

## Do the Covenants of God All Last Forever?

**Genesis 17:7:** *I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.*



As Christians, we take great comfort in knowing that God is a God of unfathomable wisdom and integrity. We may be faced with things in life we never saw coming, but God is never caught off guard. With His foresight and eternal wisdom, He is not only prepared for anything, but He has preplanned for everything. God is also always as good as His word. He does not make a promise and then haphazardly decide not to keep it. In the Bible, covenants are really solemn promises. Throughout Scripture, God has made many of these promises that also have the description of being “eternal.” One such covenant was the Law given to Moses. It seems that the

Law was described as everlasting, and yet the New Testament tells us that it loses its validity. Did God change His mind?

The short answer to this important question is “absolutely not!” Now what we have to do is understand the “why” and “how” of these two seemingly contradictory statements. To do this, let’s build a foundation of scriptural reasoning.

First, we define “covenant” and “everlasting.”

### Theme Text:

**Genesis 17:7:** *I will establish My **covenant** <1285> between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an **everlasting** <5769> **covenant**<1285>, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.*

**Covenant:** Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance #1285 *beriyth*; (in the sense of cutting [like 1254]); a compact (a formal agreement) (because made by passing between pieces of flesh)

King James Version translates this word *covenant*; 264 times, league 17 times, confederacy 1 time, confederate 1 time, confederate

Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon: 1) covenant, alliance, pledge  
1a) between men 1b) between God and man  
1b2) covenant (divine ordinance with signs or pledges)

**Everlasting:** Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance #5769 *olam*; properly {concealed} that {is} the vanishing point; generally time out of mind (past or {future}) that {is} (practically) eternity; frequentative adverbially (especially with prepositional prefix) always : - always ({-s}) ancient ({time}) any {more} {continuance} {eternal} ({for} [n-]) ever ({-lasting} {-more} of {old}) {lasting} long ({time}) (of) old ({time}) {perpetual} at any {time} (beginning of the) world (+ without end)

Brown-Driver-Briggs' Lexicon: long duration, antiquity, futurity, for ever, ever, everlasting, evermore, perpetual, old, ancient, world; ancient time, long time (of past); (of future); for ever, always; continuous existence, perpetual; everlasting, indefinite or unending future, eternity

A vanishing point is a point at which something disappears from view, like when you look at the horizon and it looks like the earth ends because of its curvature, but it really doesn't. A vanishing point can also mean something actually ceases to exist.

As we review several of the “big” covenants God made, we want to continually ask if each of these promises was an “always and forever” promise.

Our first example of a promise of God was stated by God without it being framed as a covenant—it was just a statement.

**Here is God’s first proclamation regarding His human creation:**

**Genesis 1:26-28:** *26 Then God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule (“have dominion” in the King James Version) over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. 27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 God blessed them; and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.*

God’s proclamation gave them His blessing to multiply and fill the earth AND to have *rule/dominion* (responsibility—rule and care of the natural creation) over it. In spite of the corruption of sin and death, those two blessings have continued even though it is not stated as a covenant.

**CLARIFYING GOD’S COVENANTS:**



**WHAT WAS PROMISED?**

**THE ABILITY TO FULLY POPULATE THE EARTH OVER WHICH HUMANITY WOULD MAINTAIN DOMINION.**

**Because this blessing was the foundation of God’s human creation, we will watch to see how God’s other covenants are built upon this one.**

This blessing of populating and *dominion* didn’t use the words *covenant* or *everlasting*. But we know that when God says something, He means it!

As we look at our second example of a promise of God, we see a significant connection to God’s first blessing to the couple.

**Next, we see God speaking to Noah when they are coming off the ark and going back to life on earth with their feet literally on the ground again:**

**Genesis 9:1-2:** *1 And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. 2 The fear of you and the terror of you will be on every beast of the earth and on every bird of the sky; with everything that creeps on the ground, and all the fish of the sea, into your hand they are given.*

God repeats to Noah what He told Adam at the very beginning, but this time it is spoken in the context of sinful humanity—the animals would now fear man. **The important point is the repetition of God’s promise of populating the earth and dominion.** This is a verifiable promise of God because He repeats that this is mankind’s reason for being at this essentially new beginning after the Flood.

Populating the earth and having *dominion* are the basis for God’s next major covenant to Noah. God will restate His original command to Adam: *fill the earth and subdue it.*

**God is profoundly specific with this next covenant:**

**Genesis 9:11-16:** *11 I establish My covenant <1285> with you; and all flesh shall never again be cut off by the water of the flood, neither shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth. 12 God said, This is the sign of the covenant <1285> which I am making between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all successive generations; 13 I set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant <1285> between Me and the earth. 14 It shall come about, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow will be seen in the cloud, 15 and I will remember My covenant <1285>, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 When the bow is in the cloud, then I will look upon it, to remember the everlasting <5769> covenant <1285> between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.*

Again, God reestablished what sin took away in the Garden of Eden. Noah and his family would repopulate the earth and again have dominion over the planet.

