



The Christmas Story

Genesis 3:15

Because you have done this,
you are cursed

more than all animals,
domestic and wild.

You will crawl on your belly,
grovelling in the dust as long
as you live.

¹⁵ And I will cause hostility
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring
and her offspring.

He will strike your head,

and you will strike his heel.



Father Abraham

Genesis 12:3 & Genesis 22:18

- Gen 12:3 “And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing”.
- Gen 22:18 “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice”.
- NLT Galatians 3:16 - God gave the promises to Abraham and his child. And notice that the Scripture doesn't say “to his children,” as if it meant many descendants. Rather, it says “to his child” (seed) —and that, of course, means Christ.

Galatians 3:16

- Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as *referring* to many, but *rather* to one, “And to your seed,” that is, Christ.

The Seed of Abraham

Key Interpretations:

Physical Seed: Refers to all Abraham's natural offspring, including Ishmael, Esau and the other children Abraham had to his second wife after Sarah's death.

Special Physical Seed: Refers to Abraham's natural offspring particularly through Isaac, leading to the nation of Israel, from whom Jesus was born. (The line of the Messiah – genealogies – critical in Jewish thought)

Spiritual Seed: All believers who have faith in Jesus are considered Abraham's spiritual descendants, inheriting the covenant blessings, regardless of their ethnic background.

Christ as the Seed: The Apostle Paul clarifies that the singular "seed" God promised isn't just the numerous people of Abraham's natural physical and special physical seed, but points exclusively **to Jesus**, the ultimate descendant, through whom the promises are fulfilled.

In Christ: To be "in Christ" means to be part of this spiritual family, making one an heir to the Abrahamic covenant. Galatians 3:29

➤ Jesus through the Old Covenant Scriptures

➤ Royal lineage

- **2 Samuel 7:12–16** – God promises David an everlasting kingdom through his descendant.
- **Isaiah 11:1** – A righteous ruler will come from the “stump of Jesse” (David’s father).

➤ Birth details

- **Isaiah 7:14** – A virgin will conceive and bear a son called *Immanuel* (“God with us”).
- **Micah 5:2** – The ruler of Israel will come from **Bethlehem**.

➤ Nature of the Messiah

- **Isaiah 9:6–7** – A child born who will be called “Mighty God” and “Prince of Peace.”
- **Isaiah 53** – A suffering servant who brings redemption through sacrifice.

Historical Context of the Christmas Story

➤ Political Background

- Israel was under **Roman occupation**.
- Herod the Great ruled Judea as a client king of Rome.
- Many Jews longed for freedom and divine intervention.

➤ Social Conditions

- Heavy taxation and poverty were widespread.
- Shepherds were considered low-status.
- Women, including Mary, had little social power.

➤ Religious Climate

- Messianic expectations were high.
- Temple worship and the Law of Moses were central.
- Various groups (Hasidean's, Pharisees, Sadducees, Zealots, Sicarii) had competing hopes for Israel's future.



The New Testament Christmas Story

- The Christmas narrative is recorded mainly in **Matthew 1-2** and **Luke 1-2**, each emphasizing different aspects. Bearing in mind that Matthew as a Judean wrote his gospel to a Jewish audience while Luke as a gentile wrote to the Greeks and Romans.

Jesus birth supernaturally announced.

➤ **To Mary (Luke 1:26–38)**

- The angel Gabriel announces that Mary, a virgin, will conceive by the Holy Spirit.
- Her son will be called **Jesus** (*Yeshua* = “The LORD saves”).
- He will reign on David’s throne forever.

➤ **To Joseph (Matthew 1:18–25)**

- Joseph learns in a dream that Mary’s child is from God.
- Jesus is identified as the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14.



The Birth of Jesus - (Luke 2:1–20)

➤ The setting

- A Roman census forces Joseph and Mary to travel from Nazareth to **Bethlehem**.
- Jesus is born in humble circumstances and laid in a **manger**.

➤ The announcement to shepherds

- Angels proclaim, “good news of great joy for all people.”
- Shepherds—Levitical custodians of the sacrificial Passover lambs.





- Luke 2:8 That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. ⁹ Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, ¹⁰ but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. ¹¹ The Saviour—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! ¹² And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger."
- ¹³ Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying,
- ¹⁴ "Glory to God in highest heaven,
- and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased."

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- 13 Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying,
- 14 "Glory to God in highest heaven,
- and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased."



The Visit of the Magi – Wise men. (Matthew 2:1–12)

- Wise men from the East follow a star to find the “king of the Jews.”
- They bring gifts of **gold, frankincense, and myrrh**, symbolizing kingship, divinity, and sacrifice.
- King Herod feels threatened and plots to kill the child.
- A divine warning in a dream prevented them from returning to King Herod, who has all the children under two years of age killed to neutralise the threat to his rulership.



