

Loris FBC Baptist Church
“52 Vital Doctrines of The Bible”

Doctrine #21: The Covenants

Note: Most information based on pages 139-150 of the book “Major Bible Themes” by Lewis Sperry Chaffer.

Opening Comments about the Covenants

1. The Bible discloses the fact that “human history” is the fulfillment of an “eternal purpose” of God.
2. God’s eternal plan is revealed in Scripture and centers in “solemn covenants” or “promises” which God has made.
3. At least eight (8) “biblical” covenants are recorded, and they incorporate the most important facts relating to God’s plan and purpose in the world.
4. Most of these covenants are in the form of a declaration of divine purpose which will certainly be fulfilled in God’s perfect timing.
5. In addition to the “biblical” covenants, theologians have advanced three “theological” covenants especially relating to the salvation of man.

The Theological Covenants

1. In defining the eternal purpose of God, theologians have advanced the theory that it is God’s central purpose to save the elect, those chosen for salvation from eternity past.
 - a. Accordingly, they view history as primarily the outworking of God’s plan of salvation.
 - b. In developing this doctrine, they have expounded three basic theological covenants.
 - 1) A Covenant of Works:
 - a) Some theologians believe God made a “covenant of works” with Adam.
 - b) The provision of the covenant was that if Adam “obeyed” God, he would be rendered “secure” in his spiritual state and would receive eternal life.
 - c) It is claimed that this covenant is supported by the warning concerning the tree of knowledge of good and evil:

Genesis 2:16-17 “And the LORD God commanded the man, ‘You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but YOU MUST NOT EAT from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it YOU WILL SURELY DIE.’”

- d) It is inferred that if he did not eat of the tree, he would not die, and like the holy angels he would be confirmed in his holy estate.

NOTE: This covenant is based almost entirely on inference and is not called a covenant in the Bible, and for this reason is rejected by many students of Scripture as having an insufficient ground.

2) The Covenant of Redemption:

- a) Another covenant is suggested and named the “covenant of redemption” in which the teaching is advanced that a covenant was made between God the Father and God the Son in relation to the salvation of man in eternity past.
- b) In this covenant, the Son of God undertook to provide the redemption for the salvation of those who believe, and God promised to accept His sacrifice.
- c) This covenant has more support in Scripture than the covenant of works in that the Bible clearly declares that God’s plan of salvation is eternal, and in that plan Christ *had to die* as a sacrifice for sin and God *had to accept that sacrifice* as a sufficient basis for saving those who believed in Christ.

Ephesians 1:4-6 *“For He (i.e. God the Father) chose us in Him (i.e. God the Son) BEFORE THE CREATION OF THE WORLD to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love He (i.e. God the Father) PREDESTINED US TO BE ADOPTED AS HIS SONS through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will—to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves.”*

Ephesians 1:11 *“In Him (i.e. God the Son) we were also chosen, HAVING BEEN PREDESTINED according to the plan of Him (i.e. God the Father) who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of His will...”*

- d) From these and other Scriptures, it is clear that God’s purpose in salvation is eternal.
- e) That a formal covenant was entered into between God the Father and God the Son is “inferred” from the fact that God’s *purpose* is “also” a *promise*.

3) A Covenant of Grace:

- a) Still another approach is to regard eternal purpose of God in salvation as a covenant of grace.
- b) In this point of view, Christ is regarded as the Mediator of the covenant and as the representative of those who put their trust in Him.
- c) Individuals meet the conditions of this covenant when they place faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior.
- d) Although this covenant also is an inference from the eternal plan of salvation, it tends to emphasize the gracious character of God’s salvation.

NOTE: The covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace, accordingly, have some scriptural basis and are more acceptable to most students of the Bible than the concept of the covenant of works, which has no scriptural support.

2. A problem has arisen, however, in that those who are adherents of these theological covenants often make “the plan of God for salvation” His *primary purpose* in human history.
 - a. Thus they tend to ignore the particulars of the plan of God for Israel, the plan of God for the church, and the plan of God for the nations.
 - b. While it is true that God’s plan of salvation is an important aspect of His eternal purpose, it is not the total of God’s plan.
3. A better view is that God’s plan for history is to reveal His glory, and He does this not only by saving men but by fulfilling His purpose and revealing Himself through His dealings with Israel, with the church, and with the nations.
4. Accordingly, it is preferable to view history through the eight biblical covenants which reveal the essential purposes of God throughout human history and include God’s plan of salvation.
 - a. Those who emphasize the theological covenants are often termed “covenant theologians”.
 - b. Those who emphasize the biblical covenants are called “dispensationalists,” because the biblical covenants reveal the distinctions in the various stages in human history which are revealed in the dispensations.

