



Unit 4: Disciple of Christ

Live life as a disciple of Christ and intentionally make disciples for the glory of God.

Lesson 5 Davidic Covenant

Day One

Mosaic Covenant Continued

In the last lesson, we learned that a *covenant* or testament is an agreement, promise, pledge, or treaty made between two parties to bind them together. The two sides can be either equal or unequal in power, strength, or authority.

God designed covenants to communicate His spiritual and divine intentions in a way that people could understand. His covenant system serves as a powerful means to guide humanity toward joyful and holy living. There are seven major covenants in the Bible. So far we have studied four—the Edenic Covenant, the Adamic Covenant, Noahic Covenant, and Abrahamic Covenant. We also began exploring the fifth, the Mosaic Covenant.

For clarity and structure, we divided the Mosaic Covenant into three parts. First, we examined the Ten Commandments, which Moses received directly from God. Second, we looked at the Moral and Social Regulations—wise and compassionate laws or instructions given through Moses. Now we turn to the third part of the Mosaic Covenant: the Levitical Priesthood.

(3) Levitical (Levi) Priesthood

Levi was one of the sons of Jacob—his descendants are identified as the tribe of Levi. Moses and his brother, Aaron, were both from the tribe of Levi. God chose Aaron to be the high priest when He initiated the Mosaic Covenant with its animal sacrifices for sin. The position of the high priest was hereditary and passed on through Aaron's sons. Only a Levite could be a formal priest with temple duties and responsibilities. However, not all men from the tribe of Levi were priests—some served in the temple as musicians, guards, judges, and temple officials.

Read Exodus 19: 5–6 and 1 Peter 2:9 and answer questions 1–2:

“Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, ⁶ you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.” Exodus 19:5–6

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

1 Peter 2:9

Definition: In the Old Testament, *priests* were primarily men responsible for sacrifices and offerings at the tabernacle and Temple. They also discerned God's will, blessed the people, and taught His Word—the Law. In the context of Exodus 19:5–6 and 1 Peter 2:9, *priests* are understood more broadly as spiritual leaders, teachers, and worshipers who serve God fully and declare His praises. This role now applies to faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, our High Priest, who made atonement for our sins and lives to intercede for us.

1. Although the Levites were chosen as formal priests to serve in the temple, what did God desire of all His people, the Israelites (Exodus 19:5–6)?

2. What does God desire of *you* as a Christian and disciple (1 Peter 2:9)?

A high priest was in charge of temple worship. He was to be holy and consecrated to God. As such he was the only one allowed in the Holy of Holies, also known as the Most Holy Place, to make atonement for sin. This was the innermost part of the ancient temple in Jerusalem separated by a curtain or veil from the outer chamber. Entering into this part of the temple meant that one was entering into the very presence of God. The curtain separated a holy God from sinful humanity. It was here that the ark of the covenant—with its holy contents of manna, Aaron's staff that bloomed, and the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments—was housed.

To understand the significance of this priesthood and its rituals, we need to grasp the meaning of atonement.

Definition: In the Old Testament, *atonement* was the process by which people made offerings to God to restore fellowship with Him. A simple way to remember the meaning of atonement is to break the word into parts: at-one-ment. Through *atonement*, people could become “at one” with God. The suffix “ment” indicates a state or condition resulting from a specific action.

In the New Testament, Jesus became the ultimate offering so that we could be fully restored to fellowship with God. Atonement means that because Jesus was the *atoning* sacrifice—He paid the price for our sin—Christians are now one with God. We are reconciled and brought back into a loving, healthy relationship with Him.

“Reconciliation was associated with sacrificial offerings to remove the effects of sin and in the New Testament, refers specifically to the reconciliation between God and humanity effected by the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Primarily in the Old Testament, atonement refers to the process God established whereby humans could make an offering to God to restore fellowship with God. Such offerings, including both live and dead animals, incense, and money, were required to remove the bad effects of human sin.

“The Day of Atonement was the only day of the year that the high priest entered the Holy of Holies to make sin offerings for himself, his family, and the ‘assembly of Israel.’ After making these offerings, the nation’s sins were symbolically laid on the scapegoat ‘Azazel’ that was released into the wilderness to die.”¹

These next verses show how the Old Testament system of atonement points to its fulfillment in Christ.

Read Leviticus 5:5–6 and John 1:29. Answer questions 3–6:

... when anyone becomes aware that they are guilty in any of these matters, they must confess in what way they have sinned. ⁶ As a penalty for the sin they have committed, they must bring to the LORD a female lamb or goat from the flock as a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement for them for their sin. Leviticus 5:5–6

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” John 1:29

3. Under the Mosaic Covenant, how did the people make atonement for their sins (Leviticus: 5:5–6)?

4. In the New Testament, who is the Lamb of God (John 1:29; Revelation 7:17)?

“For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; ‘he will lead them to springs of living water.’ ‘And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.’” Revelation 7:17

5. Why is Jesus called the Lamb of God (John 1:29; 1 Peter 2:24)?

“He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” 1 Peter 2:24

6. What did the Levitical priesthood and its system of sacrifices point forward to?

7. Read Matthew 5:17–18 and Galatians 3:10–13. How did Jesus fulfill (complete) the Mosaic Law and *not* abolish (stop, eliminate) it?

