

## The Covenants to Israel

Since the Mosaic Law is a covenant we need to spend some time on the subject of covenants, which we only briefly touched on in the first session.

A covenant is an agreement or contract between two parties. In our context, the two parties are God and Israel. It is said that there are five such covenants that God made specifically with Israel. Four of them are unconditional covenants and one is conditional. There are other covenants, but our focus is the Israel-specific covenants. That one conditional covenant is the main subject of this study, the Mosaic Covenant sometimes called the “Law of Moses” or simply “The Law”. It references Moses in the name because the covenant was made with Israel through the person of Moses.

What is the difference between conditional and unconditional covenants? A conditional covenant is a contractual agreement between two parties in which both parties are obligated under its terms. That is both parties have responsibilities or obligations they must meet in order to satisfy the terms of the contract. Failure to satisfy the terms of the contract by either party can invoke penalty clauses. The Mosaic Covenant is a conditional covenant, as we will explore later in this study.

Unconditional covenants are a bit different in that only one of the two parties is obliged under the terms of the contract. In the context of our study, the two parties are Israel and God, and in the four unconditional covenants God made with Israel, only God is obliged under its terms. More simply stated, God promised to do something for Israel and placed no conditions on Israel in order for Him to do exactly as He purposed. These covenants are based on the great “I will” of God. He said He would do something; “I will...” and there is nothing that Israel can do or not do that will prevent Him from doing exactly what He said He would do.

There are four unconditional covenants that God made with Israel. The first is the Abrahamic Covenant, then the Land Grant Covenant (also called the Palestinian Covenant), the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant to Israel. We will look at these in more detail shortly.

While the conditional Mosaic Covenant was made with the whole nation of Israel, both believer and unbeliever alike, the four unconditional covenants were made with only born again believing Jews. Only believing Jews will get to enjoy the ultimate blessings of these four unconditional covenants. These covenants were offered to all of Israel, but only born again Jews will get to enjoy their blessings.

Technically, born again Israel does have an obligation under the unconditional contracts even though the contracts are said to be “unconditional,” and that is born again Israel must *be there* when God delivers on His promises expressed in the four covenants. If Satan could somehow prevent God from delivering on those unconditional covenant promises He made, then Satan will have won the angelic conflict. And how might Satan accomplish that? Simply by making sure there are no Jews alive on earth when the time comes for God to deliver what He promised to deliver. Ultimate fulfillment of these covenants will happen after the Second Advent at the end of the Tribulation, but if there are no born again Jews left...? They are all dead? God can't deliver the covenant blessings as promised. This is the underlying reason for antisemitism in the world; it is Satanically inspired for his purposes. The Tribulation will be Satan's last attempt to completely exterminate the Jew and finish what Hitler started. And this is the main reason the Tribulation is so focused on Israel.

Relative to our study, there are two main schools of theology. They are the various iterations of “Covenant Theology” and “Dispensational Theology”. The perspective I have just shown you and will continue to show you is from the latter. Among other things, dispensationalists take great pains to keep Israel and the Church separate, meaning God has a plan or program for the Church, and He has a different plan for Israel. Covenant Theology tends to mix or confuse Israel and the Church, often to the extreme position that God is completely finished dealing with Israel as of 70 AD and the fall of Jerusalem, and all the unconditional promises made to Israel have been transferred to the Church. That is the Gentile church, including any born again Jews, has replaced Israel in God's covenant plan and will be the ultimate recipients of the blessings of the four unconditional covenants. This is called “Replacement Theology” and is heresy.

Actually, the reverse is true. Gentiles who come to Christ during the Tribulation and previously raptured, predominately Gentile, Church Age believers will *share* in the covenant promises made to born again Israel but will NOT replace Israel in God's covenant program.

What follows will be from the dispensational perspective of history and prophecy. I will mention contrary Covenant Theology positions when appropriate for clarification. The main source material was *Israelology, The Missing Link In Systematic Theology* by Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum.

