death on the cross. The New Covenant has better promises and is available to all who will believe in Jesus. So, let's take a look at some of the details and specifics of the New Covenant.

Scripture

A number of passages speak of or relate to the New Covenant. We will cover several of them in the following discussion. But the foundational passage is Jeremiah 31:31-34:

“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—³² 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.³³ 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.³⁴ No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

The Participants in the Covenant

This covenant is made between God and Israel, and it receives further confirmation in other passages including such as: Isaiah 55:3; 59:2 1; 61:8-9; Jeremiah 32:40; Ezekiel 16:60; 34:25-31; 37:26-28; and Romans 11:26-27.

The Provisions of the Covenant

There are nine clear and distinct provisions in the New Covenant.

First: it is an unconditional covenant involving God and all of Israel – North and South. (Jer. 31:31). Thus, it includes the entire Jewish nation: the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It should be noted that it is not made with the Church.

Second: it is clearly distinct from the Mosaic Covenant (Jer. 31:32). It is ultimately to replace the Mosaic Covenant that was now considered broken.

Third: it promises the restoration of Israel (Jer. 31:33; Is. 59:21). The key aspect of this entire covenant is the blessing of salvation, which included Israel's national rebirth.

Fourth: the restoration of Israel is to be universal among all Jews (Jer. 31:34a; Is. 61:9). The national salvation is to extend to every individual Jewish person, and it is to be true through succeeding generations from the time that the initial rebirth of Israel occurs. Thus, during the Kingdom, the unregenerate people will all be Gentiles; in the entire period of the Kingdom, there will be no unsaved Jews.

Fifth: there is provision for the forgiveness of sin. (Jer. 31:34b). The New Covenant will do the very thing that the Mosaic Covenant was unable to do. The Mosaic Covenant was able only to cover the sins of Israel, but the New Covenant will take them away. This is a huge part and effect to the blessing of salvation.

Sixth: there is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 36:27a). The reason Israel failed to keep the Law under the Mosaic Covenant was that the people lacked the power to comply with the righteous standards of God. The Mosaic Law did not provide the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; that was not its purpose. But the New Covenant will do just that, and every Jew will be enabled to do the righteous work of God. This is a blessing resulting from the blessing of salvation.

Seventh: Israel will be flooded with material blessings (Is. 61:8; Jer. 32:41; Ezek. 34:25-27). The Mosaic Law did provide conditional material blessings - for obedience, but for the most part, Israel was in disobedience because of her failure to keep the Law. However, such failure will not exist under the New Covenant. Along with Israel's regeneration and empowerment to keep the Law, material blessings will be given by the Lord.

Eighth: the temple will be rebuilt (Ezek. 37:26-28). The Mosaic Covenant provided for the building of the Tabernacle. The Davidic Covenant provided for the building of the First Temple by Solomon. The New Covenant will provide for the building of the Messianic or Millennial Temple. This Temple will be a continual reminder to Israel of all that God has done.

Ninth: just as the Mosaic Covenant contained the **Law of Moses**, the New Covenant contains the **Law of Christ** (Rom. 8:2; Gal. 6:2) Like the Law of Moses, the Law of Christ

contains many individual commandments that are applicable to the New Testament believer. These commandments were given either by Jesus directly or by the apostles. They are NOT the same as the Law of Moses a simple comparison of the details proves that. Here are four points of clarification that help demonstrate the differences –

