



# COMING WITH THE CLOUDS

A JOURNEY THROUGH PROPHECY

JOSEPH CHARLES BEACH

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ISBN: 979-8-3943-9345-7 (sc)

ISBN: 979-8-3943-9946-6 (hc)

Library of Joseph Charles Beach rev. date : 5/10/2023

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 1 - THE COVENANTS.....	6
CHAPTER 2 - PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
CHAPTER 3 - PROPHECIES OF EZEKIEL.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
CHAPTER 4 – PROPHECIES OF DANIEL.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
CHAPTER 5 – THE SEVENTY WEEKS.....	61
CHAPTER 6 – THE LAST DAYS.....	73
CHAPTER 7 – PROPHECIES OF THE GOSPELS.....	93
CHAPTER 8 – THE END OF THE AGE.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
CHAPTER 9 - THE KINGDOM OF GOD.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
CHAPTER 10 - THE NEW HIGH PRIEST.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
CHAPTER 11 – PROPHECIES OF REVELATION.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
CHAPTER 12 - THE SEVEN SEALS.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
CHAPTER 13 - THE SEVEN TRUMPETS.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
CHAPTER 14 – THE TEMPLE.....	206
CHAPTER 15 – SYMBOLISM IN REVELATION.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
CHAPTER 16 - THE SEVEN BOWLS.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
CHAPTER 17 – THE GREAT CELEBRATION.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
CONCLUSION.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
REFERENCE NOTES.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>



## INTRODUCTION

Interest in bible prophecy is very high among Christians today, and scripture is filled with many passages of prophecy. There's a lot of interest today in the appearance of the Antichrist, the Second Coming of Christ, the Last Judgment, the end of the world, the rapture, the coming of a "New Heaven and New earth," and other prophetic events. Many people believe we are living in the end-times. But how can we really know? After all, Jesus tells his disciples, "Of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of Heaven" (Matthew 24:36).

Many Christians believe we are witnessing the last era of earth's history as we know it, and soon it will come to a climactic close. Many Christians believe that the main trigger to the "end time" fulfillment lies with the rebirth of the Jewish nation of Israel in 1948. This event is speculated by so many as God's Bible prophecy coming to life. They believe "this generation" points to the beginning of the end times. When it comes to what is believed about end time prophecy, there are many different viewpoints to consider. Many "prophecy experts" predict the end-times coming in our lifetime and they often have specific dates and times that have come and gone.

The definition of prophecy is simply receiving a message that is inspired by God, a divine revelation. The Bible says that prophets "spoke from God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:20-21). So a prophet is one who receives God's message and communicates it to others. (Acts 3:18).

Bible prophecy is not just limited to foretelling the future. God's prophets repeatedly warned the ancient Israelite's about their evil ways. Those messages

described future blessings if the people obeyed God, as well as future calamity if they disobeyed God (Jeremiah 25:4-6). The prophetic movement was instituted in Deuteronomy 18:15-18 and immediately anticipated the greater prophet, Messiah, and Savior; Jesus Christ. Prophecy is still alive today in the Church. Today prophecy also focuses on encouragement and lifting up others.

God spoke a message through the prophets, a message of repentance, redemption, the coming Messiah and turning away from sin, especially idol worship. They spoke of God's character, His holiness, His everlasting love, His righteousness judgments, and His preeminence. Studying Bible prophecy and understanding the times we live in is one of the most encouraging and faith-building adventures we can take. Bible prophecy gives us hope and keeps us anticipating the Lord's return. All prophecy centers around Jesus, His kingdom, and His rule. Jesus is the only mediator between God and sinful humans. The study of all prophecy must be Christ centered.

Above all, we must understand that no prophecy of scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. Prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:20-21). God made it clear only He can appoint and predict future events. Simply stated Bible Prophecy is God telling the end at the beginning. By doing so God demonstrates He is God and the Bible is His Word. With this being said, there is much confusion and misunderstanding of bible prophecy today. As stated earlier, there are many different viewpoints to choose from, including:

1. "Preterism" is a belief that most of the prophecies in the Bible have already taken place.
2. "Amillennialism," is a view that the millennial reign of Jesus Christ is not a literal thousand-year period, but is a figurative reference.
3. "Premillennialism" is a view that the second coming of Christ will happen prior to the millennium.

