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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE ABRAHAMIC
AND DAVIDIC COVENANTS

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of
Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Theology

by
Ruth Anna Oman
August 1955
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE ABRAHAMIC AND DAVIDIC COVENANTS

A Study in English Bible

by

Ruth Anna Oman

Major Subject: Biblical Literature

Approved:

First Reader: Dr. George Allen Turner

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Into a world despairing of sin and death came the promise of life and hope through a Redeemer. The first indication of hope was the promise related in the garden of Eden when man sinned and lost the divine favor and fellowship with God. The promise became a reality when God selected a small and insignificant nation to be His Chosen People. Israel, or the Chosen People, now became significant as the medium of God’s revelation; and it was through a garnered and faithful remnant of Israel that the promise of the Messiah became a reality. From this covenant background and foundation came the Christian Church with its unique position as the Chosen People of God.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The central purpose of this study will be to make an investigation of the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants, attempting to point out similarities and contrasts by a comparative study of the two covenants; and to survey the Covenant of Jeremiah as it anticipates the fulfillment of both the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants in the New Covenant.
Importance of the study. In the realm of Old Testament study there has been no subject so important as the covenant idea. God's revealed will for man through the plan of salvation was presented in the form of the covenant. The covenant idea also points out the unique position of the church as the chosen people of God. The Christian Church was founded upon the significance of the New Covenant, which originated in the covenant with Abraham.

It was through the covenant form that God's revelation was given to man. The teaching concerning God's lovingkindness and faithfulness seems to be more clearly revealed in the covenant history than elsewhere. The idea of mutuality in the covenant relationship with the elements of both demand and promise were emphatically presented.

The fact that the two divisions of the Bible are named from the concept that the relationship between God and man was established by a covenant, emphasizes its importance.

Justification of the study. The justification for a study of the covenants is based upon the following factors:

1. The predominance of the covenant idea in the Old Testament.

2. The recurring factor among the Israelites, of breaking the covenant relationship and the resulting punishment and captivity.
3. The influence of the covenant idea upon the prophetic message.

4. An interest in finding information concerning the covenants, and the absence of other comparative studies of the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants.

II. METHOD OF PROCEDURE

Method of procedure. The general method of procedure will be an investigation of the original sources in the Old Testament and a consideration of other secondary sources. The American Standard Version will be the basis of the quotations given. It will be the express aim of the study to relate an account that is both descriptive and historical.

The inductive method will be applied to the term berith in the original language and to the usage of the word, covenant, in the Old Testament.

Heschel's concept of pathos and sympathy will be applied to the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants for a comparative study of the emotional interactions between God, Abraham and David.

Tables of the major Scripture passages of the Abrahamic, the Davidic, and the Covenant with Jeremiah present the basic features in a comparative study of the original covenants with their confirmations and amplifications.

The specific method of procedure will be a discussion
of the primitive origins of covenants, an investigation of the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants, and a comparative study of the two covenants. There will be a survey of the renewal and prophecy of the New Covenant, and the final summary and conclusion of the study.

**Limitation of the subject.** This paper is not an exhaustive study of the historical covenants recorded in the Old Testament, but it is confined predominately to the Abrahamic, the Davidic, and the Covenant with Jeremiah. Reference to the Sinai Covenant is limited and related for the purpose of contrast to the New Covenant. Only a brief survey will be made of the New Covenant in relation to its fulfillment of the preceding redemptive covenants.

This is not an exhaustive study of all the Scriptures referring to the covenants, but it is limited to the major passages. Completeness will not be attainable in regard to the fulfillment of the covenant prophecies, and only the most important will be discussed.

There will be no attempt to systematize the theology of the covenants, and no effort will be made to give a chronology of the historical covenants or related events.
CHAPTER II

THE MEANING OF COVENANT

For a better acquaintance of the covenant idea in the Old Testament, and more particularly with the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants, a knowledge of the general and specific meanings of the word is necessary. After the general meaning of the covenant has been defined, the idea will be determined by usage of the terminology. The term berith will be defined from its usage in the original language. The original sources which will be used are: Hebrew Lexicon,¹ Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament,² Concordance to the Septuagint,³ and Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament.⁴ The meaning will be given in other translations and the vocabulary will be traced in its usage in the translation of the Old Testament. The origin of covenants will be discussed in regard to the main theories of the


³ Edwin Hatch and Henry Redpath, Concordance to the Septuagint (Graz-Austria: Akademische Druck - U., 1954), I.

covenants.

General meaning. The general meaning of a covenant is an agreement of a solemn and binding force entered into between individuals, between tribes or nations, or between men with God for a special purpose. In its strict English sense, it means an agreement under seal, that something has or has not already been accomplished or shall or shall not be accomplished hereafter.5

Covenants in general involve at least two parties who are free moral agents and who acquiesce regardless of the mutuality of the engagement. The relationship formed in the covenant is always friendly and at least one of the members is always benefited. Another characteristic of a covenant is that it results in a new relationship between the members which had not previously existed.

The covenant generally implies faithfulness to the object of the covenant without thought of producing kinship, mutual identity, or a conditional curse. Both the time and purpose are not definitive as it may be entered into for either a limited or unlimited time, and for clearly defined or indefinite purposes.

Vocabulary. The Hebrew word berith has the meaning of a "covenant," a "league," or an "agreement." It is derived from the verb karat meaning "to cut" which has the significance of cutting up and distributing the flesh of the victim for eating in the sacrifice of the covenant. This formal ceremony of ratification in the cases of covenants between men uses the phrase karat berith in every instance except two in the Old Testament. Both Jeremiah 44:18 and Genesis 15:9 convey the idea that the sacrificed victim was cut in pieces and on concluding the covenant, the contracting parties passed between these parts, showing that they were bound together. However, in Genesis 15:9 it is to be noted that only God, represented by a smoking furnace and a flaming torch passed between these pieces.

In the Hebrew simple form, the verb karat means "to cut," but in the intensive form it means "to eat." It is derived from the idea of cutting and an example of the word barah is found in II Samuel 12:17 where David refused to eat because of his child's illness. From the root of barah Lee suggests that the correct signification of the word is "an eating together," or a "banquet," because among the Orientals, to eat together amounts almost to a covenant of friendship. This idea is supported by Genesis 31:46 where Jacob and Laban ratify the covenant, which they have made by eating together on the heap of stones. This also explains the expression "a cov-

The secondary meaning of the verb barah in the intensive form is "to choose," which has the idea of cutting and separating as in I Samuel 17:6 where Goliath challenged the Israelites to choose a man to fight against him.

Berry suggests that berith may be connected with the Assyrian word biritu since the etymological force of berith is not quite certain and the Assyrio-Babylonian is the only cognate language in which the word is found. Biritu has the common meaning of "fetter," but also means "alliance, covenant, firmness, and solidity."

The derived word, fetter, conveys the meaning of "restraint or enchainment, a bond, firmness, and solidity." Fetters were placed upon a conquered enemy not only to hold him but to signify his captivity. A fettered rival might become an ally through enforced subordination. This term was also given to an alliance in which the binding decrees were the result of a mutual decision. The idea of firmness was shown by the fact that a fettered house was considered a firmly built house. A fettered place was one which was surrounded by solid walls.

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The significance of the root word of bīritu is not definitely established but the probable meaning is "to bind," which would convey the idea that the covenant is that which binds together. Concerning this Berry says:

The meaning of bīritu as "covenant" seems to come directly from the root, rather than as a derived meaning from fetter. If this root idea is to bind, the covenant is that which binds together the parties. But the word, bind, would express the various usages of berith more nearly, for the term is used where two individuals bind themselves reciprocally. It is also used where one imposes a bond upon the other, or assumes the bond upon himself.

Turning to some of the languages of the East, the same thought is conveyed where the root idea of the word is "to bind"--as a covenant binds. The common Hebrew word asar signifies "to bind together"--as applied to a covenant. In the Arabic, the word asara means "to bind;" asar, "a covenant," or "a compact;" and aswar, "a bracelet;" which may be considered a band. The Syriac gives the word esar meaning "a bond." All have the same root idea of binding as a covenant binds.

The meaning of berith in other translations. The Greek translation of berith is ordinarily diathēka. Thayer relates that the word diathēka is very often used in the Scripture for

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7 Ibid.
berith and is used to denote the close relationship which God entered into, first with Noah but especially with Abraham. The prevailing meaning of berith in the New Testament and in some of the main sources of Jewish literature was diathēke meaning "covenant."  

**Old Testament usage of berith.** According to Brown, Driver, and Briggs, berith meaning "covenant," is translated in the Old Testament with various meanings. When berith is applied to a covenant with men, the first meaning is "treaty,"

---

8 The Septuagint translators render the Hebrew berith as diathēke, which means a "compact" or a "covenant." It is translated nearly three hundred times in the Greek Old Testament conveying the meaning of "covenant," while sunthēke and entolē are used only once. The word sunthēke implies that the covenant is mutual while entolē would convey the idea that the covenant which God makes with men is not fully mutual.

The Apocryphal writers frequently used only the word diathēke as meaning "covenant," and the Alexandrian translators made the deliberate choice of diathēke because of their consciousness of the basic meaning of berith.

In the New Testament diathēke is used at least thirty times in the sense of "covenant" with the exception of Hebrews 9:15-17 where it may be translated as "testament" in the sense of a will. Here Christ is likened to a testator and it may be for this reason that the Latin Vulgate inaccurately rendered diathēke as testamentum. The Revised Standard Version of the New Testament translated diathēke as "covenant" with "testament" in the margin but the American Revised Version prefers that the word "testament" be changed to "covenant" without a marginal reading with the exception of Hebrews 9:15-17. Cf. Hatch and Redpath, op. cit.; Thayer, op. cit., p. 136; David Estes, "Covenant," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (second edition), V, 729.
"alliance," or "league" and the American Standard Version renders it as "covenant" thirty-one times, "confederate" two times, and "league" six times. It is also translated with the meaning of "constitution" or "ordinance" between monarchs and subjects; and in this sense the word, covenant, is used nine times, and league, two times. The third meaning is "agreement," or "pledge;" and is translated "covenant" four times, "Baal-berith" two times, and "El-berith" once. Another meaning is "alliance of friendship" such as between David and Jonathan and is translated three times as "covenant." It also has the meaning of "alliance of marriage," and in this sense is translated twice as "covenant."

_Berith_ is also applied to a covenant between God and man, and the first meaning is "alliance of friendship" and is translated as "covenant." The second meaning is a "covenant, as a divine constitution or ordinance with signs or pledges."

The first covenant was with Noah where a divine promise was given that there would be no other deluge and is translated as "covenant" twelve times. The next covenant was with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which was a promise of multiplying their seed, giving them the land of Canaan, and making them a blessing to the nations. In these contexts the English word, covenant, is used sixteen times.

The covenant with Israel at Sinai was a divine constitu-
tion given with promises on condition of obedience and penalties for disobedience. Berith refers to the covenant forty-seven times, the word of the covenant seven times, the book of the covenant five times, the blood of the covenant twice, the salt of the covenant once, the tables of the covenant three times, and the ark of the covenant five times.

The word, covenant, is mentioned six times in the covenant with Phinehas in which an everlasting priesthood in his line was established. A covenant was made with Joshua and Israel in which there was an agreement to serve Yahweh only. The word, covenant, is mentioned six times in the oracle in which the divine promise was given to David concerning an everlasting kingdom. It is used twice with Jehoiada and the people in a constitutional agreement to be the people of Yahweh. A covenant was made with Hezekiah and the people to reform the worship. The covenant is mentioned three times when Josiah and the people made an agreement to obey the book of the covenant. The word, covenant, is used when Ezra and the people made an agreement to put away foreign wives and observe the law. The word, covenant, is used twenty-three times and betroth, once in the prophetic covenant; which is a divine promise given through a series of prophets to establish a new constitution.

When used with phrases, the first meaning is "covenant-
making" and the word, covenant, is used thirty-three times, book of the covenant once, establish once, and betroth once. It is used thirteen times to establish a covenant and ten times to confirm a covenant and once as an oath. Covenant is used fifty times in reference to God keeping a covenant, with the covenant of salt being used once, and with covenant-keeping with man, covenant is used eleven times. It is also used thirty-nine times in reference to covenant violation.

In conclusion of the Old Testament usage of berith, it is noted that berith is translated approximately three hundred and twenty-nine times as covenant, twice as the covenant of salt, seven times as the word of the covenant, once as establish, three times as the tables of covenant, twice as confederate, six times as the book of the covenant, eight times as league, twice as betroth, once as oath, twice as Baal-berith, and once as El-berith.

The covenant in the Old Testament was modified considerably from the original ideas of a covenant. Both the covenant and sacrificial ideas of the Hebrew religion had to be established on ground which possessed these older beliefs and usages. Behind the religion of the Old Testament lies the unconscious religious tradition or that concept of religious usage and belief which was a part of the successive generations of the Semites. The Hebrew religion could not begin a new
system entirely without contact with the older ideas and practices—a religion must find audience by appealing to religious instincts which already exist. In order to understand the covenant idea of the Old Testament, it is necessary to go back to the earliest ideas of the covenant among men.

