

ESCHATOLOGY: DOCTRINE OF LAST THINGS

PART 45

THE COVENANTS, PART 5

What are the elements of the New Covenant?

The New Covenant is made with Israel and Judah just as the Mosaic Covenant was made with Israel. There is no change in parties between the two. The only difference is that at the time of the Mosaic Covenant, the nation was unified but by the time the New Covenant was revealed Israel and Judah had become separate entities, Israel already vanquished by Assyria and Judah on the chopping block soon to go into the Babylonian captivity. God promised to reunify the two one day when He restored them to the land (Ezek. 37:15-23).

Hebrews 8:7,13 make it very clear the Mosaic Covenant was intended to be of limited duration and destined to be replaced. This does not say the church has taken over the New Covenant which is the interpretation so many theologians hold today.

Hebrews 8:7, 13 ⁷For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second.... ¹³When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.

Jeremiah 30-31 record God's promise to restore Israel as a national entity in the land after suffering the tribulation Jeremiah referred to as "the time of Jacob's distress" (Jer. 30:7). This is actually another land promise in the line of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 30. The New Covenant will not be fulfilled until after that time. The New Covenant as presented in Jeremiah 31:31-34 cannot be understood apart from the context of chapters 30-31 in their entirety. In other words, Israel back in the land is part of the New Covenant just as it is part of the Davidic Covenant and the Abrahamic Covenant.

The New Covenant will replace and be superior to the Mosaic Covenant because it will be written on the hearts of the Jewish people. The New Covenant is not written on stone tablets like the Mosaic Covenant was written on stones.

Under the auspices of the New Covenant, God will be the God of Israel and the Israelites will be known as God's people. All the world will acknowledge this fact.

Zechariah 8:22-23 ²²'So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD.' ²³'Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."'"

Micah 4:1–2 ¹And it will come about in the last days That the mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, And the peoples will stream to it. ²Many nations will come and say, “Come and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD And to the house of the God of Jacob, That He may teach us about His ways And that we may walk in His paths.” For from Zion will go forth the law, Even the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Isaiah 61:9 ⁹Then their offspring will be known among the nations, And their descendants in the midst of the peoples. All who see them will recognize them Because they are the offspring whom the LORD has blessed.

Gentiles living during the Kingdom will need to be taught the things of the Lord just as these Scriptures reveal. The Jewish people will not need to be taught to know the Lord; they will all know Him. “The result of the New Covenant will be a total national regeneration of Israel (v. 34). Every Jew will know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. The sins of Israel will be forgiven and forgotten. While there will be Gentile unbelievers in the kingdom, there will not be Jewish unbelievers in the kingdom.... Thus, during the kingdom, the unregenerate people will be among the Gentiles only. In the entire period of the kingdom there will be no unsaved Jews. That is the reason there will be no need for one Jew to say to another, *know the Lord*, for they shall all know Him.” [Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology*, p. 794, 587].

Walvoord believes, based on the New Covenant, there will be universal, worldwide knowledge of the Lord negating any need for teaching—for anyone, Jew and Gentile. [John F. Walvoord, *The Millennial Kingdom*, p. 211]. This is an example of just how easy it is to switch out of the context of a Scripture and force a meaning into it. Walvoord knows the New Covenant in Jeremiah pertains to Israel; therefore, to make it apply to Gentiles in the Kingdom in this manner violates the principles of literal hermeneutics. Given the Scriptures we just read in Zechariah, Isaiah, and Micah, his assertion cannot be true. Obviously, Gentiles in the Kingdom will at least possess some general knowledge of the Lord but they will still need to learn the things they need to know. It is the Jews who will not require a teacher to know the Lord. It would seem probable that Gentiles will have more knowledge during the Kingdom than most people have today, but they will still need to be taught.

The primary feature of the New Covenant provides for the forgiveness of sins. Its primary application refers to national regeneration for Israel, but the nation is comprised of individuals who must be regenerated in order to bring about national regeneration. The Mosaic Covenant could not do this; it could only cover over sins, but the New Covenant removes them and negates the necessity of punishment. God is not promising the Jews that He will remove their sin as a sovereign act apart from the payment of the sin debt. Forgiveness of sins under the auspices of the New Covenant is

based on the substitutionary sacrifice of the Lamb of God. The national remnant of Jews who finally realize the fulfillment of the New Covenant do so because they have appropriated the work of Christ on their behalf. That will be the believing generation Christ spoke about in Matthew 21:43.

