

The Creation Covenant

Introduction: Is there a **covenant** between God and Adam and Eve in the creation account in Genesis 1-3? Some say no. Others say there's a "Covenant of Works," and some of these see the Mosaic Covenant at a "**republication**" of this Covenant of Works.

Define "**Biblical Theology**" and "**Covenant**"

1. Creation of the World

1.1. Realms

Location

1. Light and dark
2. Sea and sky
3. Fertile earth

Inhabitants

4. Lights of day and night
5. Fish and birds
6. Land animals (including mankind)

7. Rest and enjoyment¹

1.2. Sabbath as Goal of Creation

"For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. Therefore, **a Sabbath** rest **remains** for God's people. For the person who has entered his rest has rested from his own works, just as God did from his. Let us, then, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall into the same pattern of disobedience." (Heb 4:8-11)

Define "**Typology**" → the **first marriage** is a type as well!

2. Adamic Commission

¹ Crossway Bibles. (2008). [The ESV Study Bible](#) (p. 50). Crossway Bibles.

“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth.’ So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female. God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth’.” (Gen 1:26-27)

“Let us make man” = Heavenly Council (see Job 1) → Invisible Realm

2.1. Image of God

“Thus the image is physical and yet goes far beyond being merely physical. This is an interpretation that allows for the physical aspect of ‘image’ but results in an emphasis such that the character of humans in ruling the world is what represents God.”²

The Son of God was/is “the image of the invisible God,” even before he came in the flesh as Jesus of Nazareth. “Angel of Yahweh”

“The grammar reveals that man rules as a result of being made as the divine image; ruling is not the essence of the image itself.”³

“and put on the new humanity created according to God in righteousness and holiness which derives from the truth” Eph 4:24

“and have put on the new humanity that is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created it” Col 3:10

2.2. Son of God

Luke 3:38. Designates familial relationship to God with responsibilities. Compare Israel and David as “son”. The Egyptian Pharaohs were called sons of God.

² Gentry, P. J., & Wellum, S. J. (2015). [God's Kingdom through God's Covenants: A Concise Biblical Theology](#) (p. 84). Crossway.

³ Gentry, P. J., & Wellum, S. J. (2015). [God's Kingdom through God's Covenants: A Concise Biblical Theology](#) (p. 84). Crossway.

2.3. Servant King

“what is a human being that you remember him, a son of man that you look after him? You made him **little less than God** and crowned him with glory and honor. You made him **ruler** over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet: all the sheep and oxen, as well as the animals in the wild, the birds of the sky, and the fish of the sea that pass through the currents of the seas.” Ps 8:4-8 (compare **Hebrew 2:5-8**)

2.4. Priest

“The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to **work** it and **watch** over it.” Gen 2:15

“It is striking that here and in the priestly law these two terms are juxtaposed (Num 3:7–8; 8:26; 18:5–6), another pointer to the interplay of tabernacle and Eden symbolism already noted”⁴

“You are to **guard** the sanctuary and the altar so that wrath may not fall on the Israelites again. Look, I have selected your fellow Levites from the Israelites as a gift for you, assigned by the Lord to **work** at the tent of meeting.” (Num 18:5-6)

“**Be fruitful**, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it” is repeated similarly to **Noah, Abraham, Israel**, and (promised) to **David**. In this Adamic Commission, it implies extending the rule of God (Kingdom) to the whole earth by **placing images** of him everywhere!

“The eleven disciples traveled to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped, but some doubted. Jesus came near and said to them, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and **make disciples of all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matt 28:16-20)

⁴ Wenham, G. J. (1987). [Genesis 1–15](#) (Vol. 1, p. 67). Word, Incorporated.

“You have already heard about this hope in the word of truth, the gospel that has come to you. It is **bearing fruit** and **growing** all over the **world**, just as it has among you since the day you heard it and came to truly appreciate God’s grace. (Col 1: 5b-6)

“We are asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, so that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: **bearing fruit** in every good work and **growing** in the knowledge of God” (Col 1:9b-10)

G K **Beale** notes the connect between the Adamic Commission and Paul’s description of the fruitfulness of the Gospel in Colossian 1.⁵

Gen. 1:28

Col. 1:6, 10

“**Increase** [*auxanō*] and “**in all the world** [*panti tō multiply* [*plēthynō*] and *kosmō*] also it [the word of fill the earth ... and rule truth, the gospel] is **bear-** over ... **all the earth** **ing fruit** [*karpophoreō*] and [*pasēs tēs gēs*].” (LXX) **increasing** [*auxanō*]” (1:6)

“**Be fruitful** and multiply, “in every good work **bear-** and fill the earth ... and **ing fruit** [*karpophoreō*] and rule ... the earth.” (MT) **increasing** [*auxanō*]” (1:10)

Note that **Gen. 1:26** has “rule over ... **all the earth**” in both **LXX** and **MT** (also, “all the earth” appears in **Gen. 1:29**).

