



Living in the New Covenant

Part 1

Living in the New Covenant

Part 1 – this week: Covenants

- What they are
- The links between the covenant with Abram and the New Covenant
- Key elements of the New Covenant

Part 2 – next week: Experiencing the New Covenant

- Everyday life in the New Covenant including examples from looking back

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In the beginning – Genesis chapters 1, 2, & 3

Gen 1:26 God said, “Let Us make man in Our image,

Gen 2:15-17 God puts Adam in the garden of Eden instructing “don’t eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.” – Literally – dying you shall die

Gen 3:1-7 Adam and Eve disobey

Gen 3:22-24 God drives Adam out of the garden in case he “*might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever*”—
. . . and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.



The consequences of Adam's sin

Romans 5:12....*through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned*

“World” = “Cosmos” – atmosphere

Ephesians 2:1-2 . . . *and you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ² in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.*

Romans 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (New Covenant in action)*



The New Covenant – restores our relationship with God

Hebrews 8:10-12 (NIV) . . . *I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts.*

I will be their God, and they will be my people.

¹¹ *No longer will they teach their neighbour, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. ¹² For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”*



First time “covenant” appears in bible is with Noah

Genesis 6:18 (NIV) *But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons’ wives with you.*

Genesis 9:11 *I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”*

Genesis 9:13 *I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth.*



Covenants – more than Contracts

The word “covenant” occurs in text of the bible over 280 times

Many other texts use Covenantal language – unfamiliar to us today

Contracts – are generally clinical (transactional) in nature

- contracts involve a commitment between at least two parties to provide identified services or goods
- a simple contract is the sale of an item

Whereas **Covenants** involve life committing relationships – typically have an emotional connection



Covenants – life committing relationships

A relationship between souls

Obligations and commitments above and beyond the delivery of identified tasks and goods

Typically a commitment to support the other party without knowing or understanding the full extent of what support will be required and what will be involved. Often for life.

A modern example is the traditional marriage vows



Traditional marriage vows

*'I, (name), take you, (name)
to be my wife/husband,
to have and to hold from this day forward;
for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish,
till death us do part,
according to God's holy law.
In the presence of God I make this vow.'*

**Basically: Any
circumstances
whatsoever for
life!**

**A Threshold
Covenant**



“Threshold” Covenant

Threshold covenants occur when someone is invited/welcome to cross over the threshold into someone else’s domain/territory

The person who stepped over the threshold into your territory at your invitation could rely on your commitment to their safety – even costing you all you have including your life – reciprocated

Often sealed with blood

Very common in ancient times and cultures and still in practice in some cultures today

Rejected by stamping/dashing your foot (kicking) the threshold





Matthew 4:6 Satan tempting Jesus on the highest point of the temple

*⁶ 'If you are the Son of God,' he said,
'throw yourself down. For it is written:*

*“He will command his angels concerning
you, and they will lift you up in their
hands, so that you will not strike your
foot against a stone.”*

*⁷ Jesus answered him, 'It is also written:
“Do not put the Lord your God to the test.*

Judges 16:2-4

² When Gazites were told, “Samson has come here,” they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city saying, “Let us wait until the morning light, then we will kill him.”

³ At midnight Samson arose and took hold of the doors of the city gate and the two posts and pulled them up along with the bars; then he put them on his shoulders and carried them up to the top of the mountain which is opposite Hebron.



Covenants are a life commitment and often sealed with blood because the *“life of the flesh is in the blood”* (**Lev 17:11**)

Syria and Egypt had a custom for when a newcomer arrived, to slaughter an animal and shed the blood on the threshold of the front door of the house. When the newcomer enters that house and steps over the threshold, they are adopted into that family and treated as a son or daughter from that day on for life.

There are also blood covenants, name covenants, as well as covenants specific to circumstances, etc.

Genesis 19:1-12 (NIV) Sodom and Gomorrah

The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. ² “My lords,” he said, “please turn aside to your servant’s house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning.”

“No,” they answered, “we will spend the night in the square.”



Genesis 19:1-12 (NIV) Sodom and Gomorrah

³ But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate. ⁴ Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom—both young and old—surrounded the house. ⁵ They called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.”



Genesis 19:1-12 (NIV) Sodom and Gomorrah

⁶ Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him ⁷ and said, “No, my friends. Don’t do this wicked thing. ⁸ Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don’t do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof.”

⁹ “Get out of our way,” they replied. “This fellow came here as a foreigner, and now he wants to play the judge! We’ll treat you worse than them.” They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door.



Genesis 19:1-12 (NIV) Sodom and Gomorrah

¹⁰ But the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. ¹¹ Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door.

¹² The two men said to Lot, “Do you have anyone else here—sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of here, ¹³ because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the Lord against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it.”



Genesis 15 – The LORD’s Covenant With Abram

¹ After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision:

*“Do not be afraid, Abram.
I am your shield,
your very great reward.”*

² But Abram said, “Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?” ³ And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.”



