



Title: **V. BL105 - Bible Covenants**
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Before examining the different covenants found in scripture, I will first define the term, “covenant”. In the Old Testament, the word covenant is derived from the Hebrew root word *berith*, which mean, “to cut”. In the New Testament, the word is *diatheke*. In the King James Bible, the word is translated “testament” but is better translated covenant.¹ Thus we have the old covenant and the new covenant. The sixty six books we have in hand are in essence, the accounts of the covenants of God with His people.

There are several instances in scriptures of covenants being made. The word covenant occurs two hundred ninety-two times in the King James Bible. Some of these solemn agreements were made between men as in Genesis 21: 22-32 between Abraham and Abimelech.

“And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, God is with thee in all that thou doest: Now therefore swear unto me here by God that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son: but according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned. And Abraham said, I will swear.” (Gen. 21: 22-24 KJV)

Many covenants can be found between God and man as in Exodus 31: 16-17. In this instance, the Sabbath is a sign of the everlasting covenant with Israel.

“Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.” (Ex. 31: 16-17 KJV)

Man makes covenants or vows to God as well as in Genesis 28: 20-22:

“And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: And this stone, which I

have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.” (Gen. 28: 20-22)

When God makes a covenant with man, it can be unconditional as is the covenant with Abraham or Noah, or it can be conditional as in the Edenic covenant. A few things to notice; when God makes a covenant with man, it is God that determines all the aspects of the covenant. When God makes an oath, it will be fulfilled. A covenant is God defining the terms in which He will relate to man and how man should relate to God. This is one way that God shows His Fatherly love toward us.

A covenant consisted of five major parts; the parties involved, the promise or oath, the conditions or obligations, the summons or invocation of a witness, and the curse formula which was often indicated by a gesture or a physical symbol. When a covenant was made, animals were often times split in two pieces. The individuals making the covenant would walk together in a figure eight around and between the animal halves reciting the terms of the covenant. God was invoked as the witness in the most solemn of oaths and asked to ensure the faithfulness of the covenant. The curse invoked if either party broke the oath, were sometimes declared to be the fate of the animal split in pieces.

A covenant can be ratified by several means. Easton's Bible Dictionary gives several instances where covenants were ratified by the giving of a hand, loosing a shoe, a feast, a monument, or by offering a sacrifice.² Garments or articles of clothing were often exchanged as a reminder of the covenant promise.

This paper will examine the covenants with Adam before and after the fall, the covenant with Noah, Abraham, Moses, Israel, David, with sinners, and the Church.

Adamic: Pre-Fall

This paper will start by examining the covenant with Adam which is sometimes referred to as the covenant of works. The promises prior to the fall are known as the Edenic Covenant. Genesis is the seed plot of the entire Bible. What is lost in Genesis is redeemed by Christ in the New Testament. What is promised in the Old Covenant comes to pass in the New. What

is hidden in the Old Testament is revealed in the New Testament. In Genesis 1, we find God making a covenant with man before he was ever made.

[26] And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. [27] So God created man in his [own] image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. [28] 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 fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. [29] And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which [is] upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which [is] the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. [30] And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein [there is] life, [I have given] every green herb for meat: and it was so. [31] And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, [it was] very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. (Gen 1:26-31 KJV)

[16] And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: [17] But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. (Gen 2:16-17 KJV)

In the passages above, we find that Adam was a free moral agent being brought into a covenant of works by God, who would be considered as the moral governing agent. The test of his obedience was abstinence from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God provided everything necessary for human existence and joy. There was no death, no sorrow, no sickness, or pain as long as Adam was obedient to the law. The promise of life in an unfallen state was Adam's as long as the covenant was intact. This covenant with man made by God was conditional. The curse for breaking the condition set forth by God was death.

The details of this covenant are that man would be made in the image of God Himself, and that he would have dominion over the animals but have a vegetarian diet. It directed man to multiply on the face of the earth. Man would walk with God and commune with Him in way that we are not capable of understanding in our current condition.

Adamic: Post Fall

When the shining one, Satan, deceived Eve and Adam broke the covenant out of love for Eve, several monumental events took place. First and foremost, Adam and Eve died spiritually thus beginning the second part of the Adamic Covenant. The communion with God was broken and they both realized they were naked. Death entered creation.