Covenant among men. There are various types of covenants and the first to be considered is one in which both contrasting parties are men. In going back to the most ancient conceptions, it is noted that they are not exclusively owned by the Hebrews, but communal with a group of kindred people. The kindred nations or Semites included the Arabs, the Hebrews, the Phoenicians, the Arameans, the Babylonians, and the Assyrians. Concerning the Semites, Smith relates:

The choice of this term (Semites) was originally suggested by the tenth chapter of Genesis, in which most of the nations of the group with which we are concerned are represented as descended from Shem the son of Noah. But though modern historians . . . have borrowed a name from the book of Genesis, it must be understood that they do not define the Semitic group as coextensive with the list of nations that are reckoned to the children of Shem. Most recent interpreters are disposed to regard the classification of families of mankind given in Genesis X as founded on principles geographical or political rather than ethnographical.


Among the indirect criteria of kinship between nations, the most obvious, and the one which has hitherto been most carefully studied, is the criterion of language; for it is observed that the languages of mankind form a series of natural groups, and that within
each group it is possible to arrange the several languages which it contains in what may be called a genealogical order, according to degrees of kinship. As a rule, therefore, the classification of mankind by language, at least when applied to large masses, will approach pretty closely to a natural classification; and in a large proportion of cases the language of a mixed race will prove on examination to be that of the stock whose blood is predominant.9

The early Semitic idea of a covenant seems to be that which prevailed among the Arabs.

The earliest covenant existing among the Arabs was the primitive rite of blood-covenanting. This rite seems to go back to the origin of religious rites among human beings or to the threshold rite which refers to life and its transmission. From the beginning blood has been referred to as the representative of life, or in a sense as life itself, so that the transference of blood has been counted as the transference of life. The inter-commingling of blood by its inter-transference has been considered as an inter-commingling of natures, thus forming one nature, one life, or one soul. Concerning the inter-commingling of natures, Trumbull relates:

The inter-commingling of natures by the inter-commingling of blood has been deemed possible between man and a lower organism,—even between man and Deity, actually or by symbol—as well as between man and his immediate fellow.10


The primitive rite of blood-covenanting was a form of mutual covenanting called blood-brotherhood in which two men became brothers through the inter-commingling of their blood. The inter-commingling of their blood was brought about by means of mutual tasting, or of its inter-transfusion. Trumbull relates an incident of the rite of the covenant of blood as it was described to him by a native Syrian who saw it performed in a village at the foot of the Lebanon mountains:

It was two young men, who were to enter into this covenant. They had known each other, and had been intimate for years, but now they were to become brother-friends, in the covenant of blood. Their relatives and neighbors were called together, in the open place before the village fountain, to witness the sealing compact. The young men publicly announced their purpose, and their reasons for it. Their declarations were written down, in duplicate,—one paper for each friend,—and signed by themselves, and by several witnesses. One of the friends took a sharp lancet, and opened a vein in the other's arm. Into the opening thus made, he inserted a quill, through which he sucked the living blood. The lancet-blade was carefully wiped on one of the duplicate covenant-papers, and then it was taken by the other friend, who made a like incision in its first user's arm, and drank his blood through the quill, wiping the blade on the duplicate covenant-record. The two friends declared together, 'We are brothers in a covenant made before God; who deceiveth the other, him will God deceive.' Each blood-marked covenant-record was then folded carefully, to be sewed up in a small leathern case, or amulet, about an inch square; to be worn thenceforward by one of the covenant-brothers, suspended about the neck, or bound upon the arm, in token of the indissoluble relation. 11

This covenant is the most extreme and sacred of all the blood

11 Ibid. pp. 5-6.
covenants and it formed a union stronger than marriage and
could not be dissolved. It was ordinarily between two persons
of the same religion although it has occurred between two men
of different religions and in such instances was considered a
closer tie than birth or sect. In this covenant is the idea
that by drinking the blood of someone else, a man absorbed the
nature of the life of the other person into his own life. Con-
cerning this, Smith says:

It lies at the root of the widespread practice of
drinking the fresh blood of enemies—a practice which
was familiar to certain tribes of the Arabs before Mo-
hammed, and which tradition still ascribes to the wild
race of Cahtan and also of the habit observed by many
savage huntsmen of eating some part (e.g. the liver) of
dangerous carnivora, in order that the courage of the
animal may pass into them.  

The covenant of blood-brotherhood ordinarily signified
that one member was adopted into the clan of the other, thus,
involving both clans as well as the god of both clans. In
this early rite, the religious element was always present for
the god of the clan was always interested in protecting the
kindred blood. An example of the clan covenant where human
blood was used was that which was prevalent among the Arabs
near Egypt:

Blood was drawn with a sharp stone from the thumbs of
each party, and smeared on seven sacred stones with invo-
vocations of the gods. The smearing makes the gods

parties to the covenant, but evidently the symbolical act is not complete unless at the same time the human parties taste each other's blood.13

The purpose of this rite was to admit an individual stranger into fellowship with an Arab clansman and his kin; thus, the covenant was binding because it was known that when the stranger has drunk a clansman's blood, he was no longer a stranger but a brother and included in the mystic circle of the clan who share in the life-blood. Concerning the obligations of the tribe, Jevons relates in part:

Blood-brotherhood is not a relationship personal to the two parties alone, but extends to the whole of each clan. Thus in this the most primitive form of society, men were divided into clans or tribes; these tribes were usually hostile to one another, but might by means of the blood-covenant make alliance with one another. If the individual kinsman slew a stranger, the whole kin were responsible; if he was slain by a stranger, they all required satisfaction. If the individual kinsman made a blood-covenant with a stranger, the whole of each tribe was bound thereby.14

In the earliest and simplest form, the covenant was not primarily a special obligation to a particular effect, but rather it was a bond of troth and life-fellowship to all that which kinsmen are permanently bound together.

Another form of the blood covenant which has been re-

13 Smith, loc. cit.

lated by the ancient Arabic literature was that which employed the use of a victim slain at a sanctuary instead of the use of human blood. In this ritual the members of the covenant were required to dip their hands into the blood, which was also applied to sacred stones representing deity or it was poured forth at the base. The dipping of the hands into the blood, represents "communion in an act of eating" and the members of this covenant were thus called "blood-lickers." In this instance the blood of an animal was used, which seemed to imply a progress in refinement and an aversion to the human blood, but this primitive form of the blood covenant has survived into modern times in some places.

Later the more primitive and natural method of commingling bloods in the blood covenants were in many places superseded by the symbolic means of washing, sprinkling, or anointing with blood. And as the blood of animals was substituted for human blood, so blood commingled with wine was used for mutual drinking in the covenant-rite and later represented by wine alone. Herodotus referred to the same rite of mingled blood and wine when he described an Oriental rite of blood-covenanting in 5 B. C.

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15 Herodotus, Persian Wars, Vol. I of The Greek Historians, ed. Francis B. Godolphin, 2 vols.; New York: Random House, 1942, p. 250. "Oaths among the Scyths are accompanied with the following ceremonies: a large earthen bowl is filled with wine, and the parties to the oath, wounding themselves slightly with a knife or an awl, drop some of their blood into the wine; ... all the while repeating prayers; lastly, the two contracting parties drink each a draught from the bowl."
Festus, a Latin writer of the second Christian century, referred also to this rite when he reported a certain kind of drink called "assiratum," which was mingled blood and wine.

Later, the simple wine or "the blood of grapes" represented the blood and wine in many forms of covenanting. In Genesis 49:11 Jacob prophesied concerning Judah and mentioned wine and the blood of grapes. The song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32:14 reads, "And of the blood of the grape thou drankest wine." This mutual drinking, especially as a covenant pledge, has continued even down to the present day.

The common meal. Another outward sign of the covenant was the common meal in which there was the idea that the mutual eating established a bond of union. Apart from the theoretic view, which maintained that the covenant-state was automatically produced when unrelated persons ate together, there is the natural basis that wherever men eat and drink together, there is a tendency to be friendly. There are many cases where a covenant was sealed by the members eating or drinking together. In some instances according to Soper, the worship of the early Semitic clan was the renewal of the blood-bond, succeeded by a common meal, the god participating with his worshippers in the festivities.

Smith related that the origin of the common meal extended back beyond the most ancient Semites to the primitive Arabian society and other ancient societies. The sacrificial meal was considered an expression of ideal religious life, not only because it was a social act and an act in which the god and his worshippers were commensals, but because the act of eating and drinking with someone was a confirmation of fellowship and of mutual obligations. It would seem that those who ate together then, were united for all social effects; while those who did not were aliens to one another without reciprocal social duties. Smith believed that the extent of this view among the Arabs and the ancient Semites may be clearly seen by their law of hospitality. The value of the Arabian evidence was that they do not stress the actual food itself but the physical act of eating together.

But the root of the matter lies in the nature of the fellowship which was created when men ate or drank together. In the Old Testament, the sacrament of a common meal was for the purpose of sealing engagements which were absolute and in-

17 Smith, op. cit., p. 269.

18 Ibid., pp. 269-270. The Arabian law of hospitality is that if a stranger has eaten food with a man, he is bound not to harm him and is under obligation to defend him. It is considered a temporary bond confirmed by repetition and finally becoming a permanent tie sealed by an oath.
In most primitive society there was only one kind of fellowship which was absolute and inviolable. It was that fellowship in which the primitive man's life was held sacred and it would be absurd for him to enter into a covenant relationship with anyone outside of this circle. This circle corresponded somewhat to that of the circle of kinship as it was a circle which was also answerable for the life of each of the members.

Among other forms of covenants was the covenant of salt. An example of this is found in the Old Testament where David received his kingdom from Jehovah forever by a covenant of salt. The early Arabian expression was, "There is salt between us;" and "He has eaten of my salt," which meant that when they ate together they became friends or their friendship was cemented. Later covenants were confirmed by the sacrificial meal and salt was always present. There was also the idea that salt is a preservative and would indicate an enduring covenant.

There are various covenants or symbolizations of covenants by artificial means other than the blood covenants, the common meal, the covenant of salt, or eating and drinking together, such as the exchange of names, the exchange of articles belonging to the covenant members, and the exchanging of handclasps, but in all these there was the same idea—the community of life which was a result of the covenant.
Theories of the significance of the covenant. There are three main theories as to the purpose of the covenants. The first theory, which was the primitive purpose of the covenant was to produce kinship or blood relationship. But the evidence does not seem to support this view as it did not produce kinship among the lowest races and the covenant was generally between individuals, representatives, or tribes and the result was not ordinarily kinship or blood-relationship.

The second theory was that the covenant relationship produced identity of individuals. The blood-covenant was an example of this where they are mutually inoculated by certain ritual actions. This produced not only identity of aims and interests, but mutual agreement and sympathy. Crawley supported this view when he said:

Each has a part of the other in his keeping, and this part not only assimilates each to the other by transmission of properties, but is a pledge, deposit, and hostage. Thus identity of interests is secured, and the possibility of mutual treachery or wrong is prevented, not only by the fact that injury done to B and A is equivalent to injury done by A to himself, but also by the fact that, if B is wronged, he may work vengeance by injuring . . . the part of A which he possesses.19

But it is maintained that if the relationship of the covenant produced identity of aims and interests, then the aims and interests of the individual would belong to the kin also.

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The third theory was that the ritual act served as a means of conditional imprecations if the covenant was broken. In many cases, the food, drink, or blood was itself the oath or curse, or was considered the vehicle of either. It was therefore possible that the primitive covenant may have contained both the idea of mutual identity and of a conditional curse but the covenant many times implied only faithfulness to the object of the covenant.

**Theories of the historical origins of the covenant.**
Most authors are agreed that there is a complexity within the thought of a covenant from its primitive origins and that one special theory does not give a complete interpretation of all the various covenants in the Old Testament. In order to understand the idea of a covenant, it is necessary to go back beyond the Hebrew concept to the older traditional religions of the primitive nations. This does not mean that the Hebrew religion was found in the culture and practice of the surrounding people, but rather that the Hebrews did not receive divine commands or ordinances at a specific historical time entirely foreign to their background culture. A predominate historical theory, which has already been related, was that the covenant idea originated in the primitive Semitic people. The prevailing idea of the covenant of the Semites was that which existed among the Arabs.
Another theory which has been given considerable emphasis was the Canaanite. The Canaanites were Semitic neighbors of the Hebrews and they were ultimately fused with the Hebrews. The theory set forth the idea that a part of the Hebrew religion was borrowed from the Canaanite culture. The Hebrews contested the possession of Canaan for centuries; but in the process, they absorbed part of their culture.

The third theory was that the covenant idea has been borrowed from the same sources as the Hittite covenants. Mendenhall stated that the Hittites themselves did not originate the covenant idea, but that it was borrowed from earlier Mesopotamian sources—it could therefore, have been an international form. He opposed the primitive Arab theory on the grounds that the nomadic groups of the Patriarchal culture differed from the Arab camel-nomadic culture.

The supernatural theory was that the covenant idea was divinely ordained by Jehovah. It originated with Jehovah and the covenant rite was introduced to the Hebrews through divine revelation.