Genesis 15 – The LORD’s Covenant With Abram

4 Then the word of the LORD came to him: “This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.” 5 He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”

6 Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.



Genesis 15 – The LORD’s Covenant With Abram

⁷ He also said to him, “I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it.”

⁸ But Abram said, “Sovereign LORD, how can I know that I will gain possession of it?”

⁹ So the LORD said to him, “Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon.”

¹⁰ Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other; the birds, however, he did not cut in half.

¹¹ Then birds of prey came down on the carcasses, but Abram drove them away.



Genesis 15 – The LORD’s Covenant With Abram

¹² As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. ¹³ Then the LORD said to him, “Know for certain that for four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved and mistreated there. ¹⁴ But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. ¹⁵ You, however, will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age. ¹⁶ In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.”



Genesis 15 – The LORD’s Covenant With Abram

17 When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces.

18 On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, “To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates— 19 the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, 20 Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, 21 Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites.”



Key elements from the LORD's Covenant With Abram

The Lord told Abram that He is His **Shield and Very great Reward**.

Abram was asleep – **God takes full responsibility** for both parties

If any of the conditions of the Covenant are **broken** by any party, **“the blazing Torch”** had to die, ending up like the dead animals.

The **Shield and Torch** refer to **Christ** who will **“cover”** Abraham's descendants if they break the **Covenant conditions**.

Predicts restoring what was lost in Garden of Eden

In dying for us, Jesus covered man's sin so that we can receive the Very Great Reward – eternal life in the Kingdom of God



Two other covenants are linked to Abram's covenant

Two other Covenants “hang on” the initial Covenant made with Abram, and form part of the overall “Marriage” Covenant the Lord has made with the descendants of Abraham.

⁸ . . . it is not the children by physical descent who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring. Romans 9:8 (NIV)

These two Covenants are referred to in Jeremiah 31



Jeremiah 31:31-33 (NASB) ³¹ “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, ³² not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD. ³³ “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the LORD, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Passover – referred to as a covenant

Passover – Groom’s Vows in Marriage Covenant

The first part of the Marriage Covenant was when “the Groom” (LORD) gave His vows (conditions of Covenant) to the Bride, to protect and to provide for Her.

Exodus 6:6-7 (NASB) ⁶ . . . ‘I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. ⁷ Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.



Mt Sinai – Bride’s Vows Marriage Covenant

At Mount Sinai the Bride gave Her vows (conditions of Covenant) to the Groom as stated in ***Exodus 19:8*** *All the people answered together and said, “**All that the LORD has spoken we will do!**”*

Declared before receiving any of the Commandments – the Bride’s vows of commitment to their Groom.

Broken with the Golden Calf incident not many days later, nearly leading to their death – Moses interceded.

The LORD knew his bride was in a fallen state and would sin eventually. He made Abram’s Covenant unconditional on behalf of Abraham’s descendants – to be a Shield and Covering that restores His Bride.



Jesus introduces the New Covenant at Passover

Jesus declared the arrival of the new Covenant and released it by fulfilling the requirements of the Abrahamic Covenant

Luke 22:19-20 (NASB) ¹⁹ *And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”*
²⁰ *And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.”*



For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. 1 Cor 5:7

When we accept Jesus we cross over the threshold into the New Covenant of Grace – a new relationship with God

As we walk with God, He reveals his calling on our lives – calling us to step into a deeper, more committed relationship with Him

This involves making decisions and taking actions to follow His lead

- some are common to all of us – Baptism
- some are individual – specific to us

Hebrews 10 calls us to persevere in our faith

28 Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?

39 But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved.



A close-up photograph of a communion cup filled with dark red wine, with a stack of flatbread in the background. The cup is made of dark wood with horizontal grooves. The bread is golden-brown and stacked in a basket. The text "Communion" is overlaid in white, and "Celebrating the New Covenant" is at the bottom left. The page number "31" is in the bottom right corner.

Communion

Celebrating the New Covenant

The New Covenant restores our relationship with God

Hebrews 8:10-12 (NIV) . . . *I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.*

¹¹ No longer will they teach their neighbour, or say to one another, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. ¹² For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

**In life Jesus conquered sin. In death He paid for our sin.
In resurrection He conquered death**



The New Covenant releases resurrection life

Romans 7:24-25 ²⁴ . . . Who will set me free from the body of this death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! . .

Romans 8:11 (NASB) ¹¹ But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Sin brings Death
Grace brings Life through the Spirit!



The New Covenant releases Resurrection power

Ephesians 1:18-20 (NIV) ¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, ¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength ²⁰ he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms . . .

God is calling us to live in His power – today!



How do we Honour God?

By receiving His Love. We do this by believing in Jesus

John 3:16 (NASB) “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

*. . . while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **Romans 5:8***

