

## **Eight Covenants Revealed in the Bible**

The **eight covenants** revealed in the Bible are the theological **foundation of the dispensations of time** referenced by the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor 9:17; Eph 1:10, 3:2; and Col 1:25. The current dispensation is the age of the Church; All prior dispensations are ended. The age of the church will likewise end when the body of Christ is translated to heaven just prior to the Tribulation; that time is also known to the Jews as Jacob's Trouble (Jer 30:7).

The **full implementation** of any Covenant is **not necessarily immediate**. The Book of Genesis **introduces** each Covenant but reveals that **complete fulfillment is yet future** for the **Abrahamic, Land, Davidic, and New Covenants**. The progressive nature of the covenants from simple to complex requires the covenants be studied as a whole and in order rather than focusing on a few or out of order. Understanding the progressive unfolding of all eight covenants is crucial to correctly understand other Bible doctrine.

Each covenant is either **conditional or unconditional**. For conditional covenants **man is commanded to obey God's requirements** in order for the blessings of that covenant to be in effect. With unconditional covenants, it is God's faithfulness alone that is required for it to remain in effect. **Only the first —the Edenic —and the fifth —the Mosaic (Law) Covenants were conditional. They are now ended due to disobedience.** It is God's sovereign will; His perfect attributes; His infinite grace; His eternal promises; His ordained plan; and His integrity and character that ensure the unconditional covenants are kept. **Provisions of the Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, Land, Davidic, and New Covenants are unconditional, eternally in effect.**

**The Abrahamic, Mosaic, Land, Davidic, and New Covenants are made with Israel alone. The Edenic, Adamic, and Noahic Covenants** were made with all mankind. There are no covenants that are made with Gentiles alone after the Abrahamic Covenant. The Mosaic (Law) Covenant was the only conditional covenant requiring Israel's obedience. **The provisions of the Abrahamic, Land, Davidic, and New Covenants are eternal, with physical blessings for Israel.**

**Prior to Gentiles experiencing the spiritual blessings of the New Covenant in this dispensation of the church, they were strangers to the covenants (Eph 2:12.)** This means

Gentiles were excluded from both the blessings and curses of Israel's covenants. **But since the beginning of the dispensation of the church—which took place at the Feast of Pentecost revealed in Acts 2—Gentiles are no longer excluded from the blessings of the New Covenant. This will be elaborated in the teaching of the eighth and final New Covenant.**

### **THE FIRST COVENANT, the Edenic Covenant**

Gen 1:28-30, 2:15-17, and Hosea 6:7 reveal the Edenic Covenant. The provisions were made between God and Adam. Adam and Eve were **positively commanded** to:

- fruitfully multiply
- subdue and take dominion over the earth (including naming the animals)
- eat Vegan
- tend the garden
- eat the fruit of all trees except one

**Negatively, Adam and Eve were warned** that disobedience would bring spiritual death. Evidently, the first couple eating of the Tree of Knowledge preceded their obedience to be fruitful and multiply. Can we assume this is because committed sin was first necessary in order to be genetically transmitted to the next generation? In Gen 3:1-8 the covenant is violated due to their disobedience; the New Testament exposition of exact nature of this disobedience is revealed in 1 John 2:16. By eating forbidden fruit, Eve and Adam gave in to the temptations of:

- the lust of the eye
- the lust of the flesh
- the pride of life

**The Edenic Covenant was conditional on obedience.** Because the first humans failed to meet at least one of the conditions of the covenant, **the covenant is now void.**

### **THE SECOND COVENANT, the Adamic Covenant**

Gen 3:14-19 reveals the Adamic Covenant. The provisions were made between God and Adam. The provisions involve **decrees** regarding the serpent, Satan, Eve, and Adam. After Edenic age disobedience:

- the serpent is cursed; crawls on his belly, and eats dust
- Satan, the evil influence over the serpent, intends perpetual hatred between his seed (the Antichrist) and Eve's seed (Messiah)
- Satan bruises Eve's heel at Christ's crucifixion
- Eve initially crushes Satan's head at Christ's resurrection
- Paul in Rom 16:20 references the final crushing of Satan by God in Rev 20:10.

**This covenant introduces the prophecy of Christ's incarnation revealed in Isa 7:14, pointing to salvation.** Due to **Eve's disobedience** she is subject to pain in childbirth as well as her husband's authority. Due to **Adam's disobedience** he is responsible for the fall of the human race; the cause of the ground not easily yielding food; the continuation of the vegan diet; and the necessity of hard labor in order to simply survive. Added to this is the new element of eventual physical death beyond the spiritual death introduced in the Edenic Covenant. Adam (and Eve?) lived 930 years. ***The Adamic Covenant remains in effect today.***

### **THE THIRD COVENANT, the Noahic Covenant**

Gen 9:1-17 reveals the Noahic Covenant, **also called the Everlasting Covenant**(there are 16 references to the Everlasting Covenant, starting with Gen 9:16.) The provisions are made between God and Noah, **after the Flood, not before or during the 120 period of building the ark. Noah was not able to tell the people that God had promised to bless by the covenant. They simply needed to believe and obey in order to be saved. They did not believe and were lost.** After the Flood, all humanity is descended not only from Adam but from Noah. Covenant provisions include:

- beginning with the eight on the Ark, man was to repopulate the empty earth
  - man having lost his dominion authority in the Garden, it is now Satan who controls the world (John 12:31; 2 Cor 4:4, Luke 4:6; and Rev 13:1-3). **Many do not believe this truth.**
  - animals now fear man
  - man's diet consists of every moving thing & green herbs; vegan diet no longer required
  - since shed blood is the symbol of death man is forbidden to eat or drink it
  - capital punishment is instituted in order to justly kill all who murder
- Offering hope to all mankind and pointing to the then future arrival of Messiah, the

Noahic covenant promises **God will never again destroy the entire earth by flood**; The rainbow

signifies this promise. **During the Tribulation, Gentiles who violated the Noahic Covenant will be judged.** The Covenant made with Noah continues in effect today. Rainbows testify of God.

#### **THE FOURTH COVENANT, the Abrahamic Covenant**

The Abrahamic Covenant is revealed in Gen 12:1-3, 7; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-21, and 22:15-18. The provisions are made between God and Abraham who represents the Jewish nation, Israel. The Covenant is not made with Gentiles, even Arabs. The covenant provides the **basis of the first coming of Messiah; the resurrection of the dead, and the eventual blessing of Israel through redemption and restoration.** The provisions of the covenant provide that:

- a great nation Israel comes from Abraham's seed
- the entire Land of Canaan is promised to the nation of Israel
- Abraham is greatly and ultimately blessed
- Abraham's name is great
- those who bless Israel are blessed
- those who curse Israel are cursed
- a son is born to Abraham through Sarah
- the nation was/is in bondage to Egypt
- Abraham is the Father of many other blessed nations, including the Arab nations<sup>1</sup>
- Abraham's name is changed from Abram (exalted Father) to Abraham (Father of a multitude)
- Sarai's name (my princess) is changed to Sarah (the princess).

God's token of promise ensuring He will keep this covenant is the commanded practice of circumcising every Jewish male on the eighth day. Though practiced by Gentiles also, this was not a command except for Jews. Beginning with Sarah's son, Isaac, the covenant is confirmed and reconfirmed through his son, Jacob, and Jacob's twelve sons (Gen 26:24.) ***This is not a conditional covenant; hence, Israel does not lose her blessings as a result of***

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<sup>1</sup> This is the provision of the Covenant that leads some Christians to incorrectly believe **they** are parties of the Abrahamic Covenant. This has led to much confusion regarding the origin of the church. The church was unrevealed in the Old Testament at the time this Covenant was made. The birth of the church is an entirely new work by God in this dispensation and only mentioned in passing by Christ in Matthew; the doctrine of the church is fully developed under Paul's commission to the Gentiles, as directed by Christ after His ascension to heaven, appearing to Paul in the Spirit while arresting Saul on the Damascus road in the first stages of converting him to Paul. See ***Our Father Abraham*** for teaching that has **contributed to this confusion,** embraced by many Messianic Jews and Messianic Israel.

***disobedience —although her idolatry, adultery and social injustice toward Gentiles have brought her much chastening and suffering.*** Most of the covenant is **still unfulfilled until the Kingdom Age**, the Millennium.

Regarding Israel's current relations with the entire Arab world, a Peace Treaty was signed with Egypt during the 1978 Camp David Accords under the Carter Administration; in August 2012 Egypt committed one violation. The Washington Declaration of Peace was signed with Jordan in 1994 under the Clinton Administration; in 1997 Israel's Intelligence Service, Mossad, committed one violation.