This is generally called the Noahic Covenant because it was made with Noah. It is also called the “Rainbow Covenant,” as God instituted the rainbow as a sign of this promise. This covenant is unconditional. It was made with Noah and every living creature—that would include animals—for all successive generations, and it includes the earth itself.

Technically, though, God is only promising not to destroy all living on the earth using water.



**Q. What about other methods of destruction, like allowing nuclear war? Aren't there scriptures that allude to destruction by fire? 2 Peter 3:10:** *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.*



True, God promised to never again *destroy all flesh* only as a result of a flood of water and not by other means.

However, we are assured *the earth remains forever (Ecclesiastes 1:4)*. Just as the earth was “destroyed” by the Flood, the literal earth and life on it remained. End Times prophecies of fire and destruction apply to the framework of SOCIETY, NOT the annihilation of man or disappearance of the planet.

God’s promise here is clear. The word *covenant* is used five times in these verses and He calls it *an everlasting covenant*. God is speaking from His perspective to say, *This will NEVER happen again. The rainbow is the sign of this promise.*

**CLARIFYING GOD’S COVENANTS:**



**WHAT WAS PROMISED?**

**THE PROTECTION OF THE EARTH AND OF ALL LIFE FROM THE DEVASTATION OF ANY FUTURE UNIVERSAL FLOOD.**

**This promise carried the outward sign of a rainbow with it as an assurance of its soundness. This IS an everlasting covenant. It is all about the ability for humanity’s dominion to continue on the earth.**

The first thing God said as Noah and his family came down off the ark was to be fruitful and multiply and have dominion over the earth. He repeats the original promise to Adam and Eve. With this powerful eternal promise, God is verifying why He put man on earth.

This is a big step to understand how God’s covenants work, and we will see how it is a baseline the Scriptures keep bringing us back to.

Covenants are big promises and everlasting covenants are even bigger. Bigger yet is the fact that God, the Creator of all, makes such promises!

**The fact that God makes such powerful promises is more than encouraging.  
What is God’s reason for making such big promises?**

As we are just beginning to see, each of God’s big and everlasting promises builds upon those covenants that went before. The point is, God’s promises are all put in place as steps towards His ultimate goal. What is that goal? The blessing of all the families of the earth. It’s no secret that the next big covenant God made was with Abraham.

**While not initially framed as a “covenant,” this promise had many specifics which would be revealed over time to show its full impact:**

**Genesis 12:1-3:** (His name was originally Abram and later changed to Abraham, as we will read later.) *1 Now 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; 2 And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; 3 and 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 was a huge promise for a 75-year-old man with no children, and he wasn't given a lot of detail. He was to leave his hometown and go to someplace he would be shown. This takes a LOT of faith.

**THE PROMISE:** *Go to an unnamed land, I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and in you ALL others will be blessed.*



There are a lot of important instructions and points in this promise, but they are vague! How would this happen? He was already old. He didn't know where he was going—he didn't even have an address!

**God works with Abram through his obedience, showing him more of the promise:**

**Genesis 13:14-16:** *14 The LORD said to Abram, after (his nephew) Lot had separated from him, Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; 15 for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever. 16 I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth, so that if anyone can number the dust of the earth, then your descendants can also be numbered.*

**THE PROMISE CONTINUES:** The unnamed land is identified and promised forever to Abram and his descendants, who would become a vast nation likened to the dust of the earth.

Even though old with no children, Abram is learning to accept, understand and embrace the promise God is building for him one piece at a time.

That was all in **Genesis 13**. **Genesis 14** records what is sometimes called “The War of the Kings,” a war between five western kings and four eastern kings. Abram helped defeat the four enemy armies of the east who had taken captive inhabitants of Sodom, including his nephew Lot. When Abram returned the captives to the king of Sodom, he was met by Melchizedek, the king and priest of Salem.

**After the War of the Kings:**

**Genesis 15:1:** *After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; your reward shall be very great.*

God speaks to Abram in this vision and reinforces His previous promise of a son. God then tells him in verse 5 to count the stars in the sky, as that's what his descendants would be like. *Dust* and now *stars*—both too innumerable to count.

*Genesis 15:5: And He took him outside and said, Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.*

*And He said to him, So shall your descendants be.*

God verifies Abram's inheritance of the land first promised in **Genesis 13:14-16**. Abram questions how he will know the land is really his and he won't be displaced. God sets up a covenant ceremony as proof.



Remember, the definition of *covenant* comes from a primary word with the sense of cutting because it was made by passing between pieces of flesh. In **Genesis 15:9-10**, God told Abram to kill a heifer, a goat, a ram, a dove and a pigeon. He was to cut them in half, except the birds, and lay the pieces in two rows, leaving a path through the center.

#### **Abraham is in a deep sleep and has a vision:**

**Genesis 15:17-18:** *17 It came about when the sun had set, that it was very dark, and behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces. 18 On that day the LORD made a **covenant** <1285> with Abram, saying, To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates.*

(Source: gotquestions.org) In ancient Near Eastern royal land grant treaties, this type of ritual was done to “seal” the promises made. Through this blood covenant, God was confirming primarily three promises He had made to Abraham: the promise of heirs, of land and of blessings.

