

## **GOD’S TEN COVENANTS ©**

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### **Preamble**

Divine covenants are covenants which are instituted by God. There are ten, of which three are universal and seven are restricted.

### **Section 1 - The Three Universal Covenants**

God established a relationship between himself as sovereign and mankind as subject with three universal covenants (numbered 1-3).

#### **Subsection 1A – The Edenic Covenant (#1)** **(conditional or suzerain)**

God instituted the EDENIC COVENANT<sup>1</sup> between himself as sovereign and Adam and Eve as his subjects. It is the first universal or general covenant.

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<sup>1</sup> The first divine covenant.

***Its 1<sup>st</sup> expression*** is recorded in Genesis 1:28-29 > 28 *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. (KJV)*

***Its 2<sup>nd</sup> expression*** is recorded in Genesis 2:15-17 > 15 *And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 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. (KJV)*

In this covenant, God commands mankind (Adam, Eve, and their descendents) to do five things: (a) populate the earth (Gen. 1:28), (b) subdue the earth (Gen. 1:28), (c) exercise dominion over the animal creation (Gen. 1:28), (d) care for the Garden of Eden and enjoy its fruits (Gen. 1:29; 2:15); and (e) refrain from eating the fruit of the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil* in the center of the Garden under penalty of death (Gen. 2:16, 17). The covenant was terminated by mankind's disobedience, when Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*, thereby causing God to impose the negative sanction of the covenant – they would surely die, both spiritually and physically. This failure necessitated the establishment of the next covenant.

### **Subsection 1B - The Adamic Covenant (#2)**

God instituted the ADAMIC COVENANT<sup>2</sup> between himself as sovereign and mankind (Adam, Eve, and their descendents) as his subject. It is the second universal or general covenant.

***Its expression*** is recorded in Genesis 3:14-21 > 14 *And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. 16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. 17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. 20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. 21 Unto Adam also and to his wife*

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<sup>2</sup> The second divine covenant.

*did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.*

In this covenant, God sets forth the conditions which will hold sway until the curse of sin is lifted from the earth. These conditions are:

- **Regarding the serpent**, the tool used by Satan to effect the fall of man, he is cursed. Apparently, great physical changes took place in the serpent. It was upright; now it will go on its belly (v. 14). It was the most desirable animal of the animal creation; now it is the most loathsome. The sight or thought of a snake should be an effective reminder of the devastating effects of sin. Furthermore, this curse affects not only the instrument, the serpent, but also the indwelling energizer of that instrument, Satan.
- **Regarding Satan**, he is judged. He will enjoy limited success ("thou shalt bruise his (the seed of the woman - Messiah) heel," v. 15), but ultimately he will be judged ("it (the seed of the woman - Messiah) shall bruise thy head," v. 15).
- **Regarding Messiah**, He will come (v. 15) - this is the first prophecy in this regard.
- **Regarding the woman**, she will (a) experience more pregnancies (necessitated by the introduction of death into the human experience) and more sorrow (perhaps due to the death of her children) (v. 16), (b) suffer pain in childbirth (v. 16), and (c) be subject to her husband (v. 16).
- **Regarding the earth**, the ground is cursed and will bring forth weeds among the food which man must eat for his existence (vv. 17-19).
- **Regarding man** (presumably all mankind), he will (a) toil sweatingly and unceasingly in order to bring forth the necessities of life - specifically food (v. 19) - and (b) immediately die spiritually and ultimately die physically (his flesh will decay until it returns to the dust from which God formed him (v. 19)).

### **Subsection 1C – The Noahic Covenant (#3)**

God instituted the NOAHIC COVENANT<sup>3</sup> between himself as sovereign and mankind (Noah, his wife, and their descendents) as his subject. It is the third universal or general covenant.

*Its expression* is recorded in Genesis 9:1-19 > *1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. 2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. 3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as*

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<sup>3</sup> The third divine covenant.