4. “Postmillennialism” is a view which views Christ’s return as happening after the millennium.
5. “Pretribulation,” is a view that the rapture, removing God’s faithful, happens before the great tribulation.
6. “Mid-Tribulation,” is a view that the rapture occurs mid-way through the seven-year great tribulation.
7. “Post-Tribulation,” is a view that maintains that all Christians are raptured at the end of the great tribulation.

So how do we know which of these are true, and which are false? We must read and study the scriptures thoroughly. We must also be able to understand history through the lens of the times in which they were written, not just how they are relevant in today’s news. It is also vastly important that we understand Jewish culture, language, customs, and history, as well as the meaning of words or phrases in that time so we can understand the true meaning of the prophecies that were written. Without this understanding we are reading terms outside of their true meaning and can become confused on what the words of scripture are trying to reveal. We must recognize the use of symbolism is very prevalent in prophecy, and we should not interpret symbolism too literally or physically. As we progress more into prophecy, we will see more and more symbolism used in both the Old and the New Testaments. We cannot allow ourselves to interpret symbolism as a physical manifestation, if we do, we can twist the scriptures into unrealistic physical renderings that completely distort the true meaning of the writing, and we lose the intended meaning of the prophecy.

Today, the predominant view of prophecy is centered on the pretribulation rapture, where Jesus will secretly return to earth to gather the elect, removing them from the earth to spare them the horrors of the tribulation that will begin on earth and last for a period of either three and a half years or for seven years. This belief is fairly new to Christian philosophy, beginning in the seventeenth century. Puritan leader, Increase Mather (1639 - 1723), argued “that the saints

would be caught up into the air” and thus escape the world’s final wrath. The person who solidified the modern pretribulation viewpoint was a person named John Darby (1800-1882). In more recent times, Hal Lindsey, and Carole C. Carlson, wrote the very popular book, *The Late Great Planet Earth* in 1970. Then Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins wrote a series of books known as the *Left Behind* series from 1995 to 2007. These books led to the continuing acceptance of this view, leading to its dominance today. The question is, with this theory being so widely taught and accepted by most Christians, does this make it true?

As we examine the Bible, we can learn what God is teaching His people. We must pray that the Holy Spirit will give us guidance and understanding of what we are reading. As we study and read the Bible, we can ask some basic questions such as, who was the author? When was the book written? Why was the book written? Who is the main audience of the writing? What were the circumstances of the author when writing? What were the major problems being addressed? And what does it say about Christ? These are just a few of the questions we need to ask ourselves. Remember that Jesus Christ is the center of and the key to understanding Bible prophecy. He alone is the center of all, and all things move in relation to Him.

Much of what is written on this topic today centers on Israel, the Anti-Christ, the Beast, and other topics rather than on Jesus. Again, to obtain truth, we must ask the Holy Spirit to give us correct interpretation as we read. We must be careful not to interpret newspaper theology as the end times, every time we witness a new war, or earthquake, or every sin our society indulges in. There have been thousands of wars and thousands of natural disasters so we must avoid falsely interpreting each one as a sign. If we take every news event today as some end times prophecy teaching, we reduce the Holy Scriptures to the level of the weekly tabloids.

We must always be careful when we listen to teachers who predict when the end will come, or when Jesus will return. When discussing His second coming,



Jesus himself said no one knows the time, only the Father knows. It is not up to us to discover the time. It is up to us to be ready! If you follow any teacher who predicts a specific time for Jesus second coming or the end time, beware. You are following a false teacher. Jesus tells us this with certainty in Matthew 24:36 “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in Heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.” Do not be deceived, no one knows the time. Even trying to figure out the time is being disobedient to Jesus. Jesus simply teaches us that our duty is to be ready at all times.



