



Timothy Ministries

Mini-Seminary

ESCHATOLOGY 2

COVENANTS

Part 1

The Família Dei

We are stardust
We are golden
And we've got to get ourselves
Back to the garden¹

Way over yonder
Is a place I have seen
In a garden of wisdom
From a long ago dream.²

The Garden of Eden was a perfect world. It answered the deepest needs of humanity. ... Deep within the psyche of modern man is this innate drive to return to Paradise.³

“Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”
— Revelation 21.3-4

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- 1 “Woodstock,” by Joni Mitchell, 1969, a song capturing the feeling of the Woodstock music festival which she was unable to attend. The lyric expresses some of her generation’s *secular* hope for a return to Edenic peace and freedom.
 - 2 Folk song, “Way Over Yonder,” by Carole King, 1971.
 - 3 Jack W. Hayford and Paul McGuire, *People of the Covenant: God’s New Covenant for Today* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1994), Lesson 3.

Part 2

Sacrifices & The Firstborn

After Adam and Eve sinned, God immediately began the process of restoring the Edenic family, so that it would eventually become possible for Him to again dwell in unhindered fellowship with mankind. The apostle John prophetically saw this eventuality accomplished (Re 21.3-7), but its accomplishment is taking millennia. Nevertheless, God inaugurated the process of restoring the *familia dei* with the introduction of blood sacrifices, the first of which on record is that of Abel who offered “of the firstlings of his flock” to the LORD (Ge 4.4). **These sacrifices served as the beginning of God’s progressive revelation of how the coming Savior would redeem, and also as regular reminders to the offerers that the expiation of sin was a prerequisite for restoring a familial relationship with the Creator.** Beyond providing ritual expiation, **the sacrifices also served as opportunities for the ritual (not literal) sharing of blood and for ceremonial meals, both of which signified, or would come to signify, the kinship relationship which the offerer desired to have with God.**

By Abraham’s time, both greater privilege and heavier responsibility fell upon the firstborn male of the family. This was a natural development, in that the family members depended upon the firstborn son to protect and maintain them upon the father’s death. When the paterfamilias died, the firstborn son became the new head of the family, and so far as possible secured the continuation of the family line.¹ In a family devoted to a deity or deities, the firstborn son was expected to maintain the religious life of the household as well. In a family covenanted to Yahveh, in which the covenant was instituted for *all subsequent generations* (Ge 9.9; 17.7), **the firstborn son would be expected to guide the family and growing clan in faithfully fulfilling its ongoing covenant obligations to Yahveh.**² The firstborn son, therefore, was all important to a family of the ANE, and in the case of Isaac, the firstborn *of the Abrahamic covenant*, the family would have understood that Yahveh had an absolute right over the life of this young man, first by virtue of bringing about his miraculous birth, but most importantly by virtue of designating him as the steward of the covenant (Ge 17.19).

Interesting question: Who was Melchizedek?

“Blessed by the Lord, the God of Shem; ... let Him [God] dwell in the tents of Shem,” Ge 9.27

Jubilees 8.18, “May the LORD God of Shem be blessed, and may the LORD dwell in the dwelling place of Shem.”

1 Cf. I. Benzinger, “Family And Marriage Relations, Hebrew,” in NSHERK: “The first-born son occupied a position of distinction among the remaining children; and as heir he received a double portion. ... In return it was the eldest son’s duty to take care of the female members of the family, since he became the head of the family at his father’s death.”

2 Cf. Mishnah, Zebachim 14.4, A-B:

A Before the tabernacle was set up, (1) the high places were permitted, and (2) [the sacrificial] service [was done by] the first born [Num. 3:12–13, 8:16–18].

B When the tabernacle was set up, (1) the high places were prohibited, and (2) the [sacrificial] service [was done by] priests.

Part 3

Covenants



The divinely initiated covenants of Scripture are elective kinship bonds, characterized by variations of the declaration, “I will take you for My people, and I will be your God,” and by which God progressively reconstitutes and maintains the *familia dei* in the present age.

The Lexham Bible Dictionary summarizes: “Covenants are familial bonds that are legally sanctioned and liturgically ritualized. ... covenants give rise to familial relations and their attendant legal obligations, which are divinely consecrated in ritual.” As Jason S. DeRouchie comments, “At the heart of a covenant is a relationship — one established by choice and not by birth, though it is modeled on family relationships.” See *How To Understand And Apply The Old Testament*, p. 316. Phillip J. Long observes in passing that, “... it is natural for a covenant relationship to be understood in terms of a marriage ...,” *Jesus The Bridegroom*, p. 104. This is true precisely because the divine covenants are essentially familial bonds.

Questions

Why are the ideas of a covenant before creation and a “covenant of works” in the garden of Eden both false?

When was the first covenant enacted?

What two common relationships in American culture fit the ANE definition of “covenant”?

Since the time of Noah, divinely instituted covenants have progressively developed toward the New Covenant under Jesus Christ. The New Covenant was, as we might expect, foreshadowed in many ways by the covenants that preceded it.

Antecedent Types And Shadows	New Covenant Realities
1. Moses, Aaron	Jesus as Mediator, High Priest
2. Old covenant blood sacrifices	Jesus as once-for-all sacrifice
3. Tabernacle and temples	Body and Spirit of Jesus
4. David	Jesus as eternal King
5. Solomon	Jesus as Teacher and Sage
6. Sign and seal of circumcision	Holy Spirit as seal (see No. 10 below)
7. Token proselytes	Blessing of the nations (Genesis 12.3)

New Covenant Features	Scripture References
1. New Mediator, High Priest	Heb 5.1-10; 7.25; 8.6; 9.15; 12.24; 1Ti 2.5
2. New sacrifice	Heb 7.27; 9.12-15
3. New promises (see page 8)	Heb 8.6
4. New assurance	Jn 6.37; 10.27-29
5. No more condemnation	Ro 8.1; Ga 3.13
6. New teaching, wisdom	Mt 12.42; Mk 1.27; cf. Ac 17.19
7. New ethnic diversity	Ac 11.18; 15.14-17; Ga 3.28-29
8. New temple, a new man	1Co 3.16-17; 6.19; 1Pe 2.5; cf. Eph 2.14
9. New rituals	Mt 28.19; 1Co 11.23-26
10. New seal	2Co 1.22; Eph 1.13; 4.30
11. New access to the Father	Jn 14.13-14; 15.16; 16.23-24; Heb 10.19-22
12. New commandments on new tablets	Jn 13.34; 1Jn 3.16; cf. 2Co 3.2-3; Heb 10.16

Successive Contributions To Restoring The *Familia Dei*

Noahic Covenant: God Reassures Mankind Of Continuing Redemption

1. Divine promise to refrain from curses of the ground and from global destruction of life (Ge 8.21-22; 9.11-15)
2. Reinstatement of humanity's mandate to be fruitful and multiply (Ge 9.1,7; cf. