

The Promises of God

The Covenant with Moses: God's Promise of His Presence

Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, "Thus you will tell the house of Jacob, and declare to the people of Israel: 'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt and how I lifted you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. And now, if you will diligently listen to me and keep my covenant, then you will be my special possession out of all the nations, for all the earth is mine, and you will be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you will speak to the Israelites."
(Exodus 19:3-6)

<http://tinyurl.com/GodOfPromises>

The Covenant with Moses: Promise of Presence

Core Theme

God promises His presence with His people, showing them that relationship with Him is central to covenant life.

Overview: God promises His presence, but the covenant highlights the need for obedience.

Teaching Notes:

Exodus 19:3-6 → Israel as God's treasured possession.

Exodus 33:14 → God's presence central to identity.

Deuteronomy 7:9 → God's covenant faithfulness.

Cross-References: Matthew 28:20; John 1:14.

Discussion Guidance: Contrast law vs. grace; God's presence then vs. now in Christ.

Leader Tip: Ask: *"If God's presence was removed, would we notice?"* Challenge the group to treasure His presence.

Discussion Questions

Why was God's presence central to Israel's identity?

How do we experience God's presence today?

What difference does God's presence make in daily life?

God's Character Revealed

The Covenant with Moses

Holiness

- **Exodus 19:3-6** Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, "Thus you will tell the house of Jacob, and declare to the people of Israel: 'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt and how I lifted you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. And now, if you will diligently listen to me and keep my covenant, then you will be my special possession out of all the nations, for all the earth is mine, and you will be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you will speak to the Israelites."

Covenant Love

- **Deuteronomy 7:8-13** Rather it is because of his love for you and his faithfulness to the promise he solemnly vowed to your ancestors that the LORD brought you out with great power, redeeming you from the place of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. So realize that the LORD your God is the true God, the faithful God who keeps covenant faithfully with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations...

Abiding Presence

- **Exodus 33:14** And the LORD said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."

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Rather it is because of his love for you and his faithfulness to the promise he solemnly vowed to your ancestors that the LORD brought you out with great power, redeeming you from the place of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. So realize that the LORD your God is the true God, the faithful God who keeps covenant faithfully with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations, but who pays back those who hate him as they deserve and destroys them. He will not ignore those who hate him but will repay them as they deserve! So keep the commandments, statutes, and ordinances that I today am commanding you to do. If you obey these ordinances and are careful to do them, the LORD your God will faithfully keep covenant with you as he promised your ancestors. He will love and bless you, and make you numerous. He will bless you with many children, with the produce of your soil, your grain, your new wine, your oil, the offspring of your oxen, and the young of your flocks in the land which he promised your ancestors to give you.

Exo 33:14 And the LORD said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."

The **Mosaic Covenant** (given at Sinai through Moses) forms the backbone of Israel's national identity, centering on **God's promise of His presence, guidance, and blessing through obedience** (Exodus 19-24).

In the **New Testament**, this covenant is frequently referenced to:

Show its purpose and limitations,

Contrast it with the New Covenant, and

Reveal its ultimate fulfillment in Christ, the true Mediator and Lawgiver.

Below is a **comprehensive, organized list of New Testament passages** that directly **reference or interpret the Mosaic Covenant**, showing how it connects to God's continuing promise of His presence.

Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants

Jesus' Fulfillment and Interpretation

Jesus and the Abrahamic Covenant

- Jesus identified Himself as the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise:
 - *"Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad."* (John 8:56)
 - He declared salvation to the Gentiles as the outworking of the Abrahamic blessing (Matthew 8:11-12).
- In calling disciples from all nations, Jesus reopened the **universal dimension** of Abraham's faith (Genesis 12:3).
- Paul later interprets this:
"If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise." (Galatians 3:29)

Jesus and the Mosaic Covenant

- Jesus perfectly **obeyed the Law** (Hebrews 4:15) and **fulfilled its moral, ceremonial, and sacrificial aspects**.
- In His teachings:
 - He restored the Law's heart intention; love for God and neighbor (Matthew 22:37-40).
 - He exposed the misuse of legalism (Mark 7:6-9).
 - He declared Himself greater than the Temple, the Sabbath, and Moses (Matthew 12:6-8; John 5:46).
- At the Last Supper, He inaugurated the **New Covenant**, saying:
"This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." (Luke 22:20)

Jesus' Fulfillment and Interpretation of Both Covenants

Jesus stood at the **hinge of covenant history** — not abolishing the old, but fulfilling it (Matthew 5:17-18).

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"This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." (Luke 22:20)

Thus, **the Mosaic covenant found its completion and closure in Christ**, while the **Abrahamic covenant found its ultimate fulfillment** in Him.

In Jesus' Day

The Mosaic Covenant (Exodus 19-24)

The Mosaic covenant was the **legal, ritual, and cultural structure** of Israel.

- The **Law (Torah)** defined righteousness, worship, and civil life.
- The **Temple** was the visible center of God's presence and covenant relationship.
- The **sacrificial system** maintained ritual purity and atonement (Leviticus).
- The **Sabbath** and festivals served as perpetual signs of covenant loyalty.

By Jesus' day:

- The Law had become **highly systematized** under oral traditions (later codified in the Mishnah).
- The Mosaic covenant had taken on a **burden of external observance** rather than inner transformation.
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In summary:

At the time of Christ, the Mosaic covenant was central to Israel's national and religious life — but it had become **an end in itself** rather than a means to point toward God's greater redemptive plan.

In Jesus' Day

The Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 12, 15, 17)

By the first century, the **Abrahamic covenant** was revered as the foundation of Israel's identity.

It emphasized:

- **God's choice of Israel** as His covenant people (Genesis 17:7-8).
- **The sign of circumcision** as covenantal membership (Genesis 17:10-14).
- **The promise of blessing** through Abraham's seed and faith (Genesis 12:3; 15:6).

In Jesus' day, this covenant was understood **ethnically** rather than spiritually.

- Descent from Abraham was seen as automatic inclusion in God's covenant people (cf. Matthew 3:9, John 8:33-39).
- The **Pharisees and religious leaders** often equated covenant faithfulness with ritual purity and national belonging.
- The **Abrahamic promise of blessing to the nations** had largely been overshadowed by ethnic exclusivity.

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In summary:

The Abrahamic covenant at the time of Jesus was honored in word but narrowed in scope. It was tied to **national pride and lineage**, not the universal faith Abraham exhibited.

After Jesus' Day

The Divergence of the Covenants

Continuation of the Mosaic Covenant (Judaism)

- The early Jewish community largely **maintained temple worship, sacrifices, and Torah observance**.
- Even Jewish Christians initially continued Temple practices (Acts 2:46; Acts 21:20).
- After the Temple's destruction in A.D. 70:
 - **Rabbinic Judaism** reorganized around Torah and synagogue life.
 - The **priesthood and sacrificial system ceased**, replaced by prayer, study, and ethical observance.
 - The Mosaic covenant became a **way of life and identity**, not a redemptive system of sacrifice.
- In essence, post-Temple Judaism preserved the Mosaic covenant **as a framework of national continuity**, not a means of atonement; the latter being fulfilled only in Christ.

Fulfillment through the Abrahamic Promise (Christianity)

- The early church recognized that in Jesus, **the Abrahamic promise had come to its fullness**:
 - Inclusion of Gentiles (Acts 10-11; Galatians 3:8).
 - Justification by faith apart from works of the law (Romans 4:1-5).
 - The Spirit as the mark of covenant membership, not circumcision (Galatians 3:14).
- The Mosaic covenant was seen as **temporary and preparatory**:
 - *"The law was our guardian until Christ came."* (Galatians 3:24)
 - *"He has made the first obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away."* (Hebrews 8:13)
- The New Covenant, promised in Jeremiah 31, now united **Jew and Gentile** in one redeemed people under grace.

After Christ: The Divergence of the Covenants

After the resurrection, two covenantal trajectories emerged — one continuing under the Mosaic framework (Judaism), and one embracing the New Covenant (Christianity).

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The Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants - In Christ

Aspect	Abrahamic Covenant	Mosaic Covenant	Fulfillment and Divergence
Nature	Unconditional, based on God's promise	Conditional, based on obedience	Abrahamic continues in Christ; Mosaic fulfilled and closed
Sign	Circumcision	Law, sacrifices, Sabbath	Replaced by faith and the Spirit (Rom. 4:11; Gal. 3:14)
Purpose	To bless all nations	To set Israel apart and reveal sin	Abrahamic realized; Mosaic transcended
Mediator	Abraham	Moses	Christ fulfills both (Gal. 3:16; Heb. 3:3-6)
Focus	Faith	Law	Grace through faith (Rom. 4:16)
Result	Justification by faith	Condemnation through disobedience	Justification and adoption in Christ
Continuing Expression	Faith in God's promise through Christ	Rabbinic adherence to Torah	Diverged after A.D. 70

Theological Summary

The **Abrahamic covenant** never ended — it was **fulfilled** in Christ and extended to all nations through faith.

The **Mosaic covenant** was **completed and superseded** in Christ, its ceremonial and national functions absorbed into the New Covenant.

Christianity, therefore, stands as the **continuation of the Abrahamic covenant** (by faith), while Judaism continues the **Mosaic tradition** (by law).

Both trace their roots to God's promises, but only one — through Christ — achieves the covenant's intended fulfillment: **blessing to all nations through faith**.

Summary Statement

In Jesus Christ, the covenants of Abraham and Moses meet. The Abrahamic covenant of promise finds its fulfillment, and the Mosaic covenant of law finds its completion. After Christ, these paths diverged — one remaining bound to the letter of Sinai, and the other carried forward by the Spirit of promise to the nations. Thus, the story of Scripture moves from covenant **law** to covenant **grace**, from the shadow of Sinai to the light of Calvary.

The Mosaic and New Covenants Relationship - Directly Connected

The Mosaic Covenant: The Covenant of Law and Mediation

- Established at Sinai (Exodus 19-24).
- Mediated through Moses between God and Israel.
- Founded on **obedience to the Law** as a condition of blessing:
“If you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession.” (Exodus 19:5)
- The Law revealed God’s holiness, Israel’s sin, and the need for atonement through continual sacrifice.
- Its ultimate purpose was **to lead people to Christ**:
“The Law was our guardian until Christ came.” (Galatians 3:24)

The New Covenant: The Covenant of Grace and Transformation

- Promised through the prophets (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:26-27).
- Mediated by Jesus Christ (Hebrews 8:6).
- Founded on **grace through faith by the blood of the Christ**:
“I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (Jeremiah 31:34)
- The Law is not abolished but **written on the heart** (Jeremiah 31:33; 2 Corinthians 3:3).
- Sacrifice is no longer repeated; Christ’s sacrifice is once for all (Hebrews 10:10).

The Relationship Between the Mosaic and New Covenants

The Mosaic Covenant and the New Covenant are **directly connected** in Scripture. The New Covenant does not abolish the Mosaic Covenant—it **fulfills and transcends it**.

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Summary:

The Mosaic Covenant prepared the way for the New; the New Covenant completes the Mosaic by transforming external law into internal life through the Spirit.

The Mosaic and New Covenants

How they were understood in Jesus's day

The Mosaic Covenant in the First Century

- The Law (Torah) was the foundation of Jewish religious, moral, and national identity.
- The **Temple, priesthood, and sacrificial system** were in full operation.
- The Pharisees and scribes emphasized precise observance of both written and oral law (Mark 7:1-9).
- The Law was often viewed as a **means of righteousness**, not as a pointer to divine grace.
- However, devout Jews still longed for **the promised New Covenant**, especially in light of prophetic expectation (Isaiah 59:20-21; Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Jesus' Teaching About the Law

- Jesus honored the Mosaic Covenant but clarified its purpose and limitations:
- **He fulfilled the Law:**
"Do not think I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." (Matthew 5:17)
- **He exposed its heart:** The Law is summed up in love for God and neighbor (Matthew 22:37-40).
- **He redefined righteousness:** It must exceed external observance (Matthew 5:20).
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(Matthew 12:6-8; John 5:46; Hebrews 3:1-6).

In Jesus' ministry, the Mosaic Covenant reached its climax — not destroyed, but **consummated** in a deeper, spiritual fulfillment.

The Mosaic and New Covenants

How they were observed by Early Church

The Cross and the New Covenant

- At the Last Supper, Jesus explicitly linked His sacrifice to the New Covenant:
 - “This cup is the new covenant in my blood.” (Luke 22:20)
- This moment marked the **transition from the old to the new**: the Mosaic covenant of repeated sacrifices gave way to the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ (Hebrews 9:11-15).
- The veil in the Temple tearing at His death (Matthew 27:51) signified **the end of the old system** and **direct access to God through Christ**

Early Christian Understanding

- The apostles continued to teach from the Law and Prophets, but **through the lens of Christ**.
- **Acts 15 (the Jerusalem Council)** declared that Gentile believers were **not bound by the Mosaic Law** for salvation; faith in Christ was sufficient.
- Paul described the Law as “holy and good,” yet powerless to save (Romans 7:12; Galatians 2:16).
- Jewish believers often continued certain customs (Acts 21:20-26), but **as cultural expressions**, not salvation-oriented obligations.

