

# THE REDEMPTIVE COVENANTS OF GOD

By  
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## Abstract

This is a comprehensive look at all the covenants by which God worked out the redemption of fallen mankind in order to reconcile man to Himself by way of the sacrificial, vicarious death of Christ Jesus. It identifies the Abramic Covenant as the foundational covenant of all of God's covenants concerning grace. These include the Covenant of Law [which, with regard to redemption, is subordinate to the Abramic Covenant, being a facilitator of grace], the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant in the blood of Christ. God's purposes in these covenants are explored to some length.

## Introduction

This subject is not well understood by most Christians today. Nevertheless, an accurate knowledge of these covenants is critical to understanding the Bible, since redemption is the principal theme of all the Scriptures. Unsound doctrines have resulted from this lack of accurate biblical knowledge, causing a significant amount of confusion and false teaching pertaining not only to salvation, but to the nation Israel, the Law, and the Church. My purpose in this paper is to clearly present God's redemptive covenants, His redemptive purpose in those covenants, and to show how His several covenants relate and work together through time to accomplish His redemptive purpose and plan by fulfilling His covenant promises.

Realizing that God's grace and mercy have been operational since the outset of His dealings with mankind, and that numerous persons have walked with God *in the obedience of faith* long before God called Abram, I will, nevertheless, begin in Genesis 12

with the call of Abram, because God began at that time to formalize His redemptive plan. That was approximately 2000 years before the first advent of Christ, or about 4000 years ago. I will quote Gen.12:1-3, which sets forth the provisions of God's covenant with Abram (later called Abraham), but subsequently I will limit my discussion mainly to the redemptive provisions. I will trace God's redemptive plan chronologically and will discuss the theological implications as we come to them, beginning with the call of Abram and ending with the New Covenant and the salvation of the Israelite remnant some time yet future to the present. Between the call of Abram and the institution of the New Covenant in the blood of Jesus [which He announced at the Passover supper], there was the giving of the Covenant of Law at Sinai approximately 665 [\*] years after Abraham's call. God's covenant with David was given about 995 B.C. [\*] *See explanation at the end of this article.*

You may recall that God prophesied to Abram the 400 year Egyptian bondage (Gen.15:13-15), which happened just as God said. Then God called Moses to lead His people out of Egypt (Exod.3:1-4:17). Through amazing miracles God brought them out and after two months they came to Sinai, where God gave them His Covenant of Law. We will discuss this momentous event in due time, for the law and its purpose have been misrepresented and misconstrued most seriously by numerous individuals who have claimed to be theologians. ***Paul said to Timothy that "the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith, from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm. But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully, knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person..." (I Tim.1:5-9a).*** But let us begin with Abram's first encounter with God.

## **The Abramic Covenant (Gen.12:1-3)---Abram Meets God**

- v.1 ‘Now the Lord had said to Abram, ‘Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you.’
- v.2 ‘I will make you a great nation;  
I will bless you and make your name great;  
and *you shall be a blessing.*’
- v.3 ‘I will bless those who bless you,  
and curse him that curses you;  
*and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*.’”

This, then, is the framework for God’s redemptive plan. He chose one man in whom He had confidence (See Gen.18:17-19— And the Lord said, “*Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.*” The very strong implication here is that the term ‘*I have known him*’ is a way of saying ‘I have empowered him by My Spirit to follow Me and to do My will.’

I have underlined the specific terms of God’s covenant with Abraham. The italicized and bold terms pertain directly to the spiritual blessing of God’s salvation. **There can be no doubt that the Abrahamic Covenant is the primary Covenant of Grace in the Bible. From it all of the redemptive covenants of God stem: namely, the Covenant of Law, the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant in the blood of Christ.**

We do not know how much time passed between God’s call to Abram and the point in time when he departed from Haran to journey to Canaan, but we are told that Abram was 75 years old when that occurred. It does appear that Terah had plans to go to

Canaan (Gen.11:31), but God had other plans. Terah died at Haran before Abram departed for Canaan (Gen.11:32). God's callings are very specific to individuals, and it was Abram, not Terah whom God chose to be the father of His special people. But now let us follow the trail of blessing from Abram till it ends with the Lord Christ Jesus.

