

God's Dealings and Covenant with David

David was chosen by God, as ruler over Israel

[GOD:] *I've chosen David to rule my people Israel.* 1 KINGS 8:16B GW

David reigned over Israel, as a powerful and righteous king – undergirded by God

David became a great and strong ruler, because the LORD All-Powerful was on his side. ... ¹²*David knew that the LORD had made him king of Israel and that he had made him a powerful ruler for the good of his people.* 2 SAMUEL 5:10, 12 CEV

David was king over all Israel, and he did what was fair and right for all his people. 2 SAMUEL 8:15 NCV™

God's covenant with David, promising that David's royal dynasty would last forever

[THE PROPHET NATHAN, TO DAVID:] *The LORD declares to you that he himself will build a dynastic house for you.* ¹²*When the time comes for you to die, I [God] will raise up your descendant, one of your own sons, to succeed you, and I will establish his kingdom.* ¹³*He will build a house for my name, and I will make his dynasty permanent.* ¹⁴*I will become his father and he will become my son. When he sins, I will correct him with the rod of men and with wounds inflicted by human beings.* ¹⁵*But my loyal love will not be removed from him as I removed it from Saul, whom I removed from before you.* ¹⁶*Your house and your kingdom will stand before me permanently; your dynasty will be permanent.*

2 SAMUEL 7:11B-16 NET

In vv. 11b, 16 “house” refers to a royal dynasty that God would build for David, in response to David’s desire to build a “house” (v. 13) or temple for God. The “descendant” spoken of in vv. 12-15 refers initially to David’s son Solomon, but is generally understood to ultimately speak of the Messiah. As such this covenant provided the people of Israel with the hope of a permanently secure kingdom (cf. vv. 10-11a) under a godly and powerful king.

Pray for persecuted Christians

CHAPTER 8

God's Word

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I. General

God's word is our window to God. For through it we learn about God and his relationship with us. Moreover, its unique characteristics and functions have the imprint of God.

What God's Word Comprises

God's word primarily is Scripture

If he [God] called them gods to whom *the word of God* came—and *Scripture* cannot be broken— ... [JOHN 10:35](#) ESV

This speaks of Scripture as "the word of God".

Every Scripture passage is inspired by God. [2 TIMOTHY 3:16A](#) GW

Scripture comes from God, i.e. Scripture "is God's Word" (CEV).

God's word includes his laws

[A PSALMIST, REFERRING TO GOD:] *He speaks his word to Jacob, his laws and judicial decisions to Israel.* [PSALMS 147:19](#) GW

God's word includes his covenants

The LORD said to Moses, "Write these words down, because it is on the basis of these words that I am making a covenant with you and with Israel." ²⁸... He wrote on the tablets *the words of the covenant*—the Ten Commandments. [EXODUS 34:27, 28B](#) GNT

This speaks of words of God forming God's covenant with Israel.

God's word includes his prophecies

[GOD, TO JEREMIAH:] *Get a scroll. Write on it everything I have told you to say about Israel, Judah, and all the other nations since I began to speak to you in the reign of Josiah until now.* [JEREMIAH 36:2](#) NET

This refers to prophecies (of God's word) regarding nations.

God's word also includes the gospel, proclaimed by his people

When they [Barnabas and Saul] arrived in Salamis, *they began to proclaim the word of God in the Jewish synagogues.* [ACTS 13:5A](#) NET

Laws for the people's relationship with God

[GOD, TO THE ISRAELITES:] *"You shall have no other gods besides me. ⁴You shall not make for yourselves an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above, or on earth below, or in the water under the earth. ⁵You shall not bow down to them in worship or serve them; because I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the iniquity of the parents, to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me, ⁶but showing gracious love to thousands who love me and keep my commandments. ⁷You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, because the LORD will not leave the one who misuses his name unpunished. ⁸Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. And you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male or female servants, nor your livestock, nor the alien who is within your gates. ¹¹For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them, and he rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.* [EXODUS 20:2-11](#) ISV

The commands in this and the following section are the Ten Commandments. These form the fundamentals of the whole law that God gave through Moses (referred to as the Mosaic Law).

Laws for relationships with other people

"Honor your father and your mother, that you may live a long time in the land the LORD your God is giving to you. ¹³You shall not murder. ¹⁴You shall not commit adultery. ¹⁵You shall not steal. ¹⁶You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. ¹⁷You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that belongs to your neighbor." [EXODUS 20:12-17](#) NET

By obeying all the law, the Israelites would have righteousness

[MOSES, TO THE ISRAELITES:] *It will be righteousness for us, if we're careful to obey all the law* before the LORD our God, as he commanded. [DEUTERONOMY 6:25](#) ISV

with Israel. In the covenant God promised Abraham that if he obeyed, God would: give him numerous descendants (vv. 5-7); give his descendants the land of Canaan (v. 8); and bless all nations through him (as per the following subsection). In conjunction with this, God would be Abraham's and his descendants' God (v. 7).