1. Many commandments are the same as those of the Law of Moses. For example, nine of the Ten Commandments are also in the Law of Christ.
2. However, many are different from the Law of Moses. For example, there is no Sabbath law now (Rom. 14:5; Col. 2:16) and no dietary code (Mk. 7:19; Rom. 14:20).
3. Some commandments in the Law of Moses are intensified by the Law of the Messiah. For example, the Law of Moses said: *love your neighbor as yourself* (Lev. 19: 18); this made man the standard. The Law of Christ says: *love one another; even as I have loved you* (Jn. 15:12); this makes Jesus the standard and He loved man enough to die for him.
4. The Law of Christ provides a new motivation. This is at the heart of the differences. For example, the Law of Moses was based on the conditional Mosaic Covenant and so the motivation was: Do, in order to be blessed. The Law of the Messiah is based on the unconditional New Covenant and so the motivation is: You **have** been blessed, therefore, do. The reason there is so much confusion over the relationship of the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ is that many commandments are similar to those found in the Mosaic Law, and many have

concluded that certain sections of the Law have therefore been retained. It has already been shown that this cannot be the case, and the explanation for the sameness of the commandments is to be found elsewhere. In the simplest terms under the Law of Moses “you had to obey”. Under the Law of Christ “you get to” obey.

The Law of Moses ended when Christ came. This can be better understood once we realize there are a number of codes in the Bible, such as the Edenic Code, Adamic Code, Noahic Code, Mosaic Code, New Code, and Kingdom Code. A new code may contain some of the same commandments of the previous code, but this does not mean that the previous code is still in effect. While certain of the commandments of the Adamic Code were also found in the Edenic Code, it did not mean that the Edenic Code was still partially in force; it ceased to function with the Fall of Man. The same is true when we compare the Law of Christ with the Law of Moses. There are many similar commandments. The Law of Moses has been made obsolete and we are now under the Law of Christ – the New Covenant. Which has many different commandments. For example, under the Law of Moses, we would not be permitted to eat pork, but under the New Covenant, we may. There are many similar commandments, but they are nonetheless in two separate systems. If we do not kill or steal today, it is not because of the Law of Moses but because of the Law of Christ – the Law of Love. On the other hand, if someone steals, he is not guilty of breaking the Law of Moses, but of breaking the Law of Christ. The present obligation to obey the New Covenant is due to the present outworking of the New Covenant.

The Importance of the Covenant

The importance of the New Covenant is that it amplifies the **Blessing** aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant, especially in relationship to salvation. It finally shows how the blessings of the Jewish covenants extend to the Gentiles. It is important to understand that the New Covenant is not simply the Old Covenant with Jesus tacked on to it! There is a change for the better under the New Covenant. (Hebrews 7:22)

The Relationship of the Church to the New Covenant

The relationship of the church to the new covenant has long been a point of considerable theological discussion. It is important to realize that the church is not in any way referred to or mentioned in Jeremiah 31. It is clear the original context of the New Covenant was given to Israel not the Church. This is why Paul referred to the church as a mystery!

While the New Covenant is between God and Israel the Church does have an important part to play. Jesus said He would build the church based on the revelation that He is the Christ. (Mt. 16:18) Jesus is the Head of the Church and believers are the body. (Col. 1:18)

Mission of Church

Jesus gave very clear instructions as to the mission of the church; 1) to preach the Gospel to all peoples (Mk. 16:15) and 2) to make disciples of those who believe. (Mt. 28:19) The Church is to do the work that Jesus did and even great works while He was on the earth. (John 14:12) The Church is to be the light and salt rescuing as many people from the kingdom of darkness and to bring them into the Kingdom of Light (God) not by the Law of Moses, but by the Gospel of the New Covenant.

Church is Not Israel

A believer does not become a (spiritual) Jew when he accepts Christ. The

Gentile does, however, gain access to the righteousness of God, which is by faith in Abraham's promised Seed, Jesus! Gentiles are now fellow heirs and partakers with Israel. We are "grafted in" and are "the seed of Abraham by faith." **Israel is not the church, and the church is not Israel.**

Neither Male nor Female

Look at Galatians 3:28-29 which says,

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, 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"

Did you lose your gender when you got saved? No, but it illustrates my point. Paul is not saying you cease to be a man or a woman, or a Jew, or a Gentile when you get saved! He is saying that none of that has any bearing on your position IN CHRIST. Salvation is no less available to a man than a woman, or to a Gentile than a Jew.