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸ For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.” Matthew 5:17–18

¹ Trent C. Butler, editor, *Holman Bible Dictionary* (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 1991), 128.

For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, as it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.” ¹¹ Clearly no one who relies on the law is justified before God, because “the righteous will live by faith.” ¹² The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, it says, “The person who does these things will live by them.” ¹³ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.” Galatians 3:10-13

8. Read Hebrews 7:23–27 and 1 John 1:9. When you are guilty of sin, what do you do?

Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; ²⁴ but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. ²⁶ Such a high priest truly meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. Hebrews 7:23–27

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers #1–8 with your discipleship team.

You may have noticed that we have been referencing the New Covenant—the seventh covenant—even though we have not yet covered the sixth, the Davidic Covenant. This is because the New Covenant has such a direct impact on our lives today, and we will explore it more thoroughly in the next lesson. Still, it is difficult to study the Mosaic Covenant without looking ahead to Christ—who fulfills both the Old and the New: the Old through His perfect obedience, and the New through His own body, broken and given as the ultimate sacrifice.

Read Hebrews 9:14–15 and answer questions 9–12:

How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! ¹⁵ For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance— now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. Hebrews 9:14–15

Definitions: *Conscience* is a person’s inner sense of right and wrong—a moral awareness that triggers feelings of guilt or shame when one acts against it. *Guilt* has two meanings: (1) being responsible for a wrongdoing or moral offense, and (2) the emotional response—such as shame or remorse—that comes from knowing or believing you have done something wrong. A *mediator* is someone who helps opposing parties resolve a conflict—an intermediary who works toward agreement. To *Mediate* means to step into a dispute with the goal of bringing about resolution or reconciliation.

9. What has the blood of Christ done for you (v. 14)?

10. Are you struggling with a sin that seems to have you in bondage (controlled)? If so, and you feel led by God, briefly share for your discipleship team to pray for you.

11. Who is the mediator of a New Covenant (v. 15)?

12. Why has the Levitical priesthood become obsolete? (See Hebrews 9:24–10:7)

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers #9–12 with your discipleship team.

Christ cleanses our inner self so that we want to do what is good and right. He helps us to choose the right and perfect path each day. Jesus also washes away all guilt and bad feelings over the wrong and evil we have done in the past.

Without Jesus, everyone should feel guilty, because all have sinned and fallen short of God's moral standard (Romans 3:23–24). With Jesus, believers should feel guilt only when they knowingly disobey God. In both cases, the solution is the same: confession and forgiveness through the blood of Jesus.

Satan and his followers *want* us to feel guilty over past sins already confessed and forgiven. He tempts us to focus our thoughts on ourselves so that we are not seeking God. If Satan succeeds in drenching us in guilt, we will be sad and miserable. We will feel sorry for ourselves and accomplish nothing worthwhile. We will completely miss the grace of God and the joyful life of discipleship.

Though Jesus did not come from the tribe of Levi, He fulfills the role of High Priest in a greater way. Jesus descended from the tribe of Judah, not Levi. However, He serves as our High Priest in the order of Melchizedek, a priesthood that came the Levitical priesthood (Genesis 14:18; Hebrews 7:1–28). Jesus is our eternal High Priest because God confirmed it by an unbreakable oath (Hebrews 7:20–22).

God's loving covenants form a unified plan to restore us into a holy relationship with Him. With each new covenant, He progressively draws humanity closer to His plan of reconciliation through His Son, Jesus Christ. These covenants build upon one another, helping us understand God's purpose for us and for all people.

God is a God of covenant. He uses earthly language and illustrations to reveal spiritual realities and point the way to everlasting life in Christ Jesus. The sixth covenant in the Old Testament is God's promise of an everlasting King who will reign with perfect peace and righteousness.

—End Day One—

Day Two

The Promised Land

The Israelites understood they were a people of covenant. They knew God cared for them, but when they sinned, there would still be consequences—it was all part of the covenant relationship. Sadly, time after time, the people sinned and forgot God. But when their enemies came after them, they would remember God, remind Him of His covenant, and seek His deliverance.

Read Psalm 79:2, 12–13 and answer questions 13–14:

They [enemies] have left the dead bodies of your servants as food for the birds of the sky, the flesh of your own people for the animals of the wild. Psalm 79:2

Pay back into the laps of our neighbors seven times the contempt they have hurled at you, Lord.

¹³ *Then we your people, the sheep of your pasture, will praise you forever; from generation to generation we will proclaim your praise. Psalm 79:12–13 (“Into their laps” = personally repaid)*

13. What are the two ways the Israelites describe themselves (v. 2)?

14. What did God’s people call on God to do to their enemies (v. 12)?

15. The Israelites were pleading their covenant relationship with God and expecting Him to come to their rescue. What were they going to do after God rescued them (v. 13)?

Israel was pleading for the Lord’s help in Psalm 79. However, Psalm 78 records their history of neglecting Him. They forgot about God’s power and how He saved them from slavery. Because of their lack of loyalty and faith, they sinned again and again.

