

THE COVENANTS OF GOD'S WORD

“The Covenants of Promise” - *Eph 2:12*

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God has established a number of covenants with man. They are the Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic and the New Covenant. These covenants form a framework in which mankind might find life-giving relationship with God through faith, *Ps 25:14*.

In the New Testament, the Greek word translated “covenant” is *diatheke*, which means a covenant established by a Superior with an inferior, in which the lessor is able to accept the covenant or reject it, but is not able to alter it.

Each covenant has a promise, a sacrifice, a sign and in some cases a covenant meal.

1. **Adamic Covenant** - *Gen 3:14-21*.

This is a comprehensive covenant including the serpent and his seed, the woman and her Seed, (Christ), man, animals, plants and the earth.

The **Promise** is in *Gen 3:15* and is the first promise in the Word of the Coming of Christ, the “Seed of the woman”, who would crush the serpent’s head. This promise was fulfilled at Calvary, *Heb 2:14, Col 2:15*.

The **Sacrifice** is implied in *Gen 3:21*. It is the killing of animals and the shedding of blood, to make coats of skins to cover the nakedness and shame of Adam and Eve.

The **Sign** is the wearing of clothes, *Gen 3:21*. Modesty in the clothes we wear is a godly thing. Satanic influence causes people to expose themselves so that they, and others will be drawn into sin through lust, e.g. pornographic magazines, videos, films and skimpy clothing.

2. **Noahic Covenant** - *Gen 9:1-17*.

This is an “everlasting covenant”, *v 16*, made with Noah and his descendants, every living creature and the earth, *v 9,10,13*.

The **Promise** is given in *Gen 8:21,22* where God says He will not again destroy every living thing, and while the earth remains, seed-time and harvest, the seasons, and day and night shall not cease.

The **Sacrifice** is in *Gen 8:20*, in which Noah offered sacrifices of every clean animal and bird.

The **Sign** is the rainbow, *Gen 9:12-17, Rev 4:3, Ezk 1:28*.

In *Gen 9:6* God established capital punishment for murder, and in *9:3*, the Lord extended Noah’s diet to include animal flesh. (Previously man had been vegetarian, *Gen 1:29, 3:18*.)

3. **Abrahamic Covenant** - *Gen 17:1-16* but also found in *Gen 12:1-3, 13:16-18, 14:19, 15:5-21, 22:15-18*.

The **Promise** of this covenant includes:

- a. Great blessing from God, *12:2,3, 22:17, 17:2,6*.
- b. Through Abraham all the families of the earth would be blessed, *12:3, 22:18*.
- c. Abraham’s seed would be as the sand and stars for multitude, *13:16, 15:5, 22:17*.
- d. The Land of Canaan, (Palestine) would be given to Abraham and his descendants *17:8, 15:7,18-21, 13:17*.
- e. Nations would come from Abraham and Sarah, *17:4,5,6,16*.
- f. Kings also from both of them, *17:6,16*.
- g. Abraham’s descendants would possess the gates of their enemies, *22:17*.

This is an everlasting covenant, *17:7*, between the Lord and Abraham and his descendants. The **Sacrifice** is in *Gen 15:8-18* where Abraham offered five different animals, divided three of them, and the presence of God passed between the pieces.

The **Sign** is circumcision, *Gen 17:9-14*. The outward sign of circumcision indicated the need for an inward cleansing of the heart, *Deut 10:16, 30:6*, and in the New Testament, *Col 2:11*.

The New Testament says that those who are of faith are the sons of Abraham, *Gal 3:7*, and are blessed with believing Abraham, *Gal 3:9*. This means that as N.T. believers, we are partakers of the blessings of this covenant in a spiritual sense and the sign is purity of heart, *Col 2:11*.

Also note that the N.T. tells us that Abraham and his descendants, through the righteousness of faith, possess the whole earth not just Palestine, *Rom 4:13*.

4. **Mosaic Covenant** - *Ex 3:6-10, 16, 17, 6:6-8, 19:3-8, 20:1-17* (the 10 laws), *20:18, - 23:33*, and in *Ex 24:1-11* the covenant is ratified or confirmed. This covenant was made between the Lord and the Nation of Israel, at Mt. Sinai, after their deliverance from Egypt. Please note in *Ex 6:6-8*, where the Lord declares what He is going to do in rescuing Israel from the Egyptian slavery, that He uses the words “**I will**” seven times. Seven is the number of perfection.

The **Promise** is well expressed in *Ex 6:6-8* where the Lord promises to redeem Israel out of all slavery, gather them into a close relationship with Himself, and establish them permanently in the land which He had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Further details of the promise are in *Ex 19:3-8*.

The **Sacrifice**. This covenant has five sacrifices described in *Lev 1-7*. The spiritual nature and significance of these sacrifices are given in **No 119**. They are the burnt offering, the cereal offering, the peace offering, the sin offering and the trespass offering.