*the green herb have I given you all things. 4 But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. 5 And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. 6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. 7 And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein. 8 And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, 9 And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; 10 And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. 11 And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. 12 And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: 13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. 14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: 15 And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. 17 And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth. 18 And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan. 19 These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread. (KJV)*

Noah has just passed through the universal flood in which all the world's people perished. Only Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their wives - eight people - survived. Noah might have thought that the things provided for by the covenant with Adam had now been changed. However, God gives the Noahic Covenant to Noah so that he and all his descendents might know that the provisions made in the Adamic Covenant remain in effect with one notable addition: the principle of human government which includes the responsibility for suppressing the outbreak of sin and violence, which will preclude the necessity of destroying the earth again by a flood. The provisions of the covenant are:

- ***Mankind must populate the earth*** (v. 1) – a reaffirmation of Gen. 1:28.
- ***Mankind must subdue the earth*** (v. 2) – a reaffirmation of Gen. 1:28.
- ***Mankind may eat the flesh of animals, but may not drink the blood of animals*** (vv. 3, 4) – a permission and a prohibition.
- ***Whoever or whatever sheds man's blood - man or beast - must be put to death*** (vv. 5, 6) – a prescription; the sacredness of human life is established.
- ***This covenant is established for all living creatures*** - man, birds, beasts, and presumably fish (vv. 9,10).

- ***God will not destroy the earth again with water*** (v. 11)<sup>4</sup> – a promise.
- ***The rainbow which God puts in the sky will serve as a token of this covenant***, - particularly of the promise that God will not destroy the earth again with water. As long as man can see the rainbow, he will know that the Noahic Covenant is in effect.

## **Section 2 - The Seven Restricted Covenants**

God established a relationship between himself as sovereign and the Jewish people as subject with seven restricted covenants (numbered 4-10).

God initiated this relationship between himself and the Jewish people with two covenants (4 & 5) between himself and Abraham, both of which are restricted and unconditional.

### **Subsection 2A – The 1<sup>st</sup> Abrahamic Covenant re the Election (#4)** **(unconditional)**

God instituted the 1<sup>ST</sup> ABRAHAMIC COVENANT<sup>5</sup> between himself as sovereign and Abraham as his subject. It is the first restricted or theocratic covenant. It identifies and sets aside a particular people - a “peculiar” people with whom God will establish a special relationship – i.e. Israel (the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob). It was articulated by God four times to Abraham and then confirmed by Moses once to Israel.

***Its 1<sup>st</sup> expression*** is recorded in Genesis 12: 1-3 – “*Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew 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: 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.*” (KJV) God spoke this to Abraham in 1893 BC, when he was 75 years old (Genesis 12:4) and living in Ur of the Chaldees (Genesis 11:31). This expression of it is usually referred to as “the Promise.”

***Its 2<sup>nd</sup> expression*** is recorded in 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.*” (KJV) God spoke this to Abraham c.1890 BC, when he was camped between Bethel and Hai, after he had visited Egypt during the reign of Cheops and then returned to Canaan.

***Its 3<sup>rd</sup> expression*** is recorded in Genesis 15:1-6 – “*...the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me*

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<sup>4</sup> Next time, he will use fire (2 Peter 3:10).

<sup>5</sup> The fourth divine covenant.

*thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. 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. And he believed in the LORD; and [the Lord] counted it to him for righteousness.” (KJV) God spoke this to Abraham c. 1884 BC, when he was camped on the Plain of Mamre in Hebron (Genesis 13:18 & 14:13), after he had battled with the Mesopotamian kings and rendered a tithe to Melchizedek, King of Salem, but before he had been in Canaan ten years (Genesis 16:3).*

***Its 4<sup>th</sup> expression*** is recorded in Genesis 17:1-7 - “...*the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. 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.” (KJV) God spoke this to Abraham in 1869 BC, when he was 99 years old (Genesis 17:1) and still camped on the Plain of Mamre in Hebron (Genesis 13:18, 14:13, and 18:1).*

***Its 5<sup>th</sup> expression*** is recorded in Deuteronomy 7:6-8 – “*For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.” (KJV) Moses spoke these words to the people of Israel at the end of their 40 years of Wandering in the desert of Midian, when they were camped on the Plain of Moab and preparing to cross the Jordan, which they did in 1412 BC.*

The 2<sup>nd</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> expressions of the 1<sup>st</sup> Abrahamic Covenant are usually referred to as “the Covenant;” it confirms “the Promise,” but articulates it in greater detail.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Abrahamic Covenant is unconditional. It depends solely upon God, who obligates himself - indicated by the unconditional declaration, "I will" - to bring to pass the promised blessings. It does not require a response from the people to whom it is addressed. It is the basis for all the other theocratic covenants. It promises blessings in three areas:

- ***National*** - "I will make of thee a great nation" (Genesis 12:2a).
- ***Personal*** - "I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a

blessing" (Genesis 12:2b) - specifically, Abraham will: (a) be the father of a great nation, (b) receive personal blessings, (c) receive personal honor and respect, and (d) be the source of blessings to others. Moreover, "...I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee" (Genesis 12:3a) - specifically: (a) those people who bless Abraham will be blessed; (b) those people who curse Abraham will be cursed. Although Genesis 12:3a is clearly addressed to Abraham, most commentators believe that it applies, not just to Abraham, but to his descendants as well, and they say that the individuals and the nations which bless the Jews will be blessed, and the individuals and nations which curse the Jews will be cursed.

