

# ENDGAME

## A Study On Revelation (Week #36)

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### The Covenants

#### The \_\_\_\_\_ of a Covenant

- Scripture talks about covenants between: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
  - Individual and individual - (Gen 21:32, Abraham and Abimelech; 1 Sam 18:3 And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself.)
  - Individual and group of individuals - (1 Sam 11:1-2, between King Nahash of Ammon and the city of Jabeshgilead)
  - Nation and nation - (Ex 23:32; 34:12, 15: in both Israel is forbidden to covenant with other nations; Hos 12:1, Israel covenants with Assyria and Egypt)
- Scripture talks about covenants between: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

#### The \_\_\_\_\_ of a Covenant

- Temporal
  - Enduring for a period of time; limited life span
- Eternal
  - Never-ending; forever

#### \_\_\_\_\_ of Covenants

- Conditional:
  - "If You Will...then I Will..."
- Unconditional:
  - "I Will..."
  - Unconditional covenants may also have conditional blessings attached.

#### The Two Main Covenants

Common Name	Participants	Period	Type	Scripture Reference
<b>Mosaic Covenant</b>	God and man, specifically God and Israel by way of Moses	Temporal	Conditional	<b>Exodus 19:5</b> Now if you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my own special treasure from among all the peoples on earth; for all the earth belongs to me. (NLT)
<b>Abrahamic Covenant</b>	See below	Eternal	Unconditional	See below

## Covenants Between God And Man

- Adamic Covenant (Covenant of Works)
  - Conditional in nature (broken by Adam & Eve)
  - Temporary
  - The Covenant can be thought of in two parts:
    - ▶ The Edenic Covenant (innocence)
    - ▶ The Adamic Covenant (grace).
  - The Edenic Covenant (Genesis 1:26-30; 2:16-17) outlined man's responsibility toward creation and God's directive regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
  - The Adamic Covenant (Genesis 3:16-19) included the curses pronounced against mankind for the sin of Adam and Eve, as well as God's provision for that sin (Genesis 3:15).
- Noahic Covenant
  - Unconditional in nature
  - Temporary or Eternal???
  - The Covenant was an unconditional covenant between God and Noah (specifically) and humanity (generally).
  - After the Flood, God promised humanity that He would never again destroy all life on earth with a Flood (Genesis chapter 9).
  - God gave the rainbow as the sign of the covenant, a promise that the entire earth would never again flood and a reminder that God can and will judge sin (2 Peter 2:5).
- Mosaic Covenant
  - Conditional in nature
  - Temporary
  - The Mosaic Covenant was a conditional covenant that either brought God's direct blessing for obedience or God's direct cursing for disobedience upon the nation of Israel (Deuteronomy 11).
  - Part of the Mosaic Covenant was the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20) and the rest of the Law, which contained over 600 commands—roughly 300 positive and 300 negative.
  - The history books of the Old Testament (Joshua–Esther) detail how Israel succeeded at obeying the Law or how Israel failed miserably at obeying the Law.

**Deuteronomy 11:26** "Look, today I am giving you the choice between a blessing and a curse! **27** You will be blessed if you obey the commands of the Lord your God that I am giving you today. **28** But you will be cursed if you reject the commands of the Lord your God and turn away from him and worship gods you have not known before." (NLT)

- Abrahamic Covenant
  - Unconditional in nature
  - Eternal
  - God promised many things to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3, 6-7; 13:14-17; 15:17:1-14; 22:15-18).
  - He personally promised that He would make Abraham's name great (Genesis 12:2).
  - That Abraham would have numerous physical descendants (Genesis 13:16).
  - That he would be the father of a multitude of nations (Genesis 17:4-5).
  - God also made promises regarding a nation called Israel. In fact, the geographical boundaries of the Abrahamic Covenant are laid out on more than one occasion in the book of Genesis (12:7; 13:14-15; 15:18-21).
  - That the families of the world will be blessed through the physical line of Abraham (Genesis 12:3; 22:18). This is a reference to the Messiah, who would come from the line of Abraham.
- Land (Palestinian) Covenant
  - Unconditional in nature
  - Eternal
  - Promises relate to Israel's possession of the land
  - Amplifies the land aspect that was detailed in the Abrahamic Covenant. (Deuteronomy 29:1-29 and Deuteronomy 30:1-10)
  - According to the terms of this covenant, if the people disobeyed, God would cause them to be scattered around the world (Deuteronomy 30:3-4).
  - He would eventually restore the nation (verse 5). When the nation is restored, then they will obey Him perfectly (verse 8), and God will cause them to prosper (verse 9).

