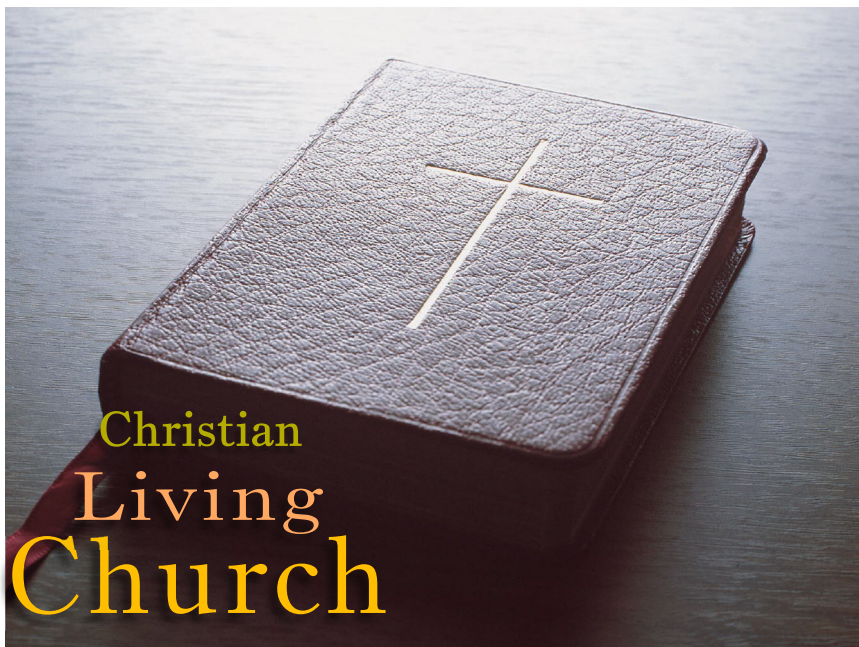


The Covenants of the Bible

“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”



Christian
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The Covenants of the Bible



This series of lessons has been designed for private study or classroom presentation. The purpose of this foreword is to explain certain conventions utilized throughout the program. The overall concept is to begin with the basic concepts necessary for the new convert to understand and progress toward more complex doctrine. The lessons are numbered in order to maintain the proper sequence of study.

When Scripture references are encountered in the text, various actions are recommended. When in parenthetical bold (**Genesis 1:1**) the verse is to be looked up and read right away. Frequently, the next textual statement will comment on that verse. Reading verse and text in proper order will enhance one's understanding of the verse. Direct quotes from Scripture will be "***bold italicized and contained in quotation marks***" and, unless otherwise noted, will be from the King James Bible. When the reference is in parenthetical non-bold (Genesis 1:1) it is to provide the Scriptural basis for the statement if confirmation is desired. References in blue [Genesis 1:1](#) will be listed in the lesson section entitled **FURTHER STUDY**.

FURTHER STUDY is the "homework" section. Its purpose is to encourage Bible study at home. The referenced verses have a short summation to assist the student desiring more knowledge about a subject to find what they are looking for.

The **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** section is primarily for classroom use. Open discussion with the exchange of ideas produces growth for all involved. Most of the time the answer is contained in the referenced Scripture but sometimes the question is offered for open discussion. Even in private Bible study, analysis of the question and the search for its answer can be rewarding.

This work is offered to anyone with a desire to better understand God's Word. It is our hope and prayer that the person studying these lessons will come away with a better understanding of God's will and a closer walk with our Lord, Jesus Christ.

With Loving Concern for all those seeking God's Message
The Church of God Rocky Mount
Rocky Mount, Virginia

Key Verse: Genesis 2:16-17



“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

Discussion Question:

What does this Key Verse mean to you?

According to Webster’s 1828 American Dictionary of the English Language the definition of the word “covenant” is *a mutual consent or agreement of two or more persons, to do or to forbear some act or thing; a contract or stipulation*. The Key Verse recounts the first covenant mentioned in the Bible. God set the terms of the agreement. He told Adam and Eve they could eat freely of every tree in the Garden except one. This was His consent to do something. No fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil could be eaten. This was the act they had to forbear. If they did eat of this

tree, they would not live forever. They would die. This was the stipulation. Adam and his wife accepted the agreement. Upon its violation they were expelled from the Garden and had to labor for their sustenance and eventually died. God fulfilled His part of the covenant exactly as He said He would.

The next covenant mentioned is in Genesis, chapter 9. God established a covenant with Noah, his descendents, and all the fowl, cattle, and beasts of the Earth. God agreed to never again destroy the Earth and all flesh in it with water. Noah and his sons were to replenish the Earth. The animals were to become fearful of man. Included in the covenant were laws concerning the eating of blood, murder, and the justice

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to be administered for it. These laws were a *part* of the covenant. They were not a covenant in and of themselves. As a token of this covenant God set His bow in the clouds. It remains to this very day as a sign of His pledge to keep the stipulations of the covenant with Noah. We call it the rainbow. It serves as a constant reminder to us that God remembers His promises and will always be faithful to keep them. The rainbow is a sign that this covenant *in its entirety* is in full effect today.

