

BIBLE TRAINING INSTITUTE

To proactively accelerate the spiritual growth of Grace Bible Church for the purpose of knowing God more intimately and becoming more effective servants of God in the world

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Major Biblical Covenants I

Introduction to the Covenants, Noahic, and Abrahamic

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Introduction to Biblical Covenants

Definition

- ✓ Legally binding obligation
- ✓ Covenants are the vehicle for God's kingdom program
 - ❖ Genesis 1–2—Kingdom Created
 - ❖ Genesis 3 – Revelation 19—The Fall and the Cross
 - ❖ Revelation 20–22—Kingdom Restored

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Introduction to Biblical Covenants

- ✓ Covenant mentioned in 27 Old Testament and 11 New Testament books
- ✓ Premillennialists recognize 5 or 6 Covenants:
 - ❖ Noahic
 - ❖ Abrahamic
 - ❖ Mosaic
 - ❖ Priestly
 - ❖ Davidic
 - ❖ New

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Introduction to Biblical Covenants

- ✓ Varieties of Covenants
 - ❖ Between two equal parties (negotiated)
 - ❖ Imposed by a superior on subordinates (not negotiated)
- ✓ Grant Covenant (unconditional)—Noahic, Abrahamic, Priestly, Davidic, New
- ✓ Treaty Covenant (conditional)—Mosaic
 - ❖ Deuteronomy 18:18; Jeremiah 31:31 = endpoint

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Introduction to Biblical Covenants

Grant	Treaty
The giver of the covenant makes a commitment to the vassal (subordinate)	The giver of the covenant imposes an obligation on the vassal
Represents an obligation of the master to his vassal	Represents an obligation of the vassal to the master
Primarily protects the rights of the vassal	Primarily protects the rights of the master
No demands are made by the superior party	The master promises to reward or punish the vassal for obeying or disobeying the imposed obligations

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Elements of a Biblical Covenant

- ✓ Pledge/oath (e.g., Deut 29:12)
- ✓ Sign (usually a repeatable memorial)
 - ❖ Noahic = Rainbow
 - ❖ Abrahamic = Circumcision
 - ❖ Mosaic = Sabbath
 - ❖ Davidic = disputed (but see Psalm 89)
 - ❖ New Covenant = most likely Lord's Table
- ✓ Spilling of Blood (the moment of inauguration)
- ✓ Witnesses
- ✓ Consequences

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Noahic Covenant

- ✓ Context—Great Flood (Gen 6:5)
- ✓ Recipients
 - ❖ First covenant referenced (Gen 6:18)
 - ❖ Largest in scope (Gen 9:9–11)
- ✓ Sign—Rainbow (Gen 9:13)
- ✓ Promise
 - ❖ Essence = never again earth flooded
 - ❖ Extent = everlasting (Gen 9:16; 8:22)

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Noahic Covenant

- ✓ Impact on other Covenants:
 - ❖ Guarantees Davidic Covenant (Jer 33:20–21)
 - ❖ Proof of God's faithfulness to the Abrahamic Covenant (Isa 54:9–10)

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Abrahamic Covenant

- ✓ Importance:
 - ❖ Promises to Abraham are foundation in embryonic form for the rest of redemptive history
 - ❖ Referred to multiple times in OT/NT
 - ❖ Basic for the whole covenant program

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Provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant

- ✓ Nation, Blessings, Great Name, God will “bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you,” All Families of Earth Blessed (Gen 12:1–3)
- ✓ Land (Gen 12:6–7)
- ✓ Land is forever (Gen 13:14–17)
- ✓ Protection, Reward, Innumerable Descendants, Land Dimensions (Gen 15:1–21)

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Provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant

- ✓ Multiply Descendants, Father of Nations, Kings from Abraham, Everlasting Covenant, Land of Canaan Promised, Circumcision as Sign of Covenant (Gen 17:1–14)
- ✓ Descendants Innumerable, Nations of the Earth Blessed through Abraham’s Seed (singular; Gen 22:15–18)

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Summary of the Abrahamic Covenant

- ✓ Individual Promises to Abraham
- ✓ National Promises to Abraham:
 - ❖ Innumerable descendants
 - ❖ Land forever including land dimensions
- ✓ Universal Promises to the Nations

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Character of the Abrahamic Covenant

- ✓ Unconditional—fulfillment based solely on God and not on the actions of humanity
 - ❖ God claimed responsibility (Gen 15:7–21)
 - ❖ **Note**—does not mean every person or generation will experience the benefits of this covenant since the relationship to the covenant is based on faith
 - ❖ God **will** fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant, but one's connection with the blessing is by faith

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Three Major Aspects of the Abrahamic Covenant

- ✓ Seed/Nation (descendants)
 1. Innumerable
 2. First physical descendants
 3. Second spiritual descendants (Rom 4:10ff)
 4. Collective of all God's people (Gal 3:29)
 5. Singular Seed of Abraham (Gal 3:16)

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Three Major Aspects of the Abrahamic Covenant

- ✓ Land
 1. “Nation” = physical territory
 2. Promised everlasting possession
 3. Land = “earth” or “dirt”
- ✓ Blessing
 1. Ultimate purpose is to bless all peoples (Gen 12:2–3)
 2. God’s intention for Abraham/Israel to be channel of blessings to the world

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Abrahamic Covenant in the Old Testament

- ✓ Official establishment of Israel (Exod 19:6)
- ✓ Israel’s continued existence—even in times of serious disobedience—was sustained by Abrahamic Covenant (Exod 32:13; Deut 9:27–28); Jer 30:3; Isa 29:22–24)
- ✓ **Note**—Joshua 21:43–45 is not complete fulfillment, but a small picture of ultimate fulfillment

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Abrahamic Covenant in the New Testament

- ✓ The New Testament era opens linking Jesus to the Abrahamic Covenant (Luke 1:54–55, 72–73; cf. Matt 1:1)
- ✓ Seed/Nation
 - ❖ A physical Jew is still a descendant of Abraham despite spiritual status (Luke 13:16; 16:24; John 8:37; Acts 13:26; Rom 11:1)
 - ❖ Abraham and his descendants are mediators of blessing to the nations
 - ❖ Abraham is the father of Israel and all who believe (Rom 4:9–12, 16)

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Abrahamic Covenant in the New Testament

- ✓ Land
 - ❖ Land is connected with national Israel so any mention of God's concern for the nation includes land (Luke 1:32–33, 71–74; 2:32)
- ✓ Universal Blessing (Gal 3:8)—promised to all through faith in Christ

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Abrahamic Covenant Conclusion

LAND	Mosaic Covenant—how to live in the land with holiness
SEED/NATION	Davidic Covenant—a real nation with a real King (seed) for all time
BLESSING	New Covenant—all the nations of the earth receiving blessing through Abraham → Israel → Christ

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