**VIDEO:** Why Isn't There a Palestinian State? (Prayer University)

- Davidic Covenant
  - Unconditional in nature
  - Eternal
  - The Davidic Covenant amplifies the "seed" aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant (2 Samuel 7:8-16).
  - The promises to David in this passage are significant. God promised that David's lineage would last forever and that his kingdom would never pass away permanently (verse 16).
  - Obviously, the Davidic throne has not been in place at all times.
  - There will be a time, however, when someone from the line of David will again sit on the throne and rule as king. This future king is Jesus (Luke 1:32-33).
- \_\_\_\_\_ and New Covenant


- Conditional in nature
- Eternal
- The Israelites were required to obey God and keep the Law, and in return He protected and blessed them (Deuteronomy 30:15-18; 1 Samuel 12:14-15).
- In the New Covenant, things change and God becomes the proactive and unconditional source of salvation and blessing (Romans 5:8).
- Required repeated, daily animal sacrifices as a reminder of sin, the New Covenant Christ's "once and for all" sacrifice eliminates further sacrifice.
- Only the High priest could enter in the Most Holy Place where God dwells, New Covenant Jesus is the High Priest and we can enter God's presence.
- External regulations and actions; New Covenant internal heart change.
- The Old Covenant established our guilt before God and our need for a Savior.
- One purpose of the Old Covenant was to make it absolutely clear that no man is righteous before God and that no one can save himself.
- We are NO LONGER under the Old Covenant.

**Galatians 3:24** Let me put it another way. The law was our guardian until Christ came; it protected us until we could be made right with God through faith. **25** And now that the way of faith has come, we no longer need the law as our guardian. (NLT)

**Matthew 5:17** "Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. **18** I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God's law will disappear until its purpose is achieved. (NLT)

**Matthew 5:17** "Do not presume that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. **18** For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter (one *ióta*) or stroke of a letter shall pass from the Law, until all is accomplished! (NASB)

**Matthew 5:17** "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. **18** For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot (Greek: *ióta*, Hebrew: *yōd*) or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. (NASB)

 **yōd**: י / Hebrew; *yōd* (*yōd*) - the tenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The Hebrew or rather Aramaic letter which was the smallest of all, to indicate the smallest part. It was written above the line and looks to us rather like an apostrophe. (Psalm 119)

iota: ἰώτα / Greek; ióta (ee-o'-tah) - the eighth letter of the Greek alphabet. It is the smallest letter.

stroke of a letter: κεραια / Greek; keraia (ker-ah'-yah) - a little hook, an apostrophe on letters of the alphabet, distinguishing them from other little letters, or a separation stroke between letters.

tittle: Hebrew; - smaller than a jot, A tittle is a letter extension, a pen stroke that can differentiate one Hebrew letter from another. Example: distinguishes dalet  $\daleth$  and resh  $\daleth$ .



- Old and \_\_\_\_\_ Covenant
  - Unconditional in nature
  - Eternal
  - The New Covenant is a covenant made first with the nation of Israel and, ultimately, with all mankind (Jeremiah 31:31-34).
  - In the New Covenant, God promises to forgive sin, and there will be a universal knowledge of the Lord.
  - Jesus Christ came to fulfill the Law of Moses (Matthew 5:17) and create a new covenant between God and His people.
  - Now that we are under the New Covenant, both Jews and Gentiles can be free from the penalty of the Law. We are now given the opportunity to receive salvation as a free gift (Ephesians 2:8-9).

**2 Corinthians 3:6** He has enabled us to be ministers of his new covenant. This is a covenant not of written laws, but of the Spirit. The old written covenant ends in death; but under the new covenant, the Spirit gives life. (NLT)

### Covenant \_\_\_\_\_

- Some Christians think that all of the covenants are conditional in nature.
  - If the covenants are conditional, then Israel failed miserably at fulfilling them.
  - Others believe that the unconditional covenants have yet to be totally fulfilled and, regardless of Israel's disobedience, will come to fruition sometime in the future.
- How does the church of Jesus Christ relate to the covenants?
  - Some believe that the church fulfills the covenants and God will never deal with Israel again. This is called \_\_\_\_\_ and has NO scriptural evidence.
  - Others believe that the church initially or partially will fulfill these covenants.