As I see it, God had a plan to develop a nation which would make the name of Jehovah known throughout the world as the one true God of all creation (Jer.32:20), the God in whom is salvation. His chosen people failed many times to glorify God, yet there were times when they were obedient to Him and He blessed them greatly and was glorified and feared by all the nations. It was at those times, mainly during the reigns of David and Solomon, that Israel had peace and prosperity. But we are getting ahead of ourselves by a thousand years.

God developed a close relationship with Abram, made a formal covenant with him concerning the land of promise (Gen.15:8-21), prophesied to Abram the 400-year Egyptian bondage for his descendants, and told Abram that he would die long before the nation would come from his descendants. In Gen.17, God changed Abram's name to Abraham (father of a multitude) and gave Abraham the sign of the covenant, which was male circumcision (Gen.17:10). I refer here to the Covenant of Grace, for though the covenant provided for certain temporal or material blessings, such as the land as an everlasting possession, *its basic tenor was spiritual blessing*. And it required faithfulness on the part of Abraham and his descendants ("My covenant, which you shall keep..." Gen.17:10, 18:19, and others). **Paul, in Rom.4:11, explains that the sign of circumcision was "a seal of the righteousness of faith which he [Abraham] had while he was still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe [the promise of spiritual blessing]." See Romans 4:9-12.**

Yes, one must understand that God's covenant with Abraham is God's foundational covenant for the dispensation and application of His grace and mercy and salvation to lost humanity,

*all who will believe His promises and who obey His commandments as Abraham did.* God's covenant with Abraham is much bigger than Abraham, and bigger than the nation of Israel and the promises pertaining to them. It is the '**vehicle**' by which God chose to make available to all mankind His wonderful salvation, and He developed His plan through other covenants (Covenant of Law and Davidic Covenant) until it reached fruition in the New Covenant in the sacrifice of the Christ.

In Gen.22 we see God's supreme test of the faith of Abraham, when God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his long-awaited son Isaac as a burnt offering to the Lord. It is well to remember that God had said "In Isaac shall your seed be called." In other words, God was telling Abraham to kill, not only his beloved son, but his only hope for the fulfillment of God's covenant promises. But Abraham's faith endured and he proceeded to obey God. We know, of course, that God intervened to prevent Isaac's death, but He was pleased and satisfied with Abraham's faith: ***"By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son [Isaac, the son of promise]—blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars in heaven and as the sand on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gates of their enemies. In your seed*** (See Gal.3:16 for Paul's understanding of Abraham's 'Seed') ***all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.*"(Gen.22:15-18).** Of course, Abraham had another son [Ishmael, the son of the Egyptian bondswoman], but Ishmael did not come under God's covenant with Abraham. He was born according to the flesh [of the will of Sarah and Abram], but Isaac was the son of promise [of God] (Gal.4:21). The physical descendants of Abraham have been very numerous, indeed, but not so numerous as the stars or the sand of the seashore. But God, I believe, is speaking of the children of faith, which are much more numerous (See Rom.4:11-12; Gal.3:6-7.).

Now let us fast forward more than 600 years to the time of Moses, called of God to lead his chosen people out of Egyptian slavery, a people descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Beginning with His advance man, Joseph, God assured their place in the fertile Land of Goshen where they thrived and grew into a nation of perhaps two million persons by Moses' day. Through miraculous plagues, performed through Moses, God freed His people. After two months travel, the complaining mob arrived near Mount Sinai, where they were encamped. They had departed Egypt on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the first month. It was now the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the third month. God was about to do something very significant.

### **Sinaitic Covenant: God Gives the Law**

The Israelites at this point in time were a very loosely organized multitude of men, women, and children. With them was a mixed multitude of non-Israelites who wanted to go out of Egypt with them, and many herds and flocks of animals. None of these people had any guidance from a legal or moral code of their own, being subject only to their cruel taskmasters in Egypt for several generations. Moses needed help!

