

Covenant and Salvation in the Old Testament: Examining the role of covenants in the Old Testament as mechanisms for salvation, considering the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenants

¹**Freddy Manurung**

Universitas Advent Indonesia

²**Alvyn Cesarianto Hendriks**

Universitas Advent Indonesia

Freddy.manurung@unai.edu

Abstract

This research examines the role of the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenants in the Old Testament as key mechanisms for salvation. Derived from the Hebrew term *berith*, a covenant is a divine agreement establishing a relationship between God and His people. Each covenant plays a pivotal role in salvation history, revealing God's character and redemptive plan. The Abrahamic Covenant promises land, descendants, and blessings, forming the foundation of Israel's identity. The Mosaic Covenant, given at Mount Sinai, provides the Law as a guide for righteous living. The Davidic Covenant guarantees an eternal kingdom through David's lineage, pointing to the messianic hope. Despite their importance, there is limited research on the covenants as interconnected aspects of salvation. This study addresses key questions regarding their theological implications and relevance for modern discussions on salvation. Using qualitative methods, the research analyzes key Old Testament passages and secondary sources to explore their historical context, themes, and salvation implications. The findings reveal that these covenants illustrate God's relational approach to humanity, emphasizing grace, faith, and obedience. Understanding these covenants is essential for grasping salvation in both the Old and New Testaments. This study highlights the interconnectedness of the covenants, deepening our understanding of God's redemptive plan and its impact on contemporary theology.

Key Words: *Covenant, Salvation, Mechanism,*

Introduction

The Old Testament is a foundational text for understanding the theological framework of Judaism and Christianity. Central to its narrative is the concept of covenant, which serves as a divine agreement between God and His people. These covenants are not merely historical documents; they are theological constructs that reveal God's character, His intentions for humanity, and the means by which salvation is offered. The Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenants are particularly significant, as they each play a crucial role in the unfolding story of salvation history. This study aims to examine the

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role of these covenants as mechanisms for salvation, exploring how they contribute to the understanding of God's redemptive plan.¹

The term "covenant" (Hebrew: *berith*) appears frequently throughout the Old Testament, signifying a binding agreement that establishes a relationship between God and His chosen people.² The Abrahamic Covenant, initiated with Abraham, promises land, descendants, and blessings, establishing a foundation for Israel's identity (Gen. 12:1-3; Gen. 15:5-6). The Mosaic Covenant, given through Moses at Mount Sinai, introduces the Law, which serves as a guide for righteous living and a means of maintaining the covenant relationship (Exod. 19-24). The Davidic Covenant, articulated through God's promise to David, assures the establishment of an everlasting kingdom, ultimately pointing to the messianic hope (2 Sam. 7:12-16; Ps. 89:3-4).

These covenants are interrelated, each building upon the previous one and contributing to a comprehensive understanding of salvation. The Old Testament presents a narrative that is not static but dynamic, revealing God's ongoing engagement with humanity.³ As such, the study of these covenants is essential for grasping the theological underpinnings of salvation in the Old Testament context.

Despite the significance of covenants in the Old Testament, there is a notable gap in the existing literature regarding the comprehensive examination of the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenants as mechanisms for salvation. While individual studies have explored each covenant in isolation, there is a need for a holistic analysis that considers their interconnections and collective impact on the concept of salvation.⁴ Furthermore, the existing literature often focuses on the historical and cultural contexts of the covenants, with less attention given to their theological implications for salvation.

Therefore, this study seeks to address the following research questions: What are the theological implications of the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenants in relation to salvation? How do these covenants interact with one another to form a cohesive understanding of God's redemptive plan? In what ways do the concepts of faith, obedience, and grace manifest within these covenants? How do the covenants inform contemporary theological discussions about salvation?

The objectives of this study are: To provide a comprehensive analysis of the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenants as mechanisms for salvation in the Old Testament. To examine the interconnections and collective impact of these covenants on the concept of salvation. To explore the theological implications of the covenants for understanding God's redemptive plan. To contribute to the existing literature on covenant theology and its implications for salvation.

