

## Scriptural Evidence for the Covenant of Works

1. Scripture repeatedly references a divine promise of eternal life to mankind upon the condition of perfect obedience to God's law (Mt. 19:16f; Lk. 10:26f; Rm. 2:13; 7:10; 10:5-6; Gal. 3:11f; Lev. 18:5).
2. God established this promise with mankind either *before* the Fall or *afterward*.
  - A. God did **not** establish this promise *after* the Fall, since mankind was already guilty in Adam and thereby disqualified from offering perfect obedience to His commandments (Rm. 3:20; 8:3; Gal. 3:10).
  - B. Therefore, God **must** have established this promise *before* the Fall.
3. There is evidence of this promise of eternal life in God's providential dealings with Adam before the Fall.
  - A. God placed Adam in "paradise", which Scripture identifies as a type of heaven (Lk. 23:43; 2 Cor. 12:3-4; Rev. 2:7).
  - B. God instituted the weekly Sabbath, which Scripture identifies as a type of everlasting heavenly rest (Gen. 2:1-3; Heb. 4:9-11; Rev. 14:13).
  - C. God planted the tree of life, which Scripture identifies as a symbol of the everlasting, unloseable, heavenly life secured for believers by Christ (Gen. 2:9; 3:17, 22, 24; Rev. 22:2, 14).
  - D. God instituted marriage, joining Adam to his wife as "one flesh", thereby signifying eternal, heavenly communion between God and man, as ultimately to be enjoyed by "Christ and the church" (Eph. 5:30-32).
  - E. Adam is called "the son of God" (Lk. 3:38), indicating that humanity's chief end was **not** to be suspended indefinitely upon its own obedience, but to "abide in the house forever" since "a son abides forever" (Jn 8:35).
4. There is confirmation of this teaching in other parts of Scripture.
  - A. Hosea 6:4-7 compares Ephraim's short-lived faithfulness to God's covenant with Adam's rapid departure from God in treacherously breaking God's "covenant" in Eden.
  - B. Romans 5:12-21 identifies Adam as "a type of Him who was to come" (i.e. Christ) and explains how Christ has succeeded where Adam had failed by perfectly obeying God's law as a covenant head or representative.
  - C. First Corinthians 15:21-22, 45-49 calls Christ the "last Adam", showing (a) that whereas Adam brought death, Christ has brought life, and (b) the vast superiority of eternal life to anything enjoyed in Eden before the Fall.

## Confessional Reformed Teaching on Covenant Theology

**CF 7.2-3** The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience. Man, by his fall, having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the covenant of grace; wherein he freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ; requiring of them faith in him, that they may be saved, and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto eternal life his Holy Spirit, to make them willing and able to believe.

**LC 20** The providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created, was the placing him in paradise, appointing him to dress it, giving him liberty to eat of the fruit of the earth; putting the creatures under his dominion, and ordaining marriage for his help; affording him communion with himself; instituting the sabbath; entering into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience, of which the tree of life was a pledge; and forbidding to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.

**LC 92** The rule of obedience revealed to Adam in the estate of innocence, and to all mankind in him, besides a special command not to eat of the fruit of the tree knowledge of good and evil, was the moral law.

**LC 22** The covenant being made with Adam as a public person, not for himself only, but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in that first transgression.

**SC 15** The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.

**LC 26** Original sin is conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity by natural generation, so as all that proceed from them in that way are conceived and born in sin.

**LC 30** God doth not leave all men to perish in the estate of sin and misery, into which they fell by the breach of the first covenant, commonly called the *covenant of works*; but of his mere love and mercy delivereth his elect out of it, and bringeth them into an estate of salvation by the second covenant, commonly called the *covenant of grace*.

**LC 31** The covenant of grace was made with Christ as the second Adam, and in him with all the elect as his seed.

**LC 32** The grace of God is manifested in the second covenant, in that he freely provideth and offereth to sinners a Mediator, and life and salvation by him; and requiring faith as the condition to interest them in him, promiseth and giveth his Holy Spirit to all his elect, to work in them that faith, with all other saving graces; and to enable them unto all holy obedience, as the evidence of the truth of their faith and thankfulness to God, and as the way which he hath appointed them to salvation.