Weeks earlier, when God supernaturally furnished them food, He said to Moses in Exod.16:4, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you...*that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not.*" [This implied their having trust in God and living by faith.]. Then Moses promised that they would see the glory of the Lord (Exod.16:7), and God revealed His glory in a cloud over the Wilderness of Sin (Exod.16:10). The people foolishly disobeyed God and gathered food on the Sabbath Day, but God dealt patiently with them, so they rested on the Sabbath. At Rephidim there was no water and they were almost ready to stone Moses. Again Moses cried to the Lord and the Lord instructed Moses what to do (Exod.17:1-7). When Moses struck the rock, life-giving water gushed out. Paul says (in I Cor.10:1-5) that that Rock was [represented] Christ. One other incident we will

mention—God’s victory over their enemies, the Amalekites, on Israel’s behalf (Exod.17:8-15). *Through these experiences God was teaching the Israelites that they were totally dependant upon Him for life, **but sadly, most of them were not good learners.***

God next used Jethro, the Midianite priest and Moses’ father-in-law, to increase Moses’ administrative skills. Jethro taught Moses how to organize the people under subordinate leaders of thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens, choosing men who feared God, were honest, and who hated covetousness. See Exod.18:13-27.

Exodus 19 is a critically important chapter in understanding God’s intended relationship with Israel. His intent toward them was a gracious one, but unfortunately for them, they did not understand God’s love and mercy. They were thinking on the level of self gratification and creature comfort, most of them knowing little or nothing of things spiritual. They would have to experience many generations of the fruits of their disobedience to God, but God would remain faithful to His word and promises.

At Sinai, the first thing God did was to call to Moses from the mountain and give him instructions as to what to say to the people. We find this in Exod.19:3-6, and it is exceedingly important to understand. Let us outline this portion:

Exod.19:3b. “*Thus you shall say to the House of Jacob and tell the Children of Israel”:*

This type of redundancy was sometimes used by God to emphasize the importance of what would follow and to highlight His relationship with the object of His statement. God knew Jacob; He had wrestled with him; He had given him his new name ‘Israel’.

Exod.19:4. “*You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself.”*

God reminds the people of His mighty deeds performed to rescue them from slavery and dangers of death, to bring them to Himself.

They are His possession by the Abrahamic Covenant, the object of His love and care, the vehicle for His redemptive plan and purpose.

Exod.19:5. “Now, therefore, [**if** ] you will indeed:

1. **Obey My voice** [shama (shaw-mah/ Str. H8085)  
And (obey/hear intelligently)
2. **Keep My Covenant** [shamar (shaw-mar/Str.H8104]

\* Note similarity—shama/shamar (keep/observe/heed)

These are the simple and straight forward conditions they must meet. There are no complicated or confusing aspects to them. **See also Deut.30:11-14.** It was simply **a matter of trust and obedience.** [**Then** ]

1. “You shall be **a special treasure to Me above all people,**  
For all the earth is Mine.”
2. “And you shall be to Me **a kingdom of priests** and a **holy nation.**”

God held out the promise of great blessings, both temporal and spiritual, to this fledgling nation. The world would see it as just a ragtag mob of former slaves, but God saw it as the potential for fulfilling His redemptive plan, and as the progeny of Abraham, with whom He had made His everlasting covenant—the man of faith who was called the friend of God. **The Lord intended these people to carry His Name and His truth, mercy, and justice to all the nations of the world. Through these people would eventually come the One who would ‘take away the sin of the world’.**

What God was about to do in the formalizing of His law was for the furtherance and outworking of His Covenant of Grace that He made with Abraham, *and in this sense, the Covenant of Law (Exod.34:28, Deut 9:9,11) is subordinate to the Abrahamic Covenant.* God requires His people to be just, merciful, and faithful to Him (**Gen.18:19**), and He gave His perfect law for Israel’s moral and spiritual guidance (See Rom.7:14), that they might live in faith (belief in Him and obedience to Him—See Deut.30:15-20, especially 20). Sadly, the Israelites for the most part did not seek righteousness by faith (Rom.9:31-32), but that

fact did not change God’s plan or purpose. His faithfulness persevered to the fruition of His covenant promise of *a Savior whose perfect sacrifice would justify all obedient believers by their faith*. The Covenant of Law, like the Abrahamic Covenant, was a conditional covenant in that the Israelites were obligated to obey God and to keep His covenant (i.e., His commandments). [Even Abraham knew and kept God’s law from the heart long before its formalization at Sinai (See Gen.26:5.). Also, Paul said that gentiles who kept the law from the heart were counted as righteous (Rom.2:13-16).]. Their obedience to God and His commandments was predicated upon their love for and fear of God (Deut.6:4-6, 5:29, 30:16, 20). God’s expectations for the Israelites and for Christians today are the same—**love God and keep His commandments (See John 14:15, 20, 21-24.)**. [In the churches of the modern and post-modern eras, the pernicious doctrine of ‘cheap grace and easy believeism’ has led many to accept a false salvation that demands no obedience to God’s law, only belief (intellectual assent), where God’s law is not written in the heart. One would hope that the victims and the purveyors of this unsound doctrine will learn of their error before it is too late.]