. . . and that all peoples would be blessed through Abraham

[GOD, TO ABRAHAM:] I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and *in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.* [GENESIS 12:3](#) ESV

Abraham believed God, and was accredited with righteousness

[GOD, TO ABRAHAM:] “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” *Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”*⁶ *And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.* [GENESIS 15:5B-6](#) ESV

God's Covenant with Israel and the Law

See also: *I. Jesus Christ and the Law's Diminished Role*, p. 114

God made a covenant with Israel, based on his law

*The LORD said to Moses, “Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.”*²⁸ *So he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread, and he did not drink water. He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.* [EXODUS 34:27-28](#) NET

If the Israelites obeyed God, then they would be his people and he would be their God

[GOD, TO THE ISRAELITES:] *Obey me and carry out the terms of the agreement exactly as I commanded you. If you do, you will be my people and I will be your God.* [JEREMIAH 11:4B](#) NET

According to the terms of the covenant, Israel was to obey God. If Israel kept the covenant by obeying God's commands, then under the covenant they would be God's people and he would be their God.

Jesus Christ is “the Word of God”

[JOHN, DESCRIBING A VISION OF CHRIST:] He is dressed in clothing dipped in blood, and *he is called the Word of God.* [REVELATION 19:13](#) NET

Jesus Christ is called the “Word of God” in part because much of what God says and does, he says and does through Jesus Christ.

Note: God has given his word by the Holy Spirit

Above all, you do well if you recognize this: *No prophecy of scripture ever comes about by the prophet's own imagination,*²³ *for no prophecy was ever borne of human impulse; rather, men carried along by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.* [2 PETER 1:20-21](#) NET

Characteristics of God's Word

God's word is holy, righteous and good

So then, *the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous, and good.* [ROMANS 7:12](#) NET

God's word is true . . .

The words of the LORD are true and all his works are dependable. [PSALMS 33:4](#) GNT

[JESUS, TO GOD:] Set them apart in the truth; *your word is truth.* [JOHN 17:17](#) NET

. . . and what God's word foretells comes true

[JEREMIAH TO JERUSALEM'S PEOPLE:] *The LORD has done what he purposed; he has carried out his word, which he commanded long ago; he has thrown down without pity; he has made the enemy rejoice over you and exalted the might of your foes.* [LAMENTATIONS 2:17](#) GW

God's word is living and active

For the word of God is living and active ... [HEBREWS 4:12A](#) NET

Two reasons for describing God's word as “living” are that it never ceases to be pertinent and it keeps on influencing and affecting people. The latter reason also shows it to be active.

God's word is powerful

What God has said isn't only alive and active! It is sharper than any double-edged sword. His word can cut through our spirits and souls and through our joints and marrow, until it discovers the desires and thoughts of our hearts. [HEBREWS 4:12](#) CEV

God's word can penetrate to the very depths of our inner-selves, exposing our thoughts and attitudes for what they really are.

God's word is everlasting

For all flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of the grass; the grass withers and the flower falls off, ²⁵but *the word of the Lord endures forever.* [1 PETER 1:24-25A](#) NET

Functions of God's Word

God's word brings spiritual and eternal life

[JESUS:] The Spirit is the one who gives life; human nature is of no help! *The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life. ...* ⁶⁸Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom would we go? *You have the words of eternal life.*" [JOHN 6:63, 68](#) NET

In v. 63b Jesus appears to be saying that his words are spiritual, producing spiritual or eternal life. Jesus seems to be implying that it is by the Holy Spirit (v. 63a) that his words produce this life.

God's word gives light

[A PSALMIST, TO GOD:] *Your word is a lamp to walk by, and a light to illumine my path.* [PSALMS 119:105](#) NET

God's word gives "light" – guidance and spiritual insight.

God's word gives hope

[A PSALMIST, TO GOD:] *Remember your word to your servant, for you have given me hope.* [PSALMS 119:49](#) NET

God had given the psalmist hope by his word, or promise.

God's word gives joy

The LORD's precepts are fair and make one joyful. [PSALMS 19:8A](#) NET

II. Key Old Testament Covenants

A covenant is a solemn agreement between two parties. God's covenants with people are a key aspect of his word.

God's covenants with people were all initiated by God. They generally confirmed his relationship with the persons concerned – who were or who became his people. The covenants included binding promises by God of blessings for his people, reflecting his purposes for them. In some cases God's covenants also outlined what God required of his people and how they were to relate to him.

God's covenants with Abraham, Israel and David are prime instances of the role of God's word. They expound pivotal promises and (in the covenant with Israel) laws of God. They also form the background of God's relationship with his people today. Learning about them enables us to better understand the significance of much of the NT's teachings.

God's Covenant with Abraham

God made a covenant with Abraham, promising him: countless descendants; the land of Canaan; . . .

Abram bowed down with his face to the ground, and God said to him, ⁴As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer will your name be Abram. Instead, your name will be Abraham because I will make you the father of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you extremely fruitful. I will make nations of you, and kings will descend from you. ⁷I will confirm my covenant as a perpetual covenant between me and you. It will extend to your descendants after you throughout their generations. I will be your God and the God of your descendants after you. ⁸I will give the whole land of Canaan – the land where you are now residing – to you and your descendants after you as a permanent possession. I will be their God." [GENESIS 17:3-8](#) NET

God made an everlasting covenant with the Israelite's ancestor Abraham, aspects of which were included in God's later covenant