

Covenant

Hebrew word 1285.

Also confederacy, league

- Genesis 6:18, 9:9 – 17 Covenant with Noah that never again would all flesh be cut off by a flood. The sign of the covenant is the rainbow. No conditions were attached, so this is more of a promise from God than a contract.
- Genesis 14:13 Abraham had treaties with some of the surrounding peoples.
- Genesis 15:18 Covenant with Abram concerning the land his descendants would inherit. No conditions were attached, so this also is more of a promise than a contract. However, the covenant does not mention how long this inheritance will be theirs. Certainly, the promised region was in the hands of the Israelites in the time of David and Solomon and in the time of Jeroboam II in the north and Uzziah in the south, but not since that time.
- Genesis 17:1 – 22 Covenant with Abram/Abraham (name changed in this chapter) that he would be the father of many nations, and that these nations would be descendants of Isaac. The promise that God would be their God was called an everlasting covenant. God did not specify if He would be God to anyone else. The sign of this covenant was circumcision.
- Genesis 21:22 – 34 Abraham made a covenant with Abimelech concerning water rights near Beersheba.
- Genesis 26:26 – 33 Isaac made a covenant with Abimelech concerning water rights near Beersheba.
- Genesis 31:44 – 55 Laban and Jacob made a covenant not to pass a certain boundary marker to harm each other.
- Exodus 2:24 God remembered the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Whether God remembered the covenant in Genesis 15 or 17 (or both) is unknown. But, because of Exodus 6:5, the land promise is more likely. The same idea may be found in 2 Kings 13:23.
- Exodus 6:4 – 5 God referenced the land promise (Genesis 15) while talking with Moses.
- Exodus 19:3 – 6 God told Moses that He was about to make a covenant with Israel that they would be a “special treasure,” a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. However, this covenant was conditional. The Israelites had to “obey My voice and keep My covenant.”
- Exodus 23:26 The Israelites were warned not to make covenants with the people of the Promised Land or their gods. Repeated in Exodus 34:12 – 16 and Deuteronomy 7:2.
- Exodus 24:7 – 8 The Law of Moses was called the Book of the Covenant. This covenant was previously described as conditional on their obedience (Exodus 19:3 – 6).
- Exodus 31:16 – 17 The Israelites (no one else) were to keep the Sabbath perpetually, which was to be a sign of God resting on the seventh day.
- Exodus 34:10 – 28 God described to Moses a covenant in which God would perform miracles such as had not been done anywhere else. Plus, God promised to drive out the Canaanites from the Promised Land. The Israelites were required to keep the major festivals set out by God and other commands. The words of the covenant are called the Ten Commandments. This appears to be a conditional contract in which God’s performance was conditional on Israel’s obedience. This is repeated in Deuteronomy 4:13 and 4:23.
- Leviticus 2:13 The rituals of the Law are described as “the covenant.”