**LC 36** The only Mediator of the covenant of grace is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, of one substance and equal with the Father, in the fulness of time became man, and so was and continues to be God and man, in two entire distinct natures, and one person, forever.

According to Scripture, there are many notable comparisons and contrasts between “the first man, Adam” who served as “a type of Him who was to come” and our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Second Adam or “Last Adam”. These connections are highlighted chiefly in Romans 5:12-21, 1 Corinthians 15:20-49, and Ephesians 5:22-33, with constant references and allusions back to the events and descriptions of Genesis 2-3. Below is a chart outlining a series of Bible-based observations regarding the typological relationship between Adam and Christ.

	<b>THE FIRST ADAM</b>	<b>THE SECOND ADAM</b>
<b>Identity &amp; Role</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Created son of God with no earthly father (Lk. 3:38).</li> <li>2. Appointed by God to represent mankind as his physical, covenantal seed.</li> <li>3. Obligated to fulfill both <i>natural</i> and <i>special</i> precepts on behalf of his covenantal seed (Tables &amp; Tree).</li> <li>4. Bride obtained when God put him to sleep, pierced his side, then awakened him in a garden (Gen. 2).</li> <li>5. Appointed by God to serve as a gardener (Gen. 2:15).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Eternal Son of God with no earthly father (Mt. 1:23; Jn. 1:1).</li> <li>2. Appointed by God to represent elect mankind as His spiritual, covenantal seed.</li> <li>3. Obligated to fulfill both <i>natural</i> and <i>special</i> precepts on behalf of His covenantal seed (Tables &amp; Tree: Ps. 40:6-8; Jn. 10:17-18; Php. 2:8)</li> <li>4. Bride obtained when God subjected him to the sleep of death (1 Cor. 15:20), pierced his side, then raised him to life in a garden (Jn. 19:41).</li> <li>5. Mistaken for a gardener by Mary Magdalene at the tomb (Jn. 20:15).</li> </ol>
<b>Personal Performance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tempted by Satan alongside his beautiful and sinless bride in a lush garden paradise.</li> <li>2. Ate the forbidden fruit in an orchard filled with delightful and permissible fruit (Gen. 2:9, 16).</li> <li>3. Tempted successfully by Satan via Eve (his bride) to refuse self-denial by eating from the forbidden tree.</li> <li>4. Subordinated God’s will to his own in the Garden of Eden (“You will be like God, knowing good &amp; evil.”).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tempted by Satan in a lonely and desolate wilderness, surrounded by wild beasts (Mk. 1:13).</li> <li>2. Refused to turn stones into bread at the end of a 40-day fast in a barren wilderness with no food in sight.</li> <li>3. Tempted unsuccessfully by Satan via Peter (a member of his bride) to refuse self-denial by avoiding the accursed tree (Mt. 16:22).</li> <li>4. Subordinated His own will to God’s in the Garden of Gethsemane (“Not My will, but Your will be done.”)</li> </ol>
<b>Outcome &amp; Consequences</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Brought eternal death to his seed by his disobedience.</li> <li>2. Incurred God’s curse by eating from a tree.</li> <li>3. Concealed his shameful nakedness with fig leaves.</li> <li>4. Cast blame upon his wife for his own personal sin.</li> <li>5. Had a curse of thorns pronounced upon his fields.</li> <li>6. Brought forth bread by the sweat of his face.</li> <li>7. Barred from paradise by God’s flaming sword.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Brought eternal life to His seed by His obedience.</li> <li>2. Endured &amp; abolished God’s curse by being nailed to a tree.</li> <li>3. Exposed in shameful nakedness for our sins (Ps. 22:17-18).</li> <li>4. Accepted blame for his wife’s sin, though he himself was sinless.</li> <li>5. Had a crown of thorns placed upon His head.</li> <li>6. Became the bread of life by the (bloody) sweat of his face.</li> <li>7. Opened paradise, being pierced by God’s flaming sword (Zech. 13:7).</li> </ol>