- **Universal** - "in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:3) - specifically, all people will be blessed by Messiah, who will be Abraham's descendent and provide many of them with salvation.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Abrahamic Covenant constitutes an important link in all that God has done, is doing, and will do in history - until history's consummation. It is the one purpose of God for men into which all of God's programs and works fit.

### **Subsection 2B – The 2nd Abrahamic Covenant re the Land (#5)** **(unconditional)**

God instituted the 2<sup>ND</sup> ABRAHAMIC COVENANT<sup>6</sup> between himself as sovereign and Abraham as his subject. It is the second restricted or theocratic covenant. It identifies and sets aside a particular place for Israel (the descendents of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) – a land which will serve as their home . It was articulated by God seven times: five times to Abraham, once to Isaac, and once to Jacob. It was then confirmed by Moses once.

***Its 1<sup>st</sup> expression*** is recorded in Genesis 12:7 – “*Unto thy seed will I give this land.*” (KJV) God spoke to Abraham in 1893 or 1892 BC, when he was camped by the great tree of Moreh in Sechem. Abraham had just demonstrated obedience to God by leaving Ur of the Chaldees and traveling first to Haran and then to Canaan, the land which God had promised to show him. Note that the promise of this land to Abraham’s descendents is unconditional. Note also, however, that there is a difference between owning something and enjoying the use thereof. While God gave the Hebrews ownership of the land “as an everlasting possession,” he drove the majority of them out of it during the Exile and also during the diaspora. Their enjoyment of the land depends upon their faithfulness to God. Lest the Jewish people or the Gentiles overlook or forget this covenant, it is stated seven times.

***Its 2<sup>nd</sup> expression*** is recorded in Genesis 13:14-15,17 - “*And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever....Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.*”

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<sup>6</sup> The fifth divine covenant.

(KJV) God spoke this to Abraham c. 1890 BC, when he was camped between Bethel and Hai, after he had visited Egypt (where Cheops was pharaoh), and then returned to Canaan.

**Its 3<sup>rd</sup> expression** is recorded in Genesis 15:7 – “*And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.*” (KJV) God spoke this to Abraham c. 1884 BC when he was camped on the Plain of Mamre, after he had battled with the Mesopotamian kings and rendered a tithe to Melchizedek, King of Salem, but before he had been in Canaan ten years (Genesis 16:3).

**Its 4<sup>th</sup> expression** is recorded in Genesis 15:18-21 – “*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: The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.*” (KJV) God spoke this to Abraham later in the same day.

**Its 5<sup>th</sup> expression** it is recorded in Genesis 17:8 – “*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.*” God spoke this to Abraham in 1869 BC, when he was 99 years old (Genesis 17:1) and still camped on the Plain of Mamre in Hebron (Genesis 13:18, 14:13, and 18:1).

**Its 6<sup>th</sup> expression** is recorded in Genesis 26:3 – “*Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father.*” (KJV) God spoke this to Isaac

**Its 7<sup>th</sup> expression** is recorded in Genesis 28:13 – “*And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed.*” (KJV) God spoke this to Jacob.

**Its 8<sup>th</sup> expression** is recorded in Deuteronomy 7:1-5 – “*When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire.*” (KJV) Moses spoke this to the people of Israel.



God first uttered this covenant at the great tree of Moreh, in Sechem, in Canaan, after Abraham had demonstrated obedience to God by leaving Ur of the Chaldees and traveling to Canaan, the land which God had promised to show him. Note that the promise of this land to Abraham is unconditional - it does not require a response from the people. Note also that there is a difference between owning something and enjoying the use thereof. While God gave the Hebrews ownership of the land "as an everlasting possession," he drove the majority of them out of it at the beginning of the Exile in 555 BC and also at the beginning of the Diaspora in 70 AD. Their enjoyment of the land depends upon their faithfulness to God.

### **Subsection 2C – The Mosaic Covenant re the Law (#6)** **(conditional)**

God instituted the MOSAICC COVENANT<sup>7</sup> between himself as sovereign and Israel (the descendents of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) as his subjects. It is the third restricted or theocratic covenant. It is conditional - it is introduced with the conditional formula, "If ye will obey my voice...then ye shall be a peculiar treasure."