Methodology

¹ Wright, N. T. *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*. (Fortress Press. 2006), 45.

² Harris, R. L. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. (Moody Press. 1992), 59

³ Goldingay, J. *Old Testament Theology: Israel's Gospel*. (InterVarsity Press. 2003), 78.

⁴ Beale, G. K. *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New*. (Baker Academic. 2011), 57.

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This research will employ a qualitative methodology, utilizing a combination of textual analysis and theological reflection. The primary texts will be drawn from the Old Testament, focusing on key passages related to the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenants. Secondary sources, including scholarly articles, commentaries, and theological works, will be consulted to provide context and depth to the analysis.

The study will begin with a thorough examination of each covenant, exploring its historical context, key themes, and implications for salvation. Following this, a comparative analysis will be conducted to identify similarities and differences among the covenants, as well as their collective contribution to the understanding of God's redemptive plan. The final section will reflect on the theological implications of the findings, considering how they inform contemporary discussions about salvation. In conclusion, this research aims to illuminate the vital role of covenants in the Old Testament as mechanisms for salvation. By examining the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenants, this study will contribute to a richer understanding of God's engagement with humanity and the unfolding narrative of redemption that permeates the biblical text. Through this exploration, it is hoped that readers will gain a deeper.

Result and Discussion

The Concept of Covenant in the Old Testament

Definition and Theological Significance

A covenant in the biblical context is a solemn agreement or promise between God and humans, often accompanied by specific stipulations and blessings. The term derives from the Hebrew word *berith*, which implies a binding contract that can involve mutual commitments and obligations.⁵ Covenants are foundational to understanding the relationship between God and His people, as they reveal God's character, intentions, and redemptive plans throughout history. The Old Testament contains several significant covenants that shape the narrative of Israel's history and theology, illustrating God's faithfulness despite human disobedience.⁶

Theologically, covenants serve as a framework for understanding God's promises and the conditions under which they are fulfilled. They reflect both *conditional* aspects (where blessings depend on obedience) and *unconditional* promises (where God commits

⁵ Got Questions Ministries. "Old Testament Salvation." Accessed December 4, 2024. <https://www.gotquestions.org/Old-Testament-salvation.html>.

⁶ Academia. "The Concept of Covenant: Biblical Covenant Theology." Accessed December 16, 2024. https://www.academia.edu/44271048/The_Concept_of_Covenant_Biblical_Covenant_Theology

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to fulfill His word regardless of human action).⁷ This duality highlights the complexity of divine-human relationships in biblical theology.

Historical Context of Covenants

Covenants in the Old Testament were established within a historical context that included various cultural practices of treaty-making prevalent in the ancient Near East. These agreements often mirrored political alliances, where a sovereign (suzerain) would make promises to protect a vassal in exchange for loyalty and service.⁸ The Old Testament covenants, such as those with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David, reflect this structure but are uniquely characterized by God's initiative and grace.

The historical backdrop includes significant events such as the Exodus, where God formed a covenant with Israel at Sinai, providing laws that governed their community life.⁹ Each covenant is situated within specific historical moments that reveal God's unfolding plan for humanity.

Types of Covenants in the Old Testament

The Old Testament identifies several major covenants, each with distinct characteristics: *Noahic Covenant*: Established after the flood (Genesis 9:8-17), this unconditional covenant promises that God will never again destroy the earth by flood. It serves as a universal promise to all living creatures.¹⁰ *Abrahamic Covenant*: This covenant (Genesis 12:1-3; 15; 17) includes promises of land, descendants, and blessing. It is primarily unconditional but entails obligations for Abraham's descendants to uphold their part of the relationship.¹¹

Mosaic Covenant: Given at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19-24), this covenant is conditional upon Israel's obedience to God's laws. It establishes Israel as God's chosen people with specific guidelines for communal living and worship.¹² *Davidic Covenant*: This covenant (2 Samuel 7) promises that David's lineage will endure forever. While it is unconditional regarding God's commitment to David's line, individual kings' reigns could be affected by their faithfulness.¹³ *New Covenant*: Foretold in Jeremiah 31:31-34, this

⁷ Christianity.com. "What Is a Covenant? Biblical Meaning and Importance Today." Accessed November 10, 2024. <https://www.christianity.com/wiki/bible/what-is-a-covenant-biblical-meaning-and-importance-today.html>.