16. Read Psalm 78:41–43. How did the Israelites put God to the test and vex Him (vv. 42–43)?

Again and again they put God to the test; they vexed the Holy One of Israel. ⁴² They did not remember his power—the day he redeemed them from the oppressor, ⁴³ the day he displayed his signs in Egypt, his wonders in the region of Zoan. Psalm 78:41–43 (The Hebrew word translated vex means to pain, wound, or deeply trouble. Zoan was a major city in Egypt.)

Even though the people had experienced God’s miracles, signs, and wonders, they lacked faith. They forgot His divine power and capabilities—they failed to remain faithful to God and His holy covenant. Whether in the Old Testament covenants or the New, God expects trust and loyalty. Unfaithfulness is among the gravest of sins, for at its core, sin is a failure to believe in and trust the Lord, His power, and His abilities. Being faithful means trusting God completely, obeying His commands, and living in a way that honors His covenant relationship.

Read Psalm 78:36–38 and answer questions 17–19:

But then they would flatter him with their mouths, lying to him with their tongues; ³⁷ their hearts were not loyal to him, they were not faithful to his covenant. ³⁸ Yet he was merciful; he forgave their iniquities and did not destroy them. Time after time he restrained his anger and did not stir up his full wrath. Psalm 78:36–38 (Flatter is lavish, insincere praise and compliments upon someone, especially to further one's own interests.)

17. In what ways did the Israelites show insincerity with their words and hearts (vv. 36–37), and how do people do the same today?

18. Even though the Israelites' hearts were not faithful to God's covenant, how did He respond (v. 38a)?

19. The people sinned again and again. What did God do again and again (v. 38b)?

God continued to hold up His part of the covenant even when the Israelites failed miserably. With extreme mercy and unfailing love, God watched over the sheep of His pasture. Even when they went astray and did not faithfully uphold their part in the covenant relationship, God was working on their behalf. When their first king, Saul, faltered, God continued His plan by choosing David, a humble shepherd, to lead His people.

Read Psalm 78:70–72 and answer questions 20–21:

He chose David his servant and took him from the sheep pens; ⁷¹ from tending the sheep he brought him to be the shepherd of his people Jacob, of Israel his inheritance. ⁷² And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them. Psalm 78:70–72

20. In God's mercy, after Saul failed as king, who did God choose (vv. 70–71)?

21. How did David lead or shepherd God's people (v. 72)?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers #16–21 with your discipleship team.

Sixth Covenant: Davidic Covenant

After David was established as the king of Israel with a royal palace, he had the desire to build a temple for the Lord. He felt rather guilty living in a fine palace of cedar while the "ark of God" remained in a tent. The "ark of God" and the "ark of the Lord" are synonymous or identical with the "ark of the covenant."

Recall from Lesson 4 that the Hebrew word for ark, as in the ark of the covenant, is *aron* (אַרֹן). It was a container for the tablets of the law and a chest where God made His presence known. It was considered the throne of the invisible God—the seat of Yahweh among His people.

The ark was built under Moses' leadership, according to God's instructions. It was rectangular shaped, approximately four feet long, two and one-half feet wide, and two and one-half feet deep. This holy ark was not only a symbol of God's presence among His people but was the actual place where He caused His glory to shine forth. The ark was built for mobility so that the people could visually see the Lord leading and guiding them at all times, even in battle (Numbers 10:33, 25–36). Remember, no one could actually see God and live (Exodus 33:20) so the ark of the covenant was perfectly designed by God as a way to reveal Himself, present and holy, to the Israelites.

When David told Nathan the prophet of his plan to build a permanent house for God, Nathan told him to go ahead because God was with him. However, that same night the Lord told Nathan that David was not to build His house (temple). Instead, God would establish a house for David.

Read 2 Samuel 7:7–9 and answer questions 22–25:

Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" ⁸ *"Now then, tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth."* 2 Samuel 7:7–9

22. Did the Lord ever ask or desire any of the Israelite rulers or leaders to build Him a house of cedar or wood (v. 7)? Yes No (Underline One)

23. What are four things that the Lord told Nathan to say David (vv. 8–9)?

24. Why did God take David from the pasture (v. 8)?

25. With the First Edenic Covenant (Genesis 1:28), God told Adam and Eve to increase in number and _____ over the earth.

Since the time of Adam and Eve, God has desired godly people to rule His world. While there have been people and rulers whom God was pleased with, none have been perfect—except one: Jesus Christ. He is the promised Redeemer foretold in the Adamic Covenant, who served humanity by dying for our sins. Through His obedience and sacrifice, He will reign over God's kingdom forever.

26. Read 2 Samuel 7:10–11a. What promise is God reaffirming, and to whom did He originally give this covenant (Genesis 12:1–4)?

And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning¹¹ and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies. 2 Samuel 7:10–11a

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers #22–26 with your discipleship team.

God’s promise of earthly land for Abraham’s descendants neared its fulfillment during David’s reign. His kingdom encompassed most of the boundaries that God had given to Abraham (Genesis 15:18). Still, Israel has never controlled *all* of the land the Lord had promised to Abraham, Moses, and David. This includes modern day Israel—they do not yet possess all of the land. However, one day every inch of the promised land will be within Israel’s possession and control. God’s covenant will stand, no matter how disobedient and rebellious the people.