## **The Abrahamic Covenant**

In our introductory history of God's dealing with the Jews in our first lesson, we discussed this covenant in some detail. Briefly stated, God made certain promises to Abraham as seen in Genesis 12:1-3. The covenant is unconditional and while God originally made these promises to Abraham they would extend through his son Isaac, then his son Jacob who would be renamed Israel, and from Jacob/Israel would come 12 sons who would father the 12 tribes of Israel. Though the promises were made to Abraham, they extended to his physical heirs and ultimately Israel.

Covenant theologians insist this covenant is conditional because Abraham was told he had to leave his family and the land he resided, Ur, and go to a place God would show him (Gen 12:1). This position misconstrues what Dispensationalists mean by "unconditional covenant". They don't mean that the content of the covenant contains not conditions, obligations, or commands. What Dispensationalists mean is God intends to fulfill the terms of the covenant regardless of whether man fulfills his obligations. It will happen as God promised regardless of what man does or does not do. Abraham actually lapsed on several occasions, but these lapses did not terminate the covenant. Furthermore, the covenant theologians insist the covenant was made conditional based on Abraham's faithfulness. God declared to Isaac in Genesis 26:5 that, "Abraham was faithful and obeyed God." Since Abraham was faithful, that rendered the covenant unconditional with the obligation now totally dependent on God.

As further proof of the covenant's unconditional nature, in Genesis 15 Abram is still childless in spite of the fact that God promised him heirs ("make him a great nation" Gen 12:2), and he asks for proof (Gen 15:1-4). God seals the contract with a blood covenant ritual practiced in Abram's time, in which animal bodies were cut in half and laid out in two rows. The normal custom was for the two parties of the contract to walk between the rows. The animal halves were symbolic of the seriousness of the covenant and figuratively depicted what should happen to anyone who broke the covenant. If one party became guilty of violating the terms of the covenant, it would free the other party from the necessity of fulfilling his own promises contained in the covenant. This blood covenant sealing process is seen in Genesis 15.

**Gen 15:7** And he said to him, "I am the Lord who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess." <sup>8</sup> But he said, "O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" <sup>9</sup> He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." <sup>10</sup> And he brought him all these, cut them in half, and laid each half over against the other. But he did not cut the birds in half. <sup>11</sup> And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. <sup>12</sup> As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him.

**Gen 15:17** When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. <sup>18</sup> On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, <sup>19</sup> the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, <sup>20</sup> the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, <sup>21</sup> the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites."

Note verse 17. It was only the Lord who passed between the animal halves. Abram was asleep, thus only God is obligated under the covenant.

**Genesis 12:1** Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make



your name great, so that you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

The original Abrahamic Covenant contained four points.

1. *And I will make of you a great nation* – God promises that he will be the father of a great nation. This has been partially fulfilled in the creation of the nation of Israel when God brought the Jews out of bondage in Egypt and placed them in the Promised Land. It will see final fulfillment in the Millennium after the Second Advent.
2. *I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing* – God promises that Abram/Abraham would be blessed and famous and be a blessing to others.
3. *I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse* – God promises to protect him and his descendants. He will bless those nations and peoples who bless Israel and discipline those nations and peoples who are antagonistic to or threaten Israel.
4. *In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed* – This was partially fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ a descendant of Abram.

While all the promises were in some way at least partially fulfilled, they will not see ultimate and complete fulfillment as envisioned by God until the Kingdom Age (Millennium) when Jesus Christ, Son of David and Abraham’s seed, will sit on His earthly throne in Jerusalem ruling the world, and Israel will be recognized as the center of the world.

## **The Land Grant Covenant (Palestinian Covenant)**

**Gen 15:17** When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces.

<sup>18</sup> On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, <sup>19</sup> the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the

Kadmonites, <sup>20</sup> the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, <sup>21</sup> the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites.”

First spelled out In God’s promises to Abraham and resisted to Isaac.

**Gen 26:2** And the Lord appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you. <sup>3</sup> Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father. <sup>4</sup> I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, <sup>5</sup> because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.”