“Conditional” vs “Unconditional” Covenants

1. The covenants of God contained in Scripture fall into two classes, those that are “conditional” and those that are “unconditional”.
 - a. A conditional covenant is one in which God’s action is in response to some action on the part of those to whom the covenant is addressed.
 - 1) A conditional covenant guarantees that God will do His part with absolute certainty when the human requirements are met.
 - 2) If man fails to meet the conditions of the covenant, God is not obligated to fulfill His covenant.
 - b. An unconditional covenant, while it may include certain human contingencies, is a declaration of the certain purpose of God, and the promises of an unconditional covenant will certainly be fulfilled in God’s time and way.
 - 1) Of the eight biblical covenants, only the Edenic and Mosaic were conditional. However, even under unconditional covenants, there is a conditional element as it applies to certain individuals.
 - 2) An unconditional covenant is distinguished from a conditional covenant by the fact that its ultimate fulfillment is promised by God and depends upon God’s power and sovereignty.

The Eight Biblical Covenants

1. The Edenic Covenant:

a. The First Covenant that God made with man:

Genesis 1:27-30 “*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.’ Then God said, ‘I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.’ And it was so.”*

Genesis 2:16-17 “*And the Lord God commanded the man, ‘You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; BUT YOU MUST NOT EAT FROM THE TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL, for when you eat of it you will surely die.’”*

- b. It was a conditional covenant with Adam in which life and blessing or death and cursing were made to depend on the faithfulness of Adam.
- c. The Edenic covenant included giving Adam the responsibility of being father of the human race, subduing the earth, having dominion over animals, caring for the garden, and not eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.
- d. Because Adam and Eve failed and disobeyed by eating the forbidden fruit, the penalty of death for disobedience was imposed.
 - 1) Adam and Eve died spiritually immediately and needed to be born again in order to be saved.
 - 2) Later they also died physically.

Genesis 5:5 “*Altogether, Adam lived 930 years, and THEN HE DIED.”*

e. Their sin plunged the whole human race into its pattern of sin and death.

Romans 5:12-14 “*Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, AND DEATH THROUGH SIN, and in this way DEATH CAME TO ALL MEN, because all sinned— for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin BY BREAKING A COMMAND, AS DID ADAM, who was a pattern of the one to come.”*

Romans 5:17 “*For if, by the trespass of the one man, DEATH REIGNED through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.”*

2. The Adamic Covenant:

a. This covenant was made with man after the Fall.

Genesis 3:16-19 *“To the woman He said, ‘I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.’ To Adam He said, ‘Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat of it,’ ‘Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”*

- 1) This is an unconditional covenant in which God declares to man what his lot in life will be because of his sin.
- 2) There is no appeal allowed, nor is any human responsibility involved.

b. The covenant as a whole provides important features which condition human life from this point on.

- 1) Included in the covenant is the fact that the serpent used of Satan is cursed:

Genesis 3:14 *“So the LORD God said to the serpent, ‘Because you have done this, CURSED ARE YOU above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life.’”*

Romans 16:20 *“The God of peace will soon CRUSH SATAN UNDER YOUR FEET.”*

2Corinthians 11:3, 14-15 *“But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ... And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. THEIR END WILL BE WHAT THEIR ACTIONS DESERVE.”*

Revelation 12:9 *“The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. HE WAS HURLED TO THE EARTH, and his angels with him.”*

- 2) Included in the covenant is a Redeemer is promised (which is ultimately fulfilled in Christ):

Genesis 3:15 *“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; HE WILL CRUSH YOUR HEAD, and you will strike his heel.”*

- 3) Included in the covenant is the place of women is detailed as being subject to multiplied conception, to sorrow and pain in motherhood, and to the headship of man:

Genesis 3:16-17 *“To the woman he said, ‘I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and HE WILL RULE OVER YOU.’”*

1Corinthians 11:7-9 “A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; **BUT THE WOMAN IS THE GLORY OF MAN**. For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; neither was man created for woman, BUT WOMAN FOR MAN.”

Ephesians 5:22-24 “Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. **FOR THE HUSBAND IS THE HEAD OF THE WIFE as Christ is the head of the church, His body, of which He is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also WIVES SHOULD SUBMIT TO THEIR HUSBANDS IN EVERYTHING.**”

1Timothy 2:11-14 “A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I DO NOT PERMIT A WOMAN TO TEACH OR TO HAVE AUTHORITY OVER A MAN; she must be silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.”

- 4) Included in the covenant is that Man will henceforth earn his bread by the sweat of his brow and his life will be one of sorrow and death:

Genesis 3:17-19 “To Adam he said, ‘Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat of it,’ Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. **BY THE SWEAT OF YOUR BROW** you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; **FOR DUST YOU ARE AND TO DUST YOU SHALL RETURN.**”

Ephesians 2:4-5 “But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ **EVEN WHEN WE WERE DEAD IN TRANSGRESSIONS**—it is by grace you have been saved.”