[16] Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire [shall be] to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. [17] And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed [is] the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat [of] it all the days of thy life; [18] Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; [19] In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou [art], and unto dust shalt thou return. (Gen 3:16-19 KJV)

Some believe that Adam existed in more than three dimensions and the universe was operating experientially in the ten or more dimensions in which it was created.³ Many Christian theologians believe that it was at this point when the ten dimensions in which Adam and Eve experientially lived were divided; the four we experience today; length, width, height, and time, and the other six that can only be inferred by indirect means. It is at this time that light is believed by some to have started slowing down and entropy entered the universe.

It is no wonder that ALL creation is groaning for the day of redemption. Adam, as a representative of all mankind, plunged humanity and creation into a universe plagued with sin. There is nothing that man can do to repeal this curse that Adam brought on mankind and creation as a whole. God is the sole determinate of the outcome of this covenant, and He is the sole satisfaction of the redemption of this disaster.

As a result of disobedience, God declared war on Satan including the promise of his ultimate demise by the seed of a woman whom is a prophecy of the virgin birth of the Messiah the King, Christ Jesus. God also declared a series of curses that would be experienced by both men and women. The woman would experience pain and sorrow in child birth and her desire would be for the leadership role of the man. The ground was cursed in that it would

bring forth thorns and weeds, and man was cursed to live by the sweat of his brow in sorrow and ultimate death of the flesh.

Covenant with Noah

The next covenant discussed will be the covenant made by God with Noah. Man had become increasingly wicked and Satan was coming close to infecting the world with the ungodly offspring of the daughters of Adam and the fallen angels. The result was a people known as Nephilim, or *fallen ones*. Noah, however, was perfect in his genealogies which meant he was without physical defect. This did not mean that Noah was perfect, but he did find grace with God. God destroyed sinful man, but he didn't destroy sin. After the flood, God made a covenant with Noah that included several of the same aspects as the covenant with Adam with the addition of some others. The following passage from Genesis 9 states the text:

[1] And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. [2] And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth [upon] the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. [3] Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. [4] But flesh with the life thereof, [which is] the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. [5] And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. [6] Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. [7] And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein. [8] And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, [9] And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; [10] And with every living creature that [is] with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. [11] And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. [12] And God said, This [is] the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that [is] with you, for perpetual generations: [13] I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. [14] And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow 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; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. [16] And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that [is] upon the earth. [17] And God said unto Noah, This [is] the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that [is] upon the earth.

[18] And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham [is] the father of Canaan. (Gen 9:1-18 KJV)

God defines the parties as Himself and every living creature upon the earth. The actual promise made by God was not only to Noah, but to his sons, and to all living things. The covenant was that God would not destroy all flesh on the earth by water again. The sign that God remembers this promise is the rainbow. This is an example of an unconditional covenant. There is nothing that Noah, his posterity, or creation itself can do that would make God recant on this promise. Noah has no obligation for performance in order for this covenant to stand. The earth would never be destroyed by water again.

“It was universal, declaring God’s wrath and judgement in the face of spurned grace. If the Flood was merely local, then God’s covenant promise (Gen. 11:11-17) has subsequently been broken on many occasions.”⁴

These passages see God installing human government and capital punishment as a means of curbing the propensity of man to sin. He also told Noah to go forth and replenish the earth. Man is given permission to eat the flesh of animals, and all creatures will fear man from that point on.

Abrahamic Covenant

The next covenant examined has been called the Abrahamic covenant. It is from this covenant that all the benefits we enjoy as Christians was initiated. The Abrahamic Covenant further defines the promises made to Eve in the Garden of Eden as to the lineage of the seed of the woman. God promises several things to Abraham. The most important one is that the coming Messiah would come from his lineage. There are literally volumes of books and writings on the impact the Abrahamic covenant. This unilateral covenant God made with Abram is by far one of the most astounding in all scripture. In Genesis 17:7, God calls it an everlasting covenant. It is astonishing that Jehovah calls an idol worshipping Gentile from Ur to be the father of the faithful. Time and time again where Abram and his offspring disobey God and showed a lack of faith we find God reiterating the covenant. It is in the midst of disobedience that God reiterates His promise to Abram and to all mankind. The following is the passage that states the covenant.