The **Sign** of the covenant - *Ex 31:12-17*. This is the **Sabbath Day of rest** and notice that in *v 13* and *v 17* it is called the “sign”. In the N.T. the Sabbath Day of rest is a spiritual state of rest in God and not a specific day of the week. Read *Heb 4:1-11*. In *v 9* the Greek word for “rest” is “sabbatismos” - the keeping of a sabbath.

Col 2:16 says, do not let anyone judge you regarding sabbaths. See also *Col 2:14, Eph 2:14-16*.

The N.T. believers met together on the “Lord’s Day”, the first day of the week.

Rev 1:10, 1Cor 16:2, Ac 20:7. This is the day when we remember Jesus’ resurrection from the dead.

A covenant meal - *Ex 24:11*. The elders joined together in a feast in the presence of the Lord.

5. **Davidic Covenant** - *2Sam 7:8-17, 23:5, 2Chr 13:5, Ps 89:3,4,34-37*.

The **Promise** God made with David was that He would build David a house, *2Sam 7:11*, and an everlasting kingdom, *v13,16*. In the natural, this promise continued for a long time after David’s descendants departed from the Lord, but essentially this is a spiritual covenant concerning Christ and His Kingdom. One of the O.T. names for the long awaited Messiah was “Ben David”, Son of David, *Jer 30:8,9, Jer 33:14-22, Is 9:6,7*. In the N.T. Jesus is referred to as the Son of David, *Lk 1:32, Mat 1:1, Mat 12:23, Mat 9:27, Mat 27:37*. David was King/Priest like Melchizedec. Jesus is the King/Priest after the order of Melchizedec, *Heb 7:1, Zech 6:13*.

The **Sacrifice** - *2Sam 6:12-15*. Outwardly David offered the sacrifices of the O.T. to God in worship, but inwardly the sacrifice was in his heart as he offered himself totally to God, *1Sam 16:7, 1Sam 13:14, Ac 13:22, Ps 51:17*.

The **Sign** of this covenant is “day and night,” *Jer 33:20-22, Gen 8:22*.

6. The **New Covenant** - *Jer 31:31-34, Heb 8:6-13, Mat 26:26-29, 1Cor 11:23-26*. Jesus Christ established the New Covenant or New Testament when He willingly offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sins on the Cross, and then rose again the third day. The **Promise** of the New Covenant is the sending of the Holy Spirit and the giving of Eternal Life to all who partake of this Covenant through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, *Jn 14:26, Lk 24:49, Ac 1:4,5, Ac 2:33,39, Jn 5:24, Jn 4:14, Jn 3:15,16,17, Eph 2:8, Rom 5:10. Heb 8:10-12* lists seven effects of the New Covenant in the believer's life.
- The **Sacrifice** of the New Covenant was the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ and the shedding of His Blood for the sins of the whole world.
1Jn 2:2, Heb 10:10,12,14, 1Pet 3:18, 1Pet 2:24, 1Pet 1:18,19.
- The **Sign** of the New Covenant is both outward and inward. Outwardly it is baptism into Christ and the regular participation in the communion service, while inwardly it is the evidence of a Christ-like life in thoughts, words, and actions.
Baptism - *Mat 28:19, Rom 6:3, Gal 3:27, Ac 2:38, Ac 10:48,19:5.*
Communion - *1Cor 11:23-26.*
Christ-like life - *Gal 5:22,23, Heb 12:14, Gal 3:27, Rom 13:14, 2Cor 5:17, Col 3:8-17, Eph 4:22-24.*
- The **meal of the New Covenant** is in the Communion, *1Cor 11:23-26*.

THE COVENANTS

Covenant	Promise	Sacrifice	Sign
Adamic	<i>Gen 3:14-21</i>	Lamb(Probably) <i>Gen 3:21</i>	Clothing <i>Gen 3:21</i>
Noahic	<i>Gen 9:1-17</i>	Clean birds and animals, <i>Gen 8:20</i>	Rainbow <i>Gen 9:13</i>
Abrahamic	<i>Gen 17:1-16</i>	5 animals <i>Gen 15:9</i>	Circumcision <i>Gen 17:10</i>
Mosaic	<i>Ex 6:6-8</i> <i>Ex 20:1-17</i> <i>Ex 24:1-11</i>	5 sacrifices <i>Lev 1-7</i>	Sabbath <i>Ex 31:13,17</i>
Davidic	<i>2Sam 7:8-17</i> <i>Ps 89:3,4</i>	Animal sacrifice <i>2Sam 6:13,</i> <i>Ps 51:17</i>	Day and night <i>Jer 33:20,21</i>
New Covenant	<i>Mat 26:26-29</i>	The Lamb of God <i>Jn 1:29</i>	Baptism Communion Christ-like life

[This is an introductory survey of the covenants of God's Word, not an exhaustive list. Some describe an Edenic Covenant, *Gen 1,2*, the Millennial Covenant, the Covenant of peace and so on.]