

Old Testament Survey

The Covenants of God

The Promise to Abraham - A Nation and a Land - The Abrahamic Covenant

God's covenant with Abraham was unconditional and consisted of three major promises.

1. The Promise of a Great Nation

Genesis 12:1-2 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

Genesis 13:16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

Genesis 15:5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

2. The Promise of Blessing to all other Nations

Genesis 12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

3. The Promise of a Land

Genesis 12:7 And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

Genesis 15:18 In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

Genesis 17:7-8 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

The Promise to Israel - A Possession - The Palestinian Covenant

The Palestinian Covenant was a conditional covenant in which Israel was promised possession of the land given to them by God in the Abrahamic Covenant, provided they obeyed God's laws.

Deuteronomy 30:1-9 And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee, And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy

soul; That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers:

General provisions and points of this covenant are:

1. It foresees a worldwide dispersion and regathering of Israel to their land.
2. It promises in a veiled form the New Covenant.
3. It prophesies judgment on Israel's future enemies.
4. It promises great blessings to restored Israel.

The Promise to David - A Throne and a Kingdom - The Davidic Covenant

The Davidic covenant was given to David in answer to his great desire to build the temple. God would not allow David to be the builder of the temple because he was a bloody man. However, God gave him something better, than being an unconditional covenant which promised that David's throne and kingdom would be an everlasting kingdom.

2 Samuel 7:12-16 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

1. David will have a child, yet to be born, who will succeed him and establish his Kingdom.
2. This son will build the temple instead of David.
3. The throne of his Kingdom will be established forever.
4. The throne will not be taken away even if the son sins.
5. David's house, throne, and kingdom will be established forever.

The Promise to Israel - A New Heart - The New Covenant

The New Covenant was given to Israel in the midst of their deportation to Babylon and the beginning of the times of the Gentiles. Israel would cease to exist as an autonomous nation for over two and a half millennia before being reborn as the modern nation of Israel. Just so Israel would know that God has not forgotten them, God gives them the New Covenant.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

General provisions and points of this covenant are:

1. It is a covenant with Israel and Judah.
2. It is contrasted with the old Mosaic covenant - Hebrews.
3. It will be fulfilled after the days of trouble (Jeremiah 30:7) and of Israel's regathering (Jeremiah 31:1-30).
4. The new covenant will supersede and be superior to the Mosaic covenant.
5. The new covenant will bring great spiritual blessing upon Israel.
6. The new covenant will be fulfilled in a period of universal knowledge about God. There will be no need for instructors.
7. The new covenant involves the forgiveness of sins which caused the judgment of God on Israel.