[1] Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: [2] And I will

make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: [3] And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. [4] So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram [was] seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. (Gen 12:1-4 KJV)

In this passage, we see God saying “I will”. There is no requirement on Abram’s part. God does it all. The promises are:

- 1) God will show Abram a land.
- 2) Abram will be the father of a great nation, his name will be great and he will be a blessing.
- 3) God will bless those that bless Abram and curse those that curse Abram.
- 4) God says that through Abram, all the nations of the earth are blessed which is the promise of the Messiah.

Isn’t it interesting that God told Abram to get out of his country, and away from his relatives, and from his father’s house, and go to a land that God would reveal. We learn that at the very onset, he did not get away from his relatives in that he took Lot, his nephew, and His father. Abram did not get out of his country, but went to Charran in Mesopotamia until his father died. It wasn’t until something died in Abram’s life that he continued with God to the land that was promised him.

[14] And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: [15] For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. [16] And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, [then] shall thy seed also be numbered. [17] Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee. (Gen 13:14-17 KJV)

[1] After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I [am] thy shield, [and] thy exceeding great reward. [2] And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house [is] this Eliezer of Damascus? [3] And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. [4] And, behold, the word of the LORD [came] unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. [5] And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. [6] And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness. [7] And he said unto him, I [am] the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

We can see how in vs. 14 – 17, God is reiterating the fact that from him will be many peoples and nations as signified by the dust of the earth. However, in Gen. 15:5-6 we find God telling Abram to look to the heavens signifying that there will be a seed coming from him that will also be with God. Abram's faith in what God told him was counted to him as righteousness. Through out history, man is righteous through faith in what God says.

[8] And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? [9] And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. [10] And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not. [11] And when the fowls came down upon the carcases, Abram drove them away. [12] And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. [13] And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land [that is] not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; [14] And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. [15] And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. [16] But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites [is] not yet full. [17] And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. [18] In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: (Gen 15:1-18 KJV)

Here we have the institution of the covenant to Abram by God. The parties to this covenant were God and Abram, however, the responsibility of performance was God alone who was the only one that went through divided animals. The promise was the land from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates and the sign of this covenant was the circumcision of the flesh which is also a foreshadowing of a greater circumcision; that of the heart.

[1] And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I [am] the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. [2] And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. [3] And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, [4] As for me, behold, my covenant [is] with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. [5] Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. [6] And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. [7] And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed

after thee. [8] And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. (Gen 17:1-8 KJV)

It is interesting here that Abram means “father” but God changes his name to Abraham or “father of multitudes” at a time when Abraham had no children indicating that God will finish what He has put into motion. The promises given by God were not only to Abraham but to Jesus Christ as we learn from Galatians 3:16. God was making promises to His Son before He ever entered time.

Mosaic Covenant

The Mosaic covenant is a conditional covenant made by God, as the agent, and the nation of Israel. God promises to make Israel a kingdom of priests and a holy nation set aside to be a light around them. They were to be a witness of the covenant keeping God to all the other nations. Scholars are divided on whether or not this covenant belongs under works or is it a covenant of grace. I tend to see it as a mixture of both. The obvious difference is that blessing under the Mosaic covenant comes as Israel obeys the law given in Exodus 19 – 24. This not really a departure from the covenant God made with Abraham in which God alone is responsible for the fulfillment of the covenant. God confirmed the covenant of the law and ratified it before hand IN Christ (Gal. 3:14) that we might the complete fulfillment of the law by our faith in Christ. God foreknew that He would be the one that would ultimately be responsible for keeping the law.

However, man’s redemption had to come as a result of a perfect kinsmen redeemer as depicted in the Book of Ruth. Thus, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, perfectly fulfilling every jot and tittle of the law, taking on our penalty for sin, and offering the Gentiles the blessings of Abraham by the same means; Faith.

The Mosaic covenant was added to the Abrahamic covenant because of the transgressions (Gal. 3:19). We also find that the law was a school master, or tutor, to bring us to Christ. (Gal. 3: 24). Once we have been justified by faith in the finished work of Jesus, the school master has done its job and we are no longer under the school master. Note that this does not nullify the need for the school master. To the one found in Christ, the law becomes a tool to

bring other to Christ. This covenant is wrapped up in the physical delivery of Israel from Egypt, which is a type of the world, as compared to the New Covenant, which we will find later, is concerned with our spiritual delivery from sin and death.

The Mosaic Law obviously brings death to all that are under it. With all the sacrificial ordinances and all the blood that would be spilled in keeping with the law, salvation was still out of reach. All this was just a foreshadowing of the coming sacrifice of Jesus Christ that would satisfy and justify all who believe by faith. There is no provision for life because there is no way sinful man can satisfy it. Thus any prudent man must eventually ask the question, “How can I be justified in the eyes of a holy God in light of my transgression against God’s law?” Enter Jesus Christ and faith. Prior to Christ, the faithful looked forward to the promise (Jesus Christ) given to Eve, Abraham, and David. After Jesus came, we look back to Christ as our fulfillment of law, to the Cross of Christ as our payment to the law, the empty tomb of Christ as our hope, and to the ascension as our seal of God’s approval of Christ’s work.

Covenant with Israel (Palestinian)

Israel has now wandered in the desert for forty years after refusing to enter the Promised Land. Although they were in disobedience, God still provided in that their clothes or shoes didn’t wear out. We also find in Deuteronomy 29 that what God is doing is keeping His oath to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. “that He may establish you today as a people for Himself, and *that* He may be God to you, just as He has spoken to you, and just as He has sworn to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”(Deut.29:13)

Moses is denied entry due to misrepresenting the Lord when he struck a rock that was to provide water instead of speaking to the rock. Deuteronomy 29:1 states that this Palestinian covenant is distinct from the Mosaic covenant given at Horeb. Before making this covenant, God reiterates to them that obeying the commandments will bring blessing and disobedience will bring curses.

[1] And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call [them] to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee, [2] And shalt return unto

the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; [3] That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee. [4] If [any] of thine be driven out unto the outmost [parts] of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: [5] And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. [6] And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. [7] And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee. [8] And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. [9] And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers: [10] If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, [and] if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. (Deut. 30:1-10 KJV)

There are a few aspects of this covenant that are unique. There is a promise to gather the nation of Israel back to the land that God has given them. (Deut. 30:1-5) We see this happening today. Even more astounding is the fact that before Israel could be gathered again, there had to be an Israel to return to. Our lifetime has seen the reemergence of Israel as not only a nation, but a very powerful nation unto which Israelis have been returning to for years.

There are many aspects of this covenant that await fulfillment. For example, Deuteronomy 30:6-7 declares that God will circumcise their hearts so that they can fully love Him. This has not happened yet in that the Jews still reject Jesus as Messiah. Circumcision was given to Abraham as an outward sign of the covenant but God turns the issue to the heart.

God also promises to judge Israel's enemies in vs. 7. We still see this today. I strongly believe that this one of the reasons why our nation has not seen the judgment of the Lord. We have, as a part of national policy, supported Israel. This support has brought blessing from God.

The Palestinian covenant is unconditional in nature because it is a magnification of the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant. It is called an everlasting covenant; “Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant.” (Eze. 16:60) The fulfillment of these promises is God’s responsibility to which Israel has no obligation.

Davidic Covenant

The next covenant we will examine is the Davidic Covenant. God’s promise to David is that the Messiah will come out of his Judaic lineage. David is also promised a dynasty, and that an everlasting kingdom would be established as well as an everlasting throne from which the Messiah will reign.

This text for this covenant starts with God almost seeming surprised and smitten with the fact that David wants to build God a house to dwell in as seen in vs. 4 & 5.

[4] And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying, [5] Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? [6] Whereas I have not dwelt in [any] house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. [7] In all [the places] wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar? [8] Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the shepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: [9] And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great [men] that [are] in the earth. [10] Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime, [11] And as since the time that I commanded judges [to be] over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house. [12] And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. [13] He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. [14] I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: [15] But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took [it] from Saul, whom I put away before thee. [16] And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever. (2Sa 7:4-16 KJV)

This covenant is a reaffirmation of the promise to Eve, Abraham, and Moses pertaining to the seed of the woman, it restates and reiterates the provisions in the Abrahamic Covenant and the Mosaic Covenant to bring Israel into a land of their own. God is telling David that his lineage will produce an everlasting dynasty of people from which the Messiah will rule from an everlasting throne. There is no obligation on David's part. God is solely responsible for this work.