For example, after David’s death, the kings who followed were not as faithful to God’s covenants, leading to the division of the land and its eventual loss—ultimately to the Romans in 135 AD. Today, however, Israel controls much of its promised land. Below is a brief history from the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews explaining how modern-day Israel—an event unprecedented in world history—came into existence in 1948:

“Never had a decimated ancient people managed to retain their individual identity through almost twenty centuries and reestablish their nation in their original homeland. The event was specifically prophesied, and it happened exactly as foretold. It was clearly a miraculous act of God.

“Many events had to dovetail perfectly to bring about the fulfillment of God’s promise to Israel, but I want to point out two events in particular that serve to illustrate the miraculous nature of the rebirth of the nation of Israel. You will be amazed at the mysterious workings of God’s providence.

“The single most influential event that triggered the Israel return to the homeland of the scattered Jews began with Israel’s First President, Chaim Weizmann. Weizmann was a Russian Jew, a brilliant chemist and a leader in the Zionist movement², who immigrated to England in 1904. During World War I, English armies used gunpowder made of cordite, which produced little smoke and thus did not blind gunners to their targets or reveal their positions. But since the manufacture of cordite required acetone made from a compound imported from their enemy, Germany, the English government was desperate to find another source. Prime Minister Lloyd

² In 1896, Theodor Herzl conceived of and founded the Zionist movement in Basel, Switzerland. Herzl and his associates defined a Zionist as “a person who desires or supports the establishment of a Jewish state in the Land of Israel, which in the future will become the state of the Jewish people.” Source: <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/what-is-the-zionism-movement.html> (accessed 11/26/2022)

George and Winston Churchill turned to Weizmann and set him up in a gin distillery, where he quickly developed a biochemical process for producing synthetic acetone.

“The success of his ingenious process for creating acetone contributed to the ultimate Allied victory. The minimal salary and token reward that Weizmann received from the government earned him significant leverage when he pressed his persistent petitions for a Jewish homeland in Israel.

“As it happened, by the war’s end, England gained possession of the land of Palestine—the very land promised in God’s covenant with Abraham—from the defeated Ottoman Empire. As an act of a grateful nation and through Weizmann’s influence within the government, England officially issued the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which declared: ‘His Majesty’s Government views with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object...’

“The second influential event that brought the scattered Jews back to Palestine was the liberation of Jewish prisoners from Auschwitz, Dachau, and other Nazi concentration camps. When Germany collapsed at the end of World War II, the liberation of these Jewish prisoners caused worldwide shock at the grossly inhumane treatment inflicted by the Nazis. This generated sympathy that drew Jewish wealth from around the world and enabled the relocation of more than a million displaced Jews to Palestine.

“That brings us all the way back to May 14, 1948. On this day, the United Nations officially recognized the State of Israel, with US president Harry Truman determining the deciding vote. The Israeli government established the State of Israel, thus fulfilling the twenty-five-hundred-year-old prophecy recorded in the Bible. Great Britain ended its mandate in Palestine and removed its troops, leaving more than 650,000 Jews to govern themselves in their own land.

“In 2006, for the first time in nineteen hundred years, Israel became home to the largest Jewish community in the world, surpassing the Jewish population in the United States. From the 650,000 who returned when the Jewish state was founded in 1948, the population of Israel has swelled to approximately 5.4 million, and it is expected to exceed 6 million by 2020. The significance of Israel’s reemergence in her ancient homeland is that this had to occur in order to set the stage for the final fulfillment of biblical prophecies.”³

27. Read the short history of Israel returning to her promised land above. What impresses you about this account?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answer #27 with your discipleship team.

—End Day Two—

³ <https://www.ifcj.org/news/fellowship-blog/the-miracle-of-the-jewish-peoples-return-to-israel> (accessed 11/25/2022).

Day Three
Everlasting King

Nathan was a respected and trusted prophet during the reign of King David. When David first expressed his desire to build a house for the Lord, Nathan initially gave him the go-ahead, recognizing that the Lord was with him (2 Samuel 7:1–3). But that very night, the Lord spoke to Nathan with a different message: it would not be David who built a house for God. Instead, God would establish a house for David—a royal line. The privilege of building the temple would be given to David’s offspring, his son (vv. 12–13).

Read 2 Samuel 7:11b–13 and answer questions 28–32:

“The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: ¹² When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 2 Samuel 7:11b–13

Definition: A *house* is a physical building for human habitation. However, in 2 Samuel 7, the Lord uses the word *house* figuratively—to refer to a lineage, family, or royal line of descent.

28. Who will establish a house for David (v. 11)?

29. What kind of house will the Lord establish for David (v. 12)?

30. Who will build the house (temple) for the Lord’s Name (v. 13, 1 Kings 2:12)?

31. Since David and his son Solomon are now deceased—whose throne is forever (v. 13)?

32. The Lord is speaking about Solomon building the earthly temple and Jesus reigning over His eternal kingdom. True | False (Underline One)

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers #28–32 with your discipleship team.

Read 2 Samuel 7:14–16 and answer questions 33–34:

“I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. ¹⁵ But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶ Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”
2 Samuel 7:14–16 (God is speaking to David in this passage.)