Only God “walked” through the animals in a symbolic representation of Himself as the smoking oven and flaming torch. This “Abrahamic Covenant” is another unconditional promise because of God's grace. Abraham was its first recipient.

**THE PROMISE:** God didn't just proclaim this promise; He literally performed the binding actions in a ceremony to seal it. The ceremonial aspect was now completed.

- Abram was given the promise vaguely in **Genesis 12**.
- In **Genesis 13**, it starts to take on form and was repeated, giving him some confidence in it.
- In **Genesis 15**, Abram wants more assurance, as this is not something he ever expected.
- God arranges in a vision for the smoking oven and flaming torch to pass through the pieces of the animals. Abram would have recognized this action which gave him needed encouragement.

The promise is first referred to as a covenant in **Genesis 15:18** and will next be expanded further.

**The next covenant development brings a name change and specific fulfillment verification:**

**Genesis 17:1-8:** *1 Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless.*

**Abram is now 99-years-old. This is 24 years after God’s original promise of a family and land. God says to Abram:**

*2 I will establish My **covenant** <1285> between Me and you, and I will multiply you exceedingly. 3 Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, 4 As for Me, behold, My **covenant** <1285> is with you, and you will be the father of a multitude of nations. 5 No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.*



*6 I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you. 7 I will establish My **covenant** <1285> between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an **everlasting** <5769> **covenant** <1285>, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. 8 I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an **everlasting** <5769> possession; and I will be their God.*

Abraham and Sarah still don’t have children, and yet his name is changed to “father of a multitude”!

**THE PROMISE:** Called by a new name, Abraham will be the father of many nations and first recipient of this everlasting covenant.

**God further develops the covenant with details:**

**Genesis 17:18-22:** *18 And Abraham said to God, Oh that Ishmael might live before You! 19 But God said, No, but Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My **covenant** <1285> with him for an **everlasting** <5769> **covenant** <1285> for his descendants after him. 20 As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I will bless him, and will make him fruitful and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. 21 But My **covenant** <1285> I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this season next year. 22 When He finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham.*

At 99, with no child from his wife, Sarah, Abraham asks God if Ishmael (his son by the concubine, Hagar) can be the promised child. God emphatically says, *No, My covenant will be an everlasting covenant with your son named Isaac, borne by your wife Sarah.*

That's specific! God names the mother and unborn child, and when the child will be born. God is making it clear that this everlasting covenant will be passed on to Isaac, the future son of Sarah. This shows the power when God makes an everlasting covenant! It is not stated haphazardly or halfway. There is no question. Abraham is now absorbing the depth and power of God's promise.



**THE PROMISE:** Isaac will be the promised seed. He will be born the following year and will be the next inheritor of God's everlasting covenant originally made with Abraham. God established the lineage by which this everlasting covenant would be handed down.

Several years later, Abraham shows a willingness to obey God and sacrifice Isaac.

**For his obedience, God reiterates the precious covenant that He made with Abraham:**

**Genesis 22:15-18:** *15 Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, 16 and said, By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18 In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.*




Back in Genesis, God blessed Adam and Eve and told them to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth and subdue it. What is God saying to Abraham here? *I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, now he adds, and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies.* The implication is that through Abraham's seed, the *dominion* will continue. There is a blessing to multiply like Adam and Eve were given. The promise comes through again and again. It is a solid thread that leads us to appreciate God's promises.

**THE PROMISE:** In addition to comparing the descendants like *the sand which is on the seashore*, Abraham is told those descendants will *possess the gate of their enemies*, meaning they will subdue or have control over their enemies.

The Abrahamic Covenant was given piece-by-layered-piece, expanding as time went on throughout Abraham's entire life. This is a beautiful picture of how God works. He is intentional in the way He expands this promise.



**CLARIFYING GOD’S COVENANTS:**



**WHAT WAS PROMISED?**

**THE DEPTH AND POWER OF GOD’S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM WAS ALL ABOUT THE EVERLASTING BLESSING OF THE ENTIRE HUMAN RACE AND THAT BLESSING COMING THROUGH A SPECIFIC LINEAGE.**

*(And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed)*

**Grasping the magnitude of this everlasting promise helps to reveal how God was ever and always planning for eternity. There was no “Plan B”—there was a definitive plan from the very beginning that simply kept unfolding.**

God is from everlasting to everlasting, and we can have confidence in His everlasting promises. Sometimes His everlasting promises are hard to track. Like Abraham, we can think, how could this possibly happen?

**With the magnitude of the Abrahamic Covenant in place, we now need to get to the “how” of the matter. How does God make this work?**

As we have already noted, God’s plans are beyond magnificent. He always has everything in order and is always willing to let “free will” play its part. Our next covenant is a little different than what we have already observed. The Law given to Israel through Moses has several complexities and details, as well as a different approach.

We’ve moved ahead from the book of Genesis into Exodus. The Hebrews are in captivity in Egypt, working as slaves. Moses is born, raised in the palace and gets married, but life is hard for the now millions of slaves and they cry out to God for help.