Covenants between God and men. The second class of covenants were those between God and men, and it was assumed

that the ideas associated with the divine covenants have been derived from the covenants between men. However, it was more than just a compact between two members on the basis of certain mutual agreements—it was a covenant in which God, the superior, related a divine ordinance with signs and seals on God's part, in which certain promises were conditioned on man's obedience and penalties for disobedience, which was accepted by man. A covenant between God and men also involved the Hebrew word *chesed* which means "love" and "loyalty" when used of covenant in general. When it is used with the covenant between Jehovah and Israel, Snaith\(^\text{21}\) believes it refers both to the firm faithfulness of God, and of the fitful faithfulness of Israel—when the word is used of God, it means primarily, "determined faithfulness to a covenant."

Fallow\(^\text{22}\) would define God's covenant with man as "a gracious engagement on the part of God to communicate certain unmerited favors to men, in connection with a particular constitution or system, through means of which these favors are to be enjoyed.


Summary. In this chapter the general meaning of the covenant has been defined as a solemn and binding agreement entered into between individuals, nations, or between God and men for a special purpose. The term berith has been defined from its usage in the original language and in other translations. The vocabulary for berith was traced in its usage in the translation of the Old Testament. Four of the main theories of the historical origins of the covenant have been discussed with special emphasis upon the primitive Arabic covenants. The theories concerning the significance of the covenants have been related as the production of blood relationship, identity of individuals, and conditional imprecations. The two classes of covenants, covenants between men, and between God and men have been defined; and we shall now turn to the Abrahamic Covenant, which is classified as a covenant between God and man.
CHAPTER III

ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

The covenant of God with Abraham is considered to be one of the important revelations of God and it not only furnishes a key to the Old Testament but it is one of the foundation stones of the New Testament. The history of the salvation of Israel began with the covenant with Abraham. It, along with the Davidic and the New Covenant, comprised the covenants which have determined the course and destiny of Israel. It will be the purpose of this chapter to relate the conditions, the purpose, the promises, and the ratification of the Abrahamic Covenant.

In the Scripture the Israelitish state was regarded as a religious community, or as it is sometimes called, the Kingdom of God. It embraced the history of both the fortunes and the vicissitudes of the Israelites in their relation to God.

While Israel was the people of God and it was only through the Scriptures that she was considered such, yet it was only through its external form that its existence as God's people was revealed. This external form was not like a Church of God, but it was a form in which the community of God then existed. The nationalistic aspect of their religion may have been caused by the surrounding idolatrous world in which it
might have been advantageous to uphold the side of truth, patriotism, honour, and national self-consciousness, in order to guard the truth. The religion of the Semitic nations was particularistic, which may have also influenced God's revelation of Himself to Israel.

The characteristic of the Old Testament Church was that the truth revealed and the life manifested had both a concrete and external form which were partly national and partly ritual. The life and truth had a cosmical form and were not strictly spiritual. This symbolized religion existed from the beginning of the Israelite history until the time of Christ. Although Israel knew the symbolisms had a general future reference yet they were sufficient to explain the meaning of practices and the life demanded of them. It was thus through the framework of the covenant that Israel received the fundamental redemptive idea or their general consciousness of salvation.

The covenant with Abraham introduced a new epoch in the Old Testament revelation and was the formal establishment of the covenant of Grace. The covenant with Noah contained only natural blessings while this was a special covenant which was elevated from a natural relation to a moral and religious one. It was a relationship in which the God of the whole world became the God of Abraham and his descendants.

**Purpose of the Abrahamic Covenant.** The general purpose
of the covenant seemed to involve both God and man. Man forfeited the divine favor of God by his apostasy and not only lost the divine image but incurred the penalty of death. God was moved by compassion for man, which He had created and who was now in a lost condition. He determined to send His Son into the world to assume human nature and the requisites for their salvation. It was upon this ground—the salvation of men through the redeeming work of Christ, that the covenant with Abraham was inaugurated.

The question as to why God chose Abraham or the Israelite nation seems to be found in His unconditional sovereign love. Snaith\(^1\) said that God's ahab (the election-love of God) for Israel was the very basis and the only cause of the covenant existence between God and Israel. This was a particular love which expressed itself in choice or election. The clue of the Old Testament doctrine of election was found in Deuteronomy 7:6:

> For thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God: Jehovah thy God hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession, above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth.

The Hebrew word yada meaning "know" is involved in God's election love, which was shown by the prophet Amos when he was referring to Jehovah speaking against Israel in Amos 3:2, "You

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\(^1\) Snaith, loc. cit., pp. 95, 134.
only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities." The word, know, in this passage involves more than "awareness," for the Hebrew word has a personal as well as an intellectual meaning. Thus, when Amos is referring to Jehovah knowing Israel, he is referring to a very intimate personal knowledge.

Another phase of Jehovah's love for Israel was that it was unconditioned by anything that Israel had done or was. All that could be said by the Old Testament writers was that God had found Israel and loved her. Deuteronomy 32:10 relates:

He found him in a desert land, And in the waste howling wilderness; He compassed him about, he cared for him, He kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle that stirreth up her nest, That fluttereth over her young, He spread abroad his wings, he took them, He bare them on his pinions.

Israel was not chosen because of her greatness nor because she was a large nation for Deuteronomy 7:7, 8 says:

Jehovah did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all peoples; but because Jehovah loveth you, and because he would keep the oath which he sware unto your fathers.

In other instances the reason given was, that it was "for His Name's sake," such as in II Kings 19:34, Isaiah 37:35, Jeremiah 14:7, 21 and Ezekiel 20:9.

The internal evidence of the Scriptures indicated that the solution was on God's side—that He chose Israel because He loved her. This in turn must fall back on the nature of
Jehovah; that He loved or acted in this way because it was within His nature to do so. Chafer said, "What God does in realizing His elective purpose is due to His love. It satisfies Him in Himself." Ahabah also means unconditioned love which may infer that God was not limited by any conditions except His will or nature. It was therefore not because of any existing conditions without but God chose Israel because He willed to choose them.

Another view of the purpose of God's choice of Abraham may be found in the characteristics of the Shemites. Although Davidson believed the primary solution was in the nature of God, he related the following positive reasons concerning the Shemites:

1. The Semitic peoples are no doubt distinguished by what is called a genius for religion.

2. There is a stage of religious advancement which the Semitic people had attained in the age of the revelation. . . . their religion was henotheistic.

3. The characteristics of the Semitic mind very well fitted one of this nationality to be the depository of a revelation. The Semitic mind is simple and emotional, without capacity for speculation or metaphysical thought.

It is not specifically stated in the Scripture why God


chose Abraham as the individual channel through which the divine plan of redemption should come. The only answer which is given in the Scriptures is that which is found in Genesis 12:3, 26:4; cf. 18:18, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed," and Genesis 22:18 and 26:4 expresses the same thought in slightly different wording. But Abraham and his descendants were chosen to be the peculiar people of God in order to preserve the revealed religion in the midst of apostasy. For this reason special revelations were made to them and God initiated a covenant with them, promising them that He would be their God with the obligation that they should be his people.

For a clearer understanding of the Abrahamic Covenant, Table I presents its basic features as they are recorded in the Old Testament. The original covenant in Genesis 12:1-3, 7 is compared with the confirmations of the covenant in Genesis 15:1-7, 9-21; Genesis 17:1-14, 19, 21, 22; and Genesis 22:1, 2, 15-18. The table presents a comparative study of the occasions, conditions, and promises of the covenant as they are recorded in the major Scripture passages.

In the original covenant there was no theophany, but God spoke to Abraham giving him the commandments and the promises. This was Abraham's second call, based upon Acts 7:2 where Stephen related that God appeared unto Abraham "when he
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<td>2. Leave father’s house.</td>
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<td>3. Leave kindred.</td>
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<td>4. Go to unknown land.</td>
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<td>1. Abraham a great nation.</td>
<td>1. Seed sojourners and affliction 400 years.</td>
<td>1. Multiply exceedingly</td>
<td>1. Blessing</td>
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<td>4. A blessing</td>
<td>4. Land from Egypt river to Euphrates to thy seed.</td>
<td>4. Father of other nations and kings.</td>
<td>4. Nations blessed through seed.</td>
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<td>5. Blessing and curse.</td>
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was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran." The word, Jehovah signifies the immanence of God and the revelation of God as a Person to Abraham. The name also indicates the personal relationship and faithfulness of God to His people and may be interpreted as "He shall cause to be." The actual form of God is not known, nor whether the voice was external or internal, but the summons was given by Jehovah and was repeated the second time.

The theophany in the confirmation of the covenant recorded in Genesis 17:1 related that Jehovah appeared and said unto Abraham, while 17:3 says, "God talked with him," and 17:22, "He left off talking with him, and went up from Abraham." In the final confirmation of the covenant in Genesis 22, the Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham and related Jehovah's message unto him after he had been obedient in the offering of his son as a sacrifice.

The ratification of the covenant actually occurred when the presence of God symbolized by a smoking furnace and a flaming torch passed between the pieces. It was in this symbol that God manifested himself to Abraham as He did in like manner to the children of Israel in the pillar of cloud and fire. The sacrifice was not a gift to God which would indicate that the soul of the offerer was in the sacrifice, for the sacrifice was not consumed by fire. But this was a covenant in which God came down to man for God alone went through the pieces of the
sacrifice. It was thus a covenant made for the purpose of communion or fellowship and it was to be a living fellowship between God and Abraham in which God promises that He will personally be his God, based upon Abraham's obedience of faith.

The sign of the covenant was given to Abraham when he was commanded to keep the covenant, which meant to observe the rite of circumcision. The ceremony was to be observed first by Abraham, then by his household or his descendants and slaves, and then by the strangers joining themselves to his household.

The rite of circumcision was not original with Abraham but existed among a number of primitive nations and especially among the Egyptians who observed this rite from the most remote antiquity. The custom may have been already in use and now adopted by God and sanctified as the special token of the covenant.

Circumcision was not a condition or obligation of the covenant but it was a sign or token which served not only to identify the recipients of the covenant, but also as a concrete indication that the covenant existed. To Abraham it was intended as a declaration of his faith in the coming seed and a symbol of his devotion to a holy life. It was a sign which indicated that the seed was not to be a child of the flesh but a child of the promise or the gift of grace.

Conditions of the Covenant. Although the covenant was
unconditional from the standpoint of being eternal, the conditions of the original covenant are found in Abraham's call. The conditions were definite and explicit in that he was to leave all—his country, his kindred, his father's house, and to follow God into a land of which He would show him. It was a command that he sever his relationship with land, people, and home. Thus, he was singled out alone to lay the foundations of the Chosen People, which is indicated in Isaiah 51:2 where he said, "I called him alone."

The command to separate from his own kinsmen and his father's house was not only a great sacrifice from the standpoint of breaking asunder ties, but it had to be a strictly final separation. There was the problem that he was now going at the age of seventy-five, to an unknown land—he was not only required to renounce all the certainties of his former life and to meet the uncertainties of the future, but he was required to follow the direction of God's will.

The first hint of a promise was found in Abraham's call where Jehovah said, "unto a land that I will show thee." Even in his call there was the promise of assurance in the form of guidance. Abraham's prompt and unhesitating obedience with the one promise of guidance to the land, indicated his simple trust or faith in Jehovah.

The covenant was concluded or solemnized by a divinely
ordered sacrifice (Genesis 15). Abraham was commanded to prepare a sacrifice according to specific directions and which later compared with the Levitical sacrifices. Keil\(^4\) believed, however, that it was not strictly sacrificial since there was neither sprinkling of blood nor offering upon an altar, and no mention was made of the pieces being burned. But it would conform to the ancient sacrifices where there was shedding of blood at the conclusion of the sacrifice, and to the Levitical sacrifice where specific kinds of animals were permissible.

Abraham received the promises at the end of the day when a deep sleep\(^5\) and an overwhelming darkness had fallen upon him. It is possible that the deep sleep which fell upon Abraham was sent by God for the purpose of His revelation.

Before relating the conditions which are related in the confirmation of the covenant in Genesis 17, Jehovah assured Abraham by announcing that He was God Almighty or the "El Shaddai" meaning that He was Jehovah the covenant God Who was able to realize his promises and that He was Almighty in His never-failing love. The conditions ascribed were to "walk before me"

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\(^5\) George Berry, \textit{The Hebrew Old Testament} (Chicago: Wilcox and Follett Company, 1946), p. 7. "The sleep is described as the same kind into which God caused Adam to fall when Eve was taken from his side as the same Hebrew word \textit{tardemah} is used in each instance."
or to walk in His presence in a pleasing manner, and "to be perfect" or to have integrity or blamelessness.

The condition of the final confirmation of the covenant was that Abraham would take his only son and offer him as a sacrifice to God, which was the most severe trial of Abraham's faith. It was probable that human sacrifices already existed, for it was considered quite meritorious among certain heathen nations to offer an only or beloved child as a sacrifice. Among the devotees of Moloch, it was the distinguishing rite of worship, but the Hebrews held human sacrifices in abhorrence. From this standpoint, it was a severe test to Abraham not only because it was ethically wrong but it did not conform to the Hebrew religion of which Jehovah was the only God. Moreover, the heathen nations would offer a human sacrifice for a definite purpose, such as a means of lifting a plague or for protection against a calamity; but there seemed to be no obvious reason for offering Isaac. But the real trial lay in the fact that Isaac was the child of promise and Abraham's decision involved either belief in the promise or belief in God's command to slay the child, who was the result of the promise.