This fact had been hidden in redemptive history but was now made known to the church. Given its mysterious nature, as well as their own ethnic bias, it is not surprising that the early church struggled with this issue.

Blessing of Abraham

Gentiles NOW have access to share in all the benefits and blessings that were intended for the Jewish people. Through Christ we are able to have a personal relationship with the God of Israel, having our sins forgiven, and having God's own Spirit indwelling our hearts! This is all possible through the New Covenant, which will ultimately be completely fulfilled in the Jewish people at the second

coming of Jesus when they, as a nation accept Him as their Messiah/King.

Look at what Galatians 3:13-14 says,

“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”), ¹⁴ that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”

As a believer under the terms of the New Covenant the “blessing of Abraham comes on you”. The NLT puts it this way, ***“God has blessed the Gentiles with the same blessing he promised to Abraham,”***.

There are some that try to limit the promise to only the “spiritual blessings”, but that is not what it says. There are two parts to the blessing 1) spiritual and 2) natural. Most do well with believing and receiving the blessing in regard to the promise for spiritual things but struggle with receiving the blessing of Abraham upon their life in the natural realm / life in this world. They try and push it off only into the Millenium.

The relationship of the Church to the New Covenant is clearly explained in two passages. The first is Ephesians 2: 11 - 16:

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—¹² 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.¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken

down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

The second passage is Ephesians 3:5 6:

“which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: ⁶ that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,

The point of these passages is that God made three unconditional covenants with Israel: The Abrahamic Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant. All of God's blessings, both physical and spiritual, are mediated through these covenants.

However, there is also the conditional Mosaic Covenant. This was the middle wall of partition. Essentially, it kept the Gentiles from enjoying the blessings of the unconditional covenants. For a Gentile to begin receiving the blessings of the unconditional covenants, he had to totally submit to the Mosaic Law, undergo circumcision, take upon himself the obligations of the Law, and, for all practical purposes, live as a son of Abraham. Gentiles, as Gentiles, did not have access to the blessings of the Jewish covenants; hence, they were strangers from the commonwealth of Israel. However, when Jesus died on the cross as the “Lamb of God”, the Mosaic Law, the middle wall of partition, was broken down. Now by faith Gentiles, as Gentiles, can enter into the provisions of the unconditional covenants. That is why Gentiles today are partakers of God's promises but not “takers over.”

The Status of the Covenant

The New Covenant itself is an unconditional covenant and therefore eternally in effect. In relationship to the Church, the New Covenant is the basis for this age of Grace which will end when the church is taken before the second coming of Jesus. Unlike the Mosaic covenant, the new covenant of Jesus Christ is intended for all mankind—regardless of race. In the Great Commission, Jesus sent His apostles into the entire world to tell the story of the cross (Luke 24:46-47; Matt. 28:18-20). The gospel call extends to every man and woman today!



Here are 5 discussion questions to help you review some of the key points about the New Covenant:

1. How does the New Covenant differ from the Old Covenant in its focus on the heart and the role of the Holy Spirit?
2. In what ways do Moses, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel anticipate the New Covenant, and how do their predictions highlight the need for spiritual transformation?
3. What is the significance of Jesus Christ's death as the basis of the New Covenant, and how does it fulfill the promises made in the Old Testament?
4. Why is the New Covenant described as "better" than the Old Covenant (Hebrews 8:6), and what are the implications of this for how believers relate to God today?
5. How does the New Covenant demonstrate God's grace in offering salvation as a free gift, and what does this reveal about His character?

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Covenant of David and Jonathan



Introduction

One of my favorite somewhat obscure stories in the Bible is that of Mephibosheth. We find it in 2 Samuel chapter nine. While it is a story about King David's kindness towards Mephibosheth it is really a story about the power of covenant. The covenant between David and Johnathan, Mephibosheth's father. I believe this story can help us better understand the power of covenant and gives more insight to the significance of the Bible covenants we explored throughout this book. Let's take a deep dive into this powerful story of the covenant between David and Jonathan.

David and Jonathan: A Covenant Relationship

The story of David and Jonathan stands as a remarkable example of a covenant relationship rooted in love and faithfulness. Jonathan, despite his natural allegiance to his father Saul and his family, prioritized his covenant with David and his devotion to God. His choices reflected not only loyalty to David but also unwavering trust in God's will. This love and commitment mirror God's covenant with us—one born out of love and upheld through His promises. As we explore their relationship, we find profound lessons about covenant, love, and faith.

Jonathan's Love and Loyalty

Jonathan's love for David went beyond friendship; it was a demonstration of selflessness and faith. He willingly risked his own position as heir to Saul's throne to uphold his covenant with David. This kind of devotion reflects God's love for us—a love that protects, shepherds, and leads us if we humble ourselves to His will. Just as Jonathan's love was inseparable from his covenant obligation, so is God's love intertwined with His covenant promises to us.

Civil War and Its Aftermath

The years following Saul's death were marked by civil war and bloodshed. The narrative, found in 2 Samuel 1-9, begins with Abner, the commander of Saul's army, retreating with the remnants of Saul's family to Mahanaim. Here, Saul's son Ish-Bosheth was made king over Israel, while David was anointed king over Judah in Hebron.

In an attempt to establish peace, Joab, David's commander, and Abner agreed to a symbolic contest at the pool of Gibeon. However, the deep-seated animosity between the two sides erupted into a battle, resulting in significant casualties. Over time, David's house grew stronger, while Saul's house weakened. Abner eventually shifted his loyalty to David, setting the stage for unity among the tribes of Israel.

David's Rise to Power

David's rise was marked by victories and strategic moves. After Ish-Bosheth's assassination, David was anointed king over all Israel. He conquered Jerusalem, established it as his capital, and brought the Ark of the Covenant there, signifying God's presence with His people. Through God's guidance, David defeated surrounding nations, expanded Israel's territory, and ushered in a period of justice and prosperity.

The Covenant Remembered

Amidst his successes, David remembered his covenant with Jonathan. In 2 Samuel 9:1, he asked, "Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake?" Upon learning about Mephibosheth, Jonathan's crippled son, David had him brought from Lo Debar, a desolate place, to the royal palace.

Mephibosheth's Fear and David's Kindness

Imagine Mephibosheth's fear as he stood before David, expecting retribution. Instead, David extended kindness, restoring Saul's land to Mephibosheth and inviting him to eat at the king's table. This act of grace fulfilled David's covenant obligation to Jonathan, demonstrating that Mephibosheth's blessings were not earned but stemmed from the covenant.

A Lesson in Covenant Grace

Mephibosheth's life illustrates the nature of covenant grace. Though undeserving, he received the blessings of Jonathan's covenant with David. Similarly, God's covenant with us, established through Christ, offers us unmerited favor and blessings. Like Mephibosheth, we must leave behind our old ways and embrace the abundant life offered through this covenant.

Application for Us

Today, many live in spiritual poverty, seeking meaning in fleeting solutions such as self-help, mysticism, or substance abuse. Yet, true purpose and fulfillment come only through a covenant relationship with God. Like David seeking Mephibosheth, God seeks us, inviting us into a covenant of love and eternal life. Deuteronomy 30:19-20 reminds us of the choice before us: life and blessings or death and curses. By choosing life through Christ, we find our purpose, protection, and provision in Him.

CONCLUSION

“But in fact the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, since the new covenant is established on better promises.”

Hebrews 8:6

Summary of the 7 Covenants

It is my prayer that as you have read through this book you have come to have a better understanding of the Bible covenants and how God’s relationship with man is revealed through these covenants. These Bible Covenants highlight God’s character and His plan for salvation. Here is a brief summary of the 7 Bible Covenants we covered in this book and how they point to the ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

1. The Edenic Covenant (Genesis 1:26–30; 2:16–17)

The Edenic Covenant is the foundation of God’s intentions for humanity. In this agreement, God gave Adam and Eve dominion over the earth, commanded them to be fruitful and multiply, and provided every resource they needed to thrive. However, He also gave a clear instruction: not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

This covenant established humanity’s role as stewards of God’s creation, emphasizing free will and the importance of obedience. Its breach introduced sin into the world, setting the stage for God’s unfolding plan of redemption.

2. The Adamic Covenant (Genesis 3:14–19)

Following humanity's fall into sin, the Adamic Covenant revealed the consequences of disobedience but also contained the first glimpse of God's plan to redeem mankind. While God pronounced curses on the serpent, the ground, and human life, He also gave a promise: the offspring of the woman would crush the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15).

This covenant is unique in that it points to Jesus Christ as the ultimate victor over sin and Satan. The Adamic Covenant reminds us that even in judgment, God's grace and redemptive purposes prevail.

3. The Noahic Covenant (Genesis 9:1–17)

After the flood that cleansed the earth of widespread wickedness, God made a covenant with Noah, his descendants, and all living creatures. He promised never again to destroy the earth with a flood, sealing this promise with the sign of the rainbow.

The Noahic Covenant reaffirmed humanity's responsibility to steward creation and emphasized God's faithfulness and mercy. It reminds us that while sin grieves God's heart, He remains committed to His creation and His plan for redemption.

4. The Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 12:1–3; 15:1–21; 17:1–14)

God's covenant with Abraham is a cornerstone of the Bible's redemptive story. He promised Abraham three things:

1. A great nation (descendants as numerous as the stars).
2. A land (the Promised Land).
3. A blessing for all nations through his seed.

This covenant is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the ultimate descendant of Abraham, through whom salvation is offered to all people. The

Abrahamic Covenant underscores God's unchanging faithfulness and His desire to bless humanity through faith.

5. The Mosaic Covenant (Exodus 19:5–6; 20:1–31:18)

The Mosaic Covenant, given at Mount Sinai, was a conditional covenant that established Israel as God's chosen nation. It included the Law, summarized in the Ten Commandments, and provided instructions for worship, societal conduct, and the sacrificial system.

This covenant highlighted humanity's inability to fully obey God's law and pointed to the need for a Savior. The sacrificial system foreshadowed Jesus, the perfect Lamb of God, who would offer Himself as the ultimate sacrifice for sin.

6. The Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7:12–16)

The Davidic Covenant is God's promise to establish David's throne forever. God assured David that his lineage would produce a king whose reign would never end. This covenant finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ, the Son of David, whose Kingdom is eternal.

The Davidic Covenant demonstrates God's sovereignty and His intention to bring salvation through the lineage of David, ultimately culminating in Christ as the King of kings.

7. The New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31–34; Luke 22:20; Hebrews 8:6–13)

The New Covenant is the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan through Jesus Christ. It replaces the old covenant of the law with a covenant of grace. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, forgiveness of sins is offered to all who believe.

This covenant is characterized by:

- A personal relationship with God, as His law is written on our hearts.

- The indwelling of the Holy Spirit, empowering believers to live holy lives.
- Eternal security in Christ, as His sacrifice is sufficient once and for all.

The New Covenant is the ultimate expression of God's love and grace, inviting all people to become part of His family through faith in Jesus.

These seven covenants reveal a God who is faithful, merciful, and relentless in His pursuit of humanity. Each covenant builds upon the previous one, culminating in the New Covenant, where every promise finds its fulfillment in Christ.

As we live under the New Covenant, let us embrace the abundant life Jesus offers, walking in His grace, authority, and purpose. These covenants are not just historical agreements—they are invitations to experience the fullness of God's love and faithfulness in our lives today.

What Do We Do Now?

As we come to the end of our journey through the Bible's covenants, the question naturally arises: What do we do now? How do we respond to the incredible truths we've uncovered? The answer lies in how we live in light of the New Covenant, a covenant of grace, empowerment, and spiritual authority through Jesus Christ.