NOTE: To a large extent, both man and woman continue from this point on to operate under the curses of the Adamic covenant.

3. The Noahic Covenant:

- a. This covenant was made with Noah and his sons (read Genesis 9:1-18).

- 1) Like the Adamic covenant it was unconditional.
- 2) It revealed God’s purpose for the race subsequent to Noah.

- b. Provisions of the covenant included:

- 1) The establishment of the principle of human government to curb sin which included capital punishment for those who took another man’s life.

Genesis 9:5-6 “And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each man, too, I WILL DEMAND AN ACCOUNTING for the life of his fellow man. ‘Whoever sheds the blood of man, BY MAN SHALL HIS BLOOD BE SHED; for in the image of God has God made man.’”

2) The normal order of nature was reaffirmed:

Genesis 9:2 *“The fear and dread of you will fall upon all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air, upon every creature that moves along the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea; THEY ARE GIVEN INTO YOUR HANDS.”*

3) Something unique in this covenant is that man was given permission to eat the flesh of animals instead of just living only on vegetables, as he seems to have done before the flood:

Genesis 9:3-4 *“EVERYTHING THAT LIVES AND MOVES WILL BE FOOD FOR YOU. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything. ‘But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it.’”*

4) The covenant with Noah included prophecy concerning the descendants of his three sons and designated Shem as the one through whom the godly line leading to the Messiah would come:

Genesis 9:25-27 *“‘Cursed be Canaan! The lowest of slaves will he be to his brothers.’ He also said, ‘BLESSED BE THE LORD, THE GOD OF SHEM! May Canaan be the slave of Shem. May God extend the territory of Japheth; may Japheth live in the tents of Shem, and may Canaan be his slave.’”*

5) The dominance of Gentile nations in world history is implied in the prophecy concerning Japheth.

Genesis 9:27 *“MAY GOD EXTEND THE TERRITORY OF JAPHETH; may Japheth live in the tents of Shem, and may Canaan be his slave.”*

NOTE: Just as the Adamic covenant introduced the dispensation of “conscience”, so the Noahic covenant introduced the dispensation of “human government”.

4. The Abrahamic covenant:

a. This covenant was made with Abraham.

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

1) The covenant with Abraham, like the Adamic and Noahic covenants, is “unconditional”.

2) While any particular generation of Israel could enjoy its provisions only if they were obedient and could, for instance, be led off into captivity if they were disobedient, the “ultimate purpose” of God to bless Israel, to reveal Himself through Israel, to provide redemption through Israel, and to bring Israel into the Promised Land is absolutely certain because it depends upon God’s sovereign power and will rather than man’s.

b. This covenant is one of the great revelations of God concerning future history, and in it profound promises were given along three lines:

1) First of all, promises were given to Abraham that he would have numerous posterity:

Genesis 12:2a *“I will make you INTO A GREAT NATION...”*

Genesis 15:2-5 *“But Abram said, ‘O Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?’ And Abram said, ‘You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.’ Then the word of the Lord came to him: ‘This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir.’ He took him outside and said, ‘Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.’ Then He said to him, “SO SHALL YOUR OFFSPRING BE.”*

Genesis 17:15-17 *“God also said to Abraham, ‘As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that SHE WILL BE THE MOTHER OF NATIONS; kings of peoples will come from her.’”*

That he would have much personal blessing:

Genesis 12:2b *“...and I will bless you...”*

Genesis 13:14-17 *“The LORD said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, ‘Lift up your eyes from where you are and look north and south, east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, FOR I AM GIVING IT TO YOU.”*

Genesis 15:6 *“Abram believed the Lord, AND HE (i.e. God) CREDITED TO HIM (i.e. Abraham) AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.”*

Genesis 15:18 *“On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram and said, ‘To your descendants I GIVE THIS LAND, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates...’”*

Genesis 24:34-35 *“So he said, “I am Abraham’s servant. THE LORD HAS BLESSED MY MASTER ABUNDANTLY, and he has become wealthy. He (i.e. God) has given him (i.e. Abraham) sheep and cattle, silver and gold, menservants and maidservants, and camels and donkeys.”*

John 8:56 *“Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing My day; HE SAW IT AND WAS GLAD.”*

That his name would be great:

Genesis 12:2c *“...I will make your name great...”*

And that Abraham, personally, would be a blessing:

Genesis 12:2d “...and YOU WILL BE A BLESSING.”

2) Second, through Abraham the promise was made that a “great nation” would emerge:

Genesis 12:2a “I will make you INTO A GREAT NATION...”

- a) In the purpose of God, this had reference primarily to “Israel” and the descendants of “Jacob”, who formed the twelve tribes of Israel.
- b) To this nation was given the promise of the land.

Genesis 12:7 “The Lord appeared to Abram and said, ‘To your offspring I WILL GIVE THIS LAND...’”

