

New Covenant Theology



Brief Review

- A covenant is a solemn agreement imposed by God on a specific person or group of people.
- The giving of a covenant often included a solemn ceremony that involved:
 - Animal sacrifices
 - Pronouncement of curses that would accompany the violation of the covenant

Brief Review

- A covenant was often accompanied by a **sign** that served as a symbol and future reminder of the covenant.
- Two types of covenants:
 - Conditional
 - Unconditional
 - **Note:** Sometimes a covenant can have both conditional and unconditional aspects to it.

The Major Covenants in the Bible

- **Noahic** (Genesis 9:8-17)
- **Abrahamic** (Genesis 12-17)
- **Mosaic** (Exodus 19-24)
 - Often referred to in the New Testament as the “Old Covenant”
- **Davidic** (2Samuel 23:5, Psalm 89:3)
- **New** (Jer.31:31-34 ; Heb.7-13; 2Cor.3:6-18)

Abrahamic Covenant

Genesis 12-17

Abrahamic Covenant



Genesis 12-17

- **Genesis 12:2-3** – *“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. 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.”*
- **Genesis 13:16** – *I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted.*
- **Genesis 15:5** – *And [the Lord] brought [Abram] outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be”.*
- **Genesis 15:18** – *On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your offspring I give this land...”*

Abrahamic Covenant



Genesis 12-17

- **Genesis 17:6-14** – *I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you.⁷ And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.⁸ And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.⁹ And God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations.*

Abrahamic Covenant



Genesis 12-17

- **Genesis 17:6-14 (continued)** – ¹⁰ *This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised.* ¹¹ *You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you.* ¹² *He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised.* *Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring,* ¹³ *both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money, shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant.* ¹⁴ *Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.*

Abrahamic Covenant - Summary

Genesis 12-17

- **Description:** A divine promise of land, offspring, and blessing
- **Type:**
 - **Unconditional** – The promise of land, offspring, and blessing to Abraham was unconditional.
 - **Conditional** – The inclusion of Abraham's household and descendants in the covenant was contingent upon their being circumcised. (Cf. Gen 17:14)
- **Made with Whom?**
 - Abraham and his descendants
- **Sign:**
 - Circumcision

The Abrahamic Covenant Had Two Fulfillments

Physical Fulfillment:

- Physical Land
- Physical Offspring
- Physical Blessing

Spiritual Fulfillment:

- Spiritual Land
- Spiritual Offspring
- Spiritual Blessing

The Abrahamic Covenant Had Two Fulfillments

Physical Fulfillment:

- **Physical Land:** The land of Canaan (in the Middle East)
 - **Genesis 17:8** – *And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.*

The Abrahamic Covenant Had Two Fulfillments

Physical Fulfillment:

- **Physical Offspring:** The numerous offspring or descendants that would come through Isaac
 - **Genesis 15:5** – *And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”*
 - **Genesis 21:12** – *But God said to Abraham, “...through Isaac shall your offspring be named.”*

The Abrahamic Covenant Had Two Fulfillments

Physical Fulfillment:

- **Physical Blessing:** Abraham would be blessed by God and would be a source of blessing to others
 - **Genesis 12:2b-3** – *I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 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 Abrahamic Covenant Had Two Fulfillments

Spiritual Fulfillment

- **Spiritual Land:** The new heavens and new earth
 - **Hebrews 11:9-10,16** – *By faith [Abraham] went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God... But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one.*
 - **Romans 4:13** – *For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.*

The Abrahamic Covenant Had Two Fulfillments

Spiritual Fulfillment

- **Spiritual Offspring:** Christ and those who belong to Him by following Abraham's example of faith
 - **Galatians 3:16** – *Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ*
 - **Galatians 3:29** – *And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.*
 - **Romans 4:16** – *Therefore, the promise comes by faith . . . to all Abraham's offspring-- not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all.*
 - **Galatians 3:7** – *Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham.*

The Abrahamic Covenant Had Two Fulfillments

Spiritual Fulfillment

- **Spiritual Blessing:** The salvation of “all nations” (the Gentiles) through faith in the gospel
 - **Galatians 3:8** - *And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed."*

Questions

- Does the distinction that I made between a physical fulfillment and a spiritual fulfillment make sense you?
- Can you see from the passages that I cited earlier that the promises of God's covenant with Abraham had both a physical and spiritual fulfillment?