In the Old Testament, the Jewish believers were not indwelt by the Holy Spirit but Ezekiel, predicting this facet of the New Covenant, revealed that Jewish believers in the future would receive that blessing. That is a blessing that all believers, Jew and Gentile alike, enjoy in this dispensation and the national remnant of Jews as well as believing Gentiles will all enjoy in the Messianic Kingdom. They will walk in the Spirit.

Ezekiel 36:27 ²⁷"I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

"Implanting God's Spirit in believing Israelites will produce a new spiritual relationship between Israel and her God. The Lord established a unique relationship with the Jewish people as His chosen people at the call of Abraham, a relationship based on God's faithfulness to them, regardless of Israel's obedience and spiritual condition. However, in the future all Israel will recognize Jesus as the Messiah, and their spiritual condition will match their national status: then you will be My people, and I will be your God." [Charles H. Dyer with Eva Rydelnik, *The Moody Bible Commentary*, p. 1257]. It is key to understand that Israel's relationship with God was established with the ratification of the Abrahamic Covenant. Within that relationship, fellowship with God is an entirely different issue. That's the same framework believers in this age are in. Believers are in relationship with God from the moment of belief, fellowship with God at any given moment may be complete or it may be broken and therefore require restoration.

In terms of determining the application of the New Covenant to the church, we will first examine the nature of the church's relationship to all the Covenants and then we will briefly examine the New Testament evidence. One important factor to remember concerning the biblical covenants is they contain spiritual, national, and material blessings. To the extent the church participates in the Covenants, it is only in the spiritual aspects of them. "It should again be noted that in Dispensationalism it is possible to believe in only one New Covenant, already ratified by the blood of the Messiah with the spiritual blessings available to Jewish and Gentile believers today, but with the national, material, and spiritual blessings for Israel still awaiting a future fulfillment. As with the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants, not all provisions of each covenant go immediately into effect upon ratification." [Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology*, p. 363].

In my mind, the most important indicator that believers participate in the Covenant blessings is the Olive Tree metaphor of Romans 11:17-24. The point is, believers participate in the place of blessing which includes all the Covenants including the New Covenant.

Romans 11:17–24 ¹⁷But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, ¹⁸do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. ¹⁹You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” ²⁰Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear; ²¹for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either. ²²Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God’s kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. ²³And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. ²⁴For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?

In this analogy, the Olive Tree does not represent Israel; the Olive Tree represents the place of blessing. The roots of the tree are the Covenants and they supply the nourishment the tree requires for survival. The natural branches represent Israel. Some of the natural branches remain attached to the tree because they are the believing remnant in this age. Gentile believers are grafted into the tree and partake of the nourishment/blessings the Covenants supply to the tree. As Jews come to faith, they are grafted back into the place of blessing. Once the terminal, faithful generation comes to faith, the Covenants will be completely fulfilled. At that point the Olive Tree analogy has run its course. During the Messianic Kingdom, Israel will experience, in full, all the national, material, and spiritual promises and blessings of the Covenants. Gentiles will comprise the nations of the world just as they did prior to Pentecost. Isaiah frequently references the nations and their relationship to Zion in the Kingdom. In indirect ways, Gentiles in the Kingdom will reap blessings when the Davidic King sits on the throne in Jerusalem. Obviously, Gentiles will be blessed by whatever tranquility, peace, agricultural production, good health, and so on is granted on a worldwide basis by the King.

As Gentiles, we bring nothing to the tree; on the contrary, we have been granted benefits simply by being grafted in by virtue of faith. One of the reasons for this blessing, is so that by our faith and subsequent blessing we can provoke the Jewish nation to jealousy (Rom. 11:14). As Gentiles, we need to remember something: before placing our faith in Christ Jesus we were worthless branches in a worthless wild olive tree. “Now Gentiles as Gentiles can by faith enjoy the spiritual blessings of the four unconditional covenants [Abrahamic, Land, Davidic, and New Covenants].” [Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology*, p. 635].