Abraham obeyed the command of God unhesitatingly because he believed in the Lord—he believed that God was able to restore Isaac even from the dead, which was confirmed by the author of Hebrews in 11:19, "Accounting that God is able to raise up, even from the dead; from whence he did also in a
The promises of the covenant. The promises and blessings given in the Abrahamic covenant have been variously interpreted but generally fall into the two categories of literal and spiritual interpretations.

The seven main features of the provisions of the covenant were:

1. "I will make of thee a great nation." (Gen. 12:1)
2. "I will bless thee." (Genesis 12:2)
3. I will make thy name great. (Genesis 12:2)
4. Thou shalt be a blessing. (Genesis 12:2)
5. "I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse." (Genesis 12:3)
6. "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Genesis 12:3)
7. I will give unto thee the land. (Genesis 13:15)

Some of the promises were given to Abraham individually, while some were to the seed of Abraham and others to the Gentiles, or "all the families of the earth."

The first promise to Abraham was that he would be the father of a great nation and in Genesis 13:16 and 15:5 the number in the nation is compared to the dust of the earth and the stars of the heaven. The literal interpretation holds that this refers to Abraham whose descendants would comprise the Israelite nation. The word, great, refers to a great number
numerically as the Hebrew word gadol in this instance, means "great in the sense of numbers." The spiritual interpretation is that there is a spiritual seed of Abraham, or those who believe in God and by faith enjoy the blessings of the covenant. Paul supported this in Galatians 3:7 where he said, "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham," and in Galatians 3:29, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

After the original covenant had been given, the word of Jehovah came again unto Abraham in a spiritual vision with assurance and promise (Genesis 15:1). Abraham did not doubt Jehovah concerning the promise of heirs but he did call the divine attention to this condition. Jehovah again assured him of an heir and brought him forth to view the heavens, comparing his seed to the number of stars. Abraham then believed or rested his faith in Jehovah, and He counted it to him for righteousness.

After the covenant had been made with Abraham for at least fourteen years, God again appeared to him as El Shaddai (almighty God), or "the covenant God Who is able to realize his

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promises. The covenant was again confirmed unto Abraham by the giving of new names unto Sarah and Abraham, and by the rite of circumcision. In this instance, berith is used in the sense of "giving a covenant," and not in the sense of "cutting a covenant," as in the original covenant--this indicated the intention or the "setting in operation" of the realization of the promises of the covenant. However, the promises are conditional and a blameless walk before God is required of Abraham. The promise is heightened in the confirmation of the covenant from the original promise of a "great nation" to "the father of a multitude of nations," which is indicated on Table I, page 34.

The second promise was that he would be the father of kings and of nations other than the "seed." This promise was literally fulfilled in the Ishmaelites, and the Edomites, as well as Kings David and Solomon being descendants of Abraham.

God also promised His personal blessing upon Abraham. He was not only blessed with every kind of good materially, and with an heir, but he was also blessed spiritually in the sense that he received justification by imputation of faith for righteousness.

7 Keil, op. cit., p. 223.
8 Ibid.
Another promise was that His name would be great and that he would be a blessing. The name of Abraham was to become renown, not in the world but in the history of the Church. Abraham was to be a blessing, or to be the medium of blessing. This blessing extended through Abraham's physical seed through Isaac and Jacob and to the Gentiles. It is related in Galatians 3:14, "That upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

Jehovah promised to give him the land as an inheritance. It was a specific land and it was for this purpose that Jehovah brought him out of Ur of Chaldees (Genesis 15:7). Abraham did not doubt God, but he desired assurance concerning the inheritance—it was upon this occasion that Jehovah commanded him to prepare the sacrifice for the conclusion and ratification of the covenant.

The Promise to Abraham's seed. The covenant included Blessings for Abraham's seed and the first was that his posterity would be great or innumerable. Before the ratification of the covenant, Jehovah revealed to Abraham that his posterity would be sojourners in a foreign land, and that they would be oppressed. After four hundred years, that nation would be judged and his posterity would escape with great substance.

The general promises to the seed of Abraham in Genesis
refer to his physical lineage. In some instances the term is used in a narrower sense or in a spiritual sense and the seed of Abraham refers to a community of believers who stand in relation to God through the covenant and are considered heirs to God through the promises of Abraham. Concerning the "seed of Abraham," Walvoord related three interpretations:

First, there is the natural lineage, or natural seed. This is limited largely to the descendants of Jacob in the twelve tribes. To them, God promises to be their God. To them was given the law. To them was given the land of Israel in the Old Testament. With them God dealt in a special way.

Second, there is the spiritual lineage within the natural. These are the Israelites who believed in God, who kept the law and who met the conditions for present enjoyment of the blessings of the covenant. Those who ultimately possess the land in the future millennium will also be of spiritual Israel.

Third, there is the spiritual seed of Abraham who are not natural Israelites. Here is where the promise to "all the families of the earth" comes in. This is the express application of this phrase in Galatians 3:6-9, "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." 9

Another promise was the possession of the land, which not only was to have extensive boundaries but it was to be an everlasting possession. Walvoord said, "It should be immediately clear that this promise guarantees both the everlasting

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continuance of the seed as a nation and its everlasting possession of the land.\textsuperscript{10} At the conclusion of the covenant, Jehovah related the specific boundaries of the land from the Nile river to the Euphrates, and the dispossession of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites. The promise of land was confirmed in Genesis 17:8 in which it was specifically called the land of Canaan.

The final promise was that Jehovah would make an everlasting covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and seed. Genesis 17:19-21a related the selection of Isaac as the recipient of the covenant:

And God said, Nay, but Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; . . . But my covenant will I establish with Isaac.

The selection of Jacob in place of Esau may be found in God's election love. His election love involved both selection, and selection with responsibility. This was exemplified in the lives of those who were recipients of the covenant. When Abraham was chosen, he remained obedient unto the covenant and to

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid., p. 420.
God's purpose of the covenant. Isaac was chosen as the child of promise—the covenant was also made with him because of his father Abraham's faith and with the condition that he "sojourn in this land." Genesis 26:2-5 supports this view:

And Jehovah appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; . . . because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

The choice of Jacob was later proved by his obedience unto God and by his faithfulness unto God's purpose. David sinned after the covenant had been made with him, but he repented and maintained that he had always been obedient and faithful to the purposes of God.

The promises to the Gentiles. There was a general promise in Genesis 12:3 to "all the families of the earth," or to the Gentiles. This general blessing may refer indirectly to salvation through the Messiah Who was of the seed of Abraham or it may refer to the nation Israel which has been the channel through which the divine revelation has come. Another provision found in Genesis 12:3, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee," was primarily applied to the Gentiles.

Summary. In this chapter, the Abrahamic covenant has
been presented including the conditions, the promises, the ratification, and the sign of the covenant. It has been presented as a mutual covenant between God and man, and conditional upon the faith of Abraham. The promises were given to Abraham, to his "seed," and to the Gentiles. The promises which were given to Abraham were sevenfold: a great nation, a great posterity, which was described as innumerable as the dust of the earth, a great name, a great blessing, a great alliance, a great defense, and a great influence. The covenant was ratified when the presence of God was symbolized by a smoking furnace, and a flaming torch passed between the pieces of the sacrifice, which Abraham had been commanded to prepare. Circumcision was the sign or token which was designed not only to identify the recipients of the covenant but also as a concrete indication that the covenant existed. Table I has been presented as a comparative study of the original covenant with its establishment and confirmations in the major Scripture passages. The following chapter contains a presentation of the Davidic covenant, which is the second covenant pertaining to the redemptive covenants.
CHAPTER IV

DAVIDIC COVENANT

The Davidic Covenant is also considered to be one of the determining covenants in the course and destiny of Israel. It is an unconditional covenant in that it rests upon the faithfulness of Jehovah and it is an everlasting covenant regardless of the unfaithfulness of man. Its involvement with a temporal kingdom, and literal dynasty and throne was used as an instrument for the achievement of God's redemptive purpose. The covenant with David involved three features—the king, his throne, and his kingdom—and both literal and eternal fulfillment entered into the covenant. It will be the endeavor of this chapter to relate the purpose, the conditions, the promises, the ratification, and the general fulfillment of the promises.

The Davidic Covenant had its antecedents in the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 17:6 where Jehovah related, "And I will make thee exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee," and was enlarged into the statement of promise in II Samuel 7:1-17. The first hint of the promise of salvation was given universally in Genesis 3:15, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." The Abrahamic Covenant was
basic as the covenant of grace and anticipated the promise of redemption. Israel had been selected out of the universe to be the medium of revelation—this was the beginning of the nationalism of the Old Testament. The Abrahamic Covenant was again restated to Isaac in Genesis 26:2-5:

And Jehovah appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; and I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these lands; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

It was given to Jacob in Genesis 35:10-12:

And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply: a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; and the land which I gave unto Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.

The covenant of Jacob was more particularistic in that the tribe of Judah was selected as the covenant people or the recipients of the promise of a Redeemer.

But the covenant of David involved only one individual which was the one who occupied the throne of David, and it was upon this covenant that the kingdom of the Redeemer Who is "of the seed of David according to the flesh" is to be founded.

The occasion of the Davidic Covenant was David's desire
to build a house for the Lord, for he dwelt in a palace of cedar but the ark of the covenant was within curtains or a moveable tent. It was during the time when David as King had acquired rest from his surrounding enemies, that he gave utterance to this resolution. At first, the prophet, Nathan sanctioned David's resolution but the Lord later revealed to the prophet that David was not required to build a temple. Jehovah related that He would first build a house for David and confirm the throne to his seed forever, and then a temple should be built for him.

The reason for David's not building the temple may have been that his kingdom was not yet established; this was proved by the wars in which David was involved and which seemed necessary and inevitable. Another reason may have been that the temple was to be the symbolic representation of the Kingdom of God, and the Kingdom would be characterized by peace. Since David was a man of war, he would not be able personally to build the temple. This was confirmed in I Chronicles 22:8 where David was instructing Solomon concerning the temple:

But the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build a house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.

The prohibition may also rest in the nature of God; He did not desire a permanent temple yet, but preferred the moveable tent, which was characterized by simplicity and in conformity with
the Israelites at this time.

Jehovah did not speak directly to David but the divine message was given to Nathan the prophet in a vision at night. When the Davidic Covenant was confirmed unto Solomon, Jehovah appeared to Solomon by night and spoke to him.

The Covenant of David was ratified by a covenant of salt, which was symbolic of an enduring and irrevocable covenant, Elmslie\(^1\) suggested that salt was necessary for the efficacy of a sacrifice based upon Leviticus 2:13 where the Israelites were commanded to season the meal-offering with salt and "the salt of the covenant of thy God" was not to be lacking from the meal-offering. From this law the covenant of salt became a phrase for a sure covenant as in Numbers 18:19, "It is a covenant of salt forever before Jehovah unto thee and to thy seed with thee." The original idea may have been derived from the primitive covenant where the partaking of food together created a sacredness of the bond.

For a graphic comprehension of the Davidic Covenant, Table II presents the basic data as it is recorded in the Old Testament. The original covenant in II Samuel 7:1-17 is compared with the confirmations of the covenant in I Chronicles

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17:1-16, Jeremiah 33:1-17, Psalm 89:19-37, and with the renewal of the covenant with Solomon in II Chronicles 7:12-22.

Chart II presents a comparative study of the conditions, promises and ratification of the covenant as they are recorded in the major Scripture passages.

**Conditions of the covenant.** The Davidic Covenant was not conditional from the standpoint of the promises, which were everlasting and not to be abrogated—both Isaiah and Paul referred to the covenant as "the sure mercies of David." But there was one qualifying condition in regard to the promise of perpetual succession. Disobedience in the Davidic family would result in chastisement which meant that the necessity of chastisement might cause the throne to be unoccupied. But the unconditional nature of the covenant assured that there should never lack a person to sit upon the throne as in II Samuel 7:14b-15 and Jeremiah 33:17:

> If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my loving kindness shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

> For thus saith Jehovah: David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel.

When the Davidic Covenant was renewed with Solomon in II Chronicles 7:12-22, it was not a conditional covenant. But the commandments given to Solomon were to walk before Jehovah as David had done, obey Jehovah's commandments, keep his stat-
# TABLE II

**COMPARISON OF THE ORIGINAL COVENANT WITH ITS CONFIRMATIONS**

**DAVIDIC COVENANT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II Samuel 7:1-17</th>
<th>I Chronicles 17</th>
<th>II Chron. 7:12-22</th>
<th>Jeremiah 33:1-17</th>
<th>Psalm 89:19-37</th>
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<td>4. Throne established forever.</td>
<td>4. Temple to be built by son.</td>
<td>Throne humbled.</td>
<td>4. Davidic rule sure as ordinances of sky.</td>
<td>4. Davidic rule sure as ordinances of sky.</td>
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<td>5. Lovingkindness not to depart as from Saul.</td>
<td>5. Father and son relationship.</td>
<td>6. Lovingkindness to remain.</td>
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utes and ordinances and not to serve other Gods—then Jehovah would establish the covenant with him. If there was disobedience, the Israelites were to be dispersed out of the land, the temple would be destroyed and a byword among all the nations, and the Davidic throne would be humbled.