**God’s deliverance of Israel was squarely built upon His everlasting promise to Abraham so many generations before:**

**Exodus 2:23-25:** *23 Now it came about in the course of those many days that the king of Egypt died. And the sons of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry for help because of their bondage rose up to God. 24 So God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant <1285> with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 25 God saw the sons of Israel, and God took notice of them.*



It was not like God just “remembered” the Israelites were there! It was time for God to move His plan forward to the next step, based on the covenant He had made with Abraham.

We remember the Ten Plagues, and how the last plague was the death of the firstborn. In order to save their own firstborn children and animals, the Hebrews were to take the blood from the Passover lamb and sprinkle it on the doorposts of their homes. This was a sign that this household under the blood of the lamb was to be “passed over;” their firstborn lived. Any without the blood, like the Egyptian households, died. Pharaoh finally let the Hebrews go.

**As God delivered them, the first aspect of their new Law was introduced as the Passover:**

**Exodus 12:14:** *Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a **permanent <5769> ordinance <2708>**.*

Does *permanent* mean never-ending here? Does it mean the Israelites, and perhaps all mankind, will commemorate for the eons of eternity their freedom from Egyptian bondage in the Old Testament? No. See the Summary on page 13.

After Israel was delivered, and Moses received more instructions from God. These would prepare the people to receive the Law. The Law Covenant that would be their guideline on how to live as God’s chosen people in this sinful world.



**Exodus 19:3-6:** *3 Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel: 4 You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself.*

*I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself*—meaning “lifted you up,” or “took you away,” or “exalted you on high,” or “swept you away.” Being lifted up on flying eagles’ wings to our Father’s presence is a picture of great power and grace.

*5 Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My **covenant <1285>**, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; 6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.*

IF you keep my covenant, THEN you shall be my special people and a holy nation. This next covenant then, was conditional upon the people remaining obedient.

After delivering God’s message to the people and the people becoming ritually clean, Moses went back up the mountain and received the Ten Commandments and so much more. We often think of the Law Covenant as being just the Ten Commandments, but there were actually hundreds of parts to the Law. God was teaching the people how to live in covenant relationship with Him.

The Jewish Law Covenant is often referred to as the Levitical Law because the Levite priests administered it. It is also called the Mosaic Law because it was first revealed to Moses, who was from the tribe of Levi. It is also called the Old Testament Law and the Old Covenant to contrast it with the New Covenant. These are all interchangeable terms.



**God begins explaining the Ten Commandments to Moses:**

**Exodus 20:1-3:** *1 Then God spoke all these words, saying, 2 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 3 You shall have no other gods before Me.*

That is the beginning of the Ten Commandments. God finishes them and then goes on for the rest of **Exodus 20** and **21** with a lot of other details of this Law. Moses then comes down from the mountain.

**After presenting all of God’s words to the people and their enthusiastic willingness to obey, Moses built an altar and called for peace offerings to be made to God:**

**Exodus 24:6-8:** *6 Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and the other half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. 7 Then he took the book of the covenant <1285> and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient! 8 So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant <1285>, which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.*

Throughout the Bible, we have seen the consistency of blood sacrifices marking important events which brought humanity toward God. Moses is saying, *This is the blood which seals this incredible promise God has made.* The solemnity of this event cannot be overstated.



With all we have observed regarding the institution of Law Covenant, it is NEVER described as “everlasting.”

**The Sabbath is one important detail of the Law that IS labeled in that way:**

**Exodus 31:15-17:** *15 For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest, holy to the LORD; whoever does any work on the sabbath day shall surely be put to death. 16 So the sons of Israel shall observe the sabbath, to celebrate the sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual <5769> covenant <1285>. 17 It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased from labor, and was refreshed.*



Let's revisit Exodus 12:14 where we read the Passover (which was the beginning of the Law) would be a *permanent ordinance*. Is there a difference between the *permanent ordinance of the Passover* and the *perpetual covenant of the Sabbath*?



*Permanent* and *perpetual* are the exact same Hebrew word. *Ordinance* and *covenant*, however, are different Hebrew words. An ordinance is part of something else whereas a covenant is a standalone feature. Let's look at Psalms to see evidence of this.

**These texts give us a sense of a layered approach to the concept of “everlasting”:**  
**Psalms 119:111-112:** *111 I have inherited Your testimonies forever <5769>, for they are the joy of my heart. 112 I have inclined my heart to perform Your statutes <2706> forever< 5769>, even to the end.*

*I have inherited Your testimonies forever—meaning “perpetually.”*

*I have inclined my heart to perform Your statutes forever—even to the end. Forever, until it ends.*



Remember the definition of everlasting was “to the vanishing point,” to the point where we don't know what happens. It is so far beyond the horizon that we don't know if it keeps going on or not.

There is a subtle difference shown in this Psalm: God's testimonies will never end, but the statutes last until they end, until they are no longer needed. We see this same difference between the “forever” (never-ending) celebration of the Sabbath and the “perpetual” (that which will end with the Law Covenant) following of statutes.

*Statute* is the same Hebrew word as *ordinance*.

