



BACKGROUND OF COVENANTS

A covenant is essentially a promise that one party makes with another. The Bible records a number of covenants that God made with man. God made both conditional and unconditional covenants. Conditional covenants required the people to do something in order for God to uphold the covenant while God would uphold unconditional covenants regardless of human action.

Covenants are an important component of the Bible. Another word for covenant is “testament” and the Bible is divided into two parts: The Old Testament and The New Testament (*or* The Old Covenant and The New Covenant). The Old Testament slowly reveals God’s plan for humanity through the use of covenants and His prophets.

IMPORTANCE OF COVENANTS

Teach Us About God

God revealed much about His character through His covenants with mankind. God showed His faithfulness, love, loyalty, and justice (to name just a few) by the terms and promises of His covenants.

Assure Us Of God’s Promises







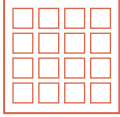


God cannot lie (Titus 1:2), therefore His promises cannot be broken. God will continue to uphold His covenants as He always has in the past. We can take comfort in knowing that God will do as He says.

Reveal God’s Plans

In His covenants, God reveals some of His plans for humanity. God revealed the Messiah, His chosen people, and where the Israelites would live in various covenants.

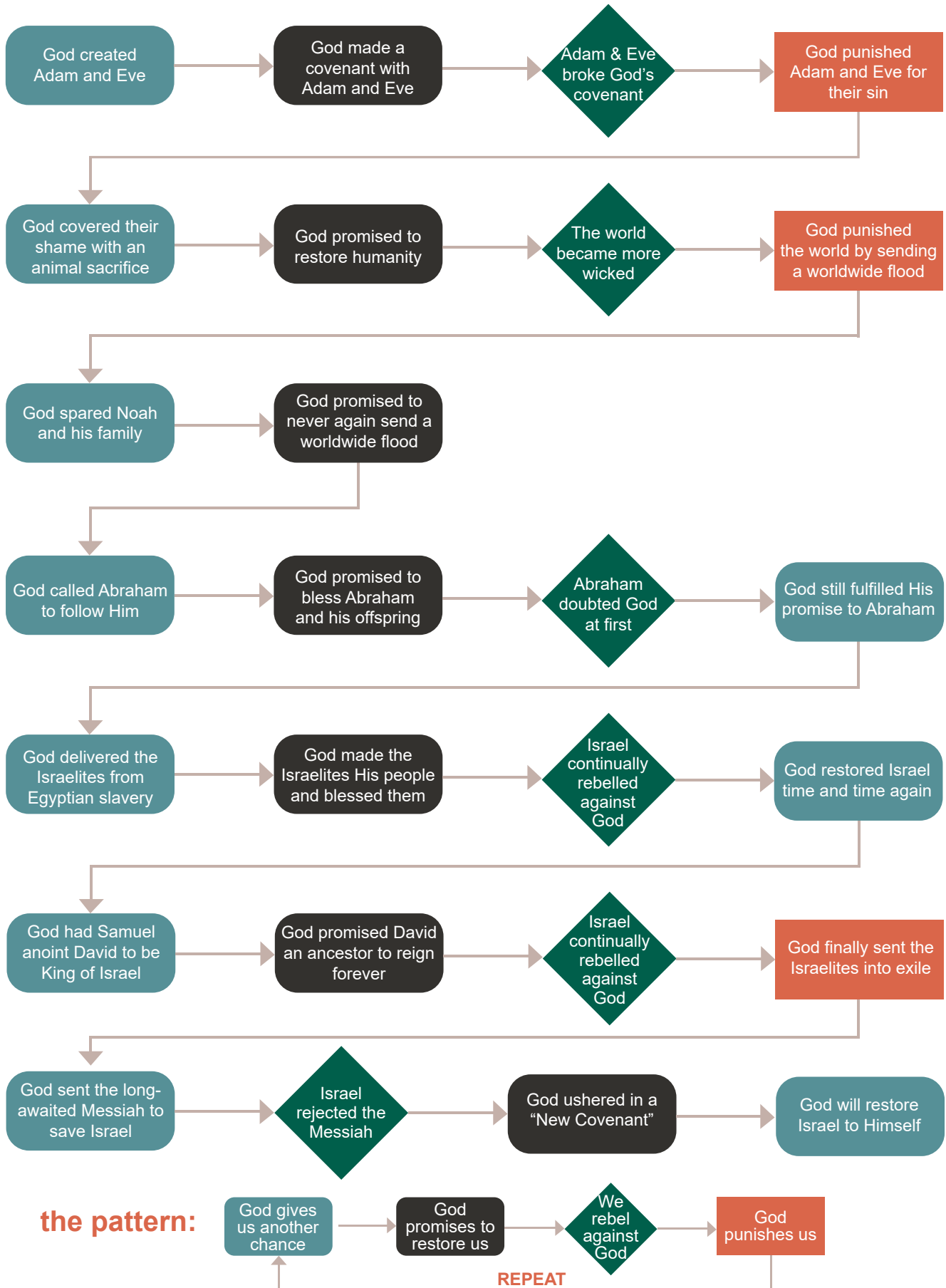


MAJOR COVENANTS IN THE BIBLE

Covenant	Passage	Participant(s)	Summary
<i>Edenic Covenant</i> 	Genesis 1:26-31, Genesis 2:15-17	Adam and Eve	God laid out the basic details of humanity. This included how we are created in God's image and that we are to rule over animals. He also gave one rule for Adam and Eve to follow: do not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17).
<i>Adamic Covenant</i> 	Genesis 3:14-19	Adam and Eve	Immediately following Adam and Eve's sin, God laid out a new covenant which detailed the consequences of their sin. God lays down the terrible effects of their sin, but leaves them with hope (Genesis 3:15).