Genesis 13:14-15 ““The LORD said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, ‘Lift up your eyes from where you are and look north and south, east and west. All the land that you see I WILL GIVE IT TO YOU AND TO YOUR OFFSPRING FOREVER.”

Genesis 15:18 “On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram and said, ‘To your descendants I GIVE THIS LAND, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates...’”

Genesis 17:7-8 “I will establish My covenant as an everlasting covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. THE WHOLE LAND OF CANAAN, where you are now an alien, I WILL GIVE AS AN EVERLASTING COVENANT to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.”

3) A third major area of the covenant was the promise that through Abraham blessing would come to the entire world:

Genesis 12:3b “and ALL THE PEOPLES ON EARTH will be blessed THROUGH YOU.”

- a. This was to be fulfilled in that Israel was to be the special channel of God’s divine revelation, the source of the prophets who would reveal God, and would provide the human writers of Scripture.
- b. Supremely, the blessing to the nations would be provided through Jesus Christ, who would be a descendant of Abraham.
- c. Because of Israel’s special relationship to God, God pronounced a solemn curse on those who would curse Israel and a blessing upon those who would bless Israel:

Genesis 12:3a “I will bless those who bless you, and WHOEVER CURSES YOU WILL BE CURSED...”

NOTE: In spite of Israel’s *many failures* in the Old Testament, God did reveal Himself to them and caused the Scriptures to be written, and ultimately Christ was born, lived, and died, and rose again exactly as the Word of God had anticipated. In spite of human failure, the purposes of God are certain of fulfillment.

5. The Mosaic Covenant:

- a. This covenant was given through Moses for the children of Israel while they were journeying from Egypt to the Promised Land (read Exodus 20:1—31:18).
 - 1) The Mosaic law was a “conditional” covenant.
 - 2) It was based on the principle that “if” Israel was obedient, God would bless them, but “if” Israel was disobedient, God would curse them and discipline them.
 - 3) This is brought out especially in Deuteronomy 28.
- b. As contained in Exodus and amplified in many other portions of Scripture, God gave to Moses “the law” which was to govern his relationship to the people of Israel.
 - 1) The approximately six hundred specific commands are classified into three major divisions:
 - a) The commandments, containing the express will of God (Exodus 20:1-26),
 - b) The judgments, relating to the social and civic life of Israel (Exodus 21:1—24:11), and
 - c) The ordinances, relating to the religious life and ceremonies of Israel (Exodus 24:12—31:18).
- c. Although it was anticipated that Israel would fail, God promised that He would not forsake His people forever:

Jeremiah 30:11 “*‘I am with you and will save you,’ declares the LORD. ‘Though I completely destroy all the nations among which I scatter you, **I WILL NOT COMPLETELY DESTROY YOU.** I will discipline you but only with justice; I will not let you go entirely unpunished.’”*

NOTE: The Mosaic covenant was also a temporary one and would terminate at the cross of Christ. Although containing gracious elements, it was basically a covenant of works.

6. The Palestinian Covenant:

- a. This was an unconditional covenant made by God to the nation of Israel regarding Israel’s final possession of the promised land (read Deuteronomy 30:1-10).
- b. The promise given to Abraham in Genesis 12:7 and subsequently reaffirmed throughout the Old Testament was that Abraham’s seed would possess the land.
 - 1) This covenant illustrates how a covenant basically “unconditional” and sure in its fulfillment nonetheless has “conditional” elements for any particular generation.
 - a) Because of disobedience and failure, Jacob and his descendants lived in Egypt hundreds of years before the Exodus.

- b) In keeping with the purpose of God, however, they returned and possessed at least a portion of the land.
 - c) Later, because of disobedience and disregard of the law of God, they were led off into the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities.
 - d) Again, in the grace of God, they were allowed to return after seventy years of the Babylonian captivity and repossessed the land until Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70.
- 2) Israel is promised, however, that in spite of all her failures, she will ultimately be returned to the land, live in safety and blessing there, and never be scattered again.

Ezekiel 39:25-29 *“Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I WILL NOW BRING BACK JACOB FROM CAPTIVITY and will have compassion on all the people of Israel, and I will be zealous for my holy name. They will forget their shame and all the unfaithfulness they showed toward me when they lived in safety in their land with no one to make them afraid. When I have brought them back from the nations and have gathered them from the countries of their enemies, I will show myself holy through them in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord their God, for though I sent them into exile among the nations, I WILL GATHER THEM TO THEIR OWN LAND, not leaving any behind. I will no longer hide my face from them, for I will pour out my Spirit on the house of Israel, declares the Sovereign Lord.”*

Amos 9:14-15 *“I WILL BRING BACK MY EXILED PEOPLE ISRAEL; they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine; they will make gardens and eat their fruit. I WILL PLANT ISRAEL IN THEIR OWN LAND, never again to be uprooted from the land I have given them,” says the LORD your God.”*