- While many of the promises towards Israel are still in the future, many believe that the church shares in the covenants in some way.
- Others believe that the covenants are for Israel and for Israel alone, and that the church has no part in these covenants.

### God's Covenant with \_\_\_\_\_

- Original promise with further amplifications
  - Gen 12:1-3, 6-7; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-14; 22:15-18

**Genesis 12:1** The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. **2** I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. **3** I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you." (NLT)

**Genesis 12:6** Abram traveled through the land as far as Shechem. There he set up camp beside the oak of Moreh. At that time, the area was inhabited by Canaanites. **7** Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "I will give this land to your descendants." And Abram built an altar there and dedicated it to the Lord, who had appeared to him. (NLT)

**Gen 13:14** After Lot had gone, the Lord said to Abram, "Look as far as you can see in every direction—north and south, east and west. **15** I am giving all this land, as far as you can see, to you and your descendants as a permanent possession. **16** And I will give you so many descendants that, like the dust of the earth, they cannot be counted! **17** Go and walk through the land in every direction, for I am giving it to you." (NLT)

### \_\_\_\_\_ Parts of the Promise

- Individual Promises
  - I will cause you to become the father of a great nation.
  - I will bless you.
  - I will make you famous.
  - I will make you a blessing to others.
  - I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you.
- National Promises, to Abraham's seed
  - the nation should be great
  - the nation should be innumerable (like dust, Gen. 13:17)
  - the nation should have possession of the land (Gen. 12:7)
  - the land will be an everlasting possession (Gen. 17:8)
- Universal Promises

- "all families of the earth" are promised blessing (Gen 12:3).

There was a conditional element to Abraham's covenant he first had to leave his homeland. However, after that was accomplished there were no other conditions on the promise.

The \_\_\_\_\_, The \_\_\_\_\_, The \_\_\_\_\_

- The essential features of the covenant from our perspective are found in the words land, seed, and blessings.
  - In these verses the word seed is translated as offspring or descendants.

**Genesis 12:7** Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "I will give this land to your descendants (seed)." And Abram built an altar there and dedicated it to the Lord, who had appeared to him. (NLT)

**Genesis 13:15** I am giving all this land, as far as you can see, to you and your descendants (seed) as a permanent possession. **16** And I will give you so many descendants that, like the dust of the earth, they cannot be counted! (NLT)

**Genesis 15:18** So the Lord made a covenant with Abram that day and said, "I have given this land to your descendants, all the way from the border of Egypt (river of Egypt) to the great Euphrates River (NLT)

**Genesis 17:7** "I will confirm my covenant with you and your descendants (seed) after you, from generation to generation. This is the everlasting covenant: I will always be your God and the God of your descendants (seed) after you. **8** And I will give the entire land of Canaan, where you now live as a foreigner, to you and your descendants (seed). It will be their possession forever, and I will be their God." (NLT)

- Immediate questions come to mind:
  - Who is the seed of Abraham?
  - Has the church become the Seed?
  - Has the Church taken the place of Israel?
  - Has the covenant been fulfilled?

The \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ **Covenant**

- Taking possession of the Promise Land
  - subpoint
  - The situation is this: the nation of Israel is at a point of crisis.
  - They are about to pass from the leadership of Moses to the leadership of Joshua.

- They are at a point of no return, about to enter the land they had been promised long ago.
- The questions were:
  - ▶ Was God with them?
  - ▶ Did they still have a right to the land?
  - ▶ Would they be successful or utterly defeated?
  - ▶ They couldn't go back, but could they go forward?

**Deuteronomy 30:1** "In the future, when you experience all these blessings and curses I have listed for you, and when you are living among the nations to which the Lord your God has exiled you, take to heart all these instructions. **2** If at that time you and your children return to the Lord your God, and if you obey with all your heart and all your soul all the commands I have given you today, **3** then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes. He will have mercy on you and gather you back from all the nations where he has scattered you. **4** Even though you are banished to the ends of the earth, the Lord your God will gather you from there and bring you back again. **5** The Lord your God will return you to the land that belonged to your ancestors, and you will possess that land again. Then he will make you even more prosperous and numerous than your ancestors! **6** "The Lord your God will change your heart and the hearts of all your descendants, so that you will love him with all your heart and soul and so you may live! **7** The Lord your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate and persecute you. **8** Then you will again obey the Lord and keep all his commands that I am giving you today. **9** "The Lord your God will then make you successful in everything you do. He will give you many children and numerous livestock, and he will cause your fields to produce abundant harvests, for the Lord will again delight in being good to you as he was to your ancestors. **10** The Lord your God will delight in you if you obey his voice and keep the commands and decrees written in this Book of Instruction, and if you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and soul. (NLT)