*Its expression* is recorded in Exodus 19:5-8 > 5 *Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: 6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. 7 And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. 8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.(KJV)*

God instituted this covenant with the nation Israel so that the people who believe the promise which he gave to Abraham would know how they should conduct themselves. The Mosaic Covenant in its entirety governs three areas of people's lives:

- **The commandments** govern their personal lives, particularly as they relate to God (Ex. 20:1-26).
- **The judgements** govern their social lives, particularly as they relate to one another (Ex. 1:21 - 24:11).
- **The ordinances** govern their religious lives; they prescribe the manner in which they must approach God. (Ex. 24:12 - 31:18). They must not attempt to approach God in ways of their own devising, as did Cain.

The Mosaic Covenant in no way replaced or set aside the Abrahamic Covenants. Its function was clearly set forth by Paul (Gal. 3:17-19), who points out that the law, the Mosaic Covenant, was given 430 years after the Abrahamic Covenants. The Mosaic

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<sup>7</sup> The sixth divine covenant.

Covenant was added alongside the Abrahamic covenants so that the people of Israel would know how to conduct themselves until "the seed of the woman" (the Christ) comes and makes the complete and perfect sacrifice, toward which the sacrifices of the Mosaic Covenant only point.

The Mosaic Covenant was given, not so that by keeping it people could be saved, but so that people would realize that they cannot do what God wants them to do even when God writes it on tablets of stone. The Law was given so that each person would realize that he cannot achieve righteousness (a right relationship between God and himself) on his own, and that his only hope is to have the righteousness of God imputed to him because of his faith in God himself as his Sovereign and Saviour.

### **Subsection 2D - The Reaffirmations of the Abrahmic & Mosaic Covenants**

Some commentators regard the passages which follow as the fourth Jewish Covenant, which they call the PALESTINIAN COVENANT. I do not. These passages are reaffirmations of the previous covenants for the next generation, the generation about to enter and take Canaan - the Promised Land.

*The 1st passage* is Deuteronomy 29:10-15 > *10 Ye stand this day all of you before the LORD your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, 11 Your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water: 12 That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the LORD thy God, and into his oath, which the LORD thy God maketh with thee this day: 13 That he may establish thee today for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. 14 Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath; 15 But with him that standeth here with us this day before the LORD our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day. (KJV)*

*The 2nd passage* is Deuteronomy 30:11-20 > *11 For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. 12 It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? 13 Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? 14 But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. 15 See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; 16 In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. 17 But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; 18 I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. 19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: 20 That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou*

*mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them. (KJV)*

In this restatement of the previous covenants, God makes two kinds of promises:

- **Legal promises**, which are immediate and conditional (Deut. 27-29). The enjoyment of the immediate blessings are introduced by the formula: "if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God...the Lord will set thee on high above all nations of the earth (Deut. 28:1). Sadly, Israel did not meet the condition of obedience and is still experiencing God's curses and punishment for their disobedience (Deut. 28:15-68).
- **Grace promises**, which are future and unconditional (Deut. 30:1-9). These promises are yet to be realized. God will re-gather the scattered people of Israel and establish them in the land which he has promised unconditionally to give to them.

Deuteronomy concludes this reaffirmation with a final warning and challenge for obedience (Deut. 30:1-20).

### **Subsection 2E – The Covenant re the Prophets (#7)** **(unconditional)**

God instituted the COVENANT RE PROPHETS<sup>8</sup> between himself as sovereign and Israel (the descendents of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) as his subjects. It is the fourth restricted or theocratic covenant. It ordains a line of faithful prophets for God's people – a line which will culminate in the ultimate Prophet, the Messiah. It is unconditional, depending solely upon God, who obligates himself to bring to pass the promised blessings. It does not require a response from the people.

*Its 1<sup>st</sup> expression* is recorded in Deuteronomy 18:15-22 > *15 The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; 16 According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. 17 And the LORD said unto me, They have well-spoken that which they have spoken. 18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. 19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. 20 But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. 21 And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? 22 When a prophet speaketh in the name of the*

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<sup>8</sup> The seventh divine covenant.

*LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him. (KJV)*

*Its 2<sup>nd</sup> expression* is recorded in Acts 3:17-26 > 17 *And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. 18 But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. 19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; 20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. 22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. 23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. 24 Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. 25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. 26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.(KJV)*

That the line of prophets for the Jews did culminate in the ultimate Prophet, the Messiah, is made clear by Peter in Acts 3:17-26 – “*And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.*” (KJV)

### **Subsection 2F – The Phinehas Covenant re Priests (#8)** **(unconditional)**

God instituted the PHINEHAS COVENANT<sup>9</sup> between himself as sovereign and Israel (the descendents of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) as his subjects. It is the fifth restricted or

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<sup>9</sup> The eighth divine covenant.

theocratic covenant. It ordains a faithful priesthood for God's people – a priesthood which will culminate in the ultimate Priest, the Messiah. It is unconditional, depending solely upon God, who obligates himself to bring to pass the promised blessings. It does not require a response from the people.

*Its expression* is recorded in Numbers 25:10-13 > 10 *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 11 Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy. 12 Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace: 13 And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel.* (KJV)

### **Subsection 2G – The Davidic Covenant re a Royal Dynasty (#9)** **(unconditional)**

God instituted the DAVIDIC COVENANT<sup>10</sup> between himself as sovereign and Israel (the descendents of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) as his subjects. It is the sixth restricted or theocratic covenant. It ordains a royal dynasty for Israel – a dynasty of kings which will culminate in the ultimate King, the Messiah. It is unconditional, depending solely upon God, who obligates himself to bring to pass the promised blessings. It does not require a response from the people.

*Its expression* is recorded in 2 Samuel 7:4-17 > 4 *And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying, 5 Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? 6 Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. 7 In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar? 8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: 9 And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth. 10 Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime, 11 And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house. 12 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. 13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. 14 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: 15 But*

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<sup>10</sup> The ninth divine covenant.

*my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. 16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever. 17 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David. (KJV)*

In this covenant, God promises David three things:

- *A land forever* (v. 10).
- *An unending dynasty* (v. 11).
- *An everlasting kingdom* (v. 11, 16).

The Davidic Covenant predicts the birth of Solomon, David's son, who will succeed David (v. 12). His particular role is to establish the Davidic Kingdom forever (v. 13). His throne continues, though his seed is cursed in the person of Jeconiah (Coniah), who was the king under whom the nation was carried captive to Babylon. Jeremiah prophesies that no one whose genealogical descent would be traced back to David through Jeconiah and Solomon would ever sit on David's throne (Jer. 22:24-30). Joseph, the legal, but not physical, father of Jesus traces his lineage to David through Jeconiah (Matt. 1:1-17). David, however, had another son, Nathan. His line was not cursed. Mary, the physical mother of Jesus, traces her lineage back to David through Nathan (Luke 3:23-38). Notice the care and the extent to which God goes to keep his Word and to preserve its truthfulness. The virgin birth was absolutely essential, not only to assure the sinless character of Jesus, but also to fulfill the Davidic Covenant. Jesus receives His "blood right" to David's throne through His earthly mother, Mary, and His "legal right" to David's throne through His adoptive father, Joseph. The virgin birth guarantees that one of David's line will sit on David's throne and rule forever, while at the same time preserving intact the curse and restriction on the line through Jeconiah.

### **Subsection 2H – The New Covenant (#10)** **(unconditional).**

God instituted the NEW COVENANT<sup>11</sup> between himself as sovereign and Israel (the descendents of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) as his subjects. It is the seventh and last, restricted or theocratic covenant. It is unconditional.

*Its expression* is recorded in Jeremiah 31:31-34 > *31 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: 32 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: 33 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,*

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<sup>11</sup> The tenth divine covenant.

*and they shall be my people. 34 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. (KJV)*

In this covenant, God promises four things to his people:

- **Regeneration** - God will put his law in their inward parts and write the law on in their hearts (v. 31:33).
- **National restoration** - Yahweh will be their God, and the nation will be his people.
- **Personal ministry of the Holy Spirit** – God will teach them individually (v. 31:34).
- **Full justification** – God will forgive and completely remove their sins (v. 31:34).

The New Covenant is made sure by the blood that Jesus shed on Calvary's cross. That blood, which guarantees to Israel its New Covenant, also provides for the forgiveness of sins for the believers who comprise the Body of Messiah. Jesus' payment for sins is more than adequate to pay for the sins of all who will believe in Him. The New Covenant is called "new" in contrast to the covenant with Moses which is called "old" (Jer. 31:32; Heb. 8:6-13) because it actually accomplished what the Mosaic Covenant could only point to, that is, the child of God living in a manner that is consistent with the character of God.