**Statute/Ordinance:** Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #2706 *choq*; from #2710; an enactment; hence, an appointment (of time, space, quantity, labor or usage)

The King James Version translates this word as statute 87 times, ordinance 9 times, decree 7 times, due 4 times, law 4 times, portion 3 times, bounds 2 times, custom 2 times, appointed 1 time, commandments 1 time


Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon: 1) statute, ordinance, limit, something prescribed, due 1a) prescribed task 1b) prescribed portion

In modern law, a “statute” is a law that is passed by a legislative body like a state or federal government. An “ordinance” is a law passed by local government, like a city or county. In the Old Testament, these are used somewhat interchangeably, but sometimes the word “statutes” is used regarding practical guidelines for living: such as tithes, war, eating kosher food and so on. “Ordinances” sometimes refer to religious rituals or observances.

**The Aaronic priesthood was established “perpetually” under the Law as a statute:**  
**Exodus 29:7-9:** 7 Then you shall take the anointing oil and pour it on his head and anoint him. 8 You shall bring his sons and put tunics on them. 9 You shall gird them with sashes, Aaron and his sons, and bind caps on them, and they shall have the priesthood by a *perpetual* <5769> *statute* <2708>. So you shall ordain Aaron and his sons.

**Statute:** Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance #2708 *chuqqah*; feminine of #2706, and meaning substantially the same  
 (a different form of the same word we have been discussing)

**Q.** Does this “Aaronic priesthood” really last forever, contradicting Hebrews 7:17,24 that says Jesus is the permanent priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek?

 This seems like a contradiction, but it’s not. Nowhere in Scripture is the Law Covenant labeled an “everlasting covenant” However, within the Law Covenant, some of its statutes and ordinances ARE labeled as everlasting. How do we harmonize this?

A statute is part of “the Law.” Its context is not within eternity, just within the Law itself. Statutes/ordinances can be perpetual until such time the Law it supports ceases or changes. They are “perpetual” within the boundaries of the Law’s existence. However, the Law is NOT labeled as, nor will it be, eternal. When it ends, all of its “perpetual statutes” end.



**Are the Sabbath and the Passover the same or different in perpetuity?**

The Passover was an ordinance/statute within the Law Covenant.

The Sabbath was an everlasting covenant between God and humanity. The Sabbath lasts forever (unending), as it was established by God at creation. It existed before there was a Law—it is independent of the Law.

The Passover was a perpetual statute *within* the Law, and when the Law ends the statute of the Passover will also end. Until that time, it is “perpetual.”

**Q.** Does one side breaking a covenant mean the covenant is null and void? It seems the answer would be “yes” for a conditional covenant. The Law Covenant was conditional upon obedience. And yet we believe the Jewish people today are still under this Covenant. It hasn’t disappeared yet.

 Israel DID break the covenant many times, but that did not end the Law.  
 What does end it? TIMING.

The Law was put in place as an example or standard. Those who followed the Law had a relationship with God. Even though the Jewish nation broke it time and again (the only one who kept it perfectly was Jesus as a perfect man), they are still bound to it today. There will come a time for it to end.

The Solution:  
 God’s timing ends the Law Covenant!



**CLARIFYING GOD'S COVENANTS:**



**WHAT WAS PROMISED?**

**THE LAW COVENANT PROMISED A WAY FOR GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE TO LIVE IN HARMONY WITH HIM. THEY COULD BE FRUITFUL, MULTIPLY AND HAVE DOMINION IF THEY ONLY FOLLOWED GOD'S LAW.**

**God knew they could not, and therefore designed this Law Covenant as an age-lasting but not everlasting covenant.**

God knew the Jewish nation could not fulfill the Law. He designed it with a life expectancy on purpose because the next layer of His plan would be built upon it.

Understanding the Law this way helps us to see how God has always had His plan focused on bringing humanity to eternity.

**Were there any other everlasting covenants from God?  
Were they built upon the Law or some other foundation?**

There were other everlasting covenants God made, and as we shall see, they were solidly built, not upon the Law, but upon the broad and strong foundation of the Abrahamic promise. The next major covenant we will look into is in chronological sequence—the promise to David to have God-honoring royalty come through his lineage.

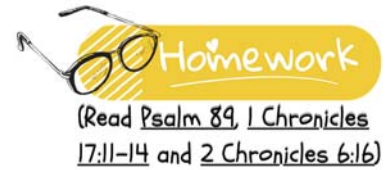
King David was described as a man after God's own heart (**1 Samuel 13:14**). In spite of his many mistakes, he always came back to God's will and His way and was given a powerful promise for that faithfulness.

In **2 Samuel 7:10**, God gave David a message through the prophet Nathan, reiterating the promise of the land first given to Abraham. In **verses 12-13**, God promises David's son Solomon would be king and build the Temple. In **verse 16**, he says, *Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.*

**David refers back to that promise right before he died:**

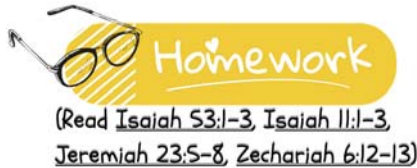
**2 Samuel 23:1-5:** *1 Now these are the last words of David.... 2 The spirit of the LORD spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue. 3 The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me, He who rules over men righteously, who rules in the fear of God, 4 Is as the light of the morning when the sun rises, a morning without clouds, when the tender grass springs out of the earth, through sunshine after rain. 5 Truly is not my house so with God? For He has made an everlasting <5769> covenant <1285> with me, ordered in all things, and secured; For all my salvation and all my desire, will He not indeed make it grow?*

This unconditional, *everlasting covenant* is often called the Davidic Covenant. God promised David that Messiah would come through his lineage and would remain on the throne forever.