## CHAPTER 1 - THE COVENANTS

### The First Covenant, The Edenic Covenant

*Genesis 1:1, In the beginning God created the Heavens and the earth. Genesis 1:28-31, 28 God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” 29 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. 30 And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so. 31 And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. Genesis 2:15-17 15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”*

The Edenic Covenant is the covenant that God made with Adam in the Garden of Eden. This covenant is also sometimes called the “Covenant of Works” and is the first covenant that God made directly with humans. This is a conditional covenant, meaning people must obey the terms of the covenant in order to receive the promises related to it. The Edenic Covenant may contain as many as six different obligations that Adam

was to keep, however the heart of the covenant is really God's command to Adam to not eat from "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." God promises Adam life and blessing, but that promise is conditional upon Adam's obedience to God's command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam's penalty for disobedience would be physical and spiritual death. This covenant plays an important part in the unfolding of God's plan of redemption, as it shows humans' inability to maintain a right relationship with God even when they are in the earthly paradise that God created for them. The commands given to Adam in the covenant include:

- 1) Be fruitful and multiply.
- 2) Subdue the earth. (Genesis 1:28-30)
- 3) Take dominion over all living things. (Genesis 2:15-17)
- 4) Plants, seeds, and fruit for food. (Hosea 6:7)
- 5) Take care of the garden.
- 6) Don't eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- 7) If you eat from the tree, you will surely die.

It is important to be aware of the covenants because the covenants lay out the instructions from God. Disobeying these covenants come warnings of discipline that will come to the people. All the future prophecies are built around the people choosing to obey or disobey God's covenants. When we understand the covenants, we will better understand the prophecies.

### **The Fall - Breaking the Covenant**

*Genesis 3:1-7, Now the serpent was more cunning than any animal of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has*

*God really said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; 3 but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" 4 The serpent said to the woman, "You certainly will not die! 5 For God knows that on the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will become like God, knowing good and evil." 6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took some of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves waist coverings.*

We begin with the first sin, as humanity is tempted by the serpent for the first time. The first sin also causes the first curse, and the first promise (prophecy) of redemption. God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But Satan (the serpent) had other plans. Satan told Eve that if she ate from the tree, she would be like God. So Eve believed Satan and ate the fruit. Unfortunately she did not realize that she was already like God, being created in His image. After Satan deceived Eve, and she ate from the fruit, sin came roaring into the hearts of humanity. After that fateful choice to partake of the forbidden fruit, humans had in effect rebelled against God. The results of that decision were disastrous, and we are still faced with the consequences today. The decision of both Adam and Eve brought about a separation from God that passed unto the entire human race. The first sin was a monumental transgression of God's law and His holiness.

When Adam and Eve sinned they hid from God in shame. They were

embarrassed because of their nakedness. God provided animal skins for clothing. To obtain animal skins, an animal sacrifice had to be made. So here we see that God makes the first animal sacrifice for the benefit of humanity. When we get to the scriptures, we learn that the Old Testament provision for removing and forgiving human sin is through the act of an animal sacrifice. Later we learn that this animal sacrifice is only a temporary solution, and later a better and permanent sacrifice will be offered by Jesus. Only through the permanent sacrifice of Jesus, can humanity be reconciled to God. Now that sin has burst into the scene, God proclaims judgment and curses onto Satan, Adam, and Eve (all humanity). God in doing so, reveals the first prophecy recorded in the Bible. God speaks about a future offspring, a descendant of Adam and Eve. This descendant will bruise the head of Satan. There will be enmity between Satan and her descendant. “Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.” (Isaiah 7:14) This first prophecy (good news) is about Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, Savior, and the Messiah. As mentioned earlier, all prophecy is centered on Jesus. God reveals the savior of the world, Jesus Christ. God has already set into motion the plan to redeem humanity. From the very beginning, Jesus is already the central focus of the Bible. It was from this announcement that Satan would attempt, throughout the Old Testament, to try and stop the prophecy from Genesis 3:15 from being fulfilled; he certainly understood the consequences. Now we get to the second covenant.

### **The Second Covenant, The Adamic Covenant**

*Genesis 3:13–19, Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” 14 So the Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will*

*crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. 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.” 16 To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.” 17 To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. 18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. 19 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.”*

The covenant story began when God created humans in his image to partner with him in spreading goodness throughout the world. God invites Adam and Eve to be priest kings and represent his generous rule on Earth. They could enjoy and reproduce blessings of eternal life as long as they continued to trust and partner with Him. But as God lays out the terms of their relationship, he warns them not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because it would bring the curse of death on humanity. And in their first test of covenant faithfulness, humans failed. They ate from the tree, fracturing the human-divine relationship and plunging humanity into corruption and death. We’d still be stuck in the wreckage if God never intervened.