### **THE FIFTH COVENANT, the Mosaic Covenant**

The Mosaic Covenant is revealed in great detail from Ex 20:1 – Deut 28:68. The provisions were **made between God and Israel**. The Covenant is not made with Gentiles. The provisions provide for both **blessing and cursing** of the Jewish nation **depending on their obedience to 365 negative laws (prohibitions) and 248 positive laws (requirements)**. It is a **conditional covenant and is no longer in effect**. The covenant further provided for:

- the temporary covering of sin (but not the taking away) by animal blood sacrifice
- slain goats and bulls forgave sin and restored fellowship between Israel and her God
- Israel was restricted in her diet (extending to Kosher law in modern times)
- Israel was to administer the death penalty to Jews for committing idolatry, adultery, cursing God or one's parents, breaking the Sabbath or practicing witchcraft
- mandatory circumcision was expanded to include Gentiles who wished to become part of the Commonwealth of Israel as God fearers; however, Paul later warned Gentiles during the church dispensation in the Book of Galatians that whomever insisted on circumcision must keep every law, not just this one; but **it is impossible to keep the law**
- the token or sign of the covenant was the Sabbath as a gift to the nation of Israel
- **Sabbath observance** began when the law was given to Moses, **not at creation and not with the inception of the Abrahamic covenant** (Ex 6:23-30, 20:8-11)
- Sabbath observance meant resting (staying at home); **not a day of corporate worship**
- **Holy convocation** regarded only the priests in the Tabernacle or Temple, not all Jews
- corporate worship by all Jews was **mandated for Passover, First Fruits, and Tabernacles**
- **The purpose of the law was to:**
  - a. reveal the holiness of God
  - b. provide the rule of life for Israel

- c. provide rules of corporate worship during seven holy seasons (Lev 23)
- d. keep the Jews a separate people by distinct food, clothes, hair, habits, worship
- e. **provide a middle wall of partition to keep Gentiles from enjoying covenant blessings** (the wall was later broken down by the New Covenant)
- f. to reveal the nature and specifics of how Jews violated the law
- g. to increase the proclivity and extent of sin experienced by the Jews
- h. show that **sin existed before the law** but after the law sinners became transgressors and were guilty, requiring punishment
- i. demonstrate that **nothing man could do to keep the law would satisfy God**
- j. **to drive one to faith in Messiah, satisfying and annulling the power of the law**

As a conditional covenant, the **Mosaic law (covenant) came to its end** with the death of Messiah (Rom 10:4, 2 Cor 3:3-11, Gal 3:19-20, Eph 2:11-18, Heb 7:11-12, 18). **“Prophetically, it was already considered broken even before the Messiah died to free the Jew from the penalty of the Law (Jer 31:32).”**<sup>2</sup> In the church age, Christ fulfills the Mosaic Law and Covenant.

An important fact unknown by many Gentile Christians is that the **Law was in effect when Christ preached to Israel in the Gospels. It was only at His death that the law became of no consequence.** It was Paul who first taught grace as superseding law **after Christ’s death.** It is an **incorrect belief** to say the legal and ceremonial aspects of the law were abolished but the **moral law was retained and is incumbent on believers today.**<sup>3</sup> (Morality is required of believers; however, not the morality of Moses’ Law but the morality of the Law of Christ.) The **613 commandments are one unit** and cannot be broken down into parts that are expendable. According to the correct interpretation of the Old Testament, **there are not 603 laws added to the Decalogue (The Commandments).** Thus, James says in chapter 2, verse 10, “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.” New Testament believers are discharged from following that law. The Mosaic Covenant was never meant to be a permanent ordinance; it only had temporary effect. A new priesthood came into effect with the end of the law, according to the Order of Melchizedek, not the Order of Aaron

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<sup>2</sup> Arnold Fruchtenbaum, *“The Eight Covenants of the Bible”*, [www.ariel.org/MBS021](http://www.ariel.org/MBS021), 23.

<sup>3</sup> *“The Eight Covenants of the Bible”*, 28.

(Heb 7:11-18).Now the love of Christ compels us to love virtue and shun disobedience to any law.