How They Were Fulfilled and Observed in the Early Church

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c. The Shift After Pentecost

- The **Holy Spirit replaced the external tablets** with an internal transformation: “I will put my laws into their minds and write them on their hearts.” (Hebrews 8:10)
- Worship shifted from **Temple-based rituals** to **Spirit-led fellowship** (John 4:23-24; Acts 2:42-47).
- The Sabbath rest found fulfillment in Christ’s finished work (Hebrews 4:9-10).
- Sacrificial offerings ceased; the Lord’s Supper became the **new covenant meal**, commemorating grace, not law.

The Mosaic and New Covenants

Ongoing Relationship Between

The Mosaic Covenant's Purpose

- The Law served as:
 - A **mirror** to reveal sin (Romans 3:20).
 - A **guardian** leading to Christ (Galatians 3:24).
 - A **shadow** of good things to come (Hebrews 10:1).
- It was **perfect in purpose but limited in power**; it could command righteousness but not produce it.

The New Covenant's Fulfillment

- The New Covenant does not discard the moral truth of the Law; it **internalizes it** through the Spirit.
- The external code is now **transformed into internal desire** (Romans 8:4; Galatians 5:22-23).
- The righteousness that the Law demanded, the Spirit now enables (Philippians 2:13).

The Law and Grace United

Paul's summary in Romans 8:3-4 captures the relationship perfectly:

- "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son ... so that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."

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Thus:

The Mosaic covenant **revealed God's holiness**.

The New Covenant **imparts that holiness** through the indwelling Spirit.

The Mosaic and New Covenants - in Christ

Theme	Old Covenant (Moses)	Fulfillment in the New Covenant (Christ)
Mediator	Moses, the servant	Jesus, the Son (Heb 3:5-6)
Law	Written on stone tablets	Written on hearts (Jer 31:33, 2 Cor 3:3)
Sacrifice	Animal blood repeated	Christ's blood once for all (Heb 9:12)
Presence	Tabernacle / Temple	Indwelling Spirit (John 14:17)
Access	Limited, via priests	Direct, through Christ our High Priest (Heb 10:19-22)
Righteousness	Demanded by the Law	Given through faith
Sign	Sabbath, circumcision	Baptism, Lord's Supper
Glory	Fading glory of Sinai	Increasing glory in the Spirit (2 Cor 3:18)
Outcome	Condemnation through law-breaking	Justification through grace and faith
Duration	Temporary, preparatory	Eternal, consummate

Theological Summary

Continuity: The moral principles of the Mosaic covenant (love, justice, holiness) continue under the New Covenant, but they are empowered by grace, not law.

Fulfillment: Jesus embodies the Law — the living Torah — and fulfills it perfectly.

Transformation: The New Covenant internalizes what the Mosaic covenant externalized.

Access: The Mosaic covenant required mediation through priests; the New grants direct access through Christ.

Purpose: The Law pointed to the need for a Redeemer; the New Covenant supplies the Redeemer Himself.

Summary Statement

The Mosaic Covenant revealed God's holiness but not humanity's power to attain it. The New Covenant reveals God's holiness fulfilled in Christ and imparted through His Spirit. What the Law commanded, grace now accomplishes — not by abolishing the Law, but by writing it on the heart. Thus, the Mosaic and New Covenants are not enemies but stages in the same divine story: promise, fulfillment, and transformation.

References to the Mosaic Covenant

The Covenant Quoted or Paraphrased

Luke 1:72-73 - God remembered His *holy covenant* made with Abraham and reaffirmed through Moses.

John 1:17 - "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

Acts 3:22-23 - Peter quotes Deuteronomy 18:15, where Moses foretold a prophet like himself; fulfilled in Christ.

Acts 7:37-38 - Stephen recounts Moses as the mediator who received "living oracles" on Mount Sinai.

Romans 10:5 - Paul quotes Leviticus 18:5: "*The man who does these things will live by them.*"

2 Corinthians 3:6-15 - Paul contrasts the "ministry of death, carved in letters on stone," with the "ministry of the Spirit."

Hebrews 8:6-9 - The author quotes Jeremiah 31:31-32, referring to the covenant made when God took Israel by the hand, out of Egypt.

Hebrews 9:18-20 - Describes the ratification of the Mosaic Covenant with blood, quoting Exodus 24:8.