⁸ Wikipedia. "Covenant (Biblical)." Accessed December 8, 2024. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Covenant_\(biblical\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Covenant_(biblical)).

⁹ ResearchWap. "The Mosaic Covenant." Accessed October 21, 2024. <https://researchwap.org/religious-and-cultural-studies/pr4suSW7pJTrf6>.

¹⁰ Elwell, W. A., & Beitzel, B. J. *Baker encyclopedia of the Bible*. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1988), 531.

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Freedman, D. N. (1996). *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary Vol. 4*. (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 905-906

¹³ Ibid, 910

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covenant signifies a future transformation where God will write His law on people's hearts, ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ.¹⁴

These covenants collectively illustrate God's relational approach with humanity and His overarching plan for redemption through history. Each type emphasizes different aspects of God's character—His justice, mercy, and faithfulness—while inviting humanity into a transformative relationship with Him.

The Abrahamic Covenant

The Abrahamic Covenant is a foundational agreement between God and Abraham that establishes key promises regarding land, descendants, and blessings for both Abraham and all nations. This covenant marks a significant turning point in biblical history, transitioning from the universal focus of humanity's sinfulness in Genesis to God's specific plan for redemption through Abraham and his lineage. The covenant unfolds across three primary interactions found in Genesis 12, 15, and 17, each building upon the previous promises and reinforcing God's commitment to Abraham.¹⁵

Key Texts and Themes in Genesis 12, 15, and 17

1. **Genesis 12:1-3**

God calls Abram (later renamed Abraham) to leave his homeland with three key promises:

- He will receive a new land (Canaan).
- God will make him the father of a great nation.
- Through him, all families on earth will be blessed.

2. **Genesis 15:1-21**

God establishes a formal covenant with Abram through a sacred ceremony:

- He promises Abram descendants as numerous as the stars.
- The covenant includes a ritual symbolizing God's binding commitment to give Abram's descendants the land of Canaan.
- God reveals that Abram's descendants will face hardship and oppression before inheriting the land.

3. **Genesis 17:1-27**

God reaffirms and expands His covenant:

- Abram's name is changed to Abraham, meaning "father of many nations."
- Circumcision is introduced as a sign of the covenant.
- The covenant is declared everlasting, extending to Abraham's descendants.

These passages emphasize God's initiative in forming a relationship with

¹⁴ Ibid, 915

¹⁵ The NIV Bible Blog. "Abrahamic Covenant with God." Accessed December 6, 2024.
<https://www.thenivbible.com/blog/abrahamic-covenant-with-god/>.

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humanity, His unconditional promises, and the importance of faith and obedience in fulfilling God's plan.

Implications for Salvation

The Abrahamic Covenant has profound implications for salvation history. It introduces the concept of grace where God unilaterally initiates a relationship with Abraham despite his background as an idolater. The promise that "all families of the earth will be blessed" (Genesis 12:3) points towards a universal scope of salvation that culminates in Jesus Christ, who fulfills this promise as a descendant of Abraham (Galatians 3:16). This covenant lays the groundwork for understanding God's redemptive plan throughout Scripture, emphasizing that salvation is available to all who have faith.¹⁶

The Role of Faith and Obedience

Faith and obedience are central to the Abrahamic Covenant. While the promises are largely unconditional—God takes responsibility for their fulfillment—Abraham's response involves active faith demonstrated through obedience. For instance, when called to leave his homeland (Genesis 12), Abraham obeys without knowing his destination. His faith is further tested when he is asked to sacrifice Isaac (Genesis 22), showcasing his trust in God's promises.¹⁷

The covenant also calls for a lifestyle reflective of loyalty to God, as seen in the requirement of circumcision (Genesis 17). This act serves as a physical reminder of their relationship and commitment to uphold God's commandments. Thus, while God's promises remain steadfast, the covenant emphasizes that faith and obedience are essential responses expected from those who enter into this divine relationship.