But the rest of the Bible is all about how God is repairing this broken partnership with humans. The Adamic Covenant can be thought of in two parts: the Edenic Covenant (innocence) and the Adamic Covenant (grace). Humans (male and female) are created in God’s image and were given the divine directive for humanity to reproduce and inhabit the entire

Earth. As a result of sin and violating this covenant, we see the following curses:

1. Enmity between Satan and Eve and her descendants.
2. Painful childbirth for women.
3. Marital strife.
4. The soil is cursed.
5. Introduction of thorns and thistles.
6. Survival to be a struggle.
7. Death is introduced and will be the inescapable fate of all living things.

As we speak of death it is important to note that when Adam and Eve sinned, their Divine spirit died. Being made in the image of God, they lost the supernatural spirit they had before their sin. Physical death will also eventually arrive. Although these curses are severe and inescapable, a wonderful promise of grace was also included in the Adamic Covenant. Genesis 3:15 is often referred to as the first gospel. Speaking to Satan, God says, “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.” Here God promises that one born of a woman would be wounded in the process of destroying Satan. The “seed” of the woman, Jesus Christ, would crush the Serpent’s head. Even in the midst of the curse, God’s gracious provision of salvation shines through in the first covenants God makes with His first human creation Adam. (see Galatians 4:4 and 1 John 3:8).

### **Cain and Abel**

*Genesis 4:1-8, Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, “I have obtained a male child with the help of the Lord.” 2 And again, she gave birth to his*

*brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a cultivator of the ground. 3 So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord from the fruit of the ground. 4 Abel, on his part also brought an offering, from the firstborn of his flock and from their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering; 5 but for Cain and his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his face was gloomy. 6 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why is your face gloomy? 7 If you do well, will your face not be cheerful? And if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it." 8 Cain talked to his brother Abel; and it happened that when they were in the field Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.*

As we continue to the second generation of humanity, our attention turns to the first two sons of Adam and Eve, who are Cain and Abel. It's not too long before we see more sin and rebellion. Cain moved with envy against his brother, because Abel was "accepted" with God through the right offering, whereas Cain's offering was rejected by God. Satan was at work against humanity and influenced Cain to commit murder against his brother Abel. Cain's punishment was to be separated from his people. Not only was humanity separated from God, but now humanity was separated from each other. Fortunately, after the death of Abel, God blessed Adam and Eve with a new son, Seth. It would be through the lineage of Seth that the promised seed of Genesis 3:15, Jesus Christ, would come.

### **Continuing Corruption of Humanity**

***Genesis 6:5-13**, Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of humanity was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually. 6 So the Lord was sorry that He had made humanity on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7 Then*



*the Lord said, “I will wipe out humanity whom I have created from the face of the land; humanity, and animals as well, and crawling things, and the birds of the sky. For I am sorry that I have made them.” 8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. 9 These are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous human, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. 10 And Noah fathered three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. 11 Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 And God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for humanity had corrupted its way upon the earth. 13 Then God said to Noah, “The end of humanity has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of people; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth.*

God said unto Noah, I will destroy humanity on the earth. This is the just consequence for violating the first covenant with God. The inhabitants of the earth allowed their hearts to be steered away from God. God said that the thoughts of humans were evil all of the time, every intent in their thoughts and mind focused only on evil. Even though sin is rampant today, it is almost impossible to see how it could be any worse. However, in the time of Noah, it was far worse. Satan failed in thwarting God’s plan for the promise seed of Eve by the murder of Able, because of the birth of Seth, however, Satan continues to corrupt the entire earth. Fortunately God is about to establish another covenant with humanity.

### **The Third Covenant, The Noahic Covenant**

*Genesis 6:17-22, Now behold, I Myself am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which there is the breath of life, from under Heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish. 18 But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark— you,*

*your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. 19 And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every kind into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. 20 Of the birds according to their kind, and of the animals according to their kind, of every crawling thing of the ground according to its kind, two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive. 21 As for you, take for yourself some of every food that is edible, and gather it to yourself; and it shall be food for you and them.” 22 So Noah did these things; according to everything that God had commanded him, so he did. **Genesis 9:1-17,** Then God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. 2 The fear of you and the terror of you will be on every animal of the earth and on every bird of the sky; on everything that crawls and on all the fish of the sea. They are handed over to you. 3 Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I have given everything to you, as I gave the green plant. 4 But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. 5 I certainly will require your lifeblood; from every animal I will require it. And from every person, from every human I will require the life of a person. 6 Whoever sheds human blood, by human his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made humanity. 7 As for you, be fruitful and multiply; populate the earth and multiply” 8 Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying, 9 “Now behold, I Myself am establishing My covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; 10 and with every living creature that is with you: the birds, the livestock, and every animal of the earth with you; of all that comes out of the ark, every animal of the earth. 11 I establish My covenant with you; and all flesh shall never again be eliminated by the waters of a flood, nor shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth.” 12 God said, “This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations; 13 I have set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall*