- Leviticus 24:8 Putting out fresh loaves on the Table of Showbread every Sabbath was called an everlasting covenant. Note that God put an end to this practice by destroying the Temple in 70 AD. The Israelites had not held up their end of the contract, so it was cancelled.
- Leviticus 26:1 – 46 God said that the fact that Israel would be “fruitful and multiply” would be a sign that God was keeping His side of the contract. God reminded them of the consequences of disobedience (26:14 – 39), and reminded them of the positive results of repentance (26:40 – 45). Note that, if they do not repent, God will not remember the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is repeated in Deuteronomy 4:31.
- The ark of the covenant is mentioned in Number 10:33, 14:44, Deuteronomy 10:8, 31:9, 31:26, Joshua 3:3, 3:6, 3:8, 3:11, 3:14, 3:17, 4:7, 4:9, 4:18, 6:6, 6:8, 8:33, Judges 20:27, 1 Samuel 4:3, 4:4, 4:5, 2 Samuel 15:24, 1 Kings 3:15, 6:19, 8:1, 8:6, 1 Chronicles 15:25 – 29, 16:6, 16:37, 17:1, 22:19, 28:2, 28:18, 2 Chronicles 5:2, 5:7, 5:10, 6:11, Jeremiah 3:16, Revelation 11:19.
- Numbers 18:19 The portion of various sacrifices that become the property of the officiating priest are called “a covenant of salt.”
- Numbers 25:12 – 13 Phineas the son of Eleazar the son of Aaron was granted an everlasting priesthood because he took action against an Israelite who married a Moabite woman. He became the third High Priest. Many of his descendants served faithfully. The Maccabean tradition claims to be his descendants. So, the High Priest even in the first century, corrupt as they were, would have been descendants of Phineas. The High Priesthood was lost after the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD. Unbelieving Jews tried to keep the office alive for another century, but, lacking a Temple, finally faded out completely. So, this promise continued as long as there was a place in which to be the High Priest.
- Leviticus 2:13 Grain offerings are to be salted, so it is called a covenant of salt. The heaven offering is similarly titled (Numbers 18:19).
- Deuteronomy 5:2 – 3 Moses repeated the Law, the covenant, which was conditional on the obedience of Israel. Note that in 5:3, Moses makes a point that these laws were not for their ancestors (for example, the Sabbath).
- Deuteronomy 7:9, 7:12 God will keep His covenant for a thousand generations with those who obey. Solomon said something similar in 1 Kings 8:23.
- Deuteronomy 8:18 – 20 The covenant is conditional on obedience. Similar wording is used when God suspended His covenant due to Solomon’s disobedience in 1 Kings 11:11
- Deuteronomy 9:9 – 15 The two tablets on which the Ten Commandments were carved were called the Tablets of the Covenant. Also 1 Kings 8:9, 8:21
- Deuteronomy 17:2 Transgressing His covenant is wickedness.
- Deuteronomy 29:1 – 25 God announced through Moses another covenant while on the Plains of Moab, which was a repeat of the first with some historical references to the Wilderness period.
- Deuteronomy 31:16 – 25 God tells Moses that Israel will break the covenant.
- Deuteronomy 33:9 Moses pronounced a blessing on the tribe of Levi as those who would keep the covenant.
- Joshua 7:11 – 15 God informed Joshua that their loss at Ai was because someone transgressed the covenant, which referenced their instructions before going into battle (6:18 – 19), not the Law of Moses.

- Joshue 9:6 – 16 The Gibeonites wanted to make a treaty.
- Joshua 23:16 If the Israelites transgress the covenant and served other gods, they will perish swiftly from the land.
- Judges 2:1 – 3, 2:20 - 23 God said He would never break His covenant, yet He did in verse 3 because the Israelites did not do their part. So, “I will never break My covenant with you” means that God will never initiate the breaking, but if Israel does it, God is no longer obligated.
- 1 Samuel 11:1 – 2 The men of Jabesh Gilead wanted to make a covenant with the Ammonites who had besieged them.
- 1 Samuel 18:2 Jonathan and David made a covenant. The details are not given.
- 1 Samuel 20:8 – 16, 23:18 The covenant between Jonathan and David was termed “a covenant of the Lord.” Details emerge about the covenant – Jonathan would tell David of Saul’s plans against David. David would not kill off the family of Jonathan when David became king.
- 2 Samuel 3:12 – 13, 21 David made a covenant with Abner.
- 2 Samuel 5:3 David made a covenant with the elders of Israel.
- 2 Samuel 23:5 God made an everlasting covenant with David. I assume he is referring to the promise that his seed would not lack a man to occupy his throne, that he Messiah would come from him (Psalm 89:29).
- 1 Kings 5:12 Solomon and Hiram made a covenant
- 1 Kings 15:19 King Asa made a covenant with Ben-Hadad of Syria.
- 1 Kings 19:10 – 14 Elijah complained that the people had forsaken the covenant, probably meaning the Law and specifically through idolatry.
- 1 Kings 20:34 Ahab made a covenant with Ben-Hadad of Syria after defeating them.
- 2 Kings 11:4 The High Priest made a covenant with some of the captains to guard the child-king and overthrow Queen Athaliah.
- 2 Kings 11:17 After overthrowing Queen Athaliah, the High Priest made a covenant between God, the child-king, and the people, that they would be the Lord’s people (again).
- 2 Kings 17:15 The Israelites rejected His covenant. Verse 35 and 38 point this rejection to the Law of Moses. 18:12 has the same idea.
- 2 Kings 23:2 – 3 records when the people restored the covenant under Josiah. In 18:23, the people re-established the Passover which had not been done since the days of the judges (not even in the time of David and Solomon).
- 1 Chronicles 11:3 David made a covenant with the tribal elders to become king.
- 1 Chronicles 16:14 – 19 David reminded the people of the land promise (covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob).
- 2 Chronicles 6:14 Solomon reminded the people of the covenant they renewed with David.
- 2 Chronicles 13:5 God’s covenant with David is called a “covenant of salt.” This promise of an everlasting kingdom is in 2 Samuel 7:8 – 16, although salt is not mentioned. The two mentions of “covenant of salt” are in Leviticus 2:13 and Numbers 18:19. All offerings were offered with salt (Leviticus 2:13). The promise is referenced in 2 Chronicles 21:7.
- 2 Chronicles 15:12 The Israelites renewed the covenant under Asa.
- 2 Chronicles 16:3 King Asa made a covenant with Ben-Hadad of Syria.
- 2 Chronicles 23:1 – 3 High Priest Jehoiada made a covenant with the military captains. The nation made a covenant with the boy-king Joash (also 23:16).