The promises of the covenant. The prohibition concerning the building of the temple was accompanied by gracious promises which indicated God's approval of David's intention. Before making the covenant with David, Jehovah related his divine purposes to him concerning David and Israel. It was in His divine purpose to call David from the sheepcote to become prince over Israel and that his way had been prepared before him. David was to have a great name and his people would dwell in a stationary place which had been appointed for them. The time would come when David would have rest from all his enemies and then Jehovah would build him a house.

The first promise was to assure David of an undying posterity or house and it was to the posterity that the main point of the covenant was given. David's house was first referred to by Jonathan when he made a covenant of friendship with David, extending it to include their houses (I Samuel 20:16). The House of David existed for a thousand years as a real unit in Israel, for Luke mentioned that Joseph went to his own city for the enrollment under Augustus, "because he was of the house
and family of David" (Luke 2:14).

Since the promise was eternal and no earthly posterity has ever existed eternally, the posterity of David could only endure forever by culminating into a descendant who is eternal—the promise then referred to the seed of David beginning with his son Solomon and ending with Christ. The House of David is unique from the standpoint that Christ belonged to it and that He is its goal and culmination.

**Fulfillment of a Davidic House.** The main part of the prophecy was given to the seed of David with both a temporal and eternal aspect. The temporal aspect of the promise of posterity began with Solomon who was responsible for the building of the earthly temple. David's posterity was to be elevated to the state of royalty, through the line of one of his sons, although the promise involved the idea of a number of descendants following each other, or a line of kings in succession.

Although the promise was not conditional, the warning concerning disobedience and chastisement would involve the Davidic house. The glory of David's house was conditioned upon their strict observance of the Sabbath, the offerings in the temple where the Davidic king was enthroned, and the observance of the Levitical ritual.

There was a second meaning of the prophecy which goes beyond the temporal and emphasized the words, forever. The
posterity of David began with Solomon but concluded with the Messiah who was both the true and the ultimate Son of David as well as the Eternal Son of God. The prophecy concerning the building of the temple was also fulfilled in a spiritual sense in the Messiah, and there is a father and son relationship between He and the Father. Concerning the eternal fulfillment of the temple, Maclaren said:

He has built the true Temple, in that His body is the seat of sacrifice and of revelation, and the meeting-place of God and man, and in as much as through Him we are built up into a spiritual house for an habitation of God. In Him is fulfilled the great prophecy of 'My Servant the Branch,' who 'shall build the Temple of the Lord' and 'be a Priest upon His Throne.' In Him, too, is fulfilled in highest truth the filial relationship. The Israelitish kings were by office sons of God. He is the Son in ineffable derivation and eternal unity of life with the Father, and their communion is in closest oneness of will and mutual interchange of love.2

The second promise was that a throne shall be established forever from the seed of David. The covenant with David provided then an unending occupancy of David's throne. Within the provision of the Davidic throne, the king was to build a house for Jehovah and there would be a personal relationship in which the successor would be as a son to Jehovah.

The conditional element of the covenant involved both the Davidic house and the throne. If the king was disobedient,

chastisement would be the consequence, but God's mercy would not allow abrogation of the throne as in the instance of Saul. The chastisement was to be inflicted by men and not God, which indicated that the throne would be humbled, but not utterly destroyed.

**Fulfillment of a Davidic throne.** The promise of an unending occupancy of David's throne and that he should never lack for a king to sit upon the throne has been fulfilled. The earthly line of kings from David to Jehoiachin included twenty-one kings reigning in succession for nearly four and a half centuries. It is to be noted that the descendants of David occupied the throne of Judah uninterruptedly for a longer period of time than any other dynasty, with few exceptions. Even the Hapsburgs or the Hohenzollerns of Prussia or the Plantagenets of England\(^3\) reigned less than three hundred and fifty years in comparison to the Davidic reign of almost four hundred and fifty years.

It was also remarkable that within the reign of the twenty-one kings, the throne passed from father to son in regular order, with the exception of the descendants of Josiah. Another significant factor was that Jerusalem remained the

Davidic capitol as long as the line of kings remained.

The fulfillment of the unending occupancy of the Davidic throne was shown in its history, which has been divided into three successive phrases:

1. Dynastic phase from David to Jehoashim—twenty-one kings reigned in succession for about four and a half centuries.

2. Phase of obscurity—from Jehoashim's death until the birth of Jesus. This constituted a period of more than five and a half centuries where the members of the House of David were in private and humble station, waiting for the fulfillment of God's promise. They were veiled in obscurity, save for Zerubbabel at the beginning—then a list of genealogies, and Joseph and Mary at the end.

3. Final phase beginning with the birth of Christ—it is in Him that all the hopes of His fathers and the promises through the prophets are fulfilled.4

The conditional element involved in the promise, which has already been alluded to, was the threat of chastisement if disobedient. The chastisement fell upon Solomon when he sinned 5 against the Lord in his latter days. It also fell during the reign of Rehoboam when the kingdom was divided and

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4 Ibid., pp. 217-218

5 At the beginning of the kingdom period, Samuel related the laws of the king and the kingdom (I Samuel 12:13-15; 20-25. The law demanded fear and obedience unto Jehovah, and disobedience resulted in Jehovah's wrath and destruction. It is probable that Samuel's law of the kingdom was based upon the Mosaic law of kings in which Jehovah commanded the reading and keeping of all laws and statutes and the negative commands concerning the multiplying of horses, wives, and wealth (Deuteronomy 17:14-20).
finally ended in the captivities. The earthly throne and kingdom of David declined progressively until it disappeared in the days of Jeremiah. This was predicted in Hosea 3:4, "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king, and without prince." There was thus a lapse of the earthly throne prior to the Advent of Christ for hundreds of years. One explanation was that a remnant of Israel did survive until the coming of Christ. Another view was that the Davidic line continued to exist as long as there was a nation and until its designed purpose was fulfilled.

The throne shall be occupied by a king who is both human and divine, as announced in Isaiah 9:6-7:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever.

The nature of the eternal king or Messiah, which is revealed in Psalms 72 and 110 is that of both a conqueror and a prince of peace. Another aspect was that the Coming King should have the office of priest after the order of Melchizedek. The underlying thought was that He would be superior to the order of Aaron and that the emphases was upon the priestly person rather than the priestly works. The promise to David was thus fulfilled in both a literal and spiritual sense in the Person of
Christ Who was the rightful heir and Who has reigned from His
time on, and shall reign forever.

Although the promises concerning the King, His throne,
and His kingdom are almost inseparable in the Scripture, the
third promise was a perpetual kingdom or a kingdom "made sure."
The threefold repetition of the throne of David and the es-
establishment of the kingdom forever pointed beyond the reign of
Solomon to an eternal continuance of a kingdom.

Fulfillment of a Davidic Kingdom. The earthly kingdom
began with the Israelite kingdom and then Palestinian, which
began after the Exile. The Palestinian kingdom was estab-
lished when the remnant of Judah and Israel returned to Pales-
tine, which is recorded in Isaiah 11:10-12:

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the
root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the
peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his
resting place shall be glorious. And it shall come
to pass in that day, that the Lord will set his hand
again the second time to recover the remnant of his
people. . . . And he will set up an ensign for the
nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel,
and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the
four corners of the earth.

But the temporal kingdom of the Davidic Kingdom ceased
to exist and necessitated a fulfillment in a spiritual sense.
The eternal kingdom shall have its fulfillment with the future
reign of the Messiah Who is the royal seed of David. It shall
be a kingdom patterned after the Davidic kingdom without its
failures and sins.

"The sure mercies of David." Although "the sure mercies of David" is an expression used in the Bible to designate the covenant, it referred specifically to God's faithfulness to the eternal character of the promises in the covenant. The idea of eternal was first conveyed in the original covenant in 7:12 where the word, establish, is used and then repeated in the next verse, "establish forever." It was again repeated twice in 7:16 as a climax of the whole covenant.

It was also echoed in the promise to David in 7:15, "But my lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee." The covenant was unconditional and the throne shall not be taken from David as it was taken from the descendants of Saul. God chose Saul as the first king of Israel (I Samuel 9:16; 10:1), but his lovingkindness may have departed because of Saul's disobedience. Samuel considered Saul disobedient unto Jehovah when he assumed the office of both priest and king, and related to him that Jehovah would have established his kingdom forever if he would have kept the commandments (I Samuel 13:13). Paul, in his address at Antioch, supported this view when he related that Saul did not do the whole will of Jehovah (Acts 13:21, 22). But the central purpose of God's rejection of Saul may be found in His election-love. Jacob's prophecy related that "the seep-
tre shall not depart from Judah" (Genesis 49:10), and this would exclude Saul who was a Benjamite.

The eternal nature of the covenant was related in the confirmation of the covenant in Psalm 89:19-37. Its eternal character is described by the word, endurance, as in Psalm 89: 36-37:

His seed shall endure forever. And his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever as the moon, And as the faithful witness in the sky.

Emphasis was thus placed upon the sureness of the covenant to David and the sureness of his throne was compared to the sureness of the perpetual witnesses of the sky. Jeremiah also substantiated this idea in 33:17a, 20, 21a:

David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel. . . Thus saith Jehovah: If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, so that there shall not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he shall not have a son to reign upon his throne.

Summary. The Davidic Covenant has been presented, including the conditions, the promises, the ratification, and the general fulfillment of the promises. The covenant was unconditional based upon the faithfulness of Jehovah and regardless of the unfaithfulness of man. The promises, which were given to David and his posterity, including an everlasting house, and and everlasting throne and kingdom. The covenant was ratified by a covenant of salt indicating an enduring covenant. Chart II
has been presented as a comparative study of the original covenant with the confirmations in the major Scripture passages. A comparative study of the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants will be presented in the next chapter.
CHAPTER V

A COMPARISON OF THE ABRAHAMIC AND DAVIDIC COVENANTS

A comparative study of the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants is almost indispensable, if their relation to one another is understood.

Both the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants were designed for the achievement of God's redemptive purpose in behalf of the human race. With Abraham there was the beginning of the historical redemptive process, which was introduced in the form of a covenant consisting chiefly in the promise and prediction that in and through his posterity would be universal blessing. The Old Covenant or Sinai Covenant which was made with the emancipated posterity of Abraham was superimposed upon, and was supplementary to the Abrahamic. The covenant with David then carried forward and supplemented the two earlier covenants, although it does not mention the Abrahamic or the law.

The highest purpose of both covenants was the effective revealing of God's will in order that man might act responsibly and this was achieved in the anticipation of redemption. More specifically, the purpose of the covenants differed in that the Abrahamic was to establish or separate a chosen people to be the media of revelation and through his posterity would come the Messiah while the Davidic was to insure an everlast-
ing throne through which the Messiah would come.

It will be the purpose of this chapter to make a comparative study of the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants by noting similarities and contrasts. They shall be considered from the standpoint of content, similar and contrasting factors, and from the application of Heschel's concept of pathos and sympathy.

I. CONTENT OF ABRAHAMIC AND DAVIDIC COVENANTS

Both covenants were attached to the lofty ideals of spiritual men--to the faith of Abraham and to David's absorbing desire to build a house for Jehovah.

While the method of revelation to Abraham was by direct communication and the relationship was that of a personal God, yet the specific communication of the covenants differed. In the Abrahamic there was the divine utterance and appearance, and the appearance of Jehovah in a symbol. The Davidic Covenant was an oracle related by the prophet Nathan.

Conditions. The Abrahamic Covenant was conditioned upon the obedience of Abraham, while the Davidic Covenant rested upon the faithfulness of Jehovah and has been everlasting regardless of man's unfaithfulness. The establishment of the covenant with Abraham required a holy walk before God and obedience, which was in the concluding words, "because thou hast
obeyed my voice." The covenant with David was established by Jehovah, but there was a condition in which disobedience would result in chastisement.

Promises. Both covenants guaranteed a personal fellowship with God, a great name, a general blessing, protection from their enemies, personal righteousness, the extension of the covenants to their posterity, and the anticipation of the Redeemer.

The covenants differed in the main elements of the promises with the Abrahamic emphasizing land, posterity, and a nation; while the Davidic, a kingdom, posterity, and a throne. The Abrahamic indicated the beginning of the Israelite nation through which the Messiah would come while the Davidic was the beginning of the royal kingdom through which the Messiah would come.

Ratification. Although the means of ratification differed, both covenants contained the idea of communion—communion in which there was personal fellowship with God; He would be their God and they would be His people. The means of sacrifice, which has already been alluded to, differed entirely as the Abrahamic involved a blood sacrifice while the Davidic was ratified by a covenant of salt. The first represented the idea of communion, while the latter, both communion and eter-
nalness. The first covenant also instituted the rite of circumcision, which was not conditional but an outward sign of the completed covenant.