*serve as a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth. 14 It shall come about, when I make a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow will be seen in the cloud, 15 and I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and everyliving creature of all flesh; and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 When the rainbow is in the cloud, I will look at it, to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” 17 “This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth.”*

The Noahic Covenant was an unconditional covenant between God and Noah (specifically) and humanity (generally). The Noahic Covenant is an unconditional covenant because it does not depend upon anything Noah or his descendants had to do to fulfill the covenant. The promise is based upon God’s faithfulness alone. Notice that God’s covenant is with more than just humanity. His promise goes out to every living creature, to all the flesh of the earth. God’s covenant also goes out to the earth itself. God gave his word to Noah and to all humanity that he would not destroy the earth again with a flood. Noah’s righteous lineage spared humanity’s fate from destruction. God also points out that humans are made in the image of God, and that is why it is wrong to shed blood. God sealed this covenant by placing a rainbow in the sky. It symbolizes the eternal promise of God never to judge by water again.

### **The Tower of Babel**

***Genesis 11:5-9**, Now the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the men had built. 6 And the Lord said, “Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they have started to do, and now nothing which they plan to do will be impossible for them. 7 Come, let Us go down there and confuse their language, so that they will not understand one another's speech.” 8 So the Lord*

*scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth; and they stopped building the city. 9 Therefore it was named Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth; and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.*

The next major attack by Satan upon humanity was Satan's influence over humanity to build the Tower of Babel. This is in complete violation of the first covenant where God commands the people to inhabit the entire earth. Satan's first strategy of killing off humanity had failed. So now Satan shifts his plan to enslave humanity through unity of a false religion. Was not this the condition that Satan proposed to Eve in the garden? God steps in to prevent Satan from accomplishing his task by confounding the languages of humanity and dispersing them physically across the face of the earth, thus stopping Satan once again.

### **The Forth Covenant – The Abrahamic Covenant**

*Genesis 12:1-3, Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; 2 And I will make you into a great nation, And I will bless you, and make your name great; And you shall be a blessing; 3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed." 7 And the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him.*

God promised that he would make Abraham's name great and that Abraham would have numerous physical descendants (Genesis 13:16). He would also be the father of a multitude of nations. God gave Abraham a son (Isaac), and through his seed Abraham would have a family that would be multiplied as the stars of Heaven. God also made promises regarding a nation called Israel. In fact, the geographical boundaries of

the Abrahamic Covenant are laid out on more than one occasion in the book of Genesis (12:7; 13:14-15; 15:18-21). Another provision in the Abrahamic Covenant is that all the families of the world will be blessed through the physical line of Abraham (Genesis 12:3; 22:18). This is a reference to the Messiah, the promised seed of the first covenant, who would come from the line of Abraham.

Abram was not just to establish the great nation for the Jews, Abram would establish many nations. God says, “In you all the families of the earth will be blessed.” Even though the Jews were the chosen, they were to share all their blessings to all the people of the world. This was the primary purpose for the establishment of the future nation of Israel. The Jews were to teach God to all the nations of the earth. The foundation was laid, God was now establishing His elect people-Israel, and by giving them the promised land they could be kept from the influence of an ungodly world. God later changes Abram’s name to Abraham; symbolizing Abraham’s identity as the father of many nations. God refers to his future people as many nations, not just Israel; which would eventually incorporate the church saints from all over the earth as well. The physical land of Israel is promised to the physical seed of Abraham, the Jews; whereas, we know today through the New Testament that believers in Christ are of the spiritual seed of Abraham and the true nation of Israel.