The Mosaic Covenant

The Mosaic Covenant also known as the Sinaitic Covenant, is a pivotal agreement established between God and the nation of Israel at Mount Sinai, primarily documented in Exodus 19-24. This covenant is characterized by its conditional nature, where blessings are promised in exchange for obedience to God's laws. Unlike previous covenants, such as the Abrahamic Covenant, which were primarily unilateral, the Mosaic Covenant involves mutual commitments from both God and Israel. God promises to bless

¹⁶Bible Study Tools. "The Abrahamic Covenant Bible Story." Last modified November 6, 2020. <https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-stories/the-abrahamic-covenant-bible-story.html>

¹⁷ Schreiner, T. R., & Wright, S. D. *Believer's baptism : sign of the new covenant in Christ* (pp. 127–128). (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 127-128.

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Israel and make them a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6), while Israel agrees to follow His commandments.¹⁸

Key Texts and Themes (Exodus 19-24, Deuteronomy)

Exodus 19-24, these chapters outline the establishment of the covenant; The first outline is Preparation for Encounter: in Exodus 19, God instructs Moses to prepare the people for His revelation on Mount Sinai. The Israelites are called to be consecrated and ready to hear God's word. The second outline, The Ten Commandments: Exodus 20 presents the Decalogue, summarizing the moral expectations of God's people. The third outline is Covenant Agreement: In Exodus 24, the covenant is ratified through sacrifices and the people's affirmation, stating, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do!" (Exodus

Deuteronomy: This book reiterates and expands upon the laws given at Sinai as Israel prepares to enter the Promised Land. It emphasizes themes of obedience, blessings for adherence to the law (Deuteronomy 28), and curses for disobedience. Deuteronomy serves as a reminder of Israel's covenant obligations and their consequences.¹⁹

The Law as a Mechanism for Salvation

The Mosaic Law functions as a guide for living in accordance with God's will rather than a means of salvation in itself. While it sets forth moral, civil, and ceremonial laws that define righteous living, adherence to these laws does not secure salvation; rather, it reflects a response to God's prior act of salvation in delivering Israel from Egypt. The law serves as a "schoolmaster" (Galatians 3:24) that reveals human sinfulness and points towards the need for a savior, ultimately fulfilled in Christ.²⁰

The Role of Sacrifice and Atonement

Sacrifice plays a crucial role in the Mosaic Covenant as it provides a means for atonement and reconciliation with God. The sacrificial system outlined in Leviticus includes various offerings (e.g., burnt offerings, sin offerings) that symbolize repentance and dedication to God. These sacrifices are essential for maintaining purity within the community and restoring one's relationship with God after transgressions.

The concept of atonement is deeply embedded in this covenant framework; it emphasizes God's holiness and justice while also showcasing His mercy. The sacrificial system foreshadows Christ's ultimate sacrifice, which fulfills the requirements of the law

¹⁸ Got Questions Ministries. "What Is the Mosaic Covenant?" Accessed December 3, 2024. <https://www.gotquestions.org/Mosaic-covenant.html>

¹⁹Ligonier Ministries. "The Mosaic Covenant." Accessed October 26, 2024. <https://learn.ligonier.org/devotionals/mosaic-covenant>.

²⁰Ibid.

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and provides a new avenue for salvation through faith rather than works.²¹

In summary, the Mosaic Covenant establishes a structured relationship between God and Israel characterized by law, obedience, sacrifice, and divine blessing or cursing based on adherence to that law. It serves as an essential component of biblical theology that shapes both historical Israelite identity and Christian understanding of grace and redemption.