33. Who is God speaking about punishing when His “son” does wrong (v. 14)?

God was not referring to His Son Jesus as a wrongdoer—Jesus was sinless, with no iniquity found in Him. The sin can either be applied to David’s human offspring (Solomon and successors) or to the fact Jesus accepted the iniquity of humanity into His body (Isaiah 53:6; 1 Peter 2:24–25). In this way, Christ became sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21).

34. Jesus is fully God and fully man. What house or physical human line of descent is He from (Matthew 1:1)?

35. Read Luke 1:31–33. Who fulfills the permanent and forever part of the prophecy and covenant God gave to David?

“You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.”³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,³³ and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”
Luke 1:31–33

Read 1 Kings 2:4, 8:25 and answer questions 36–37:

... and that the LORD may keep his promise to me [David]: ‘If your descendants watch how they live, and if they walk faithfully before me with all their heart and soul, you will never fail to have a successor on the throne of Israel.’ 1 Kings 2:4

“Now LORD, the God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father the promises you made to him when you said, ‘You shall never fail to have a successor to sit before me on the throne of Israel, if only your descendants are careful in all they do to walk before me faithfully as you have done.’” 1 Kings 8:25 (Cf. 2 Chronicles 6:16–17)

36. Explain why you think God’s promise to David was conditional or unconditional?

37. Who was the only descendant of David who walked faithfully before God with all His heart and soul, in complete obedience?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers #36–37 with your discipleship team.

In a sense God’s promises to David and the House of Israel are both conditional and unconditional. They are conditioned on David’s offspring and their faithfulness to God. On the other hand, no one can thwart or stop God’s promises. Individual kings were disciplined and even excluded from God’s promises but they could not keep God from ultimately fulfilling His covenant. God is faithful and always keeps His promises.

God brought a righteous King through David's lineage who could walk faithfully before Him. Fulfilling the human side of God's covenant, our Savior was born of a virgin through the house of David, lived on earth, died for our sins, and has been resurrected from the dead. We are waiting for His return with the final battle and the establishment of His millennial reign.⁴

Within the Davidic Covenant there are major aspects that are ultimately fulfilled in Christ Jesus. When He returns, Jesus will rule the earth as God's heir and David's earthly heir. Jesus is part of David's house or lineage and His kingdom will have no end. Jesus is King forever.

Read Acts 13:22–23 and answer questions 38–40:

*After removing Saul, he made David their king. God testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'*²³ *"From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel the Savior Jesus, as he promised."*
Acts 13:22–23

38. Why was David a man after God's own heart (v. 22b)?

39. Why or why not are you a man or woman after God's own heart?

40. From David's descendants, who has God brought to Israel as He promised (v. 23)?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers #38–40 with your discipleship team.

God is a faithful promise keeper. He is all-powerful and all-knowing. As a perfect covenant maker, He not only makes promises but also has the capability and wisdom to fulfill them flawlessly.

Psalms 89:2–5, written by Ethan the Ezrahite, reflects a deep trust in God's faithfulness.

*I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you have established your faithfulness in heaven itself.*³ *You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant,"*⁴ *I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations."*

⁴ "The word millennium comes from the Latin word mille, meaning one thousand, and annum, meaning year. The Greek word "chilias", also meaning one thousand, appears six times in Revelation 20, defining the duration of Christ's kingdom before the destruction of the old heaven and old earth. The millennium therefore refers to 1000 years of Christ's future reign on earth, which will immediately precede eternity [and starting at the second coming of Christ which will bring to an end Tribulation]. During the millennium, Christ will reign in time and space. It is his time of manifestation and his time of revelation. Christ, in all of His glory, will institute His reign of righteousness and peace. During the millennium, the unveiled glory of Christ will shine forth in all of its fullness." The Popular Encyclopedia of Bible Prophecy, "The Millennial Reign," *Are We Living in the Last Days?*, <http://www.arewelivinginthelastdays.com/article/mReign/mReign.htm> (accessed 7/8/2015)

⁵ *The heavens praise your wonders, LORD, your faithfulness too, in the assembly of the holy ones.* Psalm 89:2–5

These and other scriptures reveal that not only did David believe in God’s promises, but others in Israel believed them as well. They recognized David as God’s chosen king and believed his lineage would be established forever through the coming Messiah.

Although some Jews have accepted Jesus (Yeshua)⁵, as their Messiah, the majority have not. Many remain spiritually blinded and do not yet see how God’s promises have been fulfilled through Christ and how we are now under the New Covenant. As a result, many Israelis today are still looking for the Messiah. Yet even this is part of God’s sovereign plan and is being used to fulfill His holy purposes.

For example, 2 Thessalonians 2 tells us that Jesus will not return until the “man of lawlessness” (the antichrist) is revealed and sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming to be God. Today, in Israel, there is a place called the *Temple Institute*, where the furnishings and sacred items of the temple have been faithfully and fatefully (predetermined) crafted and reproduced according to biblical specifications. The only item they have not reproduced is the ark of the covenant.