The Israelites at Sinai were, of course, descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and though it had been hundreds of years since Abraham received the promises, those promises still applied to them, and they were expected to keep God’s covenant. ***God’s formula for a person to live by faith is: Fear and love God; walk in His ways of faith, mercy, and justice; keep his commandments, statutes, and judgments. In other words, live by Matt.22:37-40, heeding the weightier matters of the law—justice, mercy, and faith (Matt.23:23).***

In the Deuteronomy account of the giving of the law, we find much valuable insight. In chapter five, Moses recounts the Sinai experience. He told how the people were frightened when they heard God speak out of the fiery mountain and ask Moses to hear God and then tell them what He said (Deut.5:23-27). They then said, “We will hear and do it.” In their mind, the law was strictly a

legal requirement. There was no love for God involved (See Deut.9:5-13—God called Israel a stiff-necked people, and Moses said they were rebellious against God from the time they left Egypt.). They had fallen into sin before Moses came down from the mountain with the tablets of the written covenant. Even today, many orthodox Jews continue to recite the ‘Shama’[hear/obey] (Deut.6:4-6), but they are still spiritually blind, *not having the law in their hearts. They are circumcised in the flesh, but remain uncircumcised in their hearts. And a veil remains over their eyes (II Cor.3:14-16).*

Many years after Sinai, the Israelites continued to reject their loving and merciful and long-suffering God. In I Sam.8:4-7, Israel demanded an earthly king to rule over them, and God gave them Saul, a man like themselves (disobedient, selfish, and covetous). Five hundred years later, when Judah (the southern kingdom) was about to go into Babylonian captivity as a judgment from God, God said some very important things to Jeremiah the Prophet.

**This Scripture we are now about to quote and discuss is theologically extremely significant.**

### **Jeremiah 7:21-24**

V.21. *“Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat meat.’”*

God scorned their vain, hypocritical rituals, which were a mockery, because they were idolatrous and wicked.

V.22., *‘For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day I brought them out of the land of Egypt concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices.’*

V.23. *‘But this is what I commanded them, saying, **Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all My ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.**’*

V.24. “Yet they did not **obey or incline their ear** [‘shama’], but followed the counsels and the dictates of their own evil hearts, and went backward and not forward.”

This passage so clearly defines God’s intent to be gracious to the Israelites if they would walk in faith before God, just as Abraham walked [and it was accounted to him for righteousness (see also Deut.6:25)], and as Isaac and Jacob also walked in the paths of righteousness for God’s name’s sake. But ***the Israelites refused to submit to God’s authority over them and were continually rebellious*** (see Deut. 9:7). The only way that they turned to God was to beg Him to rescue them when they had sinned and were being punished, when their enemies had overcome them. Look closely at verse 23. Here is the same familiar speech structure that God had used repeatedly before in His appeals to them to walk by faith. See Deut.30:16 and 20 as examples, and there are others. Some have insisted that God forced them into a ‘covenant of works’, but this cannot be true. God would not have placed His covenant people into a covenant which could lead only to an eternity apart from God, with no redemption possible. God’s aim was to redeem them from their transgressions [sins] and to fulfill His covenant promises to Abraham [and therefore to them]. **There is no such thing as a ‘covenant of works’.** That is why the Lord furnished the Israelites with the animal sacrificial system of temporary atonement for their ignorant [unintentional] transgressions against His law, so they could be redeemed by the blood of Christ under the New Covenant (Heb.9:15 & Gal.4:4-5). “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins” (Heb.10:4, see also v.11). By what God says through Jeremiah above, the Levitical system was an expression of God’s grace and mercy to a rebellious nation that, nevertheless, had some who walked by faith and whose sins were covered until the blood of Christ would bring redemption. The fact that only a minority of Israelites lived by faith cannot alter or annul God’s redemptive

plan and covenant promises [simply because the Law was given] any more than the fact that a minority of persons have believed and obeyed the Gospel of Christ since the cross can nullify the Gospel. Paul agreed with this assessment in Gal.3:17.