Covenant with Repentant Sinners – The New Covenant

God also makes a covenant to save all repentant sinners through the sacrifice of Christ. The New Covenant is one that will see God dealing with the heart of man. "Consequently when God terminated the Old Covenant it did not eliminate anything He had promised in the Abrahamic, "Palestinian," Davidic, or New Covenants."⁵

The book of Hebrews so eloquently points out several aspects of the New Covenant; the Old Covenant was mediated by Priests, but this New Covenant is mediated by Jesus Christ in heaven. The blood of bulls and goats could not erase sin, but faith in Christ's blood that was spilled on our behalf, that one time, is forever, never to be repeated again. Burkhof states that,

"As High Priest Christ is now ministering in heaven, of which the tabernacle on earth was but a shadow, since He is the Mediator, not of the Old, but of the New Covenant, Salvation has always been by faith."⁶

Repent is mentioned 74 times in the Bible.⁷ Since the time when God established the sacrificial system with Adam and Eve, to the Mosaic ordinances, to now, it has always been and forever will be by faith in Jesus Christ that the sinner has obtained merciful justification in the eyes of a holy God. The Old Testament saints were justified by faith, as is the New Testament saints.

The Old Testament is full of types and shadows to Jesus Christ.

"Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." (Exo. 34:7)

John Piper points out that,

“before he declares the terms of the covenant, he wants to make perfectly clear that it is a covenant based on mercy and love and forgiveness. So the very first promise of God's covenant is to mercifully forgive repentant sinners.”⁸

Paul says in Galatians 3:8 that Abraham was preached the gospel of Christ. We find, as we study the narrative, the sacrifice of Isaac is a foreshadowing of another sacrifice that would take place on that very spot where another Father would provide Himself a lamb. Noah was in Ark seven days before the first sprinkles of the flood waters started to come. Noah had faith as evidence by his work of the Ark. We see Jesus in every detail of the tabernacle, and in the Temple. On every page of the Bible, Jesus can be found.

The promise the repentant sinner of salvation in Christ can found in a multitude of places.

- And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel. (Mark 1:15)
- Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (Rom. 5: 1-2)
- But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: (John 1:12)
- Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)
- But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. (Isa. 64:6)

We can see by the above passages that all forms of righteousness that is a product of man's own ability is filthy in the sight of God. To be repentant, one must know where he has erred and the penalty for those errors. This is what the Mosaic Law was all about. One, there is a recognition of those errors; the search is on for the means of satisfaction of the debt owed to God. The Old Testament saints looked forward to the coming Messiah, and we now have

faith in the Christ work of Christ as we look back on the Cross. However, both Old Testament saints and the Church of the New Testament both look forward to the promise that Christ will return and every knee will bow and every tongue confess.

Covenant with The Church

That which was hidden in the Old Testament and revealed in the New Testament is something very unique. It was prophesied about in the Old Testament, and confirmed at the council of Jerusalem by the witness of Peter and Paul. This mystery is the Church or the Bride of Christ. The church is foreshadowed in the Old Testament in the story of Abraham and Isaac as an un-named servant goes and secures for Isaac a Gentile bride who has never seen her husband. On the way back home the servant gives gifts to the bride. Isaac is not mentioned in the narrative again until he is united with His bride. We see the church typed again in the story of the destruction of Sodom as the angels were under strict instruction to not destroy the city until righteous Lot was out of harms way. The story of Ruth is a beautiful depiction of love a kinsmen redeemer toward his Gentile bride and the reinstatement of Naomi who is a picture of Israel.

In order to understand the promises God makes to the church we must first understand and appreciate that the church is not Israel and the church is not even the saints that will come out of the tribulation period or the Millennial Reign. The Church is made up of believers between the time of Christ's work on earth and the time when Christ will return for His Church at the rapture.

The book of Romans initially sets a dismal picture for the nation of Israel as having blown the opportunities presented to them by God. "But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness." (Rom. 9:31 KJV) Israel's rejection of Jesus as the Christ is, and has been, their stumbling block and has afforded the Gentile race mercy in the opportunity of salvation through the disobedience of Israel.

"For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:

*"The Deliverer will come out of Zion,
And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;
For this is My covenant with them,
When I take away their sins."*

Concerning the gospel *they are* enemies for your sake, but concerning the election *they are* beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God *are* irrevocable. For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy. For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all." (Rom. 11:25-32 NKJV)

However, there will come a time when the nation of Israel will call upon the name of the Lord and the promises will be fulfilled unto them. Dryer states that,

"The greatest argument for the future restoration of Israel as a nation is the character of God. He made a series of covenants with the patriarchs, David, and the Levites; His character demands that He will ultimately fulfill these promises to their nation."⁹

The fullness of the Gentiles is a set number. As in the parable in Matthew 22 where we find a parable concerning a King that set a table for his guests and they did not show. His servants then went out into the countryside and eventually filled the Masters house. It is interesting that in this case the Master of the house also provided the garments for his guests. The one guest that was clothed in garments not provided by the master, were bound and cast into everlasting darkness. God not only calls us to His table, but clothes us as well in the righteousness of Christ. To be welcome at the table of Lord, we must accept His garments of righteousness.

"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but [rather] through their fall salvation [is come] unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy." (Rom. 11:11 KJV). We share in the mercy, grace, and salvation of the Lord because of the failure of Israel to follow Christ in faith; we, as the Church, do not replace Israel in any way.

With this in mind we will now examine the covenant that God makes with the church. The church is the bride of Christ. Scripture tells us that these promises are give to us that we might one day, take hold of a divine nature and the corruption of death. "Whereby are given

unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” (2 Peter 1:4 KJV)

A review of the Jewish feasts can shed light on the promises made by Christ to the Church. Any student of scripture can see that the Bible is full of types and shadows. Paul, in Colossians 2:16&17, states that the Sabbath days were a shadow of the real thing which is Christ Jesus. The Sabbath was a day of rest for the Jew. There could be no work done on this appointed day. For the Christian and the Church, Jesus’ fulfillment of the Law and finished work on the cross provides us an eternal rest. In Jesus, we find peace and rest.

The Passover is celebrated as the day when they were delivered from the bondage of Egypt by the blood of a lamb. We find salvation by the blood of Christ, the perfect lamb. In obedience, those that complied with the instructions laid out were saved regardless of their nationality. Just as Paul indicates that there is neither Jew nor Gentile when it comes to availability of salvation. The blood of Jesus Christ for salvation is available to all.

The feast of unleavened bread is celebrated in remembrance of the bondage. In celebrating this time, the unleavened bread is hidden for three days and emerges on the day of First Fruits. Also, during Passover week, all the leaven of a Jewish household was removed. This is a promise the Church and Christian that Christ took our sin, buried it as dead, and we will be presented to Christ as His bride leaven free because of what He did for us as we accept His work.

The feast of first fruits was celebrated as a promise of the coming harvest. When Christ rose from the dead, the smoke from the offering of first fruits was rising into the sky that Sunday morning. We have hope of our resurrection in Christ and of the coming rapture of the Church as seen in 1 and 2 Thessalonians and Revelation 3.

The feast of Pentecost was a time when the offering made 50 days after first fruits, with one thing differing. The offering was the completed work of a full loaf of bread. We can rest assured that Christ is our completion. This feast also holds significance in that it was on this day, that the Church was born in Acts 2, when the promise as prophesied in Joel 2: 28:32 came to pass. Jesus, Himself, stated that it would be better for the disciples if He were to go away, because of the promise of the Comforter; the Holy Spirit.

As seen in the prior discussion, God is not done with Israel. In this present age, Israel is blinded. But there will come a day that the blinders will be lifted and Israel's eyes will be opened to the Messiah. This event will not take place until the fullness of the Gentiles has come as previously discussed. However, when it does take place, Christ will take away their sin. Many believe, I included, that when the church is removed at the rapture, God will then deal with the restoration of Israel during this seven year time span.