⁵ Beale, G. K. (2007). [Colossians](#). In *Commentary on the New Testament use of the Old Testament* (p. 842). Baker Academic; Apollos.

3. Garden of Eden

3.1. Kingdom of God

3.2. Promised Land

“Say to them, ‘This is what the Lord God says: On the day I chose Israel, I swore an oath to the descendants of Jacob’s house and made myself known to them in the land of Egypt. I swore to them, saying, “I am the Lord your God.” On that day I swore to them that I would bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land I had searched out for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most beautiful of all lands.” (Ezek 20:5-6)

3.3. Temple

“He carved all the surrounding temple walls with carved engravings—cherubim, palm trees, and flower blossoms—in the inner and outer sanctuaries. He overlaid the temple floor with gold in both the inner and the outer sanctuaries.” (1 Kings 6:29-30).

3.4. Jesus

“Jesus answered, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up in three days.” Therefore the Jews said, “This temple took forty-six years to build, and will you raise it up in three days?” But he was speaking about the temple of his body.” (Jn 2:19-21)

3.5. Church

“So, then, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints, and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole building, being put together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you are also being built together for God’s dwelling in the Spirit.” (Eph 2:19-22)

3.6. New Jerusalem

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I also saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice from the throne: Look, God’s dwelling is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and will be their God.” (Rev. 21:1-3)

“The one who spoke with me had a golden measuring rod to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. The city is laid out in a square; its length and width are the same. He measured the city with the rod at 12,000 stadia. Its length, width, and height are equal.” (Rev. 21:15–16)

“He prepared the inner sanctuary inside the temple to put the ark of the LORD’s covenant there. The interior of the sanctuary was thirty feet long, thirty feet wide, and thirty feet high; he overlaid it with pure gold. He also overlaid the cedar altar.” (I Kings 6:19-20)

“I did not see a temple in it, because the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.” (Rev 21:22).

4. Serpent

“So the great dragon was thrown out—the ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the one who deceives the whole world. He was thrown to earth, and his angels with him.” (Rev 12:9)

4.1. Principalities and Powers

“When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. But the LORD’s portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage” (Deut 32:8-9).

“When mankind began to multiply on the earth and daughters were born to them, the **sons of God** saw that the **daughters of mankind** were beautiful, and they took any they chose as wives for themselves. [snip] The Nephilim were on the earth both in those days and afterward, when the sons of God came to the daughters of mankind, who bore children to them. They were the powerful men of old, the famous men.” (Gen 6:1-2, 4).

“But the **prince of the kingdom of Persia** opposed me for twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me after I had been left there with the kings of Persia” (Dan 10:13).

“He said, ‘Do you know why I’ve come to you? I must return at once to fight against the **prince of Persia**, and when I leave, the **prince of Greece** will come.’” (Dan 10:30).

“For our struggle is not against **flesh and blood**, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heavens” (Eph 6:12).

4.2. Angels are Watching

“This grace was given to me—the least of all the saints—to proclaim to the Gentiles the incalculable riches of Christ, and to shed light for all about the administration of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things. This is so that God’s multi-faceted wisdom may now **be made known through the church to the rulers and authorities in the heavens**” (Eph 3:8-10).

“It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you. These things have now been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—**angels long to catch a glimpse of these things**” (1 Pet 1:12b).

“Don’t neglect to show hospitality, for by doing this some have **welcomed angels** as guests without knowing it” (Heb 13:2).