Another covenant that affects today's world is the covenant God made with Abraham. While still called Abram, he was promised a son and a lineage of descendants that would fill the Earth as the stars fill the heavens. Abram had always obeyed God's commands and followed His instructions. Abram's faith, manifested by belief and prac-

ticed through obedience, was credited to him as righteousness and qualified him as a party to a covenant of awe-inspiring scope. The terms of this covenant included the promise of all the lands of Canaan, from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates and a son through whom this land would be populated. The long-term result of this covenant would be the blessing of all nations through the descendants of Abraham (**Genesis 18:18**). This blessing has occurred in many ways. Through Isaac, the son of Abraham, Jacob and his son Judah, the Savior of the world was born, bringing mankind's only opportunity to escape eternal death and receive salvation. Abraham's descendants have made life better for mankind through their contributions to science and education. These facts are evidence of the timeless significance of God's covenants. Until ended

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by Him, the terms remain intact. The Bible is God's method of communication to mankind in general. Any covenant that He has canceled will have its termination plainly explained. If God hasn't done away with it, no word of its abolition will be found.

In the time of Moses, God reiterated His covenant with Abraham and amended it. Now the covenant was with an entire nation, not just one man. After delivering the law to them through Moses, God promised that if Israel would obey and keep the covenant they would be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (**Exodus 19:5-6**). The laws forming a part of this covenant are too numerous to list, but one significant declaration deserves special attention (**Exodus 31:12-16**). The Sabbath was established as a sign between God and Israel to serve as a reminder of the cov-

enant that made them a nation set apart from other nations, sanctified and especially chosen. The Sabbath is holy and violation of it carried a severe penalty. There is not one word in the Bible expressing the idea that God has changed the day of rest to another day. If such a significant change had occurred, ample text would have been devoted to calling attention to the altered observation of it. To fail to do so would place many in jeopardy through ignorance and God would have no reason to do that. This covenant stipulation establishing the Sabbath remains in force today, expressed in verse 16 as a *perpetual* (forever, eternal) covenant. The covenant God made with Israel is founded on the Ten Commandments (**Exodus 34:27-28**). "After the tenor of" means "according to." The covenant laws of Leviticus are a detailed amplification of the principles of the Command-

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ments.

Isaiah foretells of another covenant to be offered to mankind. This covenant will be offered not only to Israel but to the Gentiles also (**Isaiah 42:6**). This Promised One is *offered as a covenant*. Some of the terms of this covenant are related in **Isaiah 59:16-21**. There is no one else who can save but the One who comes as the covenant, coming in righteousness and bringing salvation (verse 16). The One of this covenant is identified as the Redeemer who will come to the repentant of Israel (verse 20). He will give His Spirit to those who accept His Word and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them. The remnant will never die out. There will always be believers for ever (verse 21). The wicked will be repaid according to their deeds (verse 18). The name of the LORD will be revered from the east to the west and God's Spirit will

protect His own (verse 19). The lesson text did not cover the covenant terms in the order of the verses. This is because the Hebrew prose style does not relate events in chronological order in the manner to which our western minds are accustomed. The re-arrangement of the verses puts them in that order. As you study this passage in your Bible for **FURTHER STUDY** refer to this text to assist you in comprehending the sequence of the covenant events.

Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, prophesied saying that the "horn of salvation" of the house of David was soon to come (**Luke 1:67-73**). In the prophesy, he said the coming of this One was fulfilling the promise contained in the covenant God made with Abraham, that through his (Abraham's) descendents "*.....shall all the kindreds (nations) of the earth be blessed*" (**Acts 3:25**). The

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promised covenant in Isaiah is the fulfillment of the covenant promise to Abraham, carrying out the terms of that covenant. In performing the covenant with Abraham, a better covenant replaced part of the Exodus Covenant ([Hebrews 8:6](#)), specifically the establishment of the priesthood. The flaw in that covenant was not the covenant itself but the failure of Israel to abide by it. By the terms of the old covenant, offerings were made through the priest who served as an intermediary between God and the worshipper. Under the new covenant, Jesus Christ is our High Priest and the priesthood has been bestowed upon the believer by the stipulation “*I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts*” ([Hebrews 8:10](#)). No longer will a priest be needed as a go-between for the child of God, for everyone will have

the knowledge of Him ([Hebrews 8:11](#)). The first covenant had a worldly sanctuary ([Hebrews 9:1-3](#)) whereas, under the new covenant our High Priest is entered into Heaven itself, in the presence of God ([Hebrews 9:24](#)).

God keeps His word. When Adam and Eve violated their covenant with Him, they died. Whenever we see the rainbow we can be assured that He has not forgotten His covenant with Noah. The birth of Christ and the gospel He brought to save the world fulfilled the promise to Abraham. The new covenant promising eternal life for accepting Christ as Savior and death for not doing so will be kept with the same steadfastness as all the previous covenant promises. The nature of these promises make it obvious that this covenant is forever ([Hebrews 13:20](#)).

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What was the covenant God made with David?

1 Kings 2:45; 2 Chronicles 7:18

2. What must happen before this covenant can be broken by God? **Jeremiah 33:20-21**

3. What is the absolute assurance that this covenant with David will be kept? **Luke 1:32-33**

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FURTHER STUDY:

Genesis 9:1-17 The covenant with Noah.

Genesis 15:4-21 The covenant with Abraham.

Isaiah 59:16-21 The promised covenant.

Jeremiah 31:31-33 The new covenant.

Matthew 16:18 The gates of hell shall not prevail the church.

Hebrews 8:6-13 A more excellent ministry obtained by a better covenant.

Hebrews 9:1-15 Christ being our High Priest in a more perfect tabernacle.

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Notes

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Notes

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