The promise was passed on to Abraham’s son Isaac and then to his grandson Jacob.

**Gen 35:10** And God said to him, “Your name is Jacob; no longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name.” So he called his name Israel. <sup>11</sup> And God said to him, “I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body. <sup>12</sup> The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and I will give the land to your offspring after you.”

It is restated in Exodus to Moses.

**Exodus 6:2** God spoke to Moses and said to him, “I am the Lord. <sup>3</sup> I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the Lord I did not make myself known to them. <sup>4</sup> I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners.

Its boundaries and deed of possession is stated in Exodus 34.

**Exodus 34:1** The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> “Command the people of Israel, and say to them, When you enter the land of Canaan

(this is the land that shall fall to you for an inheritance, the land of Canaan as defined by its borders), <sup>3</sup> your south side shall be from the wilderness of Zin alongside Edom, and your southern border shall run from the end of the Salt Sea on the east. <sup>4</sup> And your border shall turn south of the ascent of Akrabbim, and cross to Zin, and its limit shall be south of Kadesh-barnea. Then it shall go on to Hazar-addar, and pass along to Azmon. <sup>5</sup> And the border shall turn from Azmon to the Brook of Egypt, and its limit shall be at the sea. <sup>6</sup> “For the western border, you shall have the Great Sea and its coast. This shall be your western border. <sup>7</sup> “This shall be your northern border: from the Great Sea you shall draw a line to Mount Hor. <sup>8</sup> From Mount Hor you shall draw a line to Lebo-hamath, and the limit of the border shall be at Zedad. <sup>9</sup> Then the border shall extend to Ziphron, and its limit shall be at Hazar-enan. This shall be your northern border. <sup>10</sup> “You shall draw a line for your eastern border from Hazar-enan to Shepham. <sup>11</sup> And the border shall go down from Shepham to Riblah on the east side of Ain. And the border shall go down and reach to the shoulder of the Sea of Chinnereth on the east. <sup>12</sup> And the border shall go down to the Jordan, and its limit shall be at the Salt Sea. This shall be your land as defined by its borders all around.”

The promise of the land is described as a possession forever in that it is promised not only to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the children of Israel in the Exodus generation but to their offspring.

While Israel may occupy the land periodically, often getting expelled for infidelity to God, the ultimate fulfillment of this promise will be during the Kingdom Age (Millennium) as expressed in Jeremiah 32:36-44; Ezekiel 11:16-21, 36:24-38; and Deut 30:1-9.

**Ezekiel 36:24** I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. <sup>25</sup> I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. <sup>26</sup> And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful

to obey my rules. <sup>28</sup> You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

The Ezekiel passage above is viewing the ultimate fulfillment of Israel's possession of the land after the Tribulation. While it is clear that born again Israel would ultimately and permanently possess the land, the Mosaic Covenant also makes it clear that occupation of the land prior to that was dependent on Israel's faithfulness. Failure to meet the terms of the Mosaic Covenant, a conditional covenant, could result in temporary eviction from the land.

**Deut 28:58** "If you are not careful to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, the Lord your God, <sup>59</sup> then the Lord will bring on you and your offspring extraordinary afflictions, afflictions severe and lasting, and sicknesses grievous and lasting. <sup>60</sup> And he will bring upon you again all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. <sup>61</sup> Every sickness also and every affliction that is not recorded in the book of this law, the Lord will bring upon you, until you are destroyed. <sup>62</sup> Whereas you were as numerous as the stars of heaven, you shall be left few in number, because you did not obey the voice of the Lord your God. <sup>63</sup> And as the Lord took delight in doing you good and multiplying you, so the Lord will take delight in bringing ruin upon you and destroying you. And you shall be plucked off the land that you are entering to take possession of it. <sup>64</sup> "And the Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other ...