The Temple Institute possesses the specifications for the Ark and has the capability to recreate it—but they have chosen not to. They believe the original ark has been hidden and will be found. The actual time the ark disappeared is not known. Some scholars believe it was captured or destroyed in 587 BC by the Babylonians. “A Jewish legend in 2 Maccabees 2:4–8 claims the prophet Jeremiah hid the ark in a cave on Mount Sinai until the final restoration of Israel.” ⁶

My husband and I traveled to Israel in 2012 and had the privilege of touring the Temple Institute. The docent (guide) shared that she and others believed the contents (manna, Aaron’s staff that budded, and the tablets of the covenant) will be inside the ark when it is located. Speaking for the Institute, she also said that these contents are important to the temple restoration.

Whether or not her statements are accurate, Scripture tells us that by the time the Ark was placed in Solomon’s temple in 959 BC, only the two tablets remained inside: *There was nothing in the ark except the two stone tablets that Moses had placed in it at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the Israelites after they came out of Egypt.* 1 King 8:9 (cf. 2 Chronicles 5:10).

Some scholars believe the manna and staff were taken by the Philistines when they captured the ark and held it in their possession for seven months (1 Samuel 5:1, 6:1).

—End Day Three—

⁵ In English, the name *Yeshua* is extensively used by followers of Messianic Judaism as well as other Christian Denominations who wish to use what they consider to be Jesus’ Hebrew or Aramaic name.
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yeshua_\(name\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yeshua_(name)) (accessed 7/9/2022)

⁶ Frank E. Gaebelin, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary Volume 12 (Hebrews-Revelation)*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982), 510.

Day Four ***The Temple***

Solomon built the first permanent temple in 950 BC according to God's instructions. Before that, the Ark of the Covenant was kept in the tabernacle—a portable tent used during Israel's wilderness journey and early years in the land. Solomon's Temple stood for 363 years before it was destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 BC.

After its destruction, Israel was without a temple for 70 years. In 516 BC, under Zerubbabel's leadership and later Ezra's spiritual guidance, the Israelites rebuilt the temple. This second temple was more modest than Solomon's and stood for about 485 years before Herod the Great began major renovations. Although his improvements occurred during the last century of the temple's existence, it is often referred to as Herod's Temple because of the scale and grandeur of his reconstruction.⁷

The second temple was built after the Babylonian exile, but it too was destroyed—this time by the Romans in 70 AD. Jesus had foretold this event (Mark 13:1–8). Since then, the temple has not been rebuilt. Around 689 AD, Muslims took control of the temple mount, and soon afterward, they constructed a shrine⁸ known as the Dome of the Rock on the site where the temple once stood.

A few of the Jewish and Christian perspectives regarding the building of a third temple:

Jewish Views:

Many Orthodox Jews believe the temple will be rebuilt during the Messianic age. Others think that the temple must be rebuilt before the Messianic age can begin.

Definition: The *Messianic age* is understood to be a future period of universal peace and divine rule brought about by the Messiah (Anointed One, Christ). Christians believe Jesus is the promised Messiah and Son of God, while Jews believe the Messiah has not yet come.

Christian Views:

Some Christians believe a physical temple will be rebuilt in the future, particularly in connection with end-times events. Others interpret Jesus' words about the temple spiritually—seeing Him and His followers as the new temple. In this view, God now dwells in His people through the Holy Spirit, making the physical temple unnecessary.

These perspectives are not exhaustive for either Jews or Christians and represent only a portion of the wider discussion. You may want to explore this topic further to develop your own biblical understanding. However, Scripture does seem to indicate the presence of a physical temple in use during a future time (2 Thessalonians 2:3–4; Revelation 11:1–2).

⁷ <https://enduringword.com/how-many-temples-were-built-in-jerusalem-qa-with-david-guzik/> (accessed 11/29/2022)

⁸ A *shrine* is a sacred or holy place associated with a person, event, or religious significance. It is often built to honor a deity, prophet, or sacred object. Shrines can be buildings, altars, or even natural locations.

Read Matthew 24:15–16 and answer questions 41–42:

“So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand—¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.” Matthew 24:15–16

Definition: The *abomination that causes desolation* refers to a deeply offensive and idolatrous act that desecrates or defiles what is sacred—specifically God’s sanctuary. It typically involves the placement or worship of false gods in a holy space, rendering it spiritually desolate.⁹ Though similar events happened in the past, Jesus refers here to a future fulfillment that had not yet occurred when He spoke.

In 167 BC, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, a Greek king, attacked Jerusalem and entered God’s temple. He set up an altar to Zeus, and sacrificed a pig—an event considered an “abomination that causes desolation.” However, this occurred nearly 200 years before Jesus gave His warning in Matthew 24.

41. Where does this future event that Jesus is prophesying about take place (v. 15)?

42. Could this prophecy have been fulfilled in 70 AD when the Romans destroyed the temple?
Yes | No | Maybe (Underline One)

Although interpretations vary, many scholars agree that Jesus’ reference to “the abomination that causes desolation” points to a future event involving a physical temple. This implies that some form of temple worship must be in place at that time. Some believe the Roman destruction of the Second Temple in 70 AD was a partial fulfillment, but others see this prophecy—and Paul’s—as still future, tied to the rise of the Antichrist and the use of a future Third Temple. This view also aligns with Revelation 11:1–2, which describes a temple existing during the end times. Also, the apostle Paul builds on this idea in his letter to the Thessalonians.