### **The Fifth Covenant, The Mosaic Covenant**

*Exodus 19:1-6, In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. 2 When they set out from Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in the wilderness; and there Israel camped in front of the mountain. 3 And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, “This is what you shall say to the house of*

*Jacob and tell the sons of Israel: 4 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I carried you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself. 5 Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; 6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel."*

The Mosaic Covenant was centered around God giving His divine law to Moses on Mount Sinai. The Mosaic Covenant is also referred to as the Old Covenant (2 Corinthians 3:14; Hebrews 8:6, 13) and was replaced by the New Covenant in Christ (Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 8:8; 8:13; 9:15; 12:24). Part of the Mosaic Covenant was the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20) and the rest of the Law, which contained over 600 commands—roughly 300 positive and 300 negative. The Mosaic Covenant was a conditional covenant. If the people obey this covenant they will be blessed and if not, judgement would come upon them.

The focus at Sinai is less on what Abraham's descendants must do in order to inherit the land and more on how they must conduct themselves within the land as God's chosen people. In order to be God's "treasured possession," "kingdom of priests," and "holy nation," Israel must keep God's covenant by submitting to its requirements in Exodus 20–23.

Israel would be different from other nations and thus reflect God's wisdom and greatness to surrounding peoples. Abraham's descendants would not only follow in the footsteps of their ancestor, but would also facilitate the fulfillment of God's promises. Thus, like Abraham, Israel must "walk before God and be blameless." Failing to do so would undermine the very reason for Israel's existence. They were blessed in order to be a blessing for others.

## **The Sixth Covenant - The Palestinian Covenant**

*Deuteronomy 29:1, These are the words of the covenant which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the sons of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He had made with them at Horeb. Deuteronomy 29:13, in order that He may establish you today as His people, and that He may be your God, just as He spoke to you and as He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Deuteronomy 30:5-10, “The Lord your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will be good to you and make you more numerous than your fathers. 6 “Moreover, the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the hearts of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul, so that you may live. 7 And the Lord your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you. 8 And you will again obey the Lord, and follow all His commandments which I am commanding you today. 9 Then the Lord your God will prosper you abundantly in every work of your hand, in the children of your womb, the offspring of your cattle, and in the produce of your ground, for the Lord will again rejoice over you for good, just as He rejoiced over your fathers; 10 if you obey the Lord your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this Book of the Law, if you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and soul.*

The Palestinian covenant is another conditional covenant, containing special promises to Israel. The Palestinian covenant, or the Land Covenant, focuses on the land aspect that was detailed in the Abrahamic Covenant. The main promises to Israel include:

- 1) God would establish the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as His people.

- 2) God would give the Jewish people possession of the promised land, where Abram had earlier settled.
- 3) God promised to regenerate the Israelites of that time and their descendants by circumcising their hearts so that they would love Him totally.
- 4) God promised to judge Israel's enemies.
- 5) God promised blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience.
- 6) God promised that if the Israelites would obey God that He would prosper them in their obedience.
- 7) God promised that if the Israelites disobeyed God, He would cause them to be scattered around the world and they will no longer exist as a nation if they choose not to follow God.
- 8) God promised to gather the scattered Israelites from all over the world and to bring them back into the land He had promised to their ancestors.
- 9) God promises He would eventually restore the nation if...the people repent and turn back towards God. When the nation is restored, God will cause them to prosper. God will turn from His anger and then He will bless His people.
- 10) God promised to judge Israel's enemies.

If the people obey this covenant they will be blessed and possess the land God had promised forever. If they fail to follow this covenant, they will be driven out of the land and exiled into other nations.

While some might see these promises being fulfilled when Israel was returned from captivity in Babylon at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, there seem to be some aspects of this that have not been fully realized yet. Many believe this will not be completely fulfilled until the millennial reign of Christ.



## **The Seventh Covenant, The Davidic Covenant**

*2 Samuel 7:11-16, The Lord also declares to you that the Lord will make a house for you. 12 When your days are finished and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come from you, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he does wrong, I will discipline him with a rod of men and with strokes of sons of humanity, 15 but My favor shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from you. 16 Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.”*