The Davidic Covenant

The Davidic Covenant is a significant and unconditional agreement made between God and King David, primarily detailed in 2 Samuel 7. This covenant establishes God's promises to David, ensuring the perpetuity of his lineage and the future coming of the Messiah from his descendants. Unlike previous covenants, the Davidic Covenant does not depend on human obedience for its fulfillment; rather, it rests solely on God's faithfulness. The covenant emphasizes themes of kingship, divine favor, and the eternal nature of God's promises to Israel through David's line.²²

Key Texts and Themes (2 Samuel 7, Psalm 89)

2 Samuel 7: This chapter outlines the core elements of the covenant: The first is the Promise of a Dynasty: God promises that David's house (lineage) will endure forever (2 Samuel 7:16). This establishes a royal lineage that will lead to the Messiah. The second is the Promise of a Kingdom: God assures that David's kingdom will be established and maintained (2 Samuel 7:12-13), with his son Solomon tasked to build a temple for God. The last is the Father-Son Relationship: God declares that He will be a father to David's descendants, indicating a special relationship with the future kings (2 Samuel 7:14).

Psalm 89 reflects on the Davidic Covenant, reiterating God's faithfulness to His promises: The psalmist celebrates God's commitment to David's lineage and kingdom, emphasizing that God's covenant with David is everlasting (Psalm 89:3-4). It also addresses the challenges faced by David's descendants, affirming that despite difficulties, God's covenant remains intact (Psalm 89:30-32).

The Promise of an Eternal Kingdom

²¹ Oak Ridge Bible Chapel. "The Mosaic Covenant." Accessed October 20, 2024. <https://oakridgebiblechapel.org/mosaic-covenant/>.

²² Guilherme Brasil de Souza, "Messianic Hope and Davidic Covenant in the Classical Prophets," *Teologia Bíblica, Histórica e Adventista (Artigos Originais)* 19, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.25194/2317-0573.2023v19n1.e1923>.

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The promise of an eternal kingdom is central to the Davidic Covenant. God's declaration that David's throne will be established forever signifies not only the continuity of his lineage but also points toward the coming of an ultimate king—Jesus Christ—who fulfills this promise. This eternal aspect is emphasized in various biblical texts, including references in the New Testament where Jesus is identified as the "Son of David" (Matthew 21:9), reinforcing His rightful claim to this everlasting throne.²³

The Role of Hope and Restoration

The Davidic Covenant embodies themes of hope and restoration for Israel. In times of political turmoil and exile, this covenant serves as a reminder that God has not abandoned His people. The assurance that a descendant of David would reign forever provides hope for restoration and fulfillment of God's promises. This hope is not limited to Israel alone but extends to all nations through the Messiah, who brings salvation and establishes God's kingdom on earth.²⁴

In summary, the Davidic Covenant is foundational in biblical theology, linking God's promises across generations and culminating in Christ. It highlights God's unwavering commitment to His people while providing a framework for understanding messianic expectations and the ultimate restoration of all creation through Jesus.

A Comparative Analysis of the Biblical Covenants

The biblical covenants—Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and New—display both similarities and differences, each highlighting their unique contributions to God's redemptive plan.

Similarities Among the Covenants

1. Divine Initiation

Every covenant is initiated by God, underscoring His sovereignty and His commitment to humanity.

2. Promises and Conditions

Each covenant includes specific promises from God, often coupled with conditions for human response. For instance, the Mosaic Covenant requires obedience to the law, while the Abrahamic Covenant emphasizes faith as the response.

²³ Ligonier Ministries. "The Davidic Covenant: Unfolding Biblical Eschatology." Accessed December 10, 2024. <https://learn.ligonier.org/articles/davidic-covenant-unfolding-biblical-eschatology>.

²⁴ "The Davidic Covenant." *Christ Overall*. Accessed December 8, 2024. <https://christoverall.com/article/concise/the-davidic-covenant>.

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3. Covenant Signs

Each covenant is associated with a distinctive sign serving as a tangible reminder of the agreement. Examples include the rainbow in the Noahic Covenant, circumcision in the Abrahamic Covenant, and the Sabbath in the Mosaic Covenant.