Read 2 Thessalonians 2:3–4 and answer questions 43–45:

Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. ⁴ He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God. 2 Thessalonians 2:3–4

Definition: To “set himself up” means to take a position of authority. Here, it refers to the man of lawlessness claiming to be God and demanding worship.

⁹ *Spiritually desolate* means that a sacred place has been so severely defiled—often through idolatry or blasphemy—that it is no longer set apart for God. It is seen as abandoned by His presence and blessing, and no longer suitable for true worship until it is cleansed or restored.

43. The apostle Paul is talking about the return of Christ. That day will not come until what happens (v. 3)?

44. What will the man of lawlessness do (v. 4)?

45. Where will the man of lawlessness set himself up, proclaiming himself to be God (v. 4b)?

Read 2 Thessalonians 2:8–10 and answer questions 46–48:

And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. ⁹ The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with how Satan works. He will use all sorts of displays of power through signs and wonders that serve the lie, ¹⁰ and all the ways that wickedness deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 2 Thessalonians 2:8–10

46. What will the Lord Jesus do to the lawless one when He returns (v. 8)?

47. Who is giving the lawless man or antichrist his power (v. 9)?

48. Why will people perish or be destroyed when the lawless man reigns (v. 10)?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers #41–48 with your discipleship team.

In the book of Revelation, after the seventh and last trumpet is sounded, loud voices in heaven proclaim that the Lord and His Christ are taking over the world and will reign for ever and ever. God's wrath has come and He will be judging the dead while rewarding His servants who revere His name (Revelation 11:15–18).

Read and memorize Revelation 11:19. Answer questions 49–50:

Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a severe hailstorm. Revelation 11:19

49. When God's temple in heaven was opened after the seventh trumpet was sounded, what was seen within His temple?

50. What do you think is the significance of God's temple in heaven being opened and revealing the ark of His covenant (see also Revelation 11:1–19)?

Action Step

51. Memorize Revelation 11:19.

52. The awesome power and majesty of God is displayed through lightning, thunder, earthquake, and hail. As a disciple of Jesus Christ, how does this truth encourage your trust in God's faithfulness—or stir a reverent fear of His holy judgment? (Cf. Exodus 19:16—19)¹⁰

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers to questions 49, 50, 52 and memory verse #51.

Understanding God's covenants is a major part of knowing Him. He is a covenant-making and covenant-keeping God. This truth is highlighted in the last book of the Bible when the door of eternity swings open. The ark represented God's presence, which previously only the high priest could enter. But when God's kingdom fully comes, His visual presence will be open to all believers.

The ark of the covenant contained the Ten Commandments—the terms of His treaty with Israel. It was a permanent reminder that God expects obedience. David was not perfect, but he was obedient to the covenant. When he failed—especially in breaking the sixth commandment (do not commit adultery¹¹)—he feared God, confessed, and showed godly sorrow when confronted by the prophet Nathan.

For those who have not obeyed or feared God, judgment is coming. But for those who have followed the Messiah, reward is coming. God is taking over all nations ruled by Satan and evil. There truly will be one nation, under God. This revelation or disclosure to the apostle John brought great hope to early disciples who were suffering persecution for their faith.

In Revelation 11:19 God's redemptive covenant has come to fruition. All former symbols and shadows are now revealed in heaven as His presence is made known and His righteous judgment begins. History both begins and ends with God. Any path apart from Christ leads only to destruction.

The certainty of God's promises should stir both hope and urgency. For those in Christ, His coming kingdom is a joy to anticipate, not a fear to dread. It also calls us to live in obedience now, so we may one day hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant." The God who will shake heaven and earth holds His people securely in His covenant love.

—End Day Four—

¹⁰ The imagery in Revelation 11:19 echoes the powerful display of God's presence at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:16–19), where thunder, lightning, and earthquake announced His holiness and authority. This connection reminds us that God's judgment is both mighty and just, calling His people to reverence and trust.

¹¹ Adultery is sexual relations between a married person and anyone else other than their spouse. David committed adultery with Bathsheba when she was married to Uriah the Hittite (2 Samuel 11:2–12:24).

Day Five
Obedience

We briefly reviewed six major covenants: the Edenic Covenant, the Adamic Covenant, the Noahic Covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant, the Mosaic Covenant, and the Davidic Covenant. The seventh and climactic covenant—the New Covenant—will be the focus of Lesson 6.

A key theme runs throughout all of God’s covenants. Though it can be expressed in different ways, the central message is the same: God uses covenants—sacred agreements or pledges—to establish a holy relationship with humanity. When the first covenant in Eden was broken, God continued unfolding His redemptive plan through additional covenants to confront sin and restore His people.

Each covenant highlights the vital importance of knowing and following God. And this call to know and follow Him can be summed up in one powerful word: **obedience**. God has emphasized this truth throughout Scripture. It began in the Garden of Eden with a single command—not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—and continues into the New Covenant. Jesus not only taught about obedience, but also modeled it perfectly in His life and ministry.

Read John 8:29 and answer questions 53–54:

“The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I [Jesus] always do what pleases him.” John 8:29

53. Did Jesus always do what pleased God the Father? Yes | No (Underline One)

Definition: *Obedience* is the act of willingly submitting to and following the commands, instructions, or will of someone in authority. In a biblical context, it means responding to God and His Word with trust, love, and a desire to honor Him.