This happened to Israel on three occasions. The fifth cycle of discipline was administered when the Northern Kingdom fell to Assyria in 721 B.C. The Southern Kingdom fell to the Chaldean Empire in 586 B.C. Judea was conquered by Rome in 70 A.D. In all three cases large numbers of Israelites went into slavery and were disbursed from the land. Israel did not exist as a nation again until 1948, and all that time the land promised to them remained unoccupied as the nation Israel or by any significant number of Jews. While there is a nation called Israel today, this is not fulfillment of the promise. The regathering to the land promised in passages relating to the New Covenant and seen above in the quoted Ezekiel 36:24-38 plus Jeremiah 32:36-44; Ezekiel 11:16-2; and Deut 30:1-9 will be

during the Kingdom Age. What we see in Israel today may only be temporary. It may be the partial fulfillment of the covenant in that it is a foreshadowing of the ultimate fulfillment which will happen after the Second Coming. Or they could get evicted again. Personally, I believe it is the foreshadowing of the regathering.

It is on this basis that it is argued by some covenant theologians that the Land Grant Covenant is a conditional covenant that depends on Israel's faithfulness. However, God promised to ultimately plant Israel in the land forever. Removal from the land is always stated as temporary while possession is always stated as permanent and entirely based on the "I will" of God.

## The Davidic Covenant

This covenant is unconditional and permanent. While the contract was made unconditionally with the person of King David, it is Israel who will ultimately experience the fulfilled terms of the contract during the yet future Kingdom Age (Millennium).

**2 Sam 7:4** But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan,  
<sup>5</sup> "Go and tell my servant David, 'Thus says the Lord: Would you build me a house to dwell in? <sup>6</sup> I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. <sup>7</sup> In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" ' <sup>8</sup> Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. <sup>9</sup> And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup> And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup> from

the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. <sup>12</sup> When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup> He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. <sup>14</sup> I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, <sup>15</sup> but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. <sup>16</sup> And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.' ” <sup>17</sup> In accordance with all these words, and in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

In the Dividic Covenant, as made with King David, God promised three things:

1. Eternal dynasty – There will always be one of the House of David who has the right to the throne of Israel. Divine discipline may cause the throne to be unoccupied but there will always be someone who could claim rights to it.
2. Eternal throne
3. Eternal kingdom

The covenant is unconditional in that it does not impose even the slightest obligation on David or Israel and is based on the great “I will” of God. The covenant is not only unconditional but will continue into all eternity. Contrary to the claims of Covenant Theology there is no indication that fulfillment is limited to heaven. The promised kingdom/throne will be established on earth when Messiah returns and sets up His eternal reign on earth as the Kingdom Age or Millennium after the Second Advent.

We see confirmation of the covenant in Psalm 89.

**Psalm 89:3** You have said, “I have made a covenant with my chosen one; I have sworn to David my servant: <sup>4</sup> ‘I will establish your offspring forever, and build your throne for all generations.’ ” *Selah*

**Psalm 89:20** I have found David, my servant; with my holy oil I have anointed him,

<sup>21</sup> so that my hand shall be established with him; my arm also shall strengthen him.

<sup>22</sup> The enemy shall not outwit him; the wicked shall not humble him.

<sup>23</sup> I will crush his foes before him and strike down those who hate him.

<sup>24</sup> My faithfulness and my steadfast love shall be with him, and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

<sup>25</sup> I will set his hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers.

<sup>26</sup> He shall cry to me, 'You are my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation.'

<sup>27</sup> And I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth.

<sup>28</sup> My steadfast love I will keep for him forever, and my covenant will stand firm for him.

<sup>29</sup> I will establish his offspring forever and his throne as the days of the heavens.

<sup>30</sup> If his children forsake my law and do not walk according to my rules,

<sup>31</sup> if they violate my statutes and do not keep my commandments,

<sup>32</sup> then I will punish their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes,

<sup>33</sup> but I will not remove from him my steadfast love or be false to my faithfulness.

<sup>34</sup> I will not violate my covenant or alter the word that went forth from my lips.

<sup>35</sup> Once for all I have sworn by my holiness; I will not lie to David.

<sup>36</sup> His offspring shall endure forever, his throne as long as the sun before me.