The Real Meaning of Christmas

- The Christmas story is not merely about a birth—it is about **God entering human history**.
- Emanuel – God with us!
- **Core Christian Beliefs**
 - **Incarnation** – God became flesh (John 1:14).
 - **Humility** – The Saviour comes as a vulnerable child.
 - **Salvation** – Jesus is born to save humanity from sin.
 - **Peace and hope** – God’s kingdom begins not with power, but love (John 3:16).



What “eschatology” means in the New Testament

- **Eschatology** concerns the *last things*, but in the NT it is not only future-oriented. It is fundamentally about **God’s reign breaking into history through Jesus.**

Old Testament hope → future restoration of Israel and the nations.

New Testament proclamation → *the end has begun* in Christ

- “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand” (Mark 1:15)



What is “The Kingdom of God”

- ▶ In the New Testament, the Kingdom of God is:
 - **God’s sovereign rule**, not primarily a territory
 - **Present in Jesus**, yet awaiting full consummation
 - **Redemptive before political**
- ▶ Jesus does not abolish Jewish kingdom expectations—
He redefines and fulfills them.



Christmas and inaugurated eschatology

- The birth of Jesus marks the announcement of the **inauguration of the last days.**
- At Jesus' birth:
 - The **Messiah has come** (Luke 2:11)
 - David's throne is **legitimately claimed** (Luke 1:32–33)
 - Light has come into darkness (Isaiah 9 → Matthew 4)



The cross and resurrection: kingdom climax

- The kingdom advances not by conquest but by **Redemption**.
 - The cross defeats the powers (Col 2:15)
 - The resurrection inaugurates **new creation** (1 Cor 15)
 - Jesus is enthroned as **Messianic King** (Acts 2:30–36)
 - This reframes kingship around **suffering, victory, and exaltation**.
- 



Pentecost and the present kingdom age

- ▶ Pentecost signals:
 - The **outpouring of the Spirit** promised for the last days (Joel 2)
 - The kingdom expanding through the gospel
 - A multinational people of God
- ▶ The church is not the kingdom itself, but it is the **instrument and witness** of the kingdom.

Future consummation of the Kingdom

➤ Key events

- The **return of Christ**
 - Resurrection of the dead
 - Final judgment
 - Renewal of heaven and earth (Rev 21–22)
- “Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father” (1 Cor 15:24)
- The kingdom will become **fully visible and uncontested.**



Major theological frameworks (briefly)

➤ **Historic Premillennialism**

- Kingdom inaugurated now
- Future earthly reign of Christ

➤ **Amillennialism**

- Kingdom is spiritual now
- Consummated at Christ's return

➤ **Dispensationalism (classic & progressive)**

- Present spiritual kingdom
- Future literal fulfillment for Israel
- Progressive dispensationalism emphasizes *already/not yet* more strongly

➤ **Covenant Theology**

- One unfolding kingdom across covenants
- Fulfilled in Christ and consummated at His return



Why this matters theologically

- Eschatology is not speculative—it shapes:
 - Christian ethics (how we live now)
 - Mission (proclaiming the King)
 - Hope (suffering is temporary)
 - Worship (Christ reigns now)





Christmas begins the Kingdom of God here on earth.

- ▶ The manger points forward to:
 - The cross (redemption)
 - The throne (reign)
 - The return (restoration)
 - ▶ The Kingdom of God is **present in Christ, advancing through the Spirit, and awaiting consummation at His return.**
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And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! ¹¹ They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

¹² When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.





**‘...And when they had opened their treasures, they presented
unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.’**

— Matthew 2:11



Luke 2:25

- ²⁵ At that time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. He was righteous and devout and was eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him ²⁶ and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷ That day the Spirit led him to the Temple. So when Mary and Joseph came to present the baby Jesus to the Lord as the law required, ²⁸ Simeon was there. He took the child in his arms and praised God, saying