54. What is a single word that describes the way Jesus did what pleased God?

Read John 14:23–24 and answer questions 55–57:

Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.”²⁴ Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.
John 14:23–24

55. Jesus said that “Anyone who loves me will _____ my teaching (v. 14:23a).”

56. What did Jesus equate people’s love for Him with (v. 24)?

57. Were Jesus' words about love and obedience also the words of God the Father's words (v. 24b)? Yes | No (Underline One)

In John 14, Jesus links love for Him with obedience to His Word. This connection between love, obedience, and relationship with God is seen throughout the covenants and Scripture:

Obedience through the Covenants

After Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they were banished from the Garden of Eden. God said they had become like Him—knowing good and evil—and must not be allowed to eat from the tree of life and live forever (Genesis 3:22). To guard the way to the tree, and ensure their obedience, He placed cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth (vv. 23–24). Even so, God gave a promise: the serpent who deceived them would be crushed—a promise unfolding through His covenant plan.

In Noah's time, the people had become so wicked and disobedient that God chose to destroy them with a great flood. Yet God spared Noah and his family because Noah was righteous—he obeyed God. In faith and obedience, Noah built the ark just as God had instructed and he and his family were saved.

Next, we see Abraham obeying God. In faith and total dependence, he left his home and took his wife, nephew, and servants on a journey to an unknown land. He obeyed and relied on God—he placed his confidence in Him. Because of this obedience, Abraham entered into a covenant with God and became the father of many nations.

The Mosaic covenant contained blessings for faithfulness and curses for disobedience (Deuteronomy 28–30). Both Moses and the people were expected to follow God's commands. Though they told Moses and the elders they would do everything the Lord had said, they repeatedly failed to remain faithful.

Read Exodus 19:5 and Deuteronomy 28:1–2. Answer questions 58–60:

If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. ² All these blessings will come on you and accompany you if you obey the LORD your God. Deuteronomy 28:1–2

Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Exodus 19:5

58. During Moses time of leadership, what did God require of him and the Israelites?

59. If the people obeyed all God's commands, what would He do in return (vv. 1–2)?

60. To be God's treasured possession, what was required—or what was the condition (v. 5)?

Read Psalm 89:30–37 and answer questions 61–63:

“If his sons forsake my law and do not follow my statutes, ³¹ if they violate my decrees and fail to keep my commands, ³² I will punish their sin with the rod, their iniquity with flogging; ³³ but I will not take my love from him, nor will I ever betray my faithfulness. ³⁴ I will not violate my covenant or alter what my lips have uttered. ³⁵ Once for all, I have sworn by my holiness—and I will not lie to David—³⁶ that his line will continue forever and his throne endure before me like the sun; ³⁷ it will be established forever like the moon, the faithful witness in the sky.”
Psalm 89:30–37

61. If David’s sons or descendants disobeyed God, what would He do (vv. 31–32)?

62. What did God promise David, even if his offspring failed (vv. 34–37)?

63. How did God keep His covenant with David (See Luke 1:31:33; Acts 13:22–23)?

Read 1 Kings 8:22–25 and answer questions 64–65:

Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in front of the whole assembly of Israel, spread out his hands toward heaven ²³ and said: “LORD, the God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth below—you who keep your covenant of love with your servants who continue wholeheartedly in your way. ²⁴ You have kept your promise to your servant David my father; with your mouth you have promised and with your hand you have fulfilled it—as it is today. ²⁵ “Now LORD, the God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father the promises you made to him when you said, ‘You shall never fail to have a successor to sit before me on the throne of Israel, if only your descendants are careful in all they do to walk before me faithfully as you have done.’” 1 King 8:22–25

64. In his prayer, Solomon confirms that the Lord will keep His covenant of love with His servants who do what (v. 23)?

65. Who walked before the Lord faithfully—not only keeping all the covenants and the law perfectly, but fulfilling them (v. 25; Matthew 5:17, 26:28; Hebrews 7:23–27)?

Read Isaiah 9:6–7 and answer questions 66–68:

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this. Isaiah 9:6–7

(“The zeal of the LORD” means His passionate commitment to accomplish His purposes.)

66. Who is the child and Son that Isaiah was prophesying about?

67. How will this everlasting King come to reign (v. 7c)?

68. How is this Son described (vv. 6–7)?

Read Psalm 103:17–22 and answer questions 69–72:

But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD’s love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children’s children—¹⁸ with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts. ¹⁹ The LORD has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all. ²⁰ Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word. ²¹ Praise the LORD, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will. ²² Praise the LORD, all his works everywhere in his dominion. Praise the LORD, my soul. Psalm 103:17–22

69. With whom is the Lord’s love from everlasting to everlasting (vv. 17–18)?

70. Besides God’s people who fear Him, who else obeys God and does His will (vv. 20–22)?

71. Give an example of how you see God’s love and promises working in your own life.

72. How has studying the Old Testament covenants helped you grow in your love for God?

73. How will this study of the Old Testament covenants encourage you to stand firm in your faith and disciple others?

74. Based on Lesson 5, how is God able to assure His people’s welfare?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers #69–74 with your discipleship team.

—End of Day Five and Lesson 5—

Next—Lesson 6: New Covenant, Unit 4: Disciple of Christ

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