Differences Among the Covenants

1. Nature of Promises

The Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants are largely unconditional, focusing on God's assurance to bless and establish a dynasty. Conversely, the Mosaic Covenant is conditional, requiring Israel's obedience to access blessings.

2. Scope of Influence

The Noahic Covenant applies universally to all of humanity, whereas the other covenants primarily focus on Israel's relationship with God. The New Covenant, however, expands its reach to include Gentiles, emphasizing salvation through faith in Christ.

3. Covenant Mediators

Each covenant has a unique mediator: Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and ultimately Jesus Christ in the New Covenant. These mediators reflect the evolving roles in God's overarching redemptive plan. Through these similarities and differences, the covenants collectively reveal God's unfolding purpose and relationship with humanity across history.

The Progression of Salvation History

The biblical covenants reveal a progressive unfolding of God's salvation plan across history. Each covenant builds upon its predecessors, providing deeper insight into God's character and His intentions for humanity:

1. Noahic Covenant

After the flood, this covenant resets creation and confirms God's promise to preserve life on earth.

2. Abrahamic Covenant

This covenant introduces the concept of a chosen people, through whom God will bring blessings to all nations.

3. Mosaic Covenant

It establishes laws to guide Israel's conduct, while also emphasizing their need for redemption due to sin.

4. Davidic Covenant

This covenant highlights a royal lineage leading to the Messiah and promises an eternal kingdom.

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5. New Covenant

Initiated by Jesus Christ, the New Covenant fulfills all previous covenants, offering salvation through grace rather than adherence to the law. This progression demonstrates how God's redemptive plan gradually unfolds, culminating in the work of Christ on the cross.

The Interconnectedness of the Covenants

The covenants are closely linked, highlighting their unified role in God's salvation narrative:

- **Covenantal Continuity**
Each covenant connects to earlier ones while pointing forward to future fulfillment. For instance, the promises to Abraham ultimately find their fulfillment in the New Covenant through Jesus Christ, a descendant of David (Galatians 3:16).
- **Thematic Links**
Common themes like faith, obedience, sacrifice, and God's presence recur throughout the covenants. For example, the sacrificial system introduced in the Mosaic Covenant foreshadows Christ's ultimate sacrifice in the New Covenant.
- **Covenant Formula**
The repeated phrase, "*I will be their God, and they will be My people*" (Jeremiah 31:33), reflects God's unwavering commitment to a relationship with humanity despite human shortcomings.

In summary, while each covenant serves a distinct purpose within Scripture, together they weave a cohesive narrative of God's redemptive work. Their progression and interconnections enrich our understanding of salvation history and reveal God's faithfulness to His plan for humanity.

Theological Implications for Salvation

Understanding Salvation in the Old Testament Context

In the Old Testament, salvation is grounded in faith and grace, not merely in adherence to the Law. While the Mosaic Law provided moral and spiritual guidelines, it was never intended as the ultimate means of salvation. Instead, Old Testament believers were saved by trusting in God's promises, particularly the promise of a future Messiah. For example, Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3), demonstrating that salvation has always been a matter of grace through

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faith, even before the Law was given.²⁵

Salvation in the Old Testament is portrayed as multifaceted, encompassing liberation from physical oppression (e.g., the Exodus), restoration of a relationship with God, and healing of individual and communal brokenness. This perspective aligns with the broader scriptural narrative, emphasizing that God's redemptive actions are relationally driven and grounded in history.

The Role of Grace and Human Response

Grace is the foundation of salvation in the Old Testament. The sacrificial system, while offering temporary atonement for sin, highlights the insufficiency of human effort and the necessity of divine grace. As consistently affirmed, salvation has always been by grace through faith rather than through works. These sacrifices foreshadowed the ultimate fulfillment in Christ, who would provide permanent atonement.