- 2 Chronicles 29:10 Hezekiah wanted to re-establish the covenant (probably the Law of Moses).
- 2 Chronicles 34:30 – 32 The Law of Moses (the covenant) was re-discovered in the Temple repairs under Josiah.
- Ezra 10:3 The returning exiles under Ezra made a covenant with God about putting away their foreign wives.
- Nehemiah 1:5 Nehemiah remarked in prayer that God kept His part of the covenant despite faithless Israel.
- Nehemiah 9:8 The Levites remembered the land promise in their long recounting of the history of Israel.
- Nehemiah 8:32 The “covenant” sounds more like “promises.” God keeps His promises.
- Nehemiah 9:38 The people made a new covenant with God after recounting their sins.
- Nehemiah 13:39 A renegade priest was drive out because he violated the “covenant of the priesthood and the Levites.” The exact reference to a previous covenant is uncertain, but probably to the laws for priests and Levites in Leviticus 1 – 10.
- Job 5:23 Eliphaz the Temanite said that Job would have a covenant with the stones of the field after the current distress.
- Job 31:1 Job made a covenant with his eyes – he promised himself that he would not lust after young women.
- Job 41:4 God asks rhetorical questions about a beast (Leviathan), including “Will he make a covenant with you?” Will the beast make a peace treaty?
- Psalm 25:10, 14 The paths of God are mercy and truth to those who keep His covenant – assume the Law of Moses.
- Psalm 44:17 “We have not dealt falsely with Thy covenant.” Assume the Law of Moses.
- Psalm 50:5 “Those who have made a covenant by sacrifice.” Assume the Law of Moses.
- Psalm 50:16 Those who disobey have no right to invoke the covenant.
- Psalm 55:20 Enemies break covenants.
- Psalm 74:20 have respect for the covenant
- Psalm 78:10, 78:37 Ephraim did not keep the covenant, the Law of Moses.
- Psalm 89:3, 28, 34, 38 Covenant with David about the king of the eternal kingdom
- Psalm 103:18 Covenant of the Law of Moses.
- Psalm 105:8 – 10 Covenant about the land of Canaan to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
- Psalm 106:45 Sounds like the land promise.
- Psalm 111:5, 9 Sounds like the Law of Moses, but it is “everlasting” and involves redemption, so it is the covenant of the eternal kingdom of the Messiah.
- Psalm 132:12 Promise to David
- Proverbs 2:17 The woman is Wisdom. Due to 3:1, this sounds like the Law of Moses.
- Isaiah 24:5 Sounds like the Law of Moses. The Law could have been everlasting if they had kept it. Isaiah describes it as broken.
- Isaiah 28:15, 18 Evil rulers made a covenant with death.
- Isaiah 33:8 God broke the covenant which Israel had disobeyed, but will remember them again.
- Isaiah 42:6 Israel will be given as a covenant which is a light to the Gentiles.
- Isaiah 49:8 The covenant in which the Messiah is promised.