5. Life and Death

5.1. Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

“The best explanation to date is that of W. M. Clark, who carefully analyzed all the occurrences of the phrase in the Hebrew Bible and showed that the ‘knowledge of good and evil’ has to do with the exercise of **absolute moral autonomy**.”⁶

5.2. Tree of Life

“There are many intertextual links in the Canon to the tree of life as well. See Proverbs 3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4; Ezekiel. 47:12; etc.”⁷

“Let anyone who has ears to hear listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers, I will give the right to eat from the **tree of life**, which is in the **paradise** of God” (Rev 2:7b).

“Then he showed me the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the city’s main street. The **tree of life** was on each side of the river, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree are for **healing** the nations, and there will **no longer** be any **curse**. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will worship him” (Rev 22:1-2)

5.3. Original Sin

5.3.1. Impact on Adam and Eve

Lost fellowship with God and brought **misery** and **death** upon themselves, especially eternal death.

⁶ Gentry, P. J., & Wellum, S. J. (2015). *God’s Kingdom through God’s Covenants: A Concise Biblical Theology* (p. 91). Crossway.

⁷ Gentry, Peter J.; Wellum, Stephen J.. *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*. Crossway. Kindle Edition.

5.3.2. Impact of Adam's Descendants

“Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way **death spread to all people**, because all sinned” (Rom 5:12).

“So then, as through **one trespass** there is **condemnation** for everyone, so also through one righteous act there is justification leading to life for everyone” (Rom 5:18a).

5.3.3. Impact on Creation

“For the creation eagerly waits with anticipation for God’s sons to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to **futility**—not willingly, but because of him who subjected it—in the hope that the creation itself will also be set free from the **bondage to decay** into the glorious freedom of God’s children. For we know that the whole creation has been **groaning** together with labor pains until now.” (Rom 8:19-22).

6. Protoevangelium

“I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between **your offspring** and **her offspring**. He will strike your **head**, and you will strike his heel” (Gen 1:15).

“The life and death struggle between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent is **the plot** conflict that informs the whole of the biblical narrative. The serpent has instigated sin and incurred a curse, and man has transgressed but heard words of God that indicate that the tempter will be defeated, suggesting that not only sin but also the consequences of sin (death and banishment from God’s presence, which are different ways of saying the same thing) will be overcome”⁸

6.1. The Last Adam, the Seed of the Woman

⁸ Hamilton, J. M., Jr. (2022). *Typology: Understanding the Bible's Promise-Shaped Patterns: How Old Testament Expectations are Fulfilled in Christ* (pp. 9–10). Zondervan Academic.

“Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way **death spread to all people**, because all sinned. In fact, sin was in the world before the law, but sin is not charged to a person’s account when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam’s transgression. **He is a type of the Coming One**” (Rom 5:12-14).

“For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive” (1 Cor 15:22).

“So it is written, The **first man Adam** became a living being; the **last Adam** became a life-giving spirit” (1 Cor 15:45).

“The **first man** was from the earth, a man of dust; the **second man** is from heaven. Like the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; like the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven” (I Cor 15:47-49).

6.2. Adam Figures

“The **commission to Adam** and Eve to multiply their offspring and to rule, subdue, and “fill the earth” was **passed on to Noah** and then repeatedly to the **patriarchs** and **Israel**. Consequently, the mantle of Adam’s responsibility was placed on **Abraham** and his seed, Israel, so that they were considered to be a **‘corporate Adam.’** The nation was designed to represent true humanity. Starting with the patriarchs, the commission was mixed with a promise that it would be fulfilled at some point in a **‘seed,’** but **Israel failed** to carry out the commission. Thus, the promise was continually made that an **eschatological** time would come when this commission would **be carried out in Israel**. That part of the commission to **expand Eden** to cover the whole earth also continued, but now Israel’s **land** became conceived of as **Israel’s Eden.**”⁹

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⁹ Beale, G. K. (2011). [*A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New*](#) (p. 752). Baker Academic.

“... a common way to distinguish the biblical covenants is to employ the unconditional-unilateral (royal grant) versus conditional-bilateral (suzerain-vassal) distinction. We dissent from this thinking, since elements of both are blended together throughout the covenants. In fact, we contend that it is precisely due to this blend that there is a deliberate tension within the covenants—a tension that is heightened as the covenants progress toward their fulfilment in Christ and a tension that is important in grounding Christ’s active obedience.”¹⁰

¹⁰ Gentry, Peter J.; Wellum, Stephen J.. Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants . Crossway. Kindle Edition.