Even long before the time of Jeremiah, David showed his understanding of God's redemptive purpose when he wrote in Psa.51:16-17, "For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. **The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart**—these, O God, You will not despise."

The purpose of the law, then, was not to replace the Covenant of Grace given to Abraham and all of his spiritual descendants, *but rather to augment and facilitate it*. By this I mean that the law convicts of sin and teaches righteousness. It acted as a guardian and tutor to those Israelites who were of faith until the Promise [Christ] was revealed (Gal.3:19, 22-24). The augmentation is like this: As the knowledge and awareness of sin increased because the law made transgressions plain, then the consciences of more persons were convicted of their sins and they sought repentance that they might live (See Ezekiel 18:30-32). As sin abounded [awareness increased], grace abounded [increased] much more (Rom.5:20). One must understand that in an individual, or in society as a whole, the awareness of sin must increase before belief and obedience [faith] can occur. Thus, the preaching and teaching pertaining to spiritual lawlessness and the good news of forgiveness in Christ will greatly facilitate the grace of God. *Hence, the law, by convicting of sin and teaching of righteousness will lead to repentance and to justification by faith and to sanctification by obedience to God's commandments.* So, even after the cross of Christ, the moral law (Ten Commandment) remains as God's righteous standard for all who would walk by faith. There are two ways that Christians are not under the law. We are not condemned by it [because Jesus bore our condemnation] and the ceremonial law [sacrifices] is now obsolete, even for Jews who are Christians. But the moral law remains, and

Christians are obligated by love for Christ and our neighbor to keep it (John 14:15, 21, 23-24, Rom.13:8-10).

To conclude our discussion of this section on the Covenant of Law, we can accurately state with certainty that the Ten Commandments with the statutes and judgments stemming from them were not given to confine Israel to a legalistic system for their justification [for no one can be justified by the deeds of the law], but they were given for righteous moral guidance for those who chose to live by faith (Hab.2:4). All doctrinal belief systems that place Israel under a legalistic administration are in error according to the Scriptures, and that would include Dispensationalism and Covenant Theology. Such systems are contrary to God's redemptive purpose and would exclude Israel from eternal life in the presence of God. The purpose of their patient, loving, just, and merciful God was their redemption by faith in the promise [of Christ], which He gave through Abraham.

### **The Davidic Covenant (II Sam.7:8-16)**

Much happened in the life of the nation Israel between the giving of the law at Sinai and God making His covenant with David. The history of Israel contained in Numbers, Joshua, and Judges in this period of disobedience, wandering, conquest of the promised land and up to the time of Samuel [the last judge and a prophet of God to Israel] is not very encouraging. It is not possible to determine the exact number of years that passed, but it is probably around 350. As near as I can determine, Saul was made the first king of Israel in 1050 B.C.

During the conquest of Canaan led by Joshua, the tribes were fairly unified and God gave Israel great success, but she did not obey God completely regarding deposing the heathen that then were in the land, and this caused future problems.

Saul was a man after Israel's own heart, disobedient, rebellious, and sinful, and rejected by the Lord. David, on the other hand, was a man after God's own heart, for the most part obedient

to God's way and will, and walking in righteousness. [Yes, David sinned regarding Bathsheba and Uriah, and he was forgiven, but paid a very high price for his sins, but by-and-large David was a man who walked in God's way and kept His Law]. His military conquests were blessed by the Lord, but at the same time made him a bloody warrior, not suitable for building a house for the Lord. Nevertheless, in II Sam.7:8-16, God made His covenant with David and his descendants after him—a very important covenant, indeed. Let us examine it.

### God's Preamble—Verses 5-9

When God gave Israel peace from her enemies, David became almost obsessed to build God a house [a temple for the content of the tabernacle and for worship of Jehovah], and he gathered materials for it. God's response begins in v.5.

#### **V.5. “Would you build Me a house to dwell in?”**

Years later, Solomon, David's son admitted that God was too infinitely great to dwell in a house (I Kgs.8:27), but requested God to accept the temple Solomon had built for His Presence, and God did so (I Kgs. 8).