The Davidic Covenant expands upon the “seed” aspect of the first covenant with Adam and the later covenant with Abraham. This is an unconditional covenant God made with David. God promised that David’s lineage would last forever and that his kingdom would be permanent and never pass away. There will be a time when someone from the line of David will sit on the throne and rule as king forever. This future king is Jesus. This was fulfilled when Christ, the “Son of David” ascended to the throne of the Heavenly Jerusalem and established His rule over all the earth. The apostle Peter drove this point home on the day of Pentecost when he proclaimed to fellow Jews: “David was a prophet and knew that God promised him an oath that he would place one of his descendants on the throne. Seeing what was ahead, Jesus spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body decay. God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. For David did not ascend to Heaven, and yet he said...” The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.” Therefore

let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” (Acts 2:30-36)

### **The Eighth Covenant, The New Covenant**

*Jeremiah 31:31-34, “Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers on the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord. “For this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the Lord: “I will put My law within them and write it on their heart; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. They will not teach again, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” declares the Lord, “for I will forgive their wrongdoing, and their sin I will no longer remember.”*

The final covenant is the new covenant God made with all humanity. Even though this is a conditional covenant, there is only one condition that must be met. One must put their faith in Jesus Christ. All people are to accept Jesus as the true Messiah and ultimate sacrifice for sin and for the forgiveness of sin. What is so interesting about this new covenant is the fact that God Himself, steps in to replace humanity. In effect, this covenant is the first covenant between two equals. Because the previous covenants were made between God and humans, they were unequal partners. These covenants were doomed to fail because humans could never live up to the standards of God, because humans were sinful. This new covenant will never end or never fail. It is centered on the ministry and works of Jesus Christ the Messiah. Jesus would take the place of humanity and become human, so that He could save the humans He created. Jesus would not fail and He will make humans righteous because they could never be righteous

on their own. So then, what are the promises of this new covenant?

- God promises to forgive sin.
- There will be a universal knowledge of the Lord.
- Jesus Christ came to fulfill the Law of Moses (Matthew 5:17) and create a new covenant between God and all His people.
- Both Jews and Gentiles can be free from the penalty of the law.
- We are now given the opportunity to receive salvation as a free gift from God. (Ephesians 2:8-9).

However, this does not mean that all humans will be spared from their sins. Those who refuse to acknowledge and accept Jesus as Lord and Savior will still face the consequences of their decision. They will still be subject to judgment and the wrath that is to fall on them for not accepting this new covenant of Jesus Christ. Covenants are one of the most important themes in the Bible—they are the key to God’s redemptive plan to restore humanity to its divine calling. Starting in Genesis, God enters into one formal partnership (i.e., covenant) after another with various humans in order to rescue His world. These divine-human partnerships drive the narrative forward until it reaches its climax in Jesus. To tell the story of God redeeming humanity through Jesus is to tell the whole story of God’s covenant relationship with humans.

All prophecy is based on these covenants and how the people of God either obey or disobey them. We will see the relationship between these covenants and the prophecies that lay ahead.

## Summary of the Covenants

#	Covenant	Covenant Terms	Covenant Type	Scriptures	Participants	Provisions	Status	Sign/Seal
1	Edenic	Conditional	Suzerainty	Genesis (1:28-30) Genesis (2:15-17) Hosea (6:7)	God and Adam (Adam represented all of mankind)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Be fruitful and multiply.</li> <li>2) Subdue the earth. Genesis (1:28-30)</li> <li>3) Take dominion over all living things. Genesis (2:15-17)</li> <li>4) Plants, seeds &amp; fruit for food. Hosea (6:7)</li> <li>5) Take care of the garden.</li> <li>6) Don't eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.</li> <li>7) If you eat from the tree, you will surely die.</li> </ol>	This covenant was the basis for dispensational "Innocence" and was broken in Genesis (3:1-6) resulting in the "Adamic Covenant".	Peace and Order
2	Adamic	Unconditional	Suzerainty	Genesis (3:14-19)	God, Serpent (Satan), Adam, Woman (Adam represented all of mankind)	<p>Serpent (Satan): He is cursed above all other creatures, is to crawl on his belly, and dust will be for his food. There is enmity between you and the woman and your seed will bruise the heel of the woman but her seed will crush your head.</p> <p>Woman: Greater sorrow and pain in child birth and a desire to rebel against being under her husband's subjection.</p> <p>Man: The ground is cursed and tending it will be hard work.</p> <p>Mankind: Immediate spiritual death and eventual physical death.</p>	This covenant was the basis for dispensational "Conscience" and is still in effect today.	Death (Spiritual and Physical death)
3	Noahic	Unconditional	Suzerainty	Genesis (8:20-22) Genesis (9:1-17)	God and Noah (Noah represented all mankind)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth.</li> <li>2) The fear of man was put into the animals and they were given to man.</li> <li>3) Mankind could eat any animal but was not to drink the blood.</li> <li>4) One man was not to kill another; otherwise they were to be killed.</li> <li>5) Promise that God would never flood the earth again.</li> </ol>	This covenant was the basis for the dispensation of "Human Government" and is still in effect today.	Rainbow
4	Abrahamic	Unconditional	Suzerainty	Genesis (12:1-3) Genesis (13:14-17) Genesis (15:1-21) Genesis (17:1-21) Genesis (22:15-18)	God and Abraham (Abraham represented all of the Israelites)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) A great nation will come from Abraham through many descendants.</li> <li>2) Descendants would get certain lands (Canaan).</li> <li>3) Abraham and his descendants would be blessed and would bless others.</li> <li>4) Those who blessed descendants would be blessed.</li> <li>5) Those who cursed descendants would be cursed.</li> </ol>	This covenant was the basis for the dispensation of "Promise" and is still in effect today.	Circumcision