The New Covenant is not just a theological concept; it's a living reality. It declares that we are no longer bound by the law but set free by grace. It affirms that we are no longer spiritual orphans but sons and daughters of the Most High God. It equips us to walk in the authority of Christ, standing against the enemy and claiming the promises of God for our lives.

Living in the Power of Grace and Authority

Grace is the cornerstone of the New Covenant. It is God's unmerited favor, freely given, and it empowers us to live lives of victory and purpose. But grace is not passive; it is active. It calls us to step into the fullness of our identity in Christ, to walk in holiness, and to serve others with the same love and compassion we've received.

Through the New Covenant, we also have been granted spiritual authority. As believers, we are not victims of circumstances but overcomers in Christ. The enemy has no power over those who know who they are and whose they are. Jesus has given us authority to pray boldly, to declare His promises, and to see His Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.

A Call to Respond

If you have never received Jesus as your Lord and Savior, now is the time to activate the benefits of the New Covenant in your life. Don't delay; eternity is too important to put off. Through Jesus, you can receive forgiveness, a new identity, and the abundant life He promised. On the next page, you'll find a simple prayer to invite Him into your heart. I encourage you to take that step of faith today.

A Story to Inspire Your Next Steps

Let me leave you with this story. Imagine a man living in a small, dilapidated house. One day, he receives a letter informing him that he has inherited a mansion with vast lands and incredible wealth. All he needs to do is claim it. The man is overjoyed but hesitant. Could it really be true? He decides to stay in his old house, reasoning that it's too good to be real.

Many Christians live just like that man. The mansion—the New Covenant—has already been given to them. All they need to do is receive it and move in. But instead, they stay in their old, limited way of life, doubting the fullness of what God has provided.

Your Next Step

Don't stay in the old house. Step into the mansion. Embrace the fullness of the New Covenant. Live in the power of grace and the authority of Christ. Let your life be a testimony of God's faithfulness and love.

The choice is yours. Will you claim what has already been given to you?

I pray that as you close this book, you open your heart to the transformative power of God's covenants. May you walk in the freedom, victory, and purpose that Jesus Christ has made available to you.

The prayer on the next page is your key to unlock all of this. Take the step of faith today—you'll never look back.

Prayer of Salvation

Dear Heavenly Father,

I come to You in the Name of Jesus.

Your Word says, “The one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.” (John 6:37) I know You won’t cast me out. You take me in, and I thank You for that.

You said in Your Word, “Whoever calls on the name of Jesu the Lord shall be saved” (Rom. 10:13) I am calling on Your Name, and I know You have saved me.

You also said, “If we confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, your will be saved. For with the heart, one believes unto righteousness, and we the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” (Rom. 10:9-10) I believe in my heart Jesus is the Son of God. I believe He was raised from the dead for my justification. I confess Him as Lord.

Because Your Word says that, “with the heart one believes unto righteousness” – and I do believe with my heart – I have now become the righteousness of God in Christ (2Cor. 5:21). I am now saved!

Thank Your Lord!

Signed _____

Date _____

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bruce Edwards is a pastor, teacher, and author with over 40 years of leadership experience in business and ministry. He has been married to his wife Trudy for over 50 years. They have two children and 6 grandchildren.

He has a master's degree in business management and a degree in the pastoral ministry. He served over 28 years at Victory Christian Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma as Senior Associate Pastor. He has written over 30 books and helps pastors grow their churches.

As a pastor, he has a passion for helping people experience the abundant life provided through Jesus and is committed to teaching and communicating the principles of God's Word with clarity,



***"Therefore know that the Lord your God,
He is God, the faithful God who keeps
covenant and mercy for a thousand
generations with those who love Him
and keep His commandments;"***

Deuteronomy 7:9

You will learn:

- **All about covenants**
- **God is a Covenant God**
- **Why understanding covenant is important**
- **About 7 Bible Covenants**
- **And more**

Bruce R. Edwards