V.6, 7 God makes it clear that He never asked for a house of cedar while He led Israel. He, of course, manifested His Presence in the cloud and the pillar of fire, and above the Mercy Seat in the Holiest Place in the Tabernacle.

V.8, 9. God had a personal message for David here, reminding David how He had anointed him to be king and had cared for him and had made David a great name among the nations.

V.10. Next, God confirms His commitment to the promises to Israel contained in the Abrahamic Covenant.

- “I will appoint a place for My people Israel.”

- “I will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more.”
- “The sons of wickedness shall not oppress them any more, as they did in the time of the judges.”

#### V.11-16. David’s Legacy and Dynasty

- “The Lord declares to you that ***He will make you a house, a royal dynasty.***”
- “***I will set up your seed, who will come from your body, after you.***”
- “I will establish his kingdom.”
- “He shall build a house for My Name.”
- “***I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.***”

\*This is a crucial promise. The prophet Isaiah gives us more information about this. The last ‘son of David’ will be born of a virgin (Isa.7:14). He will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. And of the increase of His government, there will be no end, upon the ***throne of David*** to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.” (Isa.9:6-7)

- “I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he sins, I will chasten him with the rod of men, ***but My mercy shall not depart from him.***”
- “And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before Me. ***Your throne*** shall be established forever.”

Indeed, there is great theological (biblical) significance attached to ***the throne of David***. This is the heart of God’s covenant with David. The ‘throne’ speaks of the rightful place of the Lord Christ Jesus when **He will reign not only as King of the Jews, but also as KING of KINGS and LORD of LORDS. When every knee will bow to Him and every tongue will confess that JESUS IS LORD, to the GLORY of the FATHER.** [Based on Phil.2:9-11]

One might note that in this covenant there is no direct reference to the Savior or to salvation, only to the ultimate One who will occupy David's throne. Salvation, however, is implicit in the throne occupied by the Lord Jesus, and God is not finished with His revelation of redemption's plan quite yet. Again, we must fast forward to about 4 B.C. when the Angel Gabriel delivers a message to Mary (See Luke 1:26-33.). We will quote only vv. 31-33. "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God will give Him the *throne of His father David*, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His Kingdom there will be no end." Again, this is pertaining to the Davidic Covenant and so looks beyond the cross (See Acts 2:29-30.). We have to go to Matthew's gospel to see Jesus as Savior (See Matt.1:20-23), **but first I wish to remind whoever reads this that Jesus as Lord and Jesus as Savior are one and the same Person. Theological error is responsible for 'dissecting' Jesus into parts for questionable purposes, particularly the non-lordship faction. See Acts 2:36 [Jesus is both LORD and CHRIST]. One may not legitimately call Jesus SAVIOR without confessing Him as LORD, and no one may call Him LORD except by the Holy Spirit (1Co.12:3). Jesus is also Prophet and Priest, as well as Savior and Lord, and all of His offices are integral with His Person.** Hence, the Davidic Covenant belongs to the Abrahamic Covenant as one of God's redemptive covenants. The Matt.1 reference shows in v. 21 that Jesus is the long-awaited Savior.

## **THE NEW COVENANT**

The New Covenant is mentioned seven times by name that I know of, once in The Old Testament by Jeremiah (31:31-34) and six times in the New Testament. Jesus is quoted in Matt.26:28, in Luke 22:20, in Mark 14:24, and in I Cor.11:25. Hebrews 8:8

quotes from Jer.31:31, while Heb.12:24 refers to Christ as the Mediator of the New Covenant. Also, the application of the New Covenant certainly appears to be referred to [but not by name] in Ezek.11:19-20 and 36:26-27, where by a sovereign act of mercy, God will change the hearts and minds of the Israelite remnant in the last days before Armageddon. A similar implication is found in Zech.12:10 and 13:1 and in Isa.59:21.

Is the New Covenant in the blood of Christ the same as the New Covenant mentioned in Jer.31:31? I think absolutely ‘yes’. *There is only one New Covenant.* I base my opinion on the fact that a new birth by the Spirit is necessary for salvation, and that is what is described in the OT Scriptures pertaining to the New Covenant [in every instance]. Moreover, throughout God’s redemptive covenant dealings, the requirements for belonging to Him are consistently the same [love God and obey His commandments]. One plan for redemption for all—one covenant. Salvation is in Christ only (Acts 4:12) for Jews and Gentiles alike (Rom.10:12). See my separate paper on the New Covenant.