- Isaiah 54:10 The eternal kingdom (the part on earth) of the Messiah has a covenant of peace.
- Isaiah 55:3 The eternal kingdom (the part on earth) of the Messiah has a covenant that the nations will come to them.
- Isaiah 56:4, 6 Non-Israelites and eunuchs who chose to follow the Law of Moses will not be rejected from the eternal kingdom of the Messiah.
- Isaiah 57:8 A covenant with a pagan god.
- Isaiah 59:21 The covenant of the eternal kingdom of the Messiah.
- Isaiah 61:8 The covenant of the eternal kingdom (on earth) of the Messiah.
- Jeremiah 11:2 – 10 Jeremiah announced that the people had broken the Law of Moses
- Jeremiah 14:21 Jeremiah told the people to pray that God not break His covenant with them. Likely the Law of Moses.
- Jeremiah 22:9 Other nations would recognize that the disasters of Israel were because they forsook their covenant (Law of Moses).
- Jeremiah 31:31 – 33 Announcing a future covenant unlike the previous (Law of Moses)
- Jeremiah 32:40 Promises an everlasting covenant in the future.
- Jeremiah 33:20 – 25 Covenants with day and night – promises of day and night continuing – is compared with the covenant with David (everlasting throne), that both will continue despite the captivity present captivity.
- Jeremiah 34:8 – 18 King Zedekiah made a covenant with the people to release those indentured, but then revoked it. God reminded them that the Law of Moses says that indenture lasts only seven years. Further, Israel had revoked a covenant with those indentured. So, God would punish them.
- Jeremiah 50:5 Upon their return from captivity, Jeremiah predicts that they will seek an everlasting covenant with God.
- Ezekiel 16:8 Allegory of God’s marriage covenant with Israel which they broke.
- Ezekiel 16:59 – 62 God remembers the covenant that Israel broke (Law of Moses), but will make an everlasting covenant with them “when I provide an atonement for all you have done.”
- Ezekiel 20:37 Upon return from captivity, they will re-establish the Law of Moses.
- Ezekiel 30:5 Several allied countries were predicted to fall.
- Ezekiel 34:25 God promises a covenant of peace under the promised descendant of David, the Messiah.
- Ezekiel 37:26 God promises a covenant of peace under the promised descendant of David, the Messiah.
- Ezekiel 44:7 A reminder of the covenant which they broke (Law of Moses).
- Daniel 9:4 In Daniel’s prayer, he remembers that God does not forsake His covenant with those who keep His commandments (Law of Moses).
- Daniel 9:27 Just before the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, God will “confirm a covenant with many.” This is the New Covenant.
- Daniel 11:22 – 32 Antiochus IV was known for his deceit and arrogance. In addition, he taxed the Israelites very harshly. Antiochus invaded Egypt a second time, but the Romans intervened. He retreated to Israel. He put a statue of Zeus in the Temple, sacrificed a pig on the altar, and ended the sacrificial system (171 BC, see 8:13 – 14). This covenant was the Law of Moses.

- Hosea 2:18 A covenant of peace, as in the eternal kingdom under the Messiah. Peter and Paul confirmed this (Romans 9:26 – 27, 1 Peter 2:10).
- Hosea 6:7 The Law of Moses.
- Hosea 8:1 The Law of Moses.
- Hosea 10:4 Swearing falsely in making a covenant.
- Hosea 12:1 Ephraim...makes a covenant with Assyria.
- Amos 1:9 The covenant of brotherhood between Tyre and Edom. A treaty?
- Obadiah 7 Edom had treaties.
- Zechariah 9:11 Because of the blood of your covenant. The paragraph before is about the Messiah (riding on a donkey), so this blood is Jesus' blood.
- Zechariah 11:10 God was protecting the restored Israel, but was breaking that covenant of protection due to series of bad leaders.
- Malachi 2:4 – 8 Covenant with Levi (the priesthood) included life and peace, but was being corrupted.
- Malachi 2:10 Law of Moses
- Malachi 2:14 Marriage is called a covenant
- Malachi 3:1 The Messenger of the covenant: the Messiah.