**Ezekiel 20:33** As surely as I live, says the Sovereign Lord, I will rule over you with an iron fist in great anger and with awesome power. **34** And in anger I will reach out with my strong hand and powerful arm, and I will bring you back from the lands where you are scattered. **35** I will bring you into the wilderness of the nations, and there I will judge you face to face. **36** I will judge you there just as I did your ancestors in the wilderness after bringing them out of Egypt, says the Sovereign Lord. **37** I will examine you carefully and hold you to the terms of the covenant. **38** I will purge you of all those who rebel and revolt against me. I will bring them out of the countries where they are in exile, but they will never enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord. **39** "As for you, O people of Israel, this is what the Sovereign Lord says: Go right ahead and worship your idols, but sooner or later you will obey me and will stop bringing shame on my holy name by worshiping



idols. **40** For on my holy mountain, the great mountain of Israel, says the Sovereign Lord, the people of Israel will someday worship me, and I will accept them. There I will require that you bring me all your offerings and choice gifts and sacrifices.

**41** When I bring you home from exile, you will be like a pleasing sacrifice to me.

And I will display my holiness through you as all the nations watch. **42** Then when I have brought you home to the land I promised with a solemn oath to give to your ancestors, you will know that I am the Lord.

**43** You will look back on all the ways you defiled yourselves and will hate yourselves because of the evil you have done.

**44** You will know that I am the Lord, O people of Israel, when I have honored my name by treating you mercifully in spite of your wickedness. I, the Sovereign Lord, have spoken!" (NLT)

### Covenant is with? \_\_\_\_\_

- Provisions of the promise:
  - Israel will be pulled off the land because of unfaithfulness.
  - Israel will repent in the future.
  - Israel will be restored to the land.
  - Israel will be converted as a nation.
  - Israel's enemies will be judged.
  - Israel will then receive her full blessing.
- God promised that they would get the land.
  - The only condition is when, not if.
  - The timing is conditional. The promise is not.

**Galatians 3:17** This is what I am trying to say: The agreement God made with Abraham could not be canceled 430 years later when God gave the law to Moses. God would be breaking his promise. **18** For if the inheritance could be received by keeping the law, then it would not be the result of accepting God's promise. But God graciously gave it to Abraham as a promise. (NLT)

- Here is the important implication:
  - The promise to Israel is that Israel will fully and completely possess the land.
  - Israel has never fully possessed the land.
  - They have not in the past, they do not now...but they will.

### The \_\_\_\_\_ Covenant

- The most obvious question then becomes:
  - Who is the seed?
  - Who can we identify as Israel?
  - Because we are heirs of God and co-heirs with Jesus Christ, born of water and the blood and adopted by His grace, aren't we, the Church, now the seed?

### The Seed of \_\_\_\_\_

- There are three different senses in which one can be a child of Abraham:
- Natural lineage
  - Through the 12 tribes.
    - ▶ Esau rejected his birthright. (Jacob accepted).
    - ▶ Ishmael was not the child of promise. (Issac was).
  - To them God promises to be their God.
  - To them was given the law.
  - To them was given the land in the Old Testament.
  - With them God dealt in a special way.
- Spiritual lineage within the Natural
  - Israelites who believe God, keep the law, meeting the conditions for blessing.
  - They will ultimately possess the land.
- Spiritual lineage outside the Natural
  - Only admitted "in Christ Jesus"
  - The Church is not Israel.
  - The Church is a seed of Abraham, not the seed of Abraham.
  - It is the natural lineage which will inherit the land.
  - That is to whom the promise was made.

### The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Covenants.

- Israel

**Romans 9:4** They are the people of Israel, chosen to be God's adopted children (chosen for sonship). God revealed his glory to them. He made covenants with them and gave them his law. He gave them the privilege of worshiping him and receiving his wonderful promises. (NLT)

- The Church
  - The church does not replace Israel.
  - We only share in the blessings as we have relationship to the seed, Jesus Christ.
- So what was the Davidic Covenant?
  - David wanted to honor God with a Temple.
  - David was a man of war, so he was not allowed to build it.
  - But God makes a promise to David.