**Fulfillment.** In comparison, the covenants have both a literal and eternal fulfillment. While the literal aspect was predominately fulfilled in the Old Testament, it extended into the New Testament. The eternal promises are fulfilled partly in the New Testament and some have a future fulfillment. In regard to the temporal aspect, the Abrahamic Covenant referring particularly to Israel, has been fulfilled in the Old Testament. The spiritual fulfillment in the universal aspect, which concerns all the nations of the earth had only its beginning during the Old Testament period and has both a present and future fulfillment.

The promise concerning the posterity of both Abraham and David may be regarded as literally fulfilled during the time of Solomon even to the same words which were in the Abrahamic such as "sand" (I Kings 4:20), "stars" (I Chronicles 27:23), and "dust" (II Chronicles 1:9). The author of Hebrews confirmed the fulfillment of the Abrahamic in Hebrews 11:12:

> Wherefore also there sprang of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of heaven in multitude, and as the sand, which is by the sea-shore, innumerable. The Davidic was confirmed in the words of Solomon in I Kings 5:5:
And behold, I purpose to build a house for the name of Jehovah my God, as Jehovah spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build the house for thy name.

In both covenants there was the literal fulfillment of disaster as the result of disobedience. The promise of land in the Abrahamic Covenant was fulfilled during the dominion of David and Solomon, extending from the Euphrates to the River of Egypt. However, Israel did not possess the land forever but forfeited it by disobedience. Chastisement also fell upon the Davidic throne beginning first with a division of the throne and ending in the captivity of the nation. The history of the Israelite nation related that the land has been dispossessed three times and restored twice and while the land has been barren for a number of years, there would be yet a third restoration.

The promise of a nation in the Abrahamic was fulfilled first in the Israelite nation and extended to the Palestinian which was the more focalized kingdom promised in the Davidic.

The covenants are both fulfilled from the standpoint of meeting in Christ. Under the Abrahamic Covenant Christ was the "seed" to whom the promises referred in Genesis 22:18 and confirmed in Galatians 3:16:

Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of One, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

Under the Davidic Covenant Jesus, as man, is the heir of the
Davidic throne and his ancestor according to the flesh as confirmed in Luke 1:32:

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.

While both David and Abraham received righteousness by imputation of faith, the Abrahamic Covenant contained the personal blessing mentioned by Paul in Romans 4:3b, "And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness," but the Davidic Covenant does not specifically mention this personal blessing; it is known by inference after David repented (II Samuel 17).

The promises of "seed" in the covenants are contrasting in purpose. The "seed" of Abraham in the spiritual sense is comprised of Jews and Gentiles who are the believers or those who possessed similar faith as Abraham. The Davidic promise was to the end that there would be a king upon the Davidic throne forever and this was fulfilled in the Messiah Whose First Coming was rejected by the Jews, but who is reigning invisibly now.

The Davidic promise of an everlasting kingdom has its fulfillment in the kingdom of God which was comprised of the believers in the Messiah. There is a present fulfillment in individuals who accept Christ as their King and are referred to as the church. There will be a future fulfillment at the
Second Coming of Christ when He shall reign visibly with all the righteous—this would include the heirs by faith of the Abrahamic Covenant.

II. SIMILAR AND CONTRASTING FACTORS

The universalism of the Abrahamic Covenant may be contrasted to the particularism of the Davidic. In the Abrahamic, there was breadth and expansion for the promise was "for all peoples," while in the Davidic there was height and the narrowing down to the royal throne of the Messiah. The first may be considered an extension outward to the circumference while the other was a concentration on the center. It was for this reason that they are both often mentioned together such as in the prophetic praise of Zacharias in Luke 1:69, 72-73:

> And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us, In the house of his servant David... To show mercy towards our fathers, And to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he swore unto Abraham our father.

Another factor of dissimilarity was the conditional nature of the Abrahamic and the unconditional nature of the Davidic. The covenant relationship of the Abrahamic was conditional upon Abraham's obedience while the Davidic was an everlasting relationship regardless of man's obedience.

The Abrahamic Covenant was considered a basic covenant while the Davidic was the fulfillment or the extension of the former. This is proved by the Davidic Covenant having its
antecedents in the Abrahamic; for the initial promise concerning kings was given in it.

The promises of the Abrahamic centered around the land, while the promises of the Davidic centered around the idea of a throne.

The covenants may be contrasted in the manner of their treatment of the Messianic hope. The Abrahamic Covenant contained only a hint or a promise of the Messiah while the Davidic was the actual beginning of the Messianic hope. The development of the Messianic hope has been compared to a trickling stream of promise, gradually growing in depth and volume until it became a mighty river of blessing and a gospel of hope.¹

III. HESCHEL'S CONCEPT OF PATHOS AND SYMPATHY APPLIED TO THE ABRAHAMIC AND DAVIDIC COVENANTS

Within recent years, Old Testament scholars have come to recognize the significance of A. J. Heschel's concept of pathos and sympathy in Die Prophetic in the study of the emotional interaction between God, man, and the people. The present application of Heschel's concept of pathos to the emotional interaction of the covenant relationship was based upon

the analysis and summary of the treatise of Abraham Heschel's *Die Prophétie* in Herbert Livingston's dissertation, "The Hebrew Prophetic Consciousness."

Heschel's concept of pathos and sympathy may be a contributing factor in the comparative study of the covenant relationships between God and Abraham, and David. Heschel defined the religion of Israel as "the awareness of God's interest in man, the awareness of a covenant, of a responsibility that lies on Him as well as on us." And the essence is "the awareness of the reciprocity of God and man, of man's togetherness with Him who abides in eternal otherness." A method in developing the concepts of pathos and sympathy was to outline the two-fold character of the relationship between God and the person called. This two-fold structure was categorized as content and form. These categories showed that at first, God's approach to man was by an expression of pathos and then His revelation was described as an Event. This event was called an anthropotropism, or

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God's turning to man. From the standpoint of man, the response to pathos was an expression of sympathy; and his response was in the form of a deep sense of compulsion.

Content. It is necessary to make a distinction between the two categories, content, and form of this relationship. They are entirely different phases, and content is related to the subjective side of experience. Within this relationship, the content is composed of the two categories, pathos and sympathy.

Pathos. The basic assumptions of the concept of pathos are summarized as follows: (a) Pathos includes the voluntary personal relationship of God to the world. He is affected by history not only by his will, but with pathos. (b) Pathos originates in divine freedom—it is an occasion, and not a cause. It is not considered an attribute but an act. (c) Pathos expresses a property of relationship which extends toward man. (d) Pathos is limited by the deeds of man and is not static. (e) The pathos of God consists of love, mercy or anger. God's anger is caused by his suffering, which he experienced as a result of human attitude. Therefore, pathos may be understood not as an attribute of the Divine Being, but as an aspect of God's relationship to man.

The divine pathos may be demonstrated in the covenant
relationship between God and Abraham. The grounds for the various manifestations of God's pathos was His desire for human righteousness. Because of the failure of humanity in general to maintain righteousness, God chose an individual or a people to maintain this righteousness. Because of God's love and mercy, He voluntarily turned toward man extending mercy and grace to mankind, when He called Abraham. He chose Israel because He willed to do so, and not as a result of what they had done. The element of personal relationship in the divine pathos was shown in the name of Jehovah; He appeared unto Abraham as a personal covenant God and as a God who established relationships with man. When the covenant was broken by Israel, God suffered because of their unfaithfulness—His suffering resulted in anger, which brought about chastisement and oppression of the Israelites.

The divine pathos may be demonstrated in the covenant relationship between God and David. It was again because of God's love that David was chosen to be the media of revelation. God voluntarily chose David, rather than Saul, and there was an established personal relationship between them. He extended mercy toward man in his selection of the Davidic throne, which was the development of his redemptive purpose. The concept of the Messiah had now been set forth as the King of Israel as compared with the promise of the Messiah.
to Abraham. The divine pathos, expressed in anger is demonstrated by Israel's captivity when they rejected God.

**Sympathy.** Sympathy may be defined as an emotional attitude in which man turns toward God. The emotional attitude involves entire sympathy with the whole process of revelation. The presuppositions of the concept of sympathy are: 

(a) Sympathy is not self-existent but is dependent upon divine pathos. 
(b) Sympathy assumes that the person is a vital part of the process of revelation. This involves all aspects of his personality and includes his personal decision to obey God. 
(c) Sympathy assumes a personal relationship between God and man in which both are considered active subjects. 
(d) Sympathy regards the turning of man toward God as a possibility; that sin does not cause an unsurmountable barrier, and that there is the possibility of a new relationship between God and man.

In the Abrahamic Covenant, Abraham had no motivation or desire to leave his country for the purpose of establishing a new nation, or a covenant. But it was through Abraham's response to God's will that he was able to separate from his country and to meet the conditions of the covenant. When Abraham was chosen, he became a vital part of the revelation— not only was his whole personality involved, but he had to make a definite decision to obey God. The covenant established communion or relationship between God and Abraham in
which there were mutual obligations.

In the Davidic Covenant, David desired to build a house for the Lord, but there was no self-existent desire to establish the provisions of the covenant. It was only because of God's concern for Israel that David desired to fulfill the obligations of the covenant, and did not want God's Spirit to depart from him when he had sinned against the Lord. David was a vital part of the process of revelation; he was "a man after God's own heart" and became a symbol of the ideal king whose faithfulness and just reign would point forward to the Messiah. The Davidic Covenant established a personal relationship between God and David. Though the promises were not conditional, the covenant relationship did contain an element which involved obedience. The final assumption that sympathy regards the turning of man toward God as a possibility was illustrated in the life of David. After David had sinned against God, he repented and was restored again in the divine favor; although he did not escape without punishment.

Form. The preceding outline relates the content of the covenant experience. It was noted that revelation was of subjective significance to both God and man, involving both in the process of communication. Inspiration includes both content, regarded as the substance, and form, which is the structure. The form of inspiration is called Event. It
contains a point of Turning and a point of Addressing.

*Turning.* The main characteristics of the category of Turning are thus summarized: (a) The chief significance of revelation is found in God. There is a transition from motive to initiative within the life of God, which results in the Turning—this is the source and potentiality of the event. (b) Turning indicates the determination of God to have fellowship with man. God does not desire that man remain in this estranged state, but in personal communion with him, characterized by loyalty and confidence. It is to be a fellowship with mutual obligations. (c) Turning is an act of God's will with a definite design. (d) Turning indicates mediation. God's revelation is a giving of knowledge concerning his relationships with men. (e) Turning signifies a disclosure or manifestation of Himself, which is self-giving.

The Abrahamic Covenant was a result of God's turning toward man with the definite design of selecting a people through which He would reveal Himself. He had no desire for man to remain in an estranged state, but through His loving-kindness He would provide a means of reconciliation. The covenant relationship involved a fellowship with Abraham in which God's promises were conditioned upon Abraham's faith and obedience.
The covenant with David was also initiated by God with a definite motive of selecting a throne through which the Messiah would come. The basic motive of redemption may be compared to the Abrahamic. God's turning to David indicated his desire for fellowship, but the obligations were not mutual as compared to the Abrahamic Covenant. His turning also indicated mediation in which God has revealed a definite knowledge concerning a Redeemer.

Addressing. The point of Addressing is more nearly related to the recipient of the revelation for God is directing his attention toward him during this process. Addressing emphasizes the realization of the event. It is the converting of His will, purpose, and wish into deed, fact, and event. Addressing directs its attention upon an individual and it is within him, that Turning achieves its purpose.

The covenant with Abraham denoted actualization of the event when God first called Abraham. His will and purpose were to provide a means of redemption for man and Abraham's call was the realization of the promise of redemption. Abraham was necessary for God's achievement of this purpose. The covenant with David was actual and when God spoke to him through the oracle with Nathan. The purpose of the covenant would not have been accomplished without David.
Tri-dimensional relationship. In the summary of the prophetic consciousness, Livingston concluded that the structure of religion was tri-dimensional—God, prophet and people; and he suggested that the covenant idea was built around that structure.

The covenant idea involved a complex interpersonal relationship which was tri-dimensional. It was composed of Jehovah who was superior and who established and initiated the terms of the covenant; of the Israelites who had broken the covenant relationship; of the individual chosen to be the recipient of the covenant and standing between God and the Israelites.

Within this interpersonal relationship, both the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants demonstrated a wide range of emotions. The covenants were a result of Jehovah's lovingkindness; and his suffering and anger were revealed in Israel's chastisement. The emotions of the covenant people ranged from exultation to utter despair, which was a result of their obedience or disobedience. Abraham and David exercised great humility and faith in God; they recognized that Jehovah had bound himself to the covenant, thus involving not only the responsibility of Abraham and David, but Israel as well.

Summary. The comparative study has brought to the foreground some of the similarities and contrasts of the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants. Both have been designed for the achievement of God's redemptive purpose; yet the specific purpose of the covenants differed as the Abrahamic established a chosen people and the Davidic, an everlasting throne.

The Abrahamic Covenant was conditional based upon mutual obligations, while the Davidic was unconditional based upon God's faithfulness. In comparison, both covenants anticipated the Redeemer; but the main elements of the promises differed with the Abrahamic emphasizing a nation and the Davidic, a throne.