- 3) The present return of Israel to the land is, therefore, highly significant because it fulfills the first phase of the return of Israel necessary for setting the stage for the endtime.
 - 4) Israel’s return will be made complete to the last man after Jesus Christ returns and sets up His kingdom (see Ezekiel 39:25-29 above).
 - 5) While any one generation might be driven out of the land because of disobedience, the ultimate purpose of God to bring His people into their promised land is unconditional and certain of ultimate fulfillment.
- c. The Palestinian covenant, accordingly, includes:

- 1) Israel’s dispersion for unbelief and disobedience

Genesis 15:13 *“Then the Lord said to him, ‘Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers IN A COUNTRY NOT THEIR OWN, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years.’”*

Deuteronomy 28:63-65 *“Just as it pleased the Lord to make you prosper and increase in number, so it will please him to ruin and destroy you. YOU WILL BE UPROOTED FROM THE LAND YOU ARE ENTERING TO POSSESS. Then the Lord will scatter you among all nations, from one end of the earth to the other. There you will worship other gods—gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your fathers have known. Among those nations you will find no repose, no resting place for the sole of your foot...”*

2) Israel's times of repentance and restoration

Deuteronomy 30:1-3 “*When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come upon you and you take them to heart wherever the Lord your God disperses you among the nations, and when you and your children RETURN TO THE LORD your God and OBEY HIM with all your heart and with all your soul according to everything I command you today, then the Lord your God WILL RESTORE YOUR FORTUNES and have compassion on you and GATHER YOU AGAIN FROM ALL OF THE NATIONS where He scattered you.*”

3) The “regathering” of Israel and “restoration” to their land

Deuteronomy 30:3 “*...the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you and GATHER YOU AGAIN FROM ALL THE NATIONS where He scattered you.*”

Isaiah 11:11-12 “*In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the remnant that is left of his people from Assyria, from Lower Egypt, from Upper Egypt, from Cush, from Elam, from Babylonia, from Hamath and from the islands of the sea. He will raise a banner for the nations and GATHER THE EXILES OF ISRAEL; He will ASSEMBLE THE SCATTERED PEOPLE OF JUDAH from the four quarters of the earth.*”

Jeremiah 23:8 “*As surely as the Lord lives, who brought the descendants of Israel up out of the land of the north and out of all the countries where He had banished them.*’ Then they will live in their own land.”

Jeremiah 30:3 “*‘The days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will bring MY PEOPLE ISRAEL AND JUDAH BACK FROM CAPTIVITY and restore them to the land I gave their forefathers to possess,’ says the LORD.*”

Jeremiah 31:7-8 “*This is what the Lord says: ‘Sing with joy for Jacob; shout for the foremost of the nations. Make your praises heard, and say, ‘O Lord, save Your people, THE REMNANT OF ISRAEL.’ See, I will bring them from the land of the north and GATHER THEM FROM THE ENDS OF THE EARTH. Among them will be the blind and the lame, expectant mothers and women in labor; a great throng will return.’*”

Ezekiel 39:25-29 “*Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I WILL NOW BRING BACK JACOB FROM CAPTIVITY and will have compassion on all the people of Israel, and I will be zealous for my holy name. They will forget their shame and all the unfaithfulness they showed toward me when they lived in safety in their land with no one to make them afraid. When I have brought them back from the nations and have gathered them from the countries of their enemies, I will show myself holy through them in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord their God, for though I sent them into exile among the nations, I WILL GATHER THEM TO THEIR OWN LAND, not leaving any behind. I will no longer hide my face from them, for I will pour out my Spirit on the house of Israel, declares the Sovereign Lord.”*

Amos 9:14-15 “*‘I WILL BRING BACK MY EXILED PEOPLE ISRAEL; they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine; they will make gardens and eat their fruit. I WILL PLANT ISRAEL IN THEIR OWN LAND, never again to be uprooted from the land I have given them,’ says the LORD your God.*”

4) The spiritual conversion of the “remnant” of Israel

Hosea 2:14-16 “*Therefore I am now going to allure her (i.e. “the nation of Israel”); I will lead her into the desert and speak tenderly to her. There I will give her back her vineyards, and will make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. There she will sing as in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt. ‘In that day,’ declares the LORD, ‘YOU WILL CALL ME ‘MY HUSBAND’; YOU WILL NO LONGER CALL ME ‘MY MASTER’.’*”

Romans 11:26-27 “*I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. AND SO ALL ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED, as it is written: ‘The deliverer will come from Zion; He will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this is My covenant with them when I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.’*”

5) Their ultimate safety and prosperity as a nation

Amos 9:11-15 “*‘In that day I will restore David’s fallen tent. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins, and BUILD IT AS IT USED TO BE, so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations that bear my name,’ declares the Lord, who will do these things. ‘The days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when the reaper will be overtaken by the plowman and the planter by the one treading grapes. New wine will drip from the mountains and flow from all the hills. I will bring back my exiled people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine; they will make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant Israel in their own land, NEVER AGAIN TO BE UPROOTED from the land I have given them,*’ says the LORD your God.”