“By virtue of the evangelization of the Gentile world, Gentiles have been placed into *intimate connection* with God’s ongoing purposes with His chosen nation. Most obviously, the Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ our Lord, has become the Savior of countless

Gentiles. But in addition to this, the preaching of Christ brings Gentiles into vital contact with the Jewish Scriptures with all the immense spiritual profit that this entails. At this distance from Paul's words we can also see the further enrichment brought by the production of the NT Scriptures, all of which as far as I can tell was written by Jewish men. (Not even Luke is likely to be an exception to this, despite the widespread opinion that he was a Gentile). Beyond this, the Judeo-Christian tradition has been the channel of enormous benefits to Gentile society." [Zane C. Hodges, *Romans: Deliverance from Wrath*, pp. 334-335]. Hodges goes on to say that these blessings spring from the root. He considers the root to be Abraham, but I maintain the root is the Patriarchs and the Covenants. In my mind, and I believe I've demonstrated the Scriptures support this, these things are inextricably bound together. The Covenants are interrelated and, I think, need to be thought of in that way.

The Bible clearly reveals that Gentiles were once outside the covenantal blessings Israel possessed but in Christ they do participate in them.

Ephesians 2:11–16 ¹¹Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands— ¹²remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, ¹⁵by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

This Scripture confirms that the church is now a participant in the blessings of the Covenants—all of them, not just the New Covenant. The conditional covenant, the Mosaic, kept Gentiles away from the blessings; it was the barrier of the dividing wall. If a Gentile wanted to be blessed by the Covenants, he had to become a proselyte to Judaism, submit to the Mosaic Law, and live as a Jew, a son of Abraham, under the Law. Gentiles who did not submit to the Law were excluded from the commonwealth of Israel. When Christ ratified the New Covenant in His blood, the Mosaic Law was abolished which did away with the barrier wall. Now Gentiles can partake of the covenantal blessings that formerly belonged only to Israel. [Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology*, p. 635].

The first and most important thing to understand about the Covenants is they are all to and with Israel. All of these Covenants have been ratified and initiated and are being worked out in history to one degree or another. They are all inexorably moving towards fulfillment and we are privileged to see some of these preparatory things taking place before our eyes. The Abrahamic Covenant was ratified via blood sacrifice in Genesis

15:1-21 and the New Covenant was ratified at the cross via the blood sacrifice of the Lord (Mt. 26:28). I'm not certain when the Davidic Covenant was ratified by blood sacrifice but it is possible the sacrifices of 1 Chronicles 29:21 when Solomon was publicly installed as the king served to ratify it. It is also possible the Davidic Covenant was ratified in the blood sacrifice of the Lord at the cross since He is the ultimate fulfillment of it. I tend believe it was ratified in 1 Chronicles 29:21 because Solomon was the first Davidic king specifically mentioned in the Covenant as the king to succeed David. Fulfillment concerning the complete details for all of them awaits the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom.

Genesis 12:1-3 is not the Abrahamic Covenant; it is God's blueprint for history concerning land, seed, and blessing. The Covenants are the means through which this blueprint is carried out; they are the frame through which the details of history, the blueprint, are being expressed. The Abrahamic Covenant is the land grant covenant to Israel, the Davidic Covenant relates to the seed, both singular and plural, and the New Covenant relates to blessing. These Covenants explain Genesis 12:1-3.

Genesis 12:1-3 ¹Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; ²And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; ³And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

This Scripture does not specify just how these blessings are going to flow through the Covenants to everyone and not just Israel. We have to allow progressive revelation to inform us on that issue. Seed is both singular and plural. In terms of making a great nation from Abram, it is plural; the Jewish people make up that aspect of the seed. In terms of blessing all the families of the earth, no one disputes the application of this blessing will come through a singular seed, the Messiah. The outworking of this plan for history is through Israel and the Covenants God made with the Patriarchs and with Israel. Through Abram the world will be blessed by means of these Covenants which includes all people to some extent and not just Israel.

I'm going to suggest some ways we are being blessed right now by all the Covenants. In this way, I hope to show that it is not out of line to understand how the New Covenant blesses us as believers in this dispensation even though it was made with Judah and Israel. In other words, I'm suggesting those who restrict the church's blessings in this age to the New Covenant and not the other Covenants are incorrect just as those who suggest believers today enjoy no blessings from the covenants are incorrect. Keep in mind these are simply my observations and you may or may not agree with them.

How have believers been blessed by the Abrahamic Covenant? God kept the land desolate during the diaspora (Lv. 26:43) so it would not be despoiled by others to the

extent it would have been if it had been extensively farmed and urbanized. This kept some of the biblical architecture and archaeology sites safe so we can be blessed by visiting Israel, by having the Bible confirmed through archaeology, and by Israel's current presence in the land which, if nothing else, confirms the assurance we have in biblical truth. Because Israel is in control of the land right now, we can visit there in peace. We are also blessed as we bless Israel and the Jewish people. The values God directed Israel to exhibit have been carried on into Christianity and Judeo-Christian values have been the driving force for the betterment of mankind in terms of freedom and the development of civilization so the greatest number of people can live in peace and prosperity the world has ever known. It's not perfect and it won't be perfect until the Kingdom, but it has been a great blessing to the world—for believers and unbelievers alike.