## CONCLUSIONS

We have demonstrated that God’s redemptive purpose and plan, as set forth in His covenant with Abraham, have been developed and worked out by God through His Covenant of Law, His covenant with David, and His covenant in the blood of the Lord Christ Jesus (called the New Covenant). However, the New Covenant is new only in the ways pointed out in Hebrews, that is, the parts of the old covenant that became obsolete with the cross of Christ were the ceremonial law pertaining to animal sacrifices and the other ceremonies for the purifying of the flesh. The moral law (Decalogue) still stands and is part and parcel of God’s Covenant of Grace given to Abraham and developed through Moses, Joshua, Samuel and all the prophets, and David, and fulfilled in Jesus the Christ. Secondly, we can conclude that the conditions for salvation are the same now as they were in the Old Testament times under

the Covenant of Law. **Those conditions were repentance, belief, love, and obedience.** Let me explain:

- The O.T. (Hab.2:4 and others) says a man must live by his faith. Jesus and His apostles said the same thing. Abraham and all the O.T. saints were justified before God by faith, and so am I, and so is every one born of the Spirit.
- In the O.T., God said persons were to love Him with all their being and to walk according to His Spirit (in His ways), and to keep His commandments. Jesus said if a man has His commandments and keeps them, “it is he who loves Me.”
- The O.T. saint believed the covenant promise concerning Jesus, though he did not know Messiah’s name. Still he looked ahead in faith, and his faith was accounted as righteousness. I looked back on the sacrifice of Jesus, and I put my faith and trust in Him. *The only difference between me and Moses is that I knew the Savior’s name.*
- Because I turned from my sin, believed, and now strive though walking by the Spirit to keep God’s law, I am justified and I am continually being sanctified, because *“without holiness no one will see the Lord.”*(Heb.12:14). I keep the law through love the same as David did. When I fail, I have an Advocate [Jesus Christ the Righteous (1 John 2:1) (also Heb.7:25)] to intercede for me before the Father, the same Advocate that pled for David when he repented of his sins, because David most certainly believed in Christ [(Psa.17:15)—hope of resurrection in the likeness of Christ; (Psa.110:1)—David called the Son his Lord].

So, you see, there is no difference. David looked forward and I looked back [the redeemed of the Lord] to that Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Salvation is the gift of God, and it cannot be earned, but there were conditions to be met before I could receive the gift of God’s grace, and they have

to do with my mind [realize I am a sinner in need of the Savior], my heart [I must feel my need to repent], and my will [I must be willing to turn from sin and unrighteousness and to turn to God and righteousness]. My heart and mind must be touched by God in order for me to repent and receive God's grace. There can be no salvation without repentance and no justification without faith and no sanctification without obedience to God's law. Every child of God must be sanctified or there can be no justification before Holy God. The blood of Christ Jesus both sanctifies and justifies by grace through faith those who obey the gospel by turning from sin to God in repentance and belief (See Heb.5:9, 12:14, 10:10,14, Rom.5:9, 10:16a, 1 Thes.1:9b, Ezek.18:21, 30-32, and others)

It is my sincere hope and prayer that the contents of this paper, a labor of love, will bless the reader.

Neil Anderson

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[\*] Explanatory note regarding timeline comments in text of this article: It is difficult to estimate biblical time periods along a timeline. This is true because of the lack of precise chronologic information in the Bible for some periods [such as the time from Abraham to the beginning of the Egyptian bondage after the death of Joseph] or [the time between the death of Moses to Saul, the first king of the Israelites]. God prophesied the 400 year Egyptian slavery of Israel in Genesis 15, and Paul [in Gal.3:17] mentioned the law being given 430 years after God made His covenant with Abraham [apparently ignoring the time between Abraham and Joseph's death, for which I have estimated at least 250 years]. My estimate results in a span of approximately 650-700 years between Abraham and the giving of the law at Sinai. Though interesting to contemplate, such things as the passage of time [in a general sense] are not critical in Bible studies. However, God is

very specific about some periods of time such as the duration of the great tribulation, where the exact duration of certain time periods are given in years or days (Dan.9:24, 12:11-12).

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