Hebrews 12:18-24 - Contrasts Mount Sinai (the old covenant of fear) with Mount Zion (the new covenant of grace).

The Covenant Recalled or Quoted Directly

These passages refer explicitly to the covenant God made through Moses at Sinai.

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The Law's Purpose and Limitations

Matthew 5:17-18 - Jesus affirms He came not to abolish the Law or the Prophets but to fulfill them.

John 5:45-47 - Jesus says Moses wrote about Him, showing the Law's prophetic purpose.

Romans 3:19-20 - "Through the law comes knowledge of sin."

Romans 5:20-21 - The law came in to increase trespass, but grace abounded more.

Romans 7:7-13 - The law is holy but reveals the depth of sin.

Galatians 3:19-25 - The law was a *guardian* until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith.

Galatians 4:4-5 - Christ was born under the law to redeem those under the law.

Hebrews 10:1-4 - The law was only a shadow of good things to come; sacrifices could not make perfect.

The Law's Purpose and Limitations

These passages explain **why** God gave the Mosaic Law — to reveal sin, guard Israel, and point to Christ.

Matthew 5:17-18 - Jesus affirms He came not to abolish the Law or the Prophets but to fulfill them.

John 5:45-47 - Jesus says Moses wrote about Him, showing the Law's prophetic purpose.

Romans 3:19-20 - "Through the law comes knowledge of sin."

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References to the Mosaic Covenant

The Law Fulfilled and Transformed in Christ

Matthew 11:28-30 - Jesus offers rest to those burdened by legalism under the law.

Matthew 17:1-5 - At the Transfiguration, Moses (the Law) and Elijah (the Prophets) appear with Jesus, who is revealed as the Son of God — the final authority.

Romans 8:3-4 - The law, weakened by flesh, is fulfilled in believers who walk by the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:7-18 - The glory of the old covenant fades, but the glory of Christ in the new covenant surpasses it.

Hebrews 3:1-6 - Christ is greater than Moses, as the Son over God's house rather than a servant within it.

Hebrews 9:11-15 - Christ is the Mediator of a new covenant, entering once for all into the holy place with His own blood.

Hebrews 10:9-10 - Christ sets aside the first covenant to establish the second, sanctifying us through His sacrifice.

Colossians 2:14-17 - Christ cancels the record of debt and frees us from the shadow-laws of the old covenant.

The Law Fulfilled and Transformed in Christ

These passages show how Jesus fulfills and surpasses the Mosaic Covenant, establishing a new way of relationship with God.

Matthew 11:28-30 - Jesus offers rest to those burdened by legalism under the law.

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References to the Mosaic Covenant

The Promise of God's Presence in the New Covenant

John 14:16-17, 23 - Jesus promises the abiding presence of the Spirit.

Matthew 28:20 - "Behold, I am with you always." The covenant presence is fulfilled in Christ.

Romans 8:9-11 - The Spirit indwells believers, fulfilling God's promise to dwell among His people.

2 Corinthians 6:16 - "I will dwell in them and walk among them," echoing Leviticus 26:12.

Ephesians 2:21-22 - The church becomes a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Hebrews 13:5 - "I will never leave you nor forsake you," echoing God's covenantal promise to Moses and Joshua.

The Promise of God's Presence in the New Covenant

The Mosaic Covenant promised God's **presence** if Israel obeyed (Exodus 33:14-16). In the New Testament, this presence becomes **permanent** through the Holy Spirit.

John 14:16-17, 23 - Jesus promises the abiding presence of the Spirit.

Matthew 28:20 - "Behold, I am with you always." The covenant presence is fulfilled in Christ.

Romans 8:9-11 - The Spirit indwells believers, fulfilling God's promise to dwell among His people.

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References to the Mosaic Covenant

As a Shadow of the Greater Covenant

Hebrews 8:5 - The earthly tabernacle was a *copy and shadow* of heavenly realities.

Hebrews 9:23-24 - The law's rituals prefigured Christ's heavenly ministry.

Colossians 2:16-17 - The festivals, Sabbaths, and dietary laws were *shadows*; Christ is the substance.

Romans 10:4 - "Christ is the end (goal) of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes."

The Mosaic Covenant as a Shadow of the Greater Covenant

These passages reveal the typological nature of the Mosaic Covenant - it foreshadowed the New Covenant and God's eternal presence.

Hebrews 8:5 - The earthly tabernacle was a *copy and shadow* of heavenly realities.

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