<sup>37</sup> Like the moon it shall be established forever, a faithful witness in the skies." *Selah*

Jesus Christ is, of course, the ultimate fulfillment of these promises. Some see this covenant as a more detailed extension of certain features of the Abrahamic Covenant. Because of its unconditional nature, disobedience on the part of descendants of David brought discipline, but the ultimate fulfillment of the covenant itself was never in jeopardy.

## The New Covenant

**Jer 31:31** “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, <sup>32</sup> not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. <sup>33</sup> For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup> And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

**Jer 32:37** Behold, I will gather them from all the countries to which I drove them in my anger and my wrath and in great indignation. I will bring them back to this place, and I will make them dwell in safety. <sup>38</sup> And they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

**Ezek 37:21** Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all around, and bring them to their own land. <sup>22</sup> And I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. And one king shall be king over them all, and they shall be no longer two nations, and no longer divided into two kingdoms. <sup>23</sup> They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols and their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions. But I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

These provisions are restated in the New Testament Epistle to the Hebrews in Hebrews 8:8-13 and 10:16-17.



Note that this New Covenant is compared to “the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt.” That covenant, being a conditional covenant dependent on human effort to meet its terms, is inferior to this New Covenant, in which the Lord declares, “**I will** put my law within them, and **I will** write it on their hearts. And **I will** be their God, and **they shall be** my people.” The provisions of this covenant will be executed by the indwelling Holy Spirit, thus we can conclude that this covenant is one made with born again Israel. This is reinforced by the fact that its ultimate fulfillment will be during the Kingdom Age (Millennium) which will begin exclusively populated with believers after God separates the “sheep from the goats” at the Second Advent (Mat 25:31-34).

**Isa 59:20** “And a Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression,” declares the Lord. <sup>21</sup> “And as for me, this is my covenant with them,” says the Lord: “My Spirit that is upon you, and my words that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouth of your offspring, or out of the mouth of your children’s offspring,” says the Lord, “from this time forth and forevermore.”

The fact that Paul quotes this passage in Romans 11:26-27 plus the fact that the New Covenant is related to the restoration of Israel to her native land supports the fact that this covenant’s fulfillment is yet future and is speaking to the people of Israel of the Kingdom Age when our Lord will reign on David’s throne in Jerusalem.

Provisions of this covenant include:

1. It is an unconditional covenant based on the faithfulness of God.
2. It is an everlasting covenant
3. It provides regeneration
4. It provides restoration of favor and blessings from God
5. It provides the forgiveness of sins
6. It includes the indwelling of the Holy Spirit
7. With the teaching, leading, and enabling ministry of the Holy Spirit
8. It provides material blessings in the land

## Are there two “New Covenants”?

This is a logical question because of several passages in the NT that seem to suggest there is a second New Covenant, this one to the Church.

**Luke 22:20** And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

**1 Cor 11:25** In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

**2 Cor 3:4** Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. <sup>5</sup> Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, <sup>6</sup> who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

There are several dispensational views on this that can be distilled down to two basic options:

There are two distinct new covenants with one given to Israel and another to the Church. The New Covenant to the Church is more limited to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and His associated ministries of leading, enabling, and teaching.

— Or —

There is only one New Covenant to Israel, and the Church is experiencing the *spiritual aspects* of that covenant, meaning the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and His associated ministries of leading, enabling, and teaching.

While very learned expositors of the Word, whom I respect highly, have differing opinions, after reading their arguments as laid out by Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum in his book *Israelology – The Missing Link In Systematic Theology*, I am compelled to side with the argument that there is only one New Covenant, and the Church is not under a different “New Covenant” but is experiencing the spiritual aspects of the New Covenant to Israel.

Of the eight features of the New Covenant listed above, only a few pertain to the Church today, those being the forgiveness of sins, indwelling HS, and His teaching, leading and enabling ministries. All other features are related to Israel and are yet future.