**2 Samuel 7:10** And I will provide a homeland for my people Israel, planting them in a secure place where they will never be disturbed. Evil nations won't oppress them as they've done in the past, **11** starting from the time I appointed judges to rule my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. "Furthermore, the Lord declares that he will make a house for you—a dynasty of kings! **12** For when you die and are buried with your ancestors, I will raise up one of your descendants, your own offspring, and I will make his kingdom strong. **13** He is the one who will build a house—a temple—for my name. And I will secure his royal throne forever. **14** I will be his father, and he will be my son. If he sins, I will correct and discipline him with the rod, like any father would do. **15** But my favor will not be taken from him as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from your sight. **16** Your house and your kingdom will continue before me for all time, and your throne will be secure forever." (NLT)

**Jeremiah 33:20** "This is what the Lord says: If you can break my covenant with the day and the night so that one does not follow the other, **21** only then will my covenant with my servant David be broken. Only then will he no longer have a descendant to reign on his throne. The same is true for my covenant with the Levitical priests who minister before me. **22** And as the stars of the sky cannot be counted and the sand on the seashore cannot be measured, so I will multiply the descendants of my servant David and the Levites who minister before me." (NLT)

- The Davidic Covenant is a promise of:
  - An eternal house or dynasty
  - An eternal kingdom or nation
  - An eternal throne
- In other words,
  - There would be a lineage to rule
  - A people to rule over
  - A place from which to rule
- Keep it in mind the promise is of a house, a kingdom, a throne.
- This is a literal promise to be fulfilled literally.
- It is confirmed in Gabriel's announcement to Mary.

**Luke 1:32** He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. **33** And he will reign over Israel (house of Jacob) forever; his Kingdom will never end!" (NLT)

**What are the \_\_\_\_\_ of this?**

- What was promised was a literal, visible, earthly kingdom.
  - That is what Israel was looking for at the time of Christ.
  - It is still what they are looking for.
  - The only thing they missed was the Messiah. He has come.
  - And He is coming back.
  - When He does He will establish a literal, visible, earthly kingdom.
- That the Seed will possess the land is the basis of the expectation of the Old Testament and the substance of the prophets' message.
  - Isa. 11:1-11; 14:1-3; 27:12-13; 43:1-8; 49:8-16; 66:20-22
  - Jer. 16:14-16; 30:10-11; 31:8; 31-37
  - Eze. 11:17-21; 20:33-38; 34:11-16; 39:25-29
  - Hosea 1:10-11; Joel 3:17-21
  - Amos 9:11-15
  - Micah 4:4-7
  - Zeph. 3:14-20
  - Zech. 8:4-8

**The \_\_\_\_\_ Covenant**

- Israel's spiritual blessing and redemption.
- Here are some of the provisions of this covenant:
  - The new covenant is an unconditional, grace covenant resting on the "I will" of God.
  - It is an everlasting covenant.
  - It promises regeneration, the giving of a renewed mind and heart.
  - It promises restoration, the return to the favor and blessing of God.
  - It promises forgiveness of sins.
  - It promises the Holy Spirit so that the will of God will be known by obedient hearts.
  - Israel will be regathered.
  - Israel will be one nation, ruled by one king.
  - Israel will dwell forever in the land.
- The Church, although sharing in the blessings of the New Covenant through the blood of Jesus Christ, does not fulfill the place of Israel in the fulfillment of the covenant.

**Jeremiah 31:31** "The day is coming," says the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. **32** This covenant will not be like the one I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant, though I loved them as a husband loves his wife," says the Lord. **33** "But this is the new covenant I will make

with the people of Israel after those days," says the Lord. "I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. **34** And they will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their relatives, saying, 'You should know the Lord.' For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will know me already," says the Lord. "And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins." **35** It is the Lord who provides the sun to light the day and the moon and stars to light the night, and who stirs the sea into roaring waves. His name is the Lord of Heaven's Armies, and this is what he says: **36** "I am as likely to reject my people Israel as I am to abolish the laws of nature!" **37** This is what the Lord says: "Just as the heavens cannot be measured and the foundations of the earth cannot be explored, so I will not consider casting them away for the evil they have done. I, the Lord, have spoken! **38** "The day is coming," says the Lord, "when all Jerusalem will be rebuilt for me, from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. **39** A measuring line will be stretched out over the hill of Gareb and across to Goah. **40** And the entire area—including the graveyard and ash dump in the valley, and all the fields out to the Kidron Valley on the east as far as the Horse Gate—will be holy to the Lord. The city will never again be captured or destroyed." (NLT)