The Davidic Covenant is another plainly-stated, everlasting covenant from God. It was given by Nathan and repeated by David, but other prophets verify its power and existence. We will look at two:

- ① **Jeremiah 23:5-6:** *5 Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, When I will raise up for David a righteous branch; And he will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land. 6 In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely; And this is his name by which he will be called, The LORD our righteousness.*



This *righteous branch* is a reference to Jesus as the Messiah. We talked a lot about the “spiritual horticulture” prophecies of Jesus in Episode 1313: How Do We Know Jesus is the Promised Messiah? (Part II)

- ② **Ezekiel expands this even further:**  
**Ezekiel 37:24-25:** *24 My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances (this is a different Hebrew word meaning “judgments”) and keep My statutes <2708> and observe them. 25 They will live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons and their sons' sons, forever; and David My servant will be their prince forever.*

This is a straightforward prophetic utterance that completely supports David’s dying words. *God made an everlasting covenant with me—an everlasting promise that the lineage of Messiah would come through my descendants and last forever.*

It is easy to see how Jesus is the fulfillment for this everlasting covenant. Days before his crucifixion, he was hailed as this king.

**Jesus rode into Jerusalem and the people called him the king of Israel:**

**John 12:12-16:** *12 On the next day the large crowd who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet him, and began to shout, Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the King of Israel. 14 Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written, 15 FEAR NOT, DAUGHTER OF ZION; BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING, SEATED ON A DONKEY'S COLT. 16 These things his disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things to him.*

**How is the everlasting Davidic Covenant implemented? Let's go one verse further: Ezekiel 37:26:** *I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an **everlasting**< 5769> **covenant** <1285> with them. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in their midst forever.*

Here is a reference to yet another *everlasting covenant*.

What is this *covenant of peace* that comes through David's lineage? It is the New Covenant we will study in Part II.

**Let's just take a glimpse:**

**Jeremiah 31:31-32:** *31 Behold, days are coming, declares the LORD, When I will make a new **covenant** <1285> with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 32 not like the **covenant** <1285> which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My **covenant** <1285> which they broke, although I was a husband to them, declares the LORD.*

God promises to make a New Covenant, different from the Old Covenant He made with Israel after He brought them out of Egypt. This New Covenant will be everlasting.

We remember how the Old Law Covenant was broken by the people but not by God. God doesn't break His promises, but the people did. God knew that from the time the Law was given in Exodus until Jesus' times they would break the covenant countless times and made provisions in the Law for their disobedience. He allowed their disobedience to be an eternal teaching tool for Israel and the rest of the world.

**He also used it to point to something much bigger, much better—something permanent:**

**Jeremiah 31:33-34:** *33 But this is the **covenant** <1285> which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD, I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, Know the LORD, for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, declares the LORD, For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.*

What a difference! *I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they will be My people.* Think back to what Israel said when they were given the Law Covenant, *Yes, we will do all that You say.* But just a few weeks later, they built a golden calf! What happened?

The New Covenant will work "from the inside out." *I will write the covenant on their hearts* instead of giving it to them in the book of the Law. This is a completely different approach, and as we will see in Part II, has Jesus as its centerpiece. We will look at this New Covenant and the incredible function, and how it's connected to the rest of God's covenants.




**This covenant is absolutely everlasting and is mediated by Jesus:**

**Hebrews 8:6-8:** *6 But 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. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. 8 For finding fault with them, he says, BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE LORD, WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH.*

If that first covenant had been faultless—did God make a faulty promise? No. The Law provided a standard of righteousness that was needed. But it could not give life because mankind could not keep it perfectly.

Israel's priesthood foreshadowed a greater priesthood to come that would be *the mediator of a better covenant*. The Apostle Paul said it is better because it is established on *better promises*. It shows us the process by which God brings humanity back to Him.

**CLARIFYING GOD'S COVENANTS:**



**WHAT WAS PROMISED?**

**GOD HAD PROMISED A ROYAL LINEAGE THROUGH KING DAVID. THIS LINEAGE WAS ALSO PROMISED TO BE AN EVERLASTING RULERSHIP THROUGH A NEW COVENANT.**

This New Covenant will work on a different basis than the Old Law Covenant, as it would have the advantage of Adamic sin being removed and therefore be able to be written on the hearts of the people. As always, it is all about blessing humanity on earth!