How are believers being blessed by the Davidic Covenant since we know the Bible does not reveal Jesus to be ruling the Kingdom from the throne at this time? As the seed, Messiah is not only King but He is also Prophet and Priest. We are blessed by the fact He came as prophet, He now intercedes for us as High Priest, and He will bless us as King when He returns to inaugurate the Kingdom. Those are part of the seed blessing of Genesis 12:3. We are blessed because the King came and offered His Kingdom to the Covenant recipients who, in turn, rejected it and opened the door for Gentile justification. We are blessed because Christ, the Jewish Messiah, the promised blessing in Genesis 12:3, died as the sacrificial substitute for our sin problem.

The Davidic Covenant is not strictly confined to the truth about Jesus taking the throne; it also contains a land promise for Israel in 2 Samuel 7:10 and 1 Chronicles 17:9. In this sense, the Davidic Covenant is addressing the plural aspect of the promised seed. Not just believers, but the world has been blessed by Abram's seed. Jews have been in the forefront of improving society throughout history all over the world where God scattered them. More of them have been awarded Nobel Peace prizes than any other ethnic group. They have been giants in the arts, science, medicine, law, business, and every other endeavor that comes to mind. Wonderful advances in technology and medicine are coming out of Israel today. The Scriptures came through the Jews. The Jewish people have truly been a blessing to the world.

Believers are blessed by the New Covenant as they come to faith and are adopted into the family of God thereby becoming heirs of the blessings, not the Covenants themselves, alongside the Jewish people. We have the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit that Ezekiel promised the Jews they would receive in the Messianic Kingdom. We have the forgiveness of sin now which is a future national promise to Israel. Obviously, the Jewish people also experience these things now as they come to faith, but that is a small number of people to this point in time.

The church does not take over the Covenants; they participate in the blessings of the Covenants. The national and material promises of the Covenants to Israel have yet to

be fulfilled and the spiritual blessings of the Covenants will only be completely realized in the Jewish remnant that goes into the Messianic Kingdom.

How does the New Covenant specifically relate to the church in this dispensation?

In the Synoptic Gospels, the New Covenant is mentioned only in the context of the Last Supper.

Matthew 26:28 ²⁸for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.

Mark 14:24 ²⁴And He said to them, "This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.

Luke 22:20 ²⁰And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.

There is no doubt the Lord is referring to the New Covenant and that His death will be the blood sacrifice necessary to ratify that Covenant. "The New Covenant is similar to a last will and testament. When Jesus died, the provisions of His will went into effect. Immediately all people began to profit from His death. For example, the forgiveness of sins and the possession of the Holy Spirit become the inheritance of everyone who trusts in Him, Jew and Gentile alike. However those provisions of Jesus' "will" having to do with Israel as His particular focus of blessing will not take effect until the nation turns to Him in repentance at His second coming. Thus the church partakes in the benefits of the New Covenant even though God made it with Israel particularly." [Thomas L. Constable, *Thomas Constable's Notes on the Bible*, 6:240].

Blood sacrifice was necessary for the forgiveness of sins which is an important element of the New Covenant and which those who come to faith enjoy in this dispensation. Christ's death was necessary for the application of the blood to be applied through faith both for Jews and Gentiles. In terms of Israel, that was clearly necessary in order for the faithful generation of the future to believe in Christ's sacrifice on their behalf and thereby realize the fulfillment of the New Covenant in the Kingdom. Right now, we partake of this spiritual benefit and are grafted into the place of blessing. We are now participating in that aspect of blessing just as the natural branch remnant of Israel is participating in it now. "Jesus' death functions both as a covenant ratification sacrifice, thus establishing the new covenant, and as an expiatory sacrifice, thereby providing full and final forgiveness." [Bruce Compton, "Epilogue: Dispensationalism, the Church, and the New Covenant" in *Dispensational Understanding of the New Covenant*, p. 257]. Unlike the sacrifices of the Mosaic Covenant, the Lord's sacrifice was complete and final. Jesus said His blood was poured out for the disciples and for the many. I believe "many" refers to everyone. "This term 'many' appears to be a true Hebraism. The many can easily refer to more than the whole or totality by the Semitic mind.... They [the

disciples] will understand He is making a completed atonement for them and others (them and the many).” [David Olander, *The Greatness of His Blood and the New Covenant*, p. 27-28]. Individual Jews, the remnant, come to faith now based on Christ's work on the cross but the New Covenant promises national restoration which is still future.