**Isaiah 61:8** "For I, the Lord, love justice. I hate robbery and wrongdoing. I will faithfully reward my people for their suffering and make an everlasting covenant with them. **9** Their descendants will be recognized and honored among the nations. Everyone will realize that they are a people the Lord has blessed." (NLT)

**Ezekiel 37:21-28** And give them this message from the Sovereign Lord: I will gather the people of Israel from among the nations. I will bring them home to their own land from the places where they have been scattered. **22** I will unify them into one nation on the mountains of Israel. One king will rule them all; no longer will they be divided into two nations or into two kingdoms. **23** They will never again pollute themselves with their idols (literally "round things" probably alluding to dung) and vile images and rebellion, for I will save them from their sinful apostasy (from all their dwelling places where they sinned). I will cleanse them. Then they will truly be my people, and I will be their God. **24** "My servant David will be their king, and they will have only one shepherd. They will obey my regulations and be careful to keep my decrees. **25** They will live in the land I gave my servant Jacob, the land where their ancestors lived. They and their children and their grandchildren after them will live there forever, generation after generation. And my servant David will be their prince forever. **26** And I will make a covenant of peace with them, an everlasting covenant. I will give them their land and increase their numbers, and I will put my Temple among them forever. **27** I will make my home among them. I will be their God, and they will be my people. **28** And when my Temple is among them forever, the nations will know that I am the Lord, who makes Israel holy." (NLT)

**Hebrews 8:6** But now Jesus, our High Priest, has been given a ministry that is far superior to the old priesthood, for he is the one who mediates for us a far better covenant with God, based on better promises. **7** If the first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no need for a second covenant to replace it. **8** But when God found fault with the people, he said: "The day is coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. **9** This covenant will not be like the one I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand and led them out of the land of Egypt. They did not remain faithful to my covenant, so I turned my back on them, says the Lord. **10** But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel on that day (after those days), says the Lord: I will put my laws in their minds, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. **11** And they will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their relatives, saying, 'You should know the Lord.' For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will know me already. **12** And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins." (Jeremiah 31:31-34) **13** When God speaks of a "new" covenant, it means he has made the first one obsolete. It is now out of date and will soon disappear. (NLT)

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- Arguments to support the unconditional nature of the Abrahamic covenant
    - Except for the original condition of leaving his homeland and going to the promised land, the covenant is made with no conditions whatever.
    - The covenant was confirmed by the birth of Isaac and Jacob.
    - The covenant is repeated in its original form to Jacob (Gen 28:12-13).
    - The reiterations and the partial early fulfillment of the covenant are in spite of acts of disobedience.
    - In the very act of Abraham's disobedience the promises are repeated to him.
    - Later confirmations of the covenant are given in the midst of rebellion. Jer 31:36.
    - The New Testament declares this covenant to be immutable. Heb 6:13-18.
  - The confirmation of Genesis 15
    - At the beginning of chapter 15, God seeks to assure Abram that he is doing what is right, that his faith and trust in God will be rewarded, that God is Abram's protection and provision.
    - Abram asks about the promise, since he doesn't even have a son. God affirms that he will have a son, and Abram believes (v.6).
    - In response to this faith, and to substantiate His word a sign is given to Abram.
    - God tells Abram to prepare a sacrifice that they might enter into a blood covenant.

- This was common practice among the Chaldeans.
  - ▶ God is communicating to Abram in a way Abram understands.
  - ▶ Abram understands this manner of entering into a binding agreement.
  - ▶ It must have impressed Abram how important God viewed the agreement because of the number of animals used.
  - ▶ One would have been sufficient.
  - ▶ And Abram would have expected to walk through the divided animals with God, for custom demanded that the two who entered into a blood covenant should walk together between the parts of the sacrifice.
  - ▶ However, Abram is put to sleep so that he could not participate, but could only be a recipient of a covenant to which he brought nothing in the way of obligations.
  - ▶ God is binding Himself by a most solemn blood covenant to fulfill to Abraham, unconditionally, the promises concerning the seed and the land which were given to him.
  - ▶ What was given was given without any conditions, to be fulfilled by the integrity of God alone.
  - ▶ subpoint
- Arguments against the unconditional nature of the covenant:
  - Conditions may be implied that are not specifically stated, just like the judgment of Ninevah.
  - This is an argument of silence.
  - The principle of repentance and removal of judgment is well-established in Scripture. Ninevah's case is completely unlike Abraham's.