Human response, however, remains vital. Although salvation is initiated by God's grace, it requires a response of faith and obedience. This dynamic is evident in the covenantal relationships: God provides promises, but He also calls His people to faithfulness. For instance, under the Mosaic Covenant, Israel's response involved not only accepting God's laws but also engaging in sacrificial rituals as acts of faith and trust in His provision.²⁶

Covenantal Theology and Its Influence on New Testament Salvation

Covenantal theology provides a cohesive framework for understanding salvation across Scripture. Each covenant builds upon its predecessors, culminating in the New Covenant inaugurated by Jesus Christ. This progression highlights the consistency of God's method of salvation—always by grace through faith—across both the Old and New Testaments.

Paul underscores this continuity in the New Testament, noting that the righteousness credited to figures like Abraham and David is equally accessible to believers today (Romans 4:23-24). He emphasizes that justification comes through faith and not through adherence to the Law (Galatians 3:11). This reinforces the idea that Old Testament believers anticipated the Messiah, while New Testament believers look back to Christ's completed work on the cross.²⁷

²⁵ Got Questions Ministries. "Old Testament Salvation." Accessed December 4, 2024.
<https://www.gotquestions.org/Old-Testament-salvation.html>

²⁶ <https://peacetheology.net/salvation/mercy-not-sacrifice-the-bibles-salvation-story/2-salvation-in-the-old-testament/>.

²⁷ <https://www.lewistownsentinel.com/news/religion/2020/01/salvation-was-by-grace-through-faith-in-old-testament/>.

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The interconnectedness of the covenants further reveals that Christ fulfills all aspects of God's promises. He is the descendant of Abraham and David, the fulfillment of the Mosaic Law, and the ultimate mediator of the New Covenant. This understanding enriches our appreciation of salvation history and demonstrates the unity of God's redemptive plan throughout Scripture.

The theological implications of salvation underscore its foundation in grace through faith, with human response playing a crucial role. Covenantal theology illuminates how God's redemptive plan unfolds consistently across the Old and New Testaments, culminating in Christ's work. This comprehensive view highlights the unity of Scripture and deepens our understanding of God's unwavering commitment to save humanity through His grace.

Summary and Conclusion

This exploration of the covenants in the Old Testament—specifically the Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic Covenants—reveals a rich tapestry of God's redemptive plan for humanity. Each covenant serves a distinct purpose while contributing to the overarching narrative of salvation history. The Noahic Covenant establishes God's commitment to creation; the Abrahamic Covenant introduces the concept of a chosen people and promises blessings to all nations; the Mosaic Covenant provides laws that guide Israel's behavior and highlight their need for redemption; and the Davidic Covenant promises an eternal kingdom through David's lineage, culminating in the New Covenant established by Jesus Christ.

Through these covenants, themes of grace, faith, obedience, and divine promise emerge as central to understanding salvation in both the Old and New Testaments. The interconnectedness of these covenants demonstrates how God's plan unfolds progressively, revealing His unwavering commitment to His people despite their failures.

Implications for Contemporary Theology

The theological implications drawn from the study of these covenants are significant for contemporary theology. Understanding salvation as a continuous thread woven throughout Scripture encourages believers to view their faith in light of God's historical actions and promises. It emphasizes that salvation is not merely a New Testament concept but is deeply rooted in the Old Testament narrative.

Additionally, recognizing the role of grace as foundational to both Old and New Testament faith challenges contemporary Christians to embrace a holistic understanding

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of God's mercy. It invites believers to respond to God's grace with active faith and obedience, reflecting on how they live out their covenant relationship with God today.

Furthermore, this study underscores the importance of covenantal theology in shaping Christian doctrine and practice. It encourages theologians and church leaders to explore how these ancient agreements inform modern understandings of community, ethics, and divine promise.

Suggestions for Further Research

To deepen understanding of covenant theology and its implications, several avenues for further research can be pursued: Investigate how Jewish thought during the Second Temple period understood covenants and their fulfillment in Christ, including perspectives from apocryphal and pseudepigraphal writings. Explore how different theological traditions (e.g., Reformed, Dispensational) interpret covenants and their implications for salvation history. By pursuing these areas of research, scholars can continue to enrich our understanding of covenant theology and its relevance for both historical interpretation and contemporary faith practice.

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