- **Party:** This is a covenant between two equal parties. Typically both parties need to give something in order to get something.
- **Suzerainty:** This is a covenant between a greater party (i.e. a king or God) and a lesser party (i.e. a vassal or servant). In this type of covenant, the suzerain defines all of the stipulations.
- **Conditional:** This is a bi-lateral agreement between two parties. If you do something, I will do something. One party promises to do something if the other meets the defined conditions.
- **Unconditional:** This is a unilateral agreement between two parties. In this type of covenant, one party unconditionally promises something without anything required from the other party.

## Summary of the Covenants (cont.)

#	Covenant	Covenant Terms	Covenant Type	Scriptures	Participants	Provisions	Status	Sign/Seal
5	Mosaic	Conditional	Suzerainty	Exodus (20:1-31) Exodus (18)	God and the nation of Israel	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The law as a whole was given (10 commandments &amp; 613 other laws)</li> <li>2) Blessings and Judgements were defined.</li> <li>3) Blood sacrifices were required for sin and offerings were defined.</li> <li>4) Dietary restrictions were imposed.</li> <li>5) The death penalty was expanded (ex. adultery, cursing God, witchcraft, etc.).</li> </ol>	This covenant was the basis for the dispensation of "Law" and came to an end at the death of Jesus Christ.	The Sabbath
6	Palestinian	Unconditional	Suzerainty	Deuteronomy (29:1) Deuteronomy (30:1-20)	God and the nation of Israel	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Israel will break the Mosaic law and will be scattered.</li> <li>2) Israel will be punished, through war and exile.</li> <li>3) Israel will be regathered, will repent.</li> <li>4) Israel will possess the promised land and rebuild their relationship with God.</li> <li>5) The enemies of Israel will be judged.</li> </ol>	This covenant is still in effect	Blessings and Curses
7	Davidic	Unconditional	Suzerainty	2nd Samuel (7:4-17) 1st Chronicles (17:4-15)	God and David (David represented his descendants)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) David would be part of an eternal dynasty.</li> <li>2) Solomon would establish a throne after David and build the temple.</li> <li>3) Solomon would be disciplined for disobedience</li> <li>4) The Messiah would come through David's line and establish His throne forever.</li> <li>5) Promised Eternal Dynasty, Kingdom, Throne, and Descendants.</li> </ol>	This covenant is still in effect. (Jesus fulfills the eternal dynasty)	Everlasting Kingdom
8	New	Unconditional	Equal	Jeremiah (31:31-34) Matthew (26:28) Mark (14:24) Luke (22:20) Hebrews (8:8-12) Hebrews (13:20-21)	Jesus Christ and The Apostles (The Apostles represented the "Church")	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The law and Mosaic Covenant are ended.</li> <li>2) Two new commandments are given to replace the original ten.</li> <li>3) The salvation of Israel is to extend to gentiles.</li> <li>4) An everlasting provision for sin is to be made by the blood of Jesus.</li> <li>5) The Holy Spirit is promised to indwell believers.</li> </ol>	This covenant is the basis for the dispensation of "Grace" and is in effect eternally.	Baptism and The Lord's Supper

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