The similarities of the covenants have been presented by the application of Heschel's concept of pathos and sympathy as a media of revelation.
CHAPTER VI

THE COVENANT OF JEREMIAH

Another important covenant which determined the destiny of the nation Israel was the covenant with Jeremiah. It contained the prophecy of a new covenant which would condition the life of Israel in the new kingdom. The covenant was to be the basis of their plans for the reconstruction of their nation or the constitution of redeemed Israel. The covenant was new from the standpoint of superseding the Mosaic Covenant that Israel had broken, yet it included the Mosaic commandments. It did not alter or conflict with the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants but it continued the tradition of emphasis upon the Messiah, Son of David.

In the present chapter, the Covenant of Jeremiah will be presented noting such factors as the purpose of the covenant, the influence of the New Covenant on the prophetic message, the nature of the covenant, and the provisions of the covenant. The New Covenant will be considered with special attention given to its foundation and the contrast of the Old and New Covenants in Hebrews. Table III, page 82 will be presented as a comparative study of the original Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34 with the confirmations in Isaiah 61:8-9 and Ezekiel 37:21-28; and with the New Covenant in Hebrews...
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**Basis of the Covenant.** The foundation of the New Covenant predicted by Jeremiah was found within the nature of Jehovah. It was only through His divine forgiveness that the mutuality of the covenant can be preserved—Israel had broken the covenant relationship and by means of forgiveness, God will uphold the divine promise to protect and preserve Israel.

The divine forgiveness of Jehovah was a result of his everlasting love which not only included the past but extends into eternity as well. Jehovah's everlasting love for Israel was assured in Jeremiah 31:3 when he said:

*Jehovah appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.*

Israel was loved then in spite of their evil and their numerous rejections of Jehovah. This everlasting love prevailed in spite of their unworthiness and Israel could yet inherit all that Jehovah had determined for them.

Jehovah never failed to keep his promises in the covenant and always within the covenant He was the One who stood more sure than the ordinances of heaven. Jeremiah's faith rested in such a God who never broke covenants and who was
able to accomplish His purpose. It was upon this faith that
Jeremiah prophesied of a New Covenant with Israel when the
nation was crumbling around him.

**Purpose of the Covenant.** The purpose of the covenant
with Jeremiah was to reveal the development of God's redem-
tive purpose in the history of Israel. This redemptive or
Messianic purpose, which was the hope of the ancient people of
Israel, and the theme of the prophets became more distinctly
unfolded in Jeremiah's prediction of a New Covenant. The un-
derlying purpose was the announcement of the coming of the
real Messiah while the former religion of Israel was only a
type or shadow-picture of Him. The covenant with Jeremiah
predicted a new covenant which would supplant the old, thus
proving that the Old Testament anticipated the end of the
temporary Mosaic Covenant.

The immediate purpose of the covenant was the neces-
sity of establishing a new covenant with Israel in order to
preserve a remnant of the nation. Israel had broken the Old
Covenant which was conditional and now ineffective. It was
not from the standpoint that Israel had broken the covenant,
but it was the fact that God had established a relationship
with His people. He didn't alter this relationship which was
based upon his unchangeable faithfulness to the covenant, but
made a new covenant; thus disposing of the broken one.
The purpose of Jeremiah's prediction was not of reform but of revolution or the changing of existing conditions. Jeremiah believed that the remnant of Israel would not perish, that the land would be restored, and that there would be a return of the people. Jeremiah emphasized the fact that God had been faithful to the covenant, regardless of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. The covenant had been a reality, but the Israelites had broken it. Gehman\(^1\) related that God could have legally deserted Israel, but he remained faithful even giving them a new chance—this was evidence of his steadfast love.

The influence of the New Covenant on the Prophetic message. Prophecy may be defined as revelation from God in its strictest sense whether it is in the form of prediction or didactic teaching. Concerning the use of prophecy in Scripture, Rodrick Campbell related:

Prophecy forms one of the great highways of revelation which, like the covenants, bind all parts of the sacred records into one organic whole. The various strands of prophecy can be traced from the Old to the New as they converge at the Cross and then branch out into the several departments of New Covenant reality.\(^2\)

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\(^1\) Henry Gehman, "An Insight and a Realization," *Interpretation*, IX (July, 1955), 286.

The central theme and purpose of prophecy was the plan of redemption in history which culminated in the Advent of the Messiah. It was in the prophetic message that we find the most complete interpretation of the Messianic Hope. They speak with confidence concerning a Messiah who will be both servant and king, and a descendant of the house of David.

The prophets were faced with the problem of the broken covenant and what God was going to do about it. The real problem was how to reconcile God's righteousness with his steadfast covenant-love. The prophets realized Israel's apostasy and their need of repentance which could only be brought about by God's unswerving love for them.

The eighth century prophets did not stress the covenant by name, but Amos dealt especially with the requirements of God. He maintained that God chose Israel in a unique way and following the choice, there were certain specific requirements as in Amos 3:2:

You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities.

Amos was called to urge Israel to repentance and while he predicts only a slender hope for them, he does not even discuss Judah. He does not mention Jehovah's sure love which will not let them go, but he was almost certain that they would go into captivity. Amos seemed sure of their complete
doom yet he mentioned that Jehovah would not utterly destroy the house of Jacob and there would be a final restoration of God's people. 3

While Amos dealt with God's requirements in the covenant, Hosea emphasized God's faithfulness or persistent love toward the covenant people. He represented Israel's relation to God in the symbol of the marriage bond. Because of his own domestic experience, he knew to a certain extent, about God's steadfast determination to remain faithful to the covenant obligations—he also knew about God's love for Israel regardless of her unfaithfulness. Israel had broken the marriage covenant with Jehovah but He would again win her with his steadfast love—thus, there was a need of a new and sounder covenant. 4

In Hosea's prophecy there is a personal note in his relation to God. The Messiah will not only be known for His outward appearing but by His inward and spiritual appearing.

As Hosea had learned of Jehovah's love for Israel through his rejected love for Gomer, so Jeremiah who was friendless, knew about Jehovah's undying love for Israel and His reluctance to let them go, even though the covenant was

4 Cf. Hosea 8:7-8; 11:7, 8; 14:1, 2, 4, 9.
broken.

Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel were faced with the problem of the need of Israel's repentance when their whole national structure was crumbling. Jeremiah solved this solution of their apostasy by pointing to the New Covenant which God would make with Israel. He believed that even though Israel would not turn to God, yet God was able to find a way in which unrepentant Israel could turn. Jeremiah seemed to anticipate the New Covenant more clearly than any of the other Old Testament prophets.⁵

Although Ezekiel followed the influence of Jeremiah, he did not stress the covenant idea. To him the breaking of the covenant at Sinai emphasized the faithlessness of the people. However, there was a future aspect of the covenant mentioned in Ezekiel 37:21-26 where he referred to the final realization of the covenant blessings through Jehovah's faithfulness. He also emphasized the importance of the relationship of God in the New Covenant, for even though the Temple and their nation have been destroyed, God still remains.

Unlike Amos, Isaiah did not believe that the nation would be utterly destroyed, but he believed in the eternity of the Davidic line. He did not think of the covenant as a

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new one but rather as a "revitalized covenant." This was concluded from his statement in Isaiah 50:1 where he related that Israel and God have not been divorced but it was only a temporary estrangement.

It was through the prophet Isaiah that the covenant was more profoundly unfolded in the idea of the Servant. In fact Gehman said, "The Servant becomes the covenant itself, or the embodiment of the covenant." This was based upon Isaiah's words in 42:6:

And I will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people.

Isaiah traced the idea of the vicarious suffering of the Servant to an exalted King who will rule the covenant people; thus connecting the covenant idea with the Messianic hope.

Nature of the Covenant. According to Jeremiah the covenant will be new in comparison with the old covenant or the Sinaitic. It was new from the standpoint that it superseded in character and in form, yet it was still the same in substance, which was embodied in the words, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people," (Exodus 29:45).


It was a covenant made specifically with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. It shall be an everlasting covenant yet it is conditional from the standpoint that the promises require obedience.

The New and Old Covenants contrasted. The author of Hebrews maintained that the prediction of the New Covenant automatically made the first one old and further stated in Hebrews 8:13 that the first was "becoming old" and "is nigh unto vanishing away." The old refers to the covenant which God made with the emancipated posterity of Abraham on Mt. Sinai while the New Covenant shall be made with the new Israel.

The Sinai Covenant formed the constitutional basis of the Israelite nation. It contained the ten commandments, the judgments, and the ordinances which govern the life of Israel. The New Covenant was also made to condition the life of the new Israel, but it was not an external form of detailed ceremonies nor a group of laws which were to be observed outwardly. The difference was that the will of God was expressed externally to the people, determined by limitations and necessities of time and place, while in the New Covenant, it will be an internal principle.

The Sinaitic Covenant was conditional from the standpoint that it was a mutual compact--Jehovah would be their God and establish Israel's destiny if she obeyed Him. Israel broke the
covenant rendering it ineffective and necessitating a New Covenant. It was thus a temporary covenant as compared to the new one, which will endure forever.

Both are primarily redemptive covenants. Although the Old Covenant was a symbol, there was merit in it to the extent that it was acceptable to God when there was faith and conformity. The covenant at Sinai was only a projected shadow of the new and all looked forward to a new and better covenant which has its fulfillment in Christ.

The Remnant. Jeremiah prophesied that the New Covenant would be made with the house of Israel, and Judah. The Jews in the Old Testament understood this to refer to Israel while the concept of the prophets was a remnant meaning "residue." Jeremiah believed that Judah was doomed to captivity, yet a remnant would survive. In Jeremiah 23:3, there is the idea of restoration while in 42:15, 19, the remnant seemed to refer to those who escaped deportation.

Isaiah's idea of the remnant was that a remnant would be saved and return. The remnant would not rely upon other nations, but there would be repentance and Jehovah would save them. The remnant was to be separated as "grapes are gathered" or as "an olive tree is shaken," which indicated that only a little of the fruit would be left. He believed that the hope of the remnant was no longer in the nation but in a
pure and cleansed people of God within the nation. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel expressed the same idea that the new covenanted community would be the people of God.

The provisions of the covenant of Jeremiah. The first promise was that Jehovah would put his law within them and would write it upon their hearts. Jeremiah was the first of the prophets to emphasize the condition of the heart as the source of conduct. Israel was urged to receive the law, presented to him externally, into his heart, but it was an impossibility when he had not first received it within his heart.

The inward law was in definite contrast with the external laws in the Old Covenant which were written on tables of stone. It would no longer consist of outward ordinances of the will of God but it would become an internal principle of life. It would produce willing conformity to the laws of God because it was implanted into the heart by the Spirit of God as in II Corinthians 3:3 where Paul related:

Being made manifest that ye are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh.

There would be a disposition of will which would comply to the will and purpose of God; and a willing obedience toward the laws which are a result of God's righteousness.

The second promise was that Jehovah would be their God
and they would be his people. It was based upon God's faithful love toward Israel and it was the central theme of all the covenants, although the means of effecting the covenants differed. The promise included restoration and then establishment again in the divine favor of God.

The third promise reads, "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah." Isaiah also referred to a similar time when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9). The prophets were predicting that there would be an immediate and direct access to God. Human mediation would no longer be necessary—they would not be bound to the temple and priests nor to a people and country.

They would not be dependent upon an external code for their knowledge but they would receive knowledge of God based upon an inner experience of the heart. The word, know, refers to the idea of "knowing about Jehovah" under the Old Covenant, but in the New, they would actually experience knowing Him, or knowing Christ as Lord.

The promise does not infer that the practice of teaching should be excluded, but it does point out the superiority of the New Covenant as compared to the knowledge of God under the Old Covenant.
In the final promise, Jehovah will forgive their iniquity, and he will no longer remember their sin. The foundation of the New Covenant was to be complete forgiveness of all sin which originated in the mercy and grace of God. The forgiveness of their iniquity was made possible through the death of Christ and it is through Him that their sin shall no longer be remembered by God.

Chart III, page 82, relates the promises as they were given in the original covenant recorded in Jeremiah 31:31-34. They were confirmed in Isaiah 61:8-9, Ezekiel 37:21-28, and Hebrews 8:8-13. The four promises were given to Jeremiah in a dream in which the essence was an inward central union with God.

Isaiah emphasized the extension of the covenant when he related that all observers shall know that God has blessed the seed of Israel. (Isaiah 61:8-9). He related that the covenant would be everlasting.

Although the promises are implicit in the original covenant and basically the same in Ezekiel, yet they enlarge and enrich the original covenant. Israel was to be restored under one nation and king. They are to live forever in the restored land and they not only shall be known as a nation blessed of God, but they shall have an everlasting covenant of peace. This everlasting covenant prophesied by Jeremiah
reached its fulfillment in the New Covenant.

