

13 Points for Understanding the Major Biblical Covenants

Below are 12 points or guidelines that I believe are helpful for understanding the major biblical covenants—Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and New.

1. The biblical covenants are the vehicles through which God's kingdom program plays out in history.
2. The covenants are inter-related. They unfold and develop in relation to each other.
3. The covenants often contain both unconditional and conditional elements. By unconditional it means that a covenant cannot be nullified once God obligates himself unconditionally to it.
4. God will fulfill all the obligations He takes upon Himself. Yet conditions can be placed upon the human participants so that experiencing the blessings of the covenants is conditioned upon obedience.
5. The Noahic covenant is the platform for the progressive unfolding of the other covenants. God promises stability of nature after the global flood so the covenant program can develop in history.
6. The Abrahamic Covenant is the foundational covenant for the Mosaic, Davidic, and New Covenants.
7. The Mosaic Covenant is a conditional covenant and is the means through which Israel can stay connected to the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant. This covenant can be and was nullified because of disobedience by Israel (thus the need for a New Covenant).
8. Collectively and individually, the covenants consist of dozens of specific promises including spiritual, national (Israel), international, and material blessings. These elements are all important and intertwined. All elements will be fulfilled literally through two comings of Jesus (no need to typologically interpret or spiritualize the covenants).
9. The Davidic and New Covenants are extensions of the Abrahamic Covenant and the means through which the Abrahamic Covenant is fulfilled (kingly line—Davidic; salvation and blessings to all believers—New).
10. The covenants are fulfilled literally throughout history via:
 - a. historical fulfillment before Christ
 - b. first coming of Jesus fulfillment

c. second coming of Jesus fulfillment

11. The Church Age between Pentecost (Acts 2) and the return of Jesus is an era where there is fulfillment of many spiritual (not spiritualized) blessings of the covenants (new heart, indwelling spirit, Messianic salvation for both Jews and Gentiles, etc.)
12. The Millennial Kingdom is the era in history when all elements of the Abrahamic, Davidic, and New Covenants will be fulfilled in all their dimensions—spiritual, national (Israel), international (nations), and material (physical blessings, restored earth, international harmony, animal harmony, agriculture production, etc.)
13. A proper understanding of the biblical covenants is sufficient to grasp God's covenant program. Theological covenants should not be imposed on the biblical covenants in any way that alters the meaning of the biblical covenants.