<i>Noahic Covenant</i> 	Genesis 9:8-17	Noah and all other living creatures on earth (Genesis 9:9-10)	After God sent a flood to the earth to destroy the people who had become dangerously wicked, He promised to never flood the entire earth again.
<i>Abrahamic Covenant</i> 	Genesis 15, Genesis 12:2-7	Abraham and his descendents	God promised Abraham that his descendents would grow and prosper. He also promised land to Abraham's offspring. Elsewhere, God promises that one of Abraham's offspring would bless all nations which is a reference to the coming Messiah.
<i>Covenant of Circumcision</i> 	Genesis 17	Abraham and his descendents	God promised to make Abraham's offspring His chosen people if they consecrated themselves to Him through the act of circumcision.
<i>Sinaitic Covenant</i> 	Exodus 19-24	Moses and Israel	God promised to make Israel His chosen people if they consecrated themselves to Him through the act of obedience to His commands.
<i>Covenant with Phinehas</i> 	Numbers 25:10-13	The priest Phinehas and his descendents	God promised the priest Phinehas that he and his descendents will continue as a "lasting priesthood".
<i>Davidic Covenant</i> 	2 Samuel 7:5-17	King David	God promised King David that one of David's descendents will become king and his reign will never end. This is another reference to the coming Messiah.
<i>The New Covenant</i> 	Jeremiah 31:31-34	Israel	God promised Israel that someday He would usher in a new covenant in which He will forgive their sin and establish an everlasting relationship with them.



PROCESS OF COVENANTS





ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

Promises → Fulfillment

God will make Abraham into a
great nation
Genesis 12:2



The Israelites were fruitful and
increased in numbers
Exodus 1:7

God will bless all nations
through Abraham's
descendents
Genesis 12:3



Abraham's descendent Jesus
died for all of mankind, saving
us from eternal damnation
Matthew 1:1

God will give Abraham's
descendents specific land
Genesis 12:7



The Israelites entered into the
promised land under Joshua
Joshua 21:43

What did God do next?

God changed Abram's name to Abraham

"The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household 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."