The New Covenant. The term kaine diathke, "new covenant," meaning new in the sense of quality is used only five times according to the best texts of the New Testament. The five direct references are found in Luke 22:20; I Corinthians 11:25; II Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 8:18; and Hebrews 9:15.8

The New Covenant is considered among the gracious covenants from the standpoint that it originated in the grace and love of God, and because He has provided the surety for the covenant obligations. Another characteristic was that it was eternal and inviolable. God shall always remain faithful to the covenant and it shall be brought to fulfillment. The New Covenant was universal for it extended to all nations, and although it was given first to the Jews, it was not given to them alone. It was a particular covenant from the standpoint that it would not be realized universally, but in individual believers. The covenant was conditional on the basis that the believer does not merit the blessings of the covenant without faith and obedience.

Foundation of the New Covenant. The foundation of the New Covenant was the sacrifice of Christ, which was confirmed

8 Mayer, op. cit., p. 136.
by Christ in Matthew 26:27-28:

And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins.

Other passages which deal with the central aspect are: Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; I Corinthians 11:25; Hebrews 9:11, 12; and Hebrews 8:6-13. The sacrifice of Christ for man's sin was acceptable unto God; thus, making possible a new covenant relationship.

The promises of the New Covenant. The main promise, "I will be thy God" was a promise of divine fellowship and included all others, such as justification, adoption, and eternal life; There was also the promise of the blessings of salvation and the final promise of glorification in eternal life. The specific provision is the forgiveness of sins made possible by the atonement of Christ.

Contrast of the Old and New Covenants in Hebrews. The author of Hebrews contrasted the Old and New Covenants by emphasizing the perfection of Christ's atonement in comparison with the material and typical sacrifices.

First, He is greater than Moses who was the earthly mediator of the Old Covenant, and than Aaron who was the high priest. He willingly took upon Himself the consequences of sin and shed his blood for the remission of sins. Through his
sacrifice he entered "once for all" into the holy place, obtaining eternal redemption—"for this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant" (Hebrews 9:15a). Thus, he was not only the sacrifice upon which the covenant was founded, but his blood was the ratification and he is the mediator of it.

He was greater than the sacrifices which were the means of salvation in the Old Covenant. His death also secured redemption for those under the Old Covenant for the sacrifices were considered types of Christ and there was forgiveness only in anticipation of a greater sacrifice.

In reference to the salvation of the Old Covenant, Sauer9 related that Christ is greater than the covenant itself. In the New Covenant, "Christ makes the sovereignty an inward rule, the prophetic office universal, and the priesthood perfect."10

**Individual Covenant-Relationship.** A number of the covenants are made primarily with the Israelite nation, but there is the principle of individual covenant relationship which was first realized in the Abrahamic Covenant. Personal righteousness was imputed to Abraham as an individual and then to his pos-

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10 Ibid.
terity according to their faith. When David sinned, his relationship with God was destroyed until he was restored by confession. In the New Covenant, salvation is provided for every believer through the mediation of Christ in which there is personal fellowship between God and the Individual.

Conditions. There is the idea of mutuality in the covenant-relationship; God makes certain divine promises and the individual is required to meet the obligations. The covenant promises are conditional upon the believer's faith and obedience. An example of the conditional aspect of a life of faith may be found in the Palestinian Covenant which dealt with the right of enjoyment of the land and set forth the principle of choosing life or death:

See, I have set before thee this day life, and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love Jehovah thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his ordinances, that thou mayest live and multiply, and that Jehovah thy God, may bless thee in the land whither thou goest in to possess it.

But if thy heart turn away, and thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish; ye shall not prolong your days in the land, whither thou passest over the Jordan to go in to possess it.

I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse: therefore, choose life, that thou mayest live.11

11 Deuteronomy 30:15-19.
The promises can only be obtained through faith and the choosing of life. Salvation is possible to the believer through his faith in God. Another aspect was the place of blessing—the promises were not obtained until they entered the land. The covenant relationship was maintained then by dwelling in the place of blessing and by obedience to the will of God.

The believer's choice of life by faith resulted in a personal fellowship and relationship with God. The personal relationship with God was maintained by a holy walk before Him which creates a responsibility.

The responsibility of the believer was related by Ezekiel 3:16-21 and 33:2-9 where Ezekiel has been appointed by God to be a watchman over Israel. It was his duty to warn the people of the coming judgment and the danger threatening them. As an appointed watchman, it was Ezekiel's responsibility to warn the wicked and the unrighteous that they might have life. If he failed in this responsibility, the sinner would die and Ezekiel would be accounted as a murderer before God. But if he fulfilled these obligations which God had commanded him, he has saved his soul.

It is therefore the first responsibility of the individual who has entered into covenant relationship with God to emphasize the obedience of faith. As a result, he is respon-
sible for speaking the truth faithfully. It is a twofold obligation in which he must call sinners to repentance and care for the righteous. The covenant relationship with God is thus conditional upon man's faith and obedience to His will.

Summary. The general purpose of the Covenant with Jeremiah has been related as the revealing of God's redemptive purpose and the immediate purpose was the need of a new covenant in order to preserve a remnant of the nation. The central theme of the prophetic message has been the prophecy of the Advent of the Messiah. The emphasis upon an inner spiritual life of the New Covenant has been contrasted with the external features of the Old Covenant. The New Covenant has been founded upon the sacrifice of Christ and has been contrasted in Hebrews from the standpoint of Christ's perfect and better sacrifice with the old and typical sacrifices. The individual covenant relationship has been presented with its emphasis upon obedience and responsibility.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary. A survey has been made in this study of the main theories of the historical origins of the covenant with a detailed discussion of the primitive Arabic covenants. Some of the main primitive covenants are: the blood covenants, the common meal, the covenant of salt, and eating and drinking together. Theories concerning the purpose of the covenant have been related as the production of blood relationship, identity of individuals, and conditional imprecations. The two classes of covenants are those between men, and those between God and men.

The general meaning of covenant has been defined as a solomonic and binding agreement. The term berith has been defined from its usage in the original language and in other translations. The vocabulary for berith was traced in its usage in the translation of the Old Testament.

A study has been made of the Abrahamic Covenant relating the theophanies, the purpose, the conditions, the promises, and the ratification. It has been a mutual covenant involving both demand and promise and conditional upon the faith of Abraham. The promises which were given to Abraham, his posterity, and the Gentiles included: a great nation, a great
posterity, a great name, a great blessing, a great alliance, a great defense, and a great influence. The covenant was ratified by a blood sacrifice in which the presence of God in a symbol passed between the pieces of the sacrifice.

A study of the Davidic Covenant has included the purpose, the conditions, the promises, the ratification, and a general fulfillment of the promises. The promises which were given to David and his posterity included an everlasting house, and an everlasting throne and kingdom. The conditional element in the Davidic Covenant was the warning of chastisement if there was disobedience. The covenant was ratified by a covenant of salt.

A comparative study of the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants has been made by noting similarities and contrasts. They have been considered from the standpoint of description, characteristics, and from the application of Heschel's concept of pathos and sympathy.

The Covenant of Jeremiah has been presented for the purpose of revealing God's redemptive purpose and the immediate need of a New Covenant in order to preserve a remnant of Israel. The influence of the New Covenant on the prophetic message has been noted along with the nature of the covenant, and the provisions. The New Covenant has also been considered from the idea of its foundation and the contrast
of the Old and New Covenant in Hebrews has been related. It has been concluded with the presentation of the individual covenant relationship based upon Deuteronomy 30:15-20 and Ezekiel 3:16-21 and 33:2-9.

Limitations of Study. A study of all the historical covenants recorded in the Old and New Testaments should be made in order to present a more thorough study of the covenant idea. A more comprehensive study of the Sinai Covenant would aid in understanding the legal aspect of the covenant.

A complete survey of the prophecies of all the covenants including the New Covenant in regard to their fulfillment would be significant in the study of eschatology.

An exhaustive study of all relating Scriptures referring to the covenants would be a helpful study in confirming the fulfillment of the prophecies.

A study of Old Testament Theology based upon the covenants would be significant, noting such factors as the covenant relationship between God and man, the election of Israel, and the renewing of the covenant.

Conclusions. The conclusions of this study include the following factors:

1. The general meaning of the word, covenant, is an agreement of a solemn and binding force entered into between
individuals, nations, or between God and men for a special purpose. The term berith has the meaning of "covenant" with the significance of a covenant which binds. It is derived from the Hebrew word karat, which has been borrowed from the Arabian language. It has the meaning "to cut" which has the significance of cutting up and distributing the flesh of the victim for eating the sacrifice of the covenant. The meaning of berith in the Greek translations is ordinarily diatheka meaning "covenant." In the Old Testament usage, berith is translated as covenant nearly three hundred and thirty times.

2. The covenant in the Old Testament was modified considerably from the original ideas of a covenant. But it seems possible that the covenant idea of the Hebrew religion may have been borrowed from a primitive religious tradition; for the Hebrew religion would not begin a new system entirely without contact with some of the older religious instincts and practices. Most authors agree that there is a complexity of thought concerning the primitive origins of the covenant and that one special theory does not interpret all the various covenants in the Old Testament. The most likely theory is that the covenant idea originated in the primitive Arabian blood covenant, but the various covenants of the Old Testament may have also imbibed some of the culture of the Canaan-
ites and from the same source as the Hittites.

Of the various primitive covenants, the blood covenant and the common meal seem to be the most outstanding. The primitive covenant contained both the idea of mutual identity and of a conditional curse, but many times it implied only faith to the object of the covenant. The central idea of the primitive covenants was ordinarily for the purpose of communion.

God's covenant with man may be summarized in the words of Fallows, "a gracious engagement on the part of God to communicate certain unmerited favors to men, in connection with a particular constitution or system, through means of which these favors are to be enjoyed."

3. The history of the salvation of Israel began with the covenant of Abraham. The covenant was made with Abraham for the purpose of selecting a people or nation to be the media of God's revelation, and through which the Redeemer would come. Israel was chosen as a result of God's election love and not through any merit of their own. It was a conditional covenant from the standpoint that it was mutual—the promises of God were conditioned upon Abraham's faith and obedience. The promises were given especially to the seed of Abraham and the main emphasis was upon the promise of the land. The rite of circumcision was the sign which was designed not

1 Fallows, loc. cit.
only to identify the recipients of the covenant, but also as a concrete indication that the covenant existed. The covenant with Abraham has been fulfilled in a literal sense in the Old Testament in which the numerous posterity of Abraham inherited the land, but they were later dispersed from it because of unfaithfulness to the covenant. In a spiritual sense, the covenant includes all believers and comprises the Christian Church today.

4. The covenant with David involved a king, a throne, and a kingdom with both literal and eternal fulfillment. The purpose of the Davidic Covenant was to establish a perpetual throne through which the Messiah would come. The covenant was unconditional based upon the everlasting promises, and not conditioned by man's faithfulness. The promises were given mainly to the seed of David and the temporal fulfillment centered around Solomon and the line of successive kings. The Davidic Covenant was fulfilled in a literal sense in Christ as a descendant of David. There was a spiritual fulfillment in His eternal reign which is now invisible.

5. A comparative study of the two covenants reveal that both were established that God might reveal his will to man, which was achieved through the anticipation of redemption. The immediate cause of the Abrahamic was to establish a chosen people through which the Messiah was anticipated, while the
Davidic was to establish an everlasting throne through which the Messiah would come.

Both covenants contained the general promise of the anticipation of the Redeemer. The details of the covenants differed in relation to the occasions, the theophanies, and the ratifications. The main elements of the promises differed with the Abrahamic emphasizing land, posterity, and a nation; while the Davidic included a kingdom, posterity, and a throne.

One of the contrasting factors was the universalism of the Abrahamic Covenant which extended beyond the chosen people and included all who would believe. The Davidic was more particularistic in that it was narrowed down to the Davidic line. Another factor was the conditionalism of the Abrahamic Covenant in contrast to the unconditional element of the Davidic where the promises are everlasting.

6. Heschel's concept of pathos and sympathy applied to the covenants indicated the similarities of both the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants in regard to the emotional relationship between God, the covenant leaders, and the covenant people. It indicated that God initiated the covenants and through a personal relationship reveals his will to man.

7. The covenant with Jeremiah was a prophecy concerning a new covenant as the basis of a redeemed Israel.
The covenant was considered new in relation to the Sinai Covenant which Israel had broken, and was no longer effective. The basis of the covenant is found in Jehovah’s forgiveness, which finds its source in His everlasting love. The immediate purpose of the New Covenant was to preserve a remnant of the nation.

The central theme of the prophetic message was the prophecy concerning the Coming of the Messiah. The New Covenant was founded upon the sacrifice of Christ, which was a perfect and better sacrifice, than the old and typical sacrifices. The covenant emphasized an inner spiritual life in contrast with the external features of the Old Covenant.

8. There is a principle of individual covenant relationship in which the promises are conditional upon the believer’s faith and obedience. An example of this relationship is found in the Palestinian Covenant in which the believer may choose life by faith with the result of a personal relationship with God. The choosing of life creates a responsibility, which may be compared to Ezekiel who was appointed as a watchman over Israel. If he failed in this responsibility, he would be held accountable and lose his own soul.

9. In conclusion of the comparative study, it would seem that the covenants between God and His people are in reality only one covenant, whether they are made with Abra-
ham or with David. The form and details may differ, but the covenant contains the same elements of demand and promise:

"Ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."
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B. BOOKS: PARTS OF SERIES


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