*God's Great Covenants*  
**FOREVER OR FINITE?**

The promise to Adam that mankind would have dominion over the earth	<b>FOREVER!</b>
The Rainbow Covenant with Noah to never again destroy the earth by water	<b>FOREVER!</b>
The Mosaic Law Covenant given to the Israelites in the Old Testament	<b>FINITE!</b>
The Davidic Covenant promising the Messiah to come from David's line, ruling as a priest and king forever	<b>FOREVER!</b>
The New Covenant	<b>LISTEN TO PART II!</b>

God makes promises for reasons. He does not arbitrarily promise this or that to this person or that person, in this time or that time. His promises are all connected to the building of His plan, which was in His mind before the foundation of the earth. Before all creation was started, He knew the process and the plan. He knew the failure and the sin, and He knew how to draw humanity back to the original promise to *fill the earth and subdue it*.

These covenants are all about God bringing humanity back to their intended blessings and relationship with Him.

**So, do the covenants of God all last forever?  
For Rick, Jonathan, Julie and Christian Questions...  
...Think about it!**

*All scriptures cited are from the NASB1995 translation unless otherwise noted.*



## Next episode

Episode 1331:  
Is the New Covenant Different  
From God's Other Covenants?



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## Bonus Material and Study Questions

### Recommended additional study:

#### Ep.1253: How Do I Let Go and Let God?

*The value of God's timing, not ours: lessons from Abraham and Sarah*  
<https://christianquestions.com/character/1253-let-go-and-let-god/>

#### Ep.1164: What Does Moses the Deliverer Teach Us About Jesus?

*Highlighting striking similarities between the lives of Moses and Jesus*  
<https://christianquestions.com/inspiration/1164-moses-jesus/>



Parents and Bible class teachers, continue your studies on this topic with these short, animated videos for kids at ChristianQuestions.com/YouTube:

- Will the earth always be here?

<https://christianquestions.com/cq-videos/videos-cq-kids/will-the-earth-always-be-here/>

- What were the ten plagues of Egypt?

<https://christianquestions.com/cq-videos/videos-cq-kids/video-what-were-the-ten-plagues-of-egypt/>

- What are the Ten Commandments?

<https://christianquestions.com/cq-videos/videos-cq-kids/what-are-the-10-commandments/>

- What was the purpose of the Law in the Old Testament?

<https://christianquestions.com/cq-videos/videos-cq-kids/what-was-the-purpose-of-the-law/>

- Who was David? (Parts 1 and 2)

<https://christianquestions.com/cq-videos/videos-cq-kids/who-was-david-part-1/>

<https://christianquestions.com/cq-videos/videos-cq-kids/who-was-david-part-2/>

The full definitions of the key words from our study:

**Everlasting:** Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #5769 'owlam; properly {concealed} that {is} the vanishing point; generally time out of mind (past or {future}) that {is} (practically) eternity; frequentative adverbially (especially with prepositional prefix) always : - always ({-s}) ancient ({time}) any {more} {continuance} {eternal} ({for} [n-]) ever ({-lasting} {-more} of {old}) {lasting} long ({time}) (of) old ({time}) {perpetual} at any {time} (beginning of the) world (+ without end)

Brown-Driver-Briggs' Lexicon: long duration, antiquity, futurity, for ever, ever, everlasting, evermore, perpetual, old, ancient, world; ancient time, long time (of past); (of future); for ever, always; continuous existence, perpetual; everlasting, indefinite or unending future, eternity

### Just a few examples from the King James Version of the varied uses of this word:

**Exodus 21:6:** *Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever <5769>.*

**Deuteronomy 32:7:** *Remember the days of **old** <5769>, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.*

**Joshua 24:2:** *And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old **time** <5769>, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.*

**1 Samuel 1:22:** *But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide **for ever** <5769>.*

**2 Samuel 12:10:** *Now therefore the sword shall **never** <5769> depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.*

**Nehemiah 2:3:** *And said unto the king, Let the king live **for ever** <5769>: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?*

**Psalms 30:6:** *And in my prosperity I said, I shall **never** <5769> be moved.*

**Psalms 73:12:** *Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the **world** <5769>; they increase in riches.*

**Isaiah 42:14:** *I have long **time** <5769> holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once.*

**Jeremiah 5:15:** *Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the LORD: it is a mighty nation, it is an **ancient** <5769> nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say.*

**Covenant:** Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #1285 *beriyth*; (in the sense of cutting [like 1254]); a compact (a formal agreement) (because made by passing between pieces of flesh)

King James Version translates this word *covenant*; 264 times, league 17 times, confederacy 1 time, confederate 1 time, confederate 1 time

Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon: 1) covenant, alliance, pledge 1a) between men 1a1) treaty, alliance, league (man to man) 1a2) constitution, ordinance (monarch to subjects) 1a3) agreement, pledge (man to man) 1a4) alliance (of friendship 1a5) alliance (of marriage) 1b) between God and man 1b1) alliance (of friendship) 1b2) covenant (divine ordinance with signs or pledges)

**Statute/Ordinance:** Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #2708 *chuqqah*; feminine of #2706, and meaning substantially the same

The King James Version translates this word as statute 77 times, ordinance 22 times, custom 2 times, appointed 1 time, manners 1 time, rites 1 time

Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and Lexicon: 1) statute, ordinance, limit, enactment, something prescribed 1a) statute

**Statute/Ordinance:** Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #2706 *choq*; from #2710; an enactment; hence, an appointment (of time, space, quantity, labor or usage)