**This major change in economy (an organized system) was anticipated by the Old Testament prophets. Jeremiah introduced the New Covenant that was yet to come (Jer 31:31-34). Jews and Gentiles would equally enjoy justification before God when that New Covenant commenced. The law had proven to be only a “tutor” to instruct how to come to saving faith through shed blood that would not only forgive sin, as the law did, but take it away, which the law could not do. The Law of Messiah (Gal 6:2) would replace the Law of Moses.** <sup>4</sup> Freedom in Christ also means the believer in Christ *may* keep a law, i.e., not eat pork, yet not be in violation of the Law of Christ. The believer is simply not *compelled* to keep any aspect of Moses’ law, **which is practicing legalism**. This freedom is difficult for some to accept.

#### **THE SIXTH COVENANT, the Land Covenant**

The Land Covenant<sup>5</sup> is revealed in Deut 29:1-30:20. The provisions were made between God and Israel, and not with Gentiles. “Palestinian” is not a biblical term; the covenant is not made with Arabs. The provisions of the Land Covenant include:

- Prophetically, the covenant speaks of **Israel’s disobedience to the law and her subsequent dispersion all over the world**. (This is the covenant’s one fulfilled aspect.)
- Israel will repent (at the end of Jacob’s Trouble)
- Her Messiah will return (when she calls upon her Messiah)
- She will be regathered from all over the world (in order to be collectively saved in Israel)
- She will possess her entire land grant given in Genesis (far beyond her current borders)
- The entire remaining nation of Israel will be regenerated in Messiah
- Israel’s enemies will be judged (during the Tribulation)
- Israel will receive the full blessings of the messianic age (the Millennial Kingdom)

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<sup>4</sup> “...the superiority of the Law of Messiah is seen by the fact that it will never be rendered inoperative. Unlike Covenant Theology, Dispensationalism does not insist that the Ten Commandments are still in force and [perform] exegetical gymnastics [falsely interpret Scripture] to avoid observing the Sabbath, the very way the Ten Commandments actually require” *“The Eight Covenants of the Bible”*, 27.

<sup>5</sup> The Land Covenant is incorrectly referred to as the ‘Palestinian Covenant.’ Hadrian, in A.D. 132-135 intended to wipe out every connection between Jews and their right to their land. He renamed the area; To this day the geography is falsely associated more as an Arab than Jewish identity. But this is not a covenant that promises land to Arabs, *Ibid.*, 30.

**The significance of this covenant is its affirmation that God's promises to Abraham have never been broken, despite Israel's disobedience to the law.** The Abrahamic Covenant is not conditioned on obedience; It was only the Mosaic law that was broken due to disobedience. The Covenant is reconfirmed in all its aspects in Ezekiel 16:1-63. Remembering His promises to Israel in her youth, God will establish the Everlasting Covenant (the New Covenant) that will bring her into an eternal state of salvation under her Messiah, King Jesus.

### **THE SEVENTH COVENANT, the Davidic Covenant**

The David Covenant is revealed in 2 Samuel 7:11b-16 (emphasis on Solomon, David's son) and in 1 Chronicles 17:10b-14 (emphasis on Messiah.) It is reconfirmed in 2 Sam 23:1-5; Psa 89:1-52; Isa 9:6-7, 11:1; Jer 23:5-6, 30:8-9, 33:14-17, 19:26; Ezek 37:24-25; Hosea 3:4-5; Amos 9:11; Luke 1:30-35, 68-70; and Acts 15:14-18. The provisions were made between God and David, the Head of the House and Dynasty of the Throne in Jerusalem. The Covenant has seven provisions:

- Current identities unknown, the heirs of the House of David will be restored
- Solomon prevailed over his usurping brothers Absalom and Adonijah
- Guilty of shedding blood, David's desire to build the Temple passes to Solomon
- The Throne of David (not the dynasty) is established forever
- The promise of God's *lovingkindness* toward Solomon is never removed
- The Messiah will come from the seed of David but not David's physical son
- Messiah's Throne, House, and Kingdom are established forever

**Messiah is to come from the loins of Abraham, a Jew; of the Twelve Tribes; of the Tribe of Judah; of the Root of Jesse (Isa 11-12); of the House of David (apart from Jeconiah.)**

### **THE EIGHTH COVENANT, the New Covenant**

The New Covenant is revealed in Jeremiah 31:31-34, 32:40; Isa 55:3, 59:21, 61:8-9; Ezek 16:60, 34:25-31, 37:26-28; and Romans 11:26-27. The Covenant is made between God and Israel. The Covenant has nine provisions:

- Not made with the church, the covenant is made with the entire House of Israel, including Judah and Israel