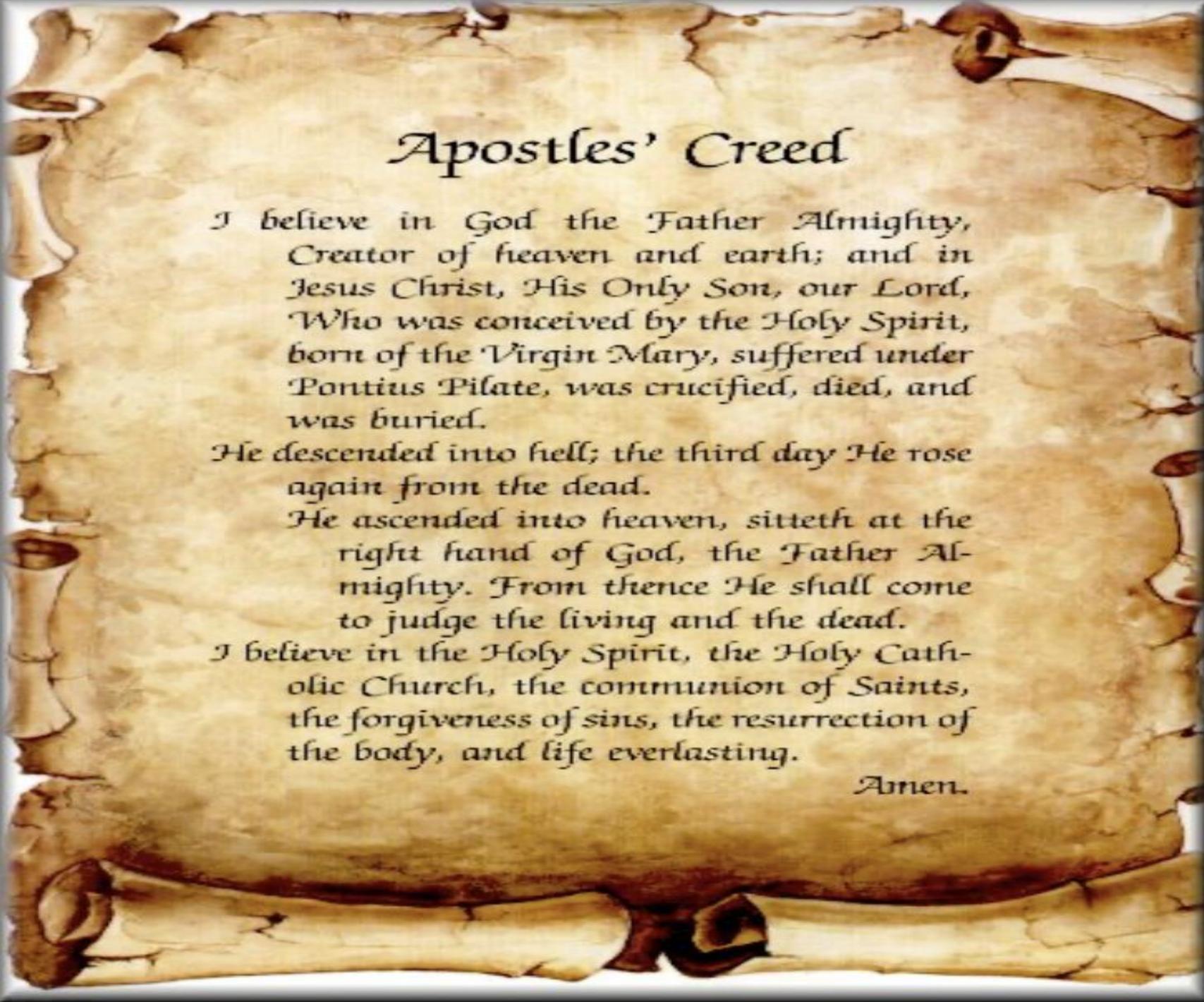
Sovereign Lord, now let your servant die in peace, as you have promised.

³⁰ I have seen your salvation,

³¹ which you have prepared for all people.

³² He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people Israel!”



A scroll with the Apostles' Creed text. The scroll is unrolled, showing the text in a black, serif font. The paper is aged and yellowed, with some staining and a dark border. The text is centered and reads: "Apostles' Creed", "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His Only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.", "He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead.", "He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.", "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.", "Amen." On the left side of the image, there is a red arrow pointing right and some faint, thin lines.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His Only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.

Amen.

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

**Hark! the herald angels sing “Glory to the newborn King
Peace on earth, and mercy mild God and sinners reconciled!”**

Joyful, all ye nations, rise Join the triumph of the skies

With angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

Hark! the herald angels sing “Glory to the newborn King!”

Christ, by highest Heav’n adored Christ the everlasting Lord

Late in time, behold Him come Offspring of a virgin’s womb

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see Hail th’incarnate Deity

Pleased as man with man to dwell Jesus, our Emmanuel

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!

Light and life to all He brings Ris’n with healing in His wings

Mild, He lays His glory by Born that man no more may die

Born to raise the sons of earth Born to give them second birth

“Glory to the newborn King!”