The King James Version translates this word as statute 87 times, ordinance 9 times, decree 7 times, due 4 times, law 4 times, portion 3 times, bounds 2 times, custom 2 times, appointed 1 time, commandments 1 time

Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon: 1) statute, ordinance, limit, something prescribed, due 1a) prescribed task 1b) prescribed portion 1c) action prescribed (for oneself), resolve 1d) prescribed due 1e) prescribed limit, boundary 1f) enactment, decree, ordinance 1f1) specific decree 1f2) law in general 1g) enactments, statutes 1g1) conditions 1g2) enactments 1g3) decrees 1g4) civil enactments prescribed by God

### A partial list of “forever/perpetual” statutes of the Old Testament Law:

Passover/Feast of Unleavened Bread (Exodus 12:14, 17, 24)  
 Tending of the priestly lamp (Exodus 27:21)  
 Priestly clothes (Exodus 28:43)  
 Ritual washing (Exodus 30:21)  
 Don't eat fat or blood (Leviticus 3:17)  
 Priestly prohibition of wine and strong drink (Leviticus 10:9)  
 Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:29, 31, 34; 23:31)  
 Peace offerings (Leviticus 17:7)  
 Feast of Firstfruits (Leviticus 23:14)  
 Feast of Weeks (Leviticus 23:21)  
 Feast of Booths (Leviticus 23:41)  
 The showbread (Leviticus 24:3, 8-9)  
 Manner of sacrifices (Numbers 15:15)  
 Ritual impurity (Numbers 19:21)

### A list of scriptures (King James Version) using the phrase *everlasting covenant*:

**Genesis 17:13:** *He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.*

**Genesis 17:19:** *And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.*

**Leviticus 24:8:** *Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant.*

**2 Samuel 23:5:** *Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.*

**1 Chronicles 16:17:** *And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an **everlasting covenant**,*

**Psalms 105:10:** *And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an **everlasting covenant**:*

**Isaiah 24:5:** *The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the **everlasting covenant**.*

**Isaiah 55:3:** *Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an **everlasting covenant** with you, even the sure mercies of David.*

**Isaiah 61:8:** *For I the LORD love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an **everlasting covenant** with them.*

**Jeremiah 32:40:** *And I will make an **everlasting covenant** with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.*

**Ezekiel 16:60:** *Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an **everlasting covenant**.*

**Ezekiel 37:26:** *Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an **everlasting covenant** with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.*

**Hebrews 13:20:** *Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the **everlasting covenant**.*

# Study QUESTIONS

## Ep.1330: Do the Covenants of God All Last Forever?

See:



<https://christianquestions.com/doctrine/1330-covenants/>

1. What is the definition of “covenant” and of “everlasting?” What is a “vanishing point”?
2. **Adam and Eve:** What was God’s promise to Adam and Eve? Genesis 1:28
3. **Noah – Noahic or Rainbow Covenant:**
  - a. What was God’s promise to Noah?
  - b. How does it connect with God’s promise to Adam and Eve?
  - c. What is God verifying through this covenant? (Genesis 9:1-2)
4. **Abram – Abrahamic Covenant:** The layered building of the Abrahamic Covenant
  - a. What was the original promise given to Abram? (Genesis 12:1-3)
  - b. How did the promise continue? (Genesis 13:14-16)
  - c. What was added in Genesis 15:5?
  - d. How was this promise confirmed and “sealed?” (Genesis 15:17-18)
  - e. Why was Abram’s name change to Abraham significant? How does God describe the duration of this covenant? After Abraham, who inherited this covenant with God? (Genesis 17:1-8, 18-22)
  - f. God reiterated His covenant with Abraham after he demonstrated his obedience through his willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac. How did this echo the promise to Adam and Eve? (Genesis 22:15-18)
5. **Israel – Law Covenant:** What are the various names of this covenant?
  - a. What was the first aspect of Israel’s new Law? (Exodus 2:23-25, chapter 11, 12:14)
  - b. How do we know this covenant was “conditional?” What were the conditions? (Exodus 19:3-6)
  - c. In what way was this covenant sealed? (Exodus 24:6-8)
  - d. Explain the difference between a permanent ordinance (or statute) like the Passover and a perpetual covenant like the Sabbath. Be detailed, there is a lot of information here. More in Part II! (Exodus 12:14, 31:15-17)
  - e. How could the Law Covenant be conditional upon obedience, yet the Jewish people (though disobedient many times through the ages) are still considered to be under this covenant?
6. **David – Davidic Covenant:**
  - a. What were the terms of the Davidic Covenant? (2 Samuel 7:10-16, 23:1-5)
  - b. Who was Jeremiah 23:5-6 and Ezekiel 37:24-25 talking about? (John 12:12-16)
  - c. How is the everlasting Davidic Covenant implemented? (Ezekiel 37:26)
7. **World of Mankind – New Covenant:**
  - a. What is the “covenant” of peace that comes through David’s lineage? (Jeremiah 31:31-34)
  - b. Why will the New Covenant work where the Old Covenant failed? (Jeremiah 31:33, Hebrews 8:6-8) (More in Part II!)
8. What is the purpose of all of God’s covenants with man? What has God promised you? What are you doing with those promises?