- Distinct from the broken, conditional Mosaic Covenant, the New Covenant is unconditional
- **The promise of Israel's national salvation is the core of the Covenant**
- All successive generations of Jews during the Millennium will be regenerated
- **Sins will be forgiven, not merely covered** as with the Mosaic Covenant
- **The indwelling Holy Spirit, absent under the law, will provide power to obey**
- Material blessings will flow to the regenerated Jews during the Millennium
- The Sanctuary will be rebuilt; the Millennial/Messianic Temple will remind of Him
- The Law of Messiah will compel by His love to obey because all are blessed in Him

**The New Covenant is made with Israel.** Saved Gentiles along with saved Jews are included in the blessings of Israel's New Covenant in this age, the dispensation of the church. **Saved Gentiles are wild branches grafted into the Olive Tree of Israel. Saved Jews are of the Olive Tree's natural branches.** These Jewish natural branches that are saved sometimes call themselves Messianic Jews or completed Jews. **Together, saved Jews and saved Gentiles are now One in Messiah.** This is the true **healing of the greatest schism** that has existed since Abraham was called out of Ur.<sup>6</sup> At the end of the Tribulation, after millennia of disobedience, previously unrepentant Israel will finally receive her full inheritance in the New Covenant with its complete blessing. Many will be killed during Jacob's Trouble; those remaining will finally recognize and receive their Messiah, at which time all remaining Israel will be saved.

**The importance of the New Covenant demonstrates Gentiles are now included in the blessings of Israel, especially in the aspects of spiritual salvation. It is the mainly Gentile Church that is blessed by Israel, not Israel blessed by the church.** This is **KEY:** Great confusion exists because of **incorrect teaching** that claims **either**:

- the New Covenant is made with the church (but God made the covenant with Israel and the church benefits indirectly)
- **or** there are two New Covenants; one with Israel and one with the church
- **or** there is one New Covenant with separate aspects for Israel and the church

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<sup>6</sup> Incorrectly, Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy claim their split around A.D. 1,000 is the Great Schism. Since they are both in error, their disconnection is merely an historical fact. But it is the healing of the breach between Jews and Gentiles that represents the true healing power of the Cross of Christ.

**It is these Scriptures that demonstrate the true relationship of the Jewish New Covenant to the Church:**

Matthew 26:28, Mark 14:24, Luke 22:14-20

1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:6

Hebrews 7:22, 8:6-13, 9:15, 10:16, 29, 12:24, and 13:20

All the above incorrect teachings require an **allegorical** interpretation of Scripture, **not a literal interpretation** that is biblically indicated as the way God intends we receive His Word.

**Ephesians 2:11-16 explains the relationship of those Gentiles of the Church to Israel.**

“Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye 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: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *even the law of commandments contained* in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, *so making peace*; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.”

Messiah’s death at the end of the dispensation of the law broke down the middle wall of partition that had separated Jews from Gentiles. **The Wall was the Mosaic Law which did not apply to Gentiles.** (See fifth bullet under Fifth Covenant for **how Gentiles were able to become Jews under the law.**) In this dispensation, “...by faith Gentiles...can enjoy the **spiritual blessings** of Israel’s four unconditional covenants. Gentiles in the church are “partakers” of Israel’s blessings but the Church does not “take over” Israel’s covenant blessings.<sup>7</sup> This is demonstrated in Romans 11:17. **[For the most accurate understanding of the Book of Romans, think of Romans 9, 10, and 11 as a “parenthesis” between Paul’s treatise on salvation in Romans 1-8 and his instructions to the church in Romans 12-16. Rom 9 teaches about Israel’s past (Law). Rom 10 teaches about Israel’s present (potential members of**

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<sup>7</sup> “*The Eight Covenants of the Bible*,” 39.

**Christ's body**). Rom 11 teaches about national Israel's future (in the physical Millennial Kingdom, along with Christ's heavenly people, the church, who will be with Christ on earth.]

Rom 15:25-27 teaches that due to having been brought into the blessings of Israel's covenants, **Gentiles are indebted to Jews**. No doubt, over the millennia, this indebtedness has contributed to the fact of anti-Semitism, which is actually a form of jealousy over the unique relationship Jews have with their Messiah. **Regarding the church, the New Covenant is the basis of the Dispensation of Grace in which members experience spiritual blessings. Regarding Israel, the New Covenant is the basis of the Dispensation of the Kingdom in which they will experience physical blessings.**