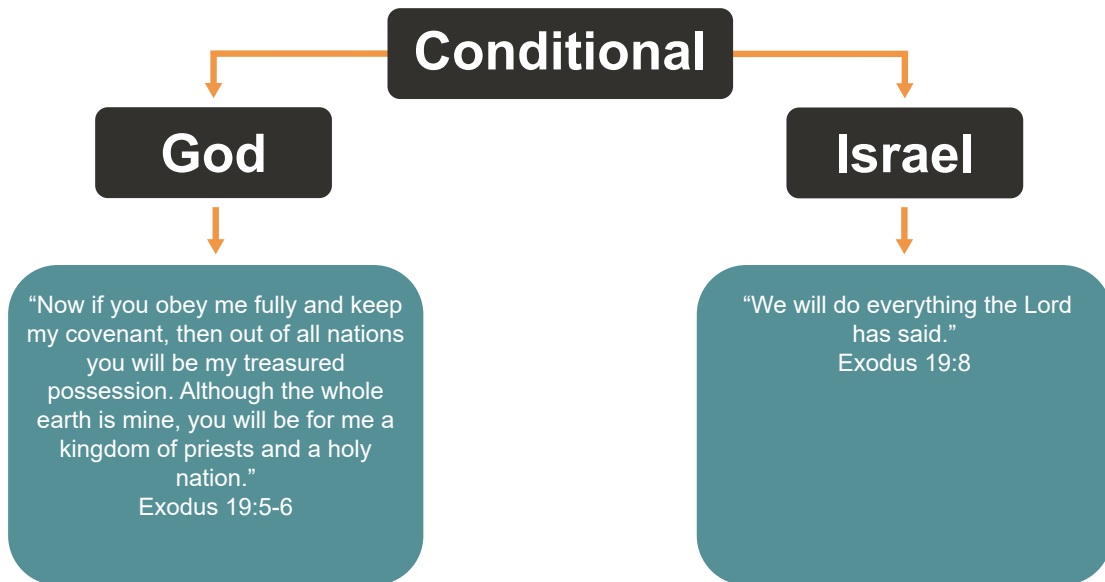
So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.

Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. The Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him."

Genesis 12:1-7



SINAITIC COVENANT



Significance of the Sinaitic Covenant

- God had already singled out the Israelites as His people, however the Sinaitic covenant set them apart as a holy people. Now they were to be set apart as devoted to God and holy, which is reflected in the Mosaic Law that God revealed to the Israelites.
- The sacrificial system set in place by God foreshadowed Christ's payment on the cross (Hebrews 9:15-22).
- The sacrifices did not remove sin (Hebrews 10:4).
- The Sinaitic Covenant was replaced by the New Covenant.

What did God do next?



God gave Israel the Mosaic Law



DAVIDIC COVENANT

Promises → Fulfillment

God reassured David that the Israelites will receive the land promised to them

2 Samuel 7:10



This promise has not yet been fulfilled

God will raise up a king from David's descendents who will reign as king forever

2 Samuel 7:12-16



Jesus is the eternally reigning king, He will return to establish His kingdom forever

Matthew 1:1, Revelation 5:13

“Go and tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?””

“Now then, tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies.

“The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you: When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”

2 Samuel 7:5-16



NEW COVENANT

“The days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors 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 people 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. No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘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.”

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Effects of the New Covenant

New Heart	The New Covenant is written in our hearts in contrast to the Sinaitic Covenant which was written on two stone tablets.
New Spirit	The Holy Spirit enters all participants of the New Covenant. We can participate in the New Covenant when we trust in Jesus and repent of our sins.
Grace	We are no longer under the law but rather we are under grace. We are saved not by following rules, but purely by the grace of God.
Salvation	God has given eternal life to those who participate in the New Covenant.
Relationship with God	Participants of the New Covenant enter into a never-ending relationship with God.

**Jesus announced that the New Covenant would begin with the shedding of His blood
(Luke 22:20)**