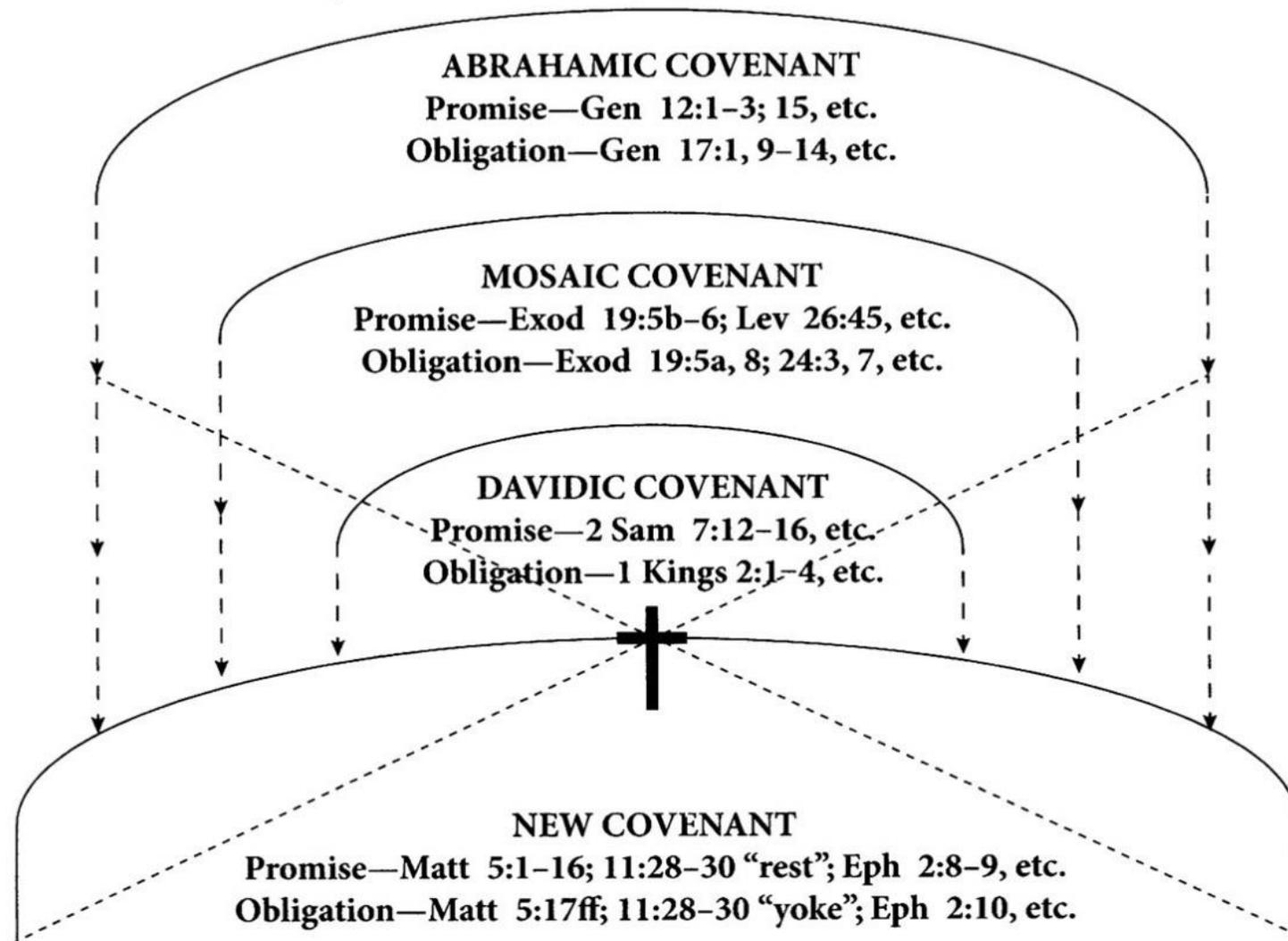


➤ **D. Flight to Egypt and Return (Matthew 2:13–23)**

- Joseph flees with Mary and Jesus to Egypt to escape Herod.
- After Herod's death, the family returns and settles in **Nazareth**.

Hannukah

- **Hanukkah**^[d] (IPA: [/ˈhæɪnəkə/](#), [/ˈhɑːnəkə/](#); Hebrew: [חַנּוּכָּה](#) romanized: *Hānukkā*, lit. 'dedication'; [listen](#)[ⓘ]) is a Jewish holiday that commemorates the Maccabean Revolt against the Seleucid Empire in the 2nd century BCE, when the Maccabees successfully recovered Jerusalem and the Second Temple.^{[4][5]}



NOTE: Both promise (yielding peace) and obligation (yielding purpose) are built into the very organic nature of God's redemptive program. One makes no sense and will not work without the other. Our “rest” depends upon the combination of the two.