The Covenants of God

Edenic Covenant, Gen 1:26-28 — The conditional covenant between God and Adam, governing man’s creation and life in Edenic innocence. It regulated man’s dominion and subjugation of the earth, and presented a simple test of obedience and a death penalty. It ended shortly after it was made when Adam and Eve ate of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Adamic Covenant, Gen 3:14-19 — The unconditional covenant between God and all fallen humans. Satan’s tool (the serpent) was cursed (Gen 3:14); the first promise of the Redeemer was given (3:15); women’s status was altered (3:16); the earth was cursed (3:17-19); physical and spiritual death resulted (3:19). It remains in effect as long as sin is present on earth.

Noahic Covenant, Gen 8:20-9:6 — The unconditional covenant for all human government. Man is to govern his fellowmen for God, indicated by the institution of capital punishment as the supreme judicial power of the state (Gen 9:5-6). Other features included the promise of redemption through the line of Shem (9:26). It remains in effect as long as there are rainbows.

Abrahamic Covenant, Gen 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:1-7; 17:1-8 — The unconditional covenant of promise for all of Abraham’s spiritual children. Abraham’s posterity was to be made a great nation. In him (through Christ) all the families of the earth were to be blessed (Gal 3:16,28-29). Benefactors of the covenant receive the real Promised Land, a home not on earth (Heb 11:13-16).

Mosaic Covenant, Ex 20:1-31:18 — The legal conditional covenant, given solely to the Nation of Israel. It consisted of the Ten Commandments (Ex 20:1-26), social judgments (Ex 21:1; 24:11) and religious ordinances (Ex 24:12-31:18). Because of its prominence in Jewish civil prudence, it is frequently referred to as “the Law”. Spiritually, it was a conditional covenant of works, and due to its impossible requirements, it is a ministry of ‘condemnation’ and ‘death’ (2 Cor 3:7-9), designed to lead the transgressor to redemption in Christ. It ended with the death of Christ in ~33AD.

Davidic Covenant, 2 Sam 7:4-17, 1 Chr 17:4-15 — The unconditional kingdom covenant regulating the temporal and eternal rule of David’s Posterity. It secures in perpetuity a Davidic dynasty and kingdom. It was confirmed by divine oath in Ps 89:30-37, renewed to Mary in Lk 1:31-33, and fulfilled in Christ as the Savior and Israel’s coming King (Acts 1:6; Rev 19:16; 20:4-6).

New Covenant, Jer 31:31-33; Mt 26:28; Mk 14:24; Lk 22:20; Heb 8:8-12 — The covenant of unconditional blessing based upon the finished redemption of Christ. It secures blessing for all believers, flowing from the Abrahamic Covenant (Gal 3:13-20), including those of the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants. Its fullest implementation is either in or after the Millennium. This covenant is unconditional, final and irreversible, and although it was announced ~580BC, it applies to all who are saved by faith in the Messiah from Adam onward.