Both John the Baptist and Jesus claimed the Kingdom was near, and yet it has been 2000 years and no Kingdom. Were they wrong? No, it was near in that it was being offered to Israel at that time, but Israel rejected the King and thus the Kingdom. God then took the spiritual aspects of the Kingdom and gave them to the new Church. The other physical features that relate to Israel will be granted after the Second Advent when the *literal* Kingdom would come into being.

Regenerate Israel will be the primary recipients of all of the unconditional covenants. While some portions of the four covenants have seen fulfillment already, ultimate realization of all of their promised blessings are yet future. They will be delivered to regenerate Israel who came to Christ during the Tribulation (still in their mortal bodies) along with born again Jews resurrected at the Second Advent, and resurrected (raptured) Church Age believers. In all four cases, the covenants were made with Israel either directly or indirectly through individuals such as Abraham and David.

A remnant of Israel must survive the Tribulation, and there is explicitly such a threat that they are at just that sort of risk mentioned by Jesus in Matthew.

**Mat 24:21** For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. <sup>22</sup> And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.

Understanding these four unconditional covenants is important to understanding some of the motivations of Satan in the angelic conflict. Since they are based on the “I will” of God, should He somehow fail to deliver as He said He would, then what does that make God? Is he thus a liar unable to do what He promised and someone unworthy to sit in judgment of others, in this case Satan? Satan cannot allow these

covenants to be fulfilled. He must destroy all of Israel to get the ones who are regenerate.

### **The New Covenant and the Law of Moses**

One last point on the New Covenant should be noted and that is how it is compared to the Law of Moses.

**Jer 31:31** “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, <sup>32</sup> **not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt**, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. <sup>33</sup> For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup> And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

God explains that this New Covenant will be unlike the covenant He made with Israel when He brought them out of Egypt. That, of course, is a reference to the Mosaic Covenant, the main subject of our study.

In this New Covenant God says He will put/write His Law in their hearts and they will “know” Him. The Hebrew word translated “know” is *yada* and means to know from personal experience. It is an intimate knowledge and, in certain contexts, it means to have carnal knowledge. “Law” is *torah* and refers to law, instruction, or body of legal directives. It is not limited to the Law of Moses, but includes the moral aspects of that code as well as an understanding of how to relate to God. In this Church Age we would understand this as a fully functioning and vitally alive spiritual life.

That word translated “put” is *nathan* and means to give, bestow, grant. “Write” is *kathab* which means to write, inscribe, engrave. Between these two words this putting/writing of verse 33 probably should be viewed as implanting in some direct means apart from normal human assimilation of knowledge. God’s New Covenant will give Israel the inner ability to obey

His righteous standards and thus to enjoy His blessings. That power source would be the indwelling Holy Spirit. Ezekiel indicated that this change will result from God's bestowal of the Holy Spirit on these believers (Ezek. 36:24–32). In Old Testament times the Holy Spirit did not universally indwell all believers. Thus one significantly different feature of the New Covenant is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in all believers (cf. Joel 2:28–32) like we experience doing the current Church Age.

This is very different from the Mosaic Covenant, which God says Israel did not keep. Aside from the fact that the Mosaic Covenant is a conditional covenant and the New Covenant is an unconditional covenant, the Mosaic Covenant had to be kept by human effort alone.

**Rom 8:3** For God has done what **the law, weakened by the flesh,** could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup> in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be **fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.**

Under the New Covenant, we have access to the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The Mosaic Covenant was technically impossible to keep and could only condemn. This was actually a feature and not a fault to teach man about sin and the weakness of human works to deal with it. The New Covenant is easy to keep because it does not depend on human power but by the very power of the indwelling Holy Spirit to have victory over sin.

### **In summary:**

1. Israel is promised it will be a nation forever
2. Israel is promised a land of their own forever
3. Israel is promised a king forever of the line of David
4. Israel is promised a throne forever
5. Israel is promised a kingdom forever
6. Israel is promised a “New Covenant” with an intimate relationship with God
7. Israel is promised “abiding blessings”

Remember, all of these are unconditional promises based solely on the “I will” of God.