Joel 3:1 “*In those days and at that time, when I RESTORE THE FORTUNES of Judah and Jerusalem...”*

6) And divine judgment of their oppressors

Isaiah 14:1-2 “*The Lord will have compassion on Jacob; once again He will choose Israel and will settle them in their own land. Aliens will join them and unite with the house of Jacob. Nations will take them and bring them to their own place. And the house of Israel will possess the nations as menservants and maidservants in the Lord’s land. THEY WILL MAKE CAPTIVES OF THEIR CAPTORS AND RULE OVER THEIR OPPRESSORS.”*

Joel 3:2 “*I will gather all nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. There I will enter into JUDGMENT AGAINST THEM CONCERNING MY INHERITANCE, My people Israel, for they scattered My people among the nations and divided up My land.”*

7. The Davidic Covenant:

- a. This covenant is an unconditional covenant in which God promised David an unending royal lineage, a throne, and a kingdom, all of them forever (read: 2 Sam 7:4-16 and 1Chron 17:3-15).
- b. In the declaration of this covenant, Jehovah reserves the right to interrupt the actual reign of David's sons if chastisement is required, but the essence of the covenant could not be broken:

2 Samuel 7:14-15 *"I will be his father, and he will be My son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men. But MY LOVE WILL NEVER BE TAKEN AWAY FROM HIM, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you."*

2Samuel 7:16 *"Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before Me; YOUR THRONE WILL BE ESTABLISHED FOREVER."*

Psalm 89:20-37 *"I have found David My servant; with My sacred oil I have anointed him. My hand will sustain him; surely my arm will strengthen him. No enemy will subject him to tribute; no wicked man will oppress him. I will crush his foes before him and strike down his adversaries. My faithful love will be with him, and through my name his horn will be exalted. I will set his hand over the sea, his right hand over the rivers. He will call out to me, 'You are my Father, my God, the Rock my Savior.' I will also appoint him my firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of the earth. I will maintain my love to him forever, and my covenant with him will never fail. I will establish his line forever, his throne as long as the heavens endure. If his sons forsake my law and do not follow my statutes, if they violate my decrees and fail to keep my commands, I will punish their sin with the rod, their iniquity with flogging; but I will not take my love from him, nor will I ever betray my faithfulness. I WILL NOT VIOLATE MY COVENANT OR ALTER WHAT MY LIPS HAVE UTTERED. Once for all, I have sworn by my holiness— and I will not lie to David— that HIS LINE WILL CONTINUE FOREVER and HIS THRONE ENDURE BEFORE ME like the sun; IT WILL BE ESTABLISHED FOREVER like the moon, the faithful witness in the sky."*

1) The Abrahamic covenant guaranteed to Israel

- a) An everlasting entity as a nation (Jer. 31:36)
- b) And an everlasting possession of the land (Gen. 13:15; 1 Chron. 16:15-18; Ps. 105:9-11)

2) The Davidic covenant guarantees to Israel

- a) An everlasting throne

2Samuel 7:16 *"Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before Me; YOUR THRONE WILL BE ESTABLISHED FOREVER."*

Psalm 89:36 *"...that his line will continue forever and HIS THRONE ENDURE BEFORE ME like the sun."*

b) An everlasting King

Jeremiah 33:20-21 *“This is what the Lord says: ‘IF YOU CAN BREAK UP MY COVENANT WITH THE DAY AND MY COVENANT WITH THE NIGHT, so that day and night no longer come at their appointed time, then My covenant with David my servant—and my covenant with the Levites who are priests ministering before Me—can be broken and David will no longer have a descendant to reign on His throne.”*

c) And an everlasting Kingdom

Daniel 7:14 *“He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is ONE THAT WILL NEVER BE DESTROYED.”*

- c. From the day that the covenant was made and confirmed by Jehovah’s oath (Acts 2:29-30) to the birth of Christ, David did not lack for a son to sit on his throne (Jer. 33:20-21); and Christ the eternal Son of God and Son of David, being the rightful heir to that throne and the One who will yet sit on that throne (Luke 1:30-33), completes the fulfillment of this promise to David that a son would sit on his throne forever.

Acts 2:29-30 *“Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath THAT HE WOULD PLACE ONE OF HIS DESCENDANTS ON HIS THRONE.”*

Jeremiah 33:20-21 *“This is what the Lord says: ‘IF YOU CAN BREAK UP MY COVENANT WITH THE DAY AND MY COVENANT WITH THE NIGHT, so that day and night no longer come at their appointed time, then My covenant with David my servant—and my covenant with the Levites who are priests ministering before Me—can be broken and David will no longer have a descendant to reign on His throne.”*

Luke 1:30-33 *“But the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of his father David, and HE WILL REIGN OVER THE HOUSE OF JACOB FOREVER; His kingdom will never end.”*

- d. The Davidic covenant is most important as “assuring” the millennial kingdom in which Christ will reign on earth.