Greek word 1242

Also testament

- Matthew 26:28, Mark 14:24, Luke 22:20, 1 Corinthians 11:25 First Lord's Supper, the blood of the (new) covenant.
- Luke 1:73 Zacharias prophesied that that God would remember the covenant sworn to Abraham and the David, so it must be the Messiah.
- Acts 3:25 Covenant about the Messiah told to Abraham.
- Acts 7:8 Covenant of circumcision
- Romans 11:27 Covenant about the Messiah from Isaiah 59:21
- 2 Corinthians 3:6 Made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant
- 2 Corinthians 3:14 The veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Covenant
- Galatians 3:15 – 17 Example: man's covenant cannot be modified, therefore the covenant with Abraham about the Messiah cannot either.
- Hebrews 7:22 Jesus has become the surety of a better covenant.
- Hebrews 8:6 – 9:4, 10:16 Jesus is the Mediator of a better covenant. Contrasts the Law and the gospel, quoting Jeremiah 31:31 – 34.
- Hebrews 9:15 – 20 He is the Mediator of a new covenant, contrasted with Law of Moses
- Hebrews 10:29, 12:24, 13:20 Blood of the covenant refers to the New Covenant.

Summary:

- Covenant with Noah: no more worldwide floods. No conditions.
- Covenant with Abraham about the promised land. No conditions. Accomplished under David, Solomon, and Jeroboam II. The sign of this covenant was circumcision.
- Covenant with Abraham as the father of many nations. No conditions. Accomplished in the church. Also could be called the covenant which promised a Messiah.
- Covenant with Israel, the Law of Moses. Conditional on obedience.

- Covenant of Salt. Covenant with Levi. The priesthood in Israel would not pass from them.
- Covenant with David. No conditions. Accomplished when Jesus became king of the eternal kingdom.
- Covenant with the faithful. The New Covenant. Conditional upon faith.

Symbolism of the Destruction of the Temple in 70 AD

The first century Christians knew from the words of Jesus and from Daniel that the world could not end before the Temple was destroyed. The devastation that occurred around that event is referenced many times in the New Testament in order to prepare the early Christians for that time. Even though that event is long past, it has importance for subsequent believers. Not only was the end of the Temple a physical accomplishment of a prediction by God, but also a symbol of at least three spiritual truths.

The End of the Law of Moses

1. The end of the Law did not occur when Jesus was crucified. Many quote Colossians 2:14 out of context to claim that the Law was nailed to the cross. The context refers to Gentiles (verse 13), not Jews. What were nailed to the cross were the judgments against us.
2. The apostles continued to observe the Law all through the book of Acts, and recommended that Jewish Christians do the same (Acts 21:18 – 25).
3. To explain the attitude of the Jewish Christians, perhaps the example of David is appropriate. On more than one occasion, David had opportunity to kill King Saul. David had already been anointed by Samuel as the next king. But, David considered it inappropriate for him to speed the process along (1 Samuel 24:4 – 7, 1 Samuel 26:7 – 12). The Jewish Christians waited patiently for God to accomplish His promise of the end of that era (Daniel 9:27).
4. Since the Law applied only to the physical descendants of Israel who lived in a small geographic area, Gentile Christians would consider the end of the Law to be interesting, but not applicable to them. The magnitude of the event implies that something more is being symbolized.

