

Covenants of the Bible

The Importance of Understanding Biblical Covenants in Redemptive History

Understanding the covenants of the Bible is essential for grasping the overarching narrative of Scripture (redemptive history). The covenants serve as the major milestones of God's plan to redeem fallen humanity, progressively revealing: His character, His promises, and His goal of redemption through Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, there are "covenants" labelled and described by theologians that confuse the discussion of covenants. Here we focus on covenants that God initiated to relate with and provide for his people.

1. Protoevangelium Promise

- a. Genesis 3:15 (NASB95) And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel."
- b. Key Context: Genesis 3:14-19 After the fall, there was curse upon the serpent & curse upon humanity (Pain in Childbirth & labor toils) But God's promise established the expectation that a future SEED will crush the head of the serpent.

2. The Noahic Covenant

- a. Genesis 9:8-17
- b. Key Context: After the flood, God promised never to destroy the earth by water again, establishing the rainbow as a sign of His promise.
- c. Unconditional covenant made by God that is a promise to all of Noah's descendants.
- d. Key Verses:
 - i. Isaiah 54:9 "For this is like the days of Noah to Me, when I swore that the waters of Noah would not flood the earth again; so, I have sworn that I will not be angry with you nor rebuke you."
 - ii. Jeremiah 33:20-21, Ezekiel 14:14, 20, 2 Peter 2:5, 2 Peter 3:5-7

3. The Abrahamic Covenant

- a. Genesis 12:1-3, 13:14-17, 15:1-21, 17:1-14
- b. Key Context: God promised to bless Abraham with future land, descendants, and a role of being a blessing to all nations.
- c. Unconditional covenant made by God and confirmed by the sign of circumcision.
- d. Key Verses Psalm 105:8-11 "He has remembered His covenant forever, The word which He commanded to a thousand generations, The covenant which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac, Then He confirmed it to Jacob as a statute, To Israel as an everlasting covenant, Saying, 'To you I will give the land of Canaan As the portion of your inheritance.'"
 - i. Deuteronomy 30:1-10, Ezekiel 36:24-28, Luke 1:72-73, Galatians 3:6-9, 16-18

4. The Mosaic (Sinaitic) Covenant

- a. Exodus 19:5-6, Exodus 20-23, Deuteronomy 28
- b. Key Context: Given at Mount Sinai, this covenant established Israel as God's chosen people, giving them the Law (including the Ten Commandments) and a sacrificial system to govern their relationship with God. Obedience brought blessings, while disobedience brought curses.
- c. Conditional and temporary covenant specifically to Israel. Completely ended with Christ (Matt 5:17, Hebrews 8:13)

5. The Davidic Covenant

- a. 2 Samuel 7:8-16, 1 Chronicles 17:11-14, Psalm 89:3-4
- b. Key Context: God promised David an eternal & perpetual throne, ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the eternal King.
- c. Key Verses:
 - i. 2 Samuel 7:8-16, Psalm 89:3-4, Isaiah 9:6-7, Luke 1:32-33.

6. The New Covenant

- a. Jeremiah 31:31-34, Ezekiel 36:25-28, Luke 22:20, Hebrews 8:6-13
- b. Key Context: Prophesied in the Old Testament and fulfilled in Christ, this covenant replaces the Mosaic Covenant, providing forgiveness of sins and a transformed heart through the Holy Spirit. Jesus' sacrifice establishes this covenant for all who believe.
- c. Unconditional covenant made with Israel but with blessings extended to the Church.
- d. Key Verses:
 - i. God will put His law in their hearts - Jeremiah 31:33.
 - ii. Israel will be fully restored to God- Jeremiah 31:34.
 - iii. The Holy Spirit will indwell - Ezekiel 36:26-27.
 - iv. The new covenant in Jesus' blood - Luke 22:20
 - v. Christ is superior in every way - Hebrews 8-10.