1) Resurrected David will reign under Christ as a prince over the house of Israel

Jeremiah 23:5-6 *“‘The days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘WHEN I WILL RAISE UP TO DAVID A RIGHTEOUS BRANCH, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The Lord Our Righteousness.”*

Ezekiel 34:23-24 *“I will place over them one shepherd, MY SERVANT DAVID, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd. I the Lord will be their God, and MY SERVANT DAVID WILL BE PRINCE AMONG THEM. I the Lord have spoken.”*

Ezekiel 37:24 “MY SERVANT DAVID WILL BE KING OVER THEM, and they will all have one shepherd.”

NOTE (1): The Davidic covenant is not fulfilled by Christ reigning on His throne in heaven, as David has never and never will sit upon the Father’s throne. It is rather an earthly kingdom and an earthly throne.

Matthew 25:30-31 “When THE SON OF MAN COME IN ALL HIS GLORY, and all the angels with Him, HE WILL SIT ON HIS THRONE in heavenly glory. ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE GATHERED BEFORE HIM, and He will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.”

NOTE (2): The Davidic covenant is, accordingly, the key to God’s prophetic program yet to be fulfilled.

8. The New Covenant:

a. The New Covenant was prophesied in the Old Testament.

- 1) It is to have its primary fulfillment in the millennial kingdom.
- 2) It is also an unconditional covenant.

Jeremiah 31:31-33 “‘The time is coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when I WILL MAKE A NEW COVENANT with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will NOT BE LIKE THE COVENANT I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,’ declares the LORD. ‘This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,’ declares the LORD. ‘I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.’”

- 3) It is a new covenant in contrast with the Mosaic covenant which was broken by Israel,

Jeremiah 31:32 “It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, BECAUSE THEY BROKE MY COVENANT, though I was a husband to them,’ declares the LORD.”

b. In the covenant God promises:

Jeremiah 31:33 “‘This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,’ declares the Lord. ‘I will put My law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and THEY WILL BE MY PEOPLE.’”

- 1) Because of this intimate and personal revelation of God and His will to His people, the new covenant goes on to state,

Jeremiah 31:34 “‘No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ because THEY WILL ALL KNOW ME, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD. ‘FOR I WILL FORGIVE THEIR WICKEDNESS AND WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE.’”

- 2) This means Jesus Christ will be visible and present during the millennial kingdom.

- a) This passage anticipates the ideal circumstances of the millennial kingdom where Christ is to be reigning, and all will know the facts about Jesus Christ.
 - b) It will not be necessary, accordingly, for a person to evangelize his neighbor, for the facts about the Lord will be universally known.
 - c) It will also be a period in which God will forgive Israel's sin and bless them abundantly.
- c. It should be clear from this description of the "new covenant" promise as given in Jeremiah that this is "not" being fulfilled today, since the church has been instructed to go into all the world and preach the Gospel because of almost universal ignorance of the truth.
- 1) Because the New Testament, however, also relates the church to a new covenant, some have taught that the church fulfills the covenant given to Israel.
 - 2) Those who do not believe in a future millennial kingdom and a restoration of Israel, therefore, find complete fulfillment now in the church, spiritualizing the provisions of the covenant and making Israel and the church one and the same.
 - 3) Others who recognize Israel's future restoration and the millennial kingdom consider the New Testament references to the new covenant either to be an application of the general truths of the future covenant with Israel to the church, or to distinguish two new covenants:
 - a) One for "Israel" as given in Jeremiah
 - b) The second, a new covenant given through Jesus Christ in the present age of grace "providing salvation for the church".

NOTE: Actually the new covenant, whether for Israel or for the church, stems from the death of Christ and His shed blood.

- d. The new covenant guarantees all that God proposes to do for men on the ground of the blood of His Son. This may be seen in two aspects:
 - 1) That He will save, preserve, and present in heaven conformed to His Son, all who have believed on Christ.
 - a) The fact that it is necessary to believe on Christ in order to be saved does not form a condition in this covenant.
 - b) Believing is not a part of the covenant, but rather is the ground of admission into its eternal blessings.
 - c) The covenant is not related to the unsaved, but it is made with those who believe, and it promises the faithfulness of God in their behalf and every other promise concerning the saving and keeping power of God are part of this covenant in grace.