Completion of the Written Word and the Gathering of the Elect

1. Ephesians 4:7 – 14 says that Jesus granted miraculous apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers for the equipping of the saints UNTIL we all come to the unity of the faith. If this does not happen until the end of time, then Jesus' prayer in John 17:20 – 21 failed. Rather, these miraculous people were provided until the objective standard was completed and delivered to the whole world (Colossians 1:6, Romans 1:8, Jude 3). God has the ability to spread the gospel to the whole world in an instant. He chose to cause that dispersal to take about 40 years (perhaps 30). Clearly, a dozen men could not accomplish this task, so the time frame is still miraculous. God chose to disperse the message through human deliverymen, so He was obliged to operate within the boundaries of the free will He had previously granted. So, the spreading took time, much like the Israelites had to wander in the wilderness for 40 years in order to grow a new generation.

2. Revelation 11:3 – 14 describes the miraculous messengers of the gospel, that they stayed alive by their powers despite tremendous opposition. But, when their testimony was complete (verse 7), Satan was able to kill them. The litmus test for whether a passage refers to the end of time is whether anyone survives. This scene is followed by another that refers to the physical earth, so this completion of the written Word occurred at a point in history. Otherwise, we should be expecting more books to be added to the Bible.
3. Jesus applied Daniel 7:13 – 14 to Himself (Matthew 24:30, Luke 21:27, Luke 22:69, Matthew 26:64), “The Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.” This event is connected with “gathering together the elect from the four winds (Matthew 24:31, Mark 13:27). Jesus was careful to specify that this was not at the end of time, but rather would be accomplished before that generation passed away (Matthew 24:34, Mark 13:30). Further, Jesus, Paul, and Peter specified that there would be no signs of the end of heaven and earth (Matthew 24:36, Mark 13:32, 1 Thessalonians 5:2 – 3, 2 Peter 3:10), yet Jesus gave several signs of His “coming in the clouds.”
4. As promised, the gospel went “to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile,” (Acts 13:46, Romans 1:8, 2:9, 2:10). Paul notes in Romans 11 that a significant percentage of Jews did not accept the gospel, and were cut off from the family of God, but that this was part of the plan. However, this low response rate was not permanent, as described in the latter part of the chapter (viz., 11:25). The destruction of the Temple was a watershed event for many unbelieving Jews. Although they did not, at the time, believe that Jesus was the Messiah, they had read Daniel and knew that the Temple could not be destroyed until after the Messiah came. When the Temple fell, many unbelieving Jews turned to Jesus because of the accomplishment of the prophecy of Daniel. The “fullness of the Gentiles” had come in; many Jews brought up the rear, and the elect had been effectively gathered from the four corners of the earth.

The End of Satan’s Power on Earth

1. Jesus described the events surrounding the destruction of Jerusalem as the worst of all time (Matthew 24:21, Mark 13:19). Further, Jesus said that “unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved, but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.”
2. Satan was lord of this earth during Jesus’ time and that of the apostles (Luke 4:6, John 14:30, Ephesians 2:2, 2 Corinthians 4:4, 1 Peter 5:8). In addition to tempting Jesus (Matthew 4, Luke 4) and demon possession, Satan could take away the Word to prevent belief (Luke 8:12), had the power of death (Hebrews 2:14), deceived (Revelation 12:9), and accused (Revelation 12:10). However, Jesus hinted that this would not always be the case (John 12:31)
3. Jesus is the king of this world now (Revelation 1:5, 2:27, 12:5, 11:15, 19:15, Psalm 2:8 - 9). After Jesus returned to heaven, a war ensued, after which Satan and his angels were exiled to the earth (Revelation 12:8 – 9). Satan knew he had only a short time, so he had great wrath against the faithful, which spilled over onto the unbelievers (Revelation 12:12 – 17). This is the source of the great tribulation described by Jesus, the worst of all time.
4. In conjunction with the destruction of the Temple, Satan was bound in the abyss (Revelation 20:2 – 3) and can “deceive the nations no longer.” Compare to 2 Corinthians 4:4. The bad angels also are bound in the abyss (Jude 6, 2 Peter 2:4), as predicted by Zechariah 13:2 and applied by Jesus in Matthew 26:31.