The Corinthian participation in the Lord's Supper was an occasion for Paul to teach about the New Covenant in Christ's blood.

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 ²³For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” ²⁵In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” ²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

The church at Corinth was provided this truth by Paul who received it directly from the Lord. The substitutionary nature of His sacrifice as represented by the bread and the cup of the New Covenant representing eternal justification was ratified in His blood and these facts are clearly presented as church truth. The bread represented His body and the cup represented the New Covenant.

Paul said that he was a minister of the New Covenant.

2 Corinthians 3:6 ⁶who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Paul was saying that he was a servant of the New Covenant which is the only Covenant that gives life in contrast to the Mosaic Covenant which was a Covenant of death. The Spirit was the driving force behind Paul's ministry and the Spirit gives life. What the Mosaic Covenant could not do as a ministry of the flesh can be accomplished through the New Covenant which is a ministry of the Holy Spirit who is a life-giving Spirit.

No one disputes the fact the Levitical priesthood has been done away and Christ is now a priest in the order of Melchizedek. This too is related to the New Covenant.

Hebrews 7:12 ¹²For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also.

Hebrews 9:11–12 ¹¹But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; ¹²and not through the blood of goats and

calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

Right now, Christ is ministering in the true Tabernacle in heaven as the High Priest of all who believe. He is not ruling as King at this time. The Law has been replaced by the New Covenant which required a change in the Levitical priesthood which was the priesthood of the Mosaic Covenant. Christ is a priest according to the order of Melchizedek. Christ is ministering the eternal redemption program of the New Covenant.

Christ is the mediator of the New Covenant and He is right now serving as the mediator between God and believers. The book of Hebrews specifically connects His ministry of mediation with the New Covenant.

1 Timothy 2:5 ⁵For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

Hebrews 8:6 ⁶But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.

Hebrews 9:15 ¹⁵For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Hebrews 12:24 ²⁴and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.

A mediator is one who stands between two parties to remove a disagreement or reach a common goal (μεσίτης, BDAG). Fruchtenbaum defines a “mediator [as] one who intervenes between two people either to make peace and friendship or to ratify a covenant.” [Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Ariel’s Bible Commentary: The Messianic Jewish Epistles*, p. 122]. If Christ is the mediator of the New Covenant, then the New Covenant must be in existence. He is not acting as mediator for national, unbelieving Israel, but for those who believe. “[T]he Old Covenant, the Mosaic Covenant, was based upon the Law. It brought blessing for obedience, but it brought cursing and even death for disobedience. In contrast, the New Covenant is based upon grace, and it is able to impart righteousness and provide empowerment to keep its demands. It is this New Covenant that is the basis for His high priestly ministry in a better sanctuary.” [Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Ariel’s Bible Commentary: The Messianic Jewish Epistles*, p. 110].

There are other New Testament proofs that the church is enjoying the salvation aspect of the New Covenant, but this has been sufficient to make the case. Given the New Testament testimony it is clear the church enjoys the blessings of the Covenant, all of

them and not just the New Covenant. The church does not take them over and Israel has not lost them.

The explanation I've given you concerning the Covenants is not held by many theologians. Most of them believe the Abrahamic Covenant was established in Genesis 12:1-3. I believe that is God's blueprint for history and the Covenants—Abrahamic, Land, Davidic, and New—are the framework for carrying out that plan. Many believe Abram did not have to leave Ur in order to receive the Abrahamic Covenant; this seems to be born out of a desire to affirm the unconditional nature of the Covenant. Fruchtenbaum holds that position. I believe the nature of the royal grant covenant did call for Abram to leave Ur in order to receive the Covenant which is a reward covenant, but responding in faith is not a work and it does not defeat God's sole role in assuring the fulfillment of the covenant. I've also called for abstaining from using the term "unconditional" and substituting the term "reward" in its place in order to eliminate confusion about the faith requirement for receiving the Covenant. I've also made the case for understanding the church to be enjoying some blessings from all the Covenants and not just the New Covenant.

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