The covenant between God and the house of Judah or Israel is still awaiting completion. This is significant because it is with the whole of Israel, there are no lost tribes or non-sense like that. This is the promise that is fulfilled in the New Testament; where God will write His laws in their hearts and not on tables of stone. This teaching is the zenith of Jeremiah's writing. The maker of the covenant is God. This covenant will be supernaturally fulfilled by the Lord Himself. The symbol of the Old Testament was Passover just as we will see the symbol of the New Covenant will be the Lord's Supper.

"Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah-- not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 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." (Jeremiah 31:31-34 NKJV)

Verse 32 indicates that this Old Covenant's identity is with the birth of the nation which was while they were still in bondage in Egypt. They entered Egypt as 12 tribes and emerged as a

nation. Hosea states that out of Egypt I will call my son. The New Covenant is linked with a new birth. John 3 focuses on this tie as Nicodemus comes to Jesus by night. The Lord tells Nicodemus that he must be born and again and he didn't have an inkling what Jesus was talking about. Jesus then introduces the concept of being born again and actually scolds Nicodemus for being a teacher and not knowing this passage in Jeremiah.

"I will be their God, and they shall be My people" This particular phrase shows up several times in the Torah. This is what God wants and it will be fulfilled. So much so that God is stating that this concept will be so ingrained in them that there will be no more need of teaching. This has not happened yet, but it will.

The following verses state that as long as the universe is in concert with the law that God lay down before the foundation of the earth, Israel will be God's people and He will not forget His promises to them. This is a direct refutation to any replacement theology where the church becomes Israel or that God has forsaken Israel. We can rest assured that if the sun comes up, God has not forgotten Israel or this or any promises make to that people. Hosea 5:15 states that "I will go [and] return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early." Here, God is prophesying that He will leave this place and return again when Israel acknowledges their offence which is the rejection of Jesus Christ. The affliction talked about is the Great Tribulation or the time of Jacob's trouble. It will be at this time that Israel will pray the prayer which says, "Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up." (Hos. 6:1 KJV) There are those that believe that there is a pre-requisite for Christ's return. This is that Israel would ask Him to come as would have been the picture when Moses was told to speak to the rock and the water would flow. Moses, however, struck the rock. It was this distortion of the shadow that prevented him from entering the Promised Land.

In summary, God is a God of covenants. His promises are true and faithful. God is not approached on our terms but His. He has chosen to show grace and mercy through faith in the sacrificial work of His Son.

Questions:

1) In the Old Testament, the word covenant is derived from the Hebrew root word _____, which mean, “to cut”.

A: *berith*

2) What is the word for covenant used in the New Testament?

A: the word is *diatheke*.

3) How many parts are there to the Adamic Covenant?

A: 2

4) What was the seemingly only light given to Eve at the fall?

A: The promise of the “seed of the woman” or the Messiah.

5) What the covenant with Adam of grace or works?

A: Works

6) Was the covenant with Noah conditional or unconditional?

A: Unconditional

7) What was the sign of the covenant with Noah?

A: The rainbow

8) What are the 4 promises made to Abraham?

- God will show Abram a land.
- Abram will be the father of a great nation, his name will be great and he will be a blessing.
- God will bless those that bless Abram and curse those that curse Abram.
- God says that through Abram, all the nations of the earth are blessed which is the promise of the Messiah.

9) Is the Abrahamic Covenant conditional or unconditional?

A: Unconditional

10) What does Abraham mean?

A: Father of nations

11) How many children did Abraham have when God changed his name?

A: Zero

12) Was the Mosaic covenant new or was it an addition to an existing covenant?

A: It was an addition to the Abrahamic covenant.

13) What did God promise to make the nation of Israel?

A: A nation of priest and a holy nation

14) What did God give to the nation in the Mosaic covenant?

A: The commandments and the Levitical law.

15) Was there any provision for salvation in the law?

A: No

16) What is one of the unique factors of the Covenant with Israel?

A: That God would bring them back together again as a nation.

17) What is one of the promises to David in the Davidic covenant?

A: That the Messiah would come from His lineage and set up an everlasting throne.

18) Who is the mediator of the New Covenant?

A: Christ Jesus

19) Is the New Covenant a covenant of works or grace?

A: Grace

20) Has the church replaced Israel as God's chosen people?

A: NO..

Reference Page

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