Philippians 1:6 "*...being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you WILL CARRY IT ON UNTIL TO COMPLETION UNTIL THE DAY OF CHRIST JESUS.*"

- 2) There is no salvation contemplated for man in this age that does not guarantee perfect preservation here and a final presentation of the saved one in glory.
 - 3) There may be an issue between the Father and His child as to the daily life, and as in the case of David's sins, the Christian's sin may call for the chastening hand of God; but those questions which enter into the daily life of the believer are never made to *condition* the promise of God concerning the eternal salvation of those whom He has received in grace.
- e. There are those who emphasize the importance and power of the human will and who contend that both salvation and safekeeping must be made *conditional* on the cooperation of the human will.
- 1) This may seem reasonable to the human mind; but it is not according to the revelation given in Scripture.
 - 2) In every case God has declared *unconditionally* what He will do for all those who put their trust in Him.

John 5:24 *"I tell you the truth, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life and WILL NOT BE CONDEMNED; he has crossed over from death to life."*

John 6:37 *"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and whoever comes to Me I WILL NEVER DRIVE AWAY."*

John 10:28 *"I give them eternal life, and THEY SHALL NEVER PERISH; no one can snatch them out of My hand."*

- a) This is a very great undertaking which must of necessity involve the absolute control of the very thoughts and intents of the heart; but it is no more unreasonable than that God should declare to Noah that his seed would follow the absolute channels which he had decreed, or that he should declare to Abraham that He would make of him a great nation and that of his seed Christ should be born.
- b) In every case it is the manifestation of sovereign authority and power.
- 3) It is evident that God has given latitude for the exercise of the human will.
 - a) He appeals to the wills of men, and men who are saved are conscious that both their salvation and their service are according to their own deepest choice.
 - b) We are told that God controls the will of man:

John 6:44 *"No one can come to Me UNLESS THE FATHER WHO SENT ME DRAWS HIM, and I will raise him up at the last day."*

Philippians 2:13 *"for it is God who works in you TO WILL AND TO ACT ACCORDING TO HIS GOOD PURPOSE."*

And at the same time God appeals to and conditions His blessing on the will of man:

John 5:40 “...yet YOU REFUSE TO COME TO ME to have life.”

John 7:17 “IF ANYONE CHOOSES TO DO GOD’S WILL, he will find out whether My teaching comes from God or whether I speak on My own.”

Romans 12:1 “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, TO OFFER YOUR BODIES as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.”

1John 1:9 “IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

f. Scripture gives unquestionable emphasis to the sovereignty of God.

- 1) God has perfectly determined what will be, and His determined purpose will be realized; for it is impossible that God should ever be either surprised or disappointed.
- 2) So, also, there is “equal” emphasis in Scripture upon the fact that lying between these two undiminished aspects of His sovereignty—His eternal purpose and its perfect realization—He has “permitted” sufficient latitude for “some” exercise of the human will.
 - a) In so doing, His determined ends are in no way jeopardized.
 - b) One aspect of this truth without the other will lead:
 - (1) In the one case (i.e. “the belief that human’s really have NO free will”), becomes fatalism, wherein there is no place for petition in prayer, no motive for the wooing of God’s love, no ground for condemnation, no occasion for evangelistic appeal, and no meaning to very much Scripture.
 - (2) In the other case (i.e. “the belief that God is at the mercy of human’s free will”), leads to the dethroning of God.
- 3) It is reasonable to believe that the human will may be under the control of God; but most unreasonable to believe that the sovereignty of God is under the control of the human will.

NOTE: Those who believe are saved and safe forever because it is according to the *unconditional* covenant of God.

Final Comments

1. The future salvation of Israel is promised under the *unconditional* “new” covenant.

Isaiah 27:9 “*By this, then, will JACOB’S GUILT BE ATONED FOR, and this will be the full fruitage of the REMOVAL OF HIS SIN...*”

Ezekiel 37:23 “*They will no longer defile themselves with their idols and vile images or with any of their offenses, for I will save them from all their sinful backsliding, and I WILL CLEANSE THEM. They will be My people, and I will be their God.*”

Romans 11:25-27 “*I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. AND SO ALL ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED, as it is written: ‘The deliverer will come from Zion; He will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this is MY COVENANT with them when I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.’*”

2. This salvation will be accomplished only on the ground of the shed blood of Christ.
 - a. Through the sacrifice of Christ, God is as free to save a nation as He is free to save an individual.
 - b. Israel is represented by Christ as a treasure hid in the field.
 - 1) The field is the world.
 - 2) It was Christ, we believe, who sold all that He had that He might purchase the field and possess the treasure.

Matthew 13:44 “*The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and SOLD ALL HE HAD AND BOUGHT THAT FIELD.*”

3. In contemplating the eight covenants, too much emphasis cannot be placed on the fact of the sovereignty of God as it is related to those covenants which are *unconditional*, in contrast with the absolute failure of man as it is revealed in the outworking of those covenants which are *conditional*.
4. Whatever God undertakes *unconditionally* will be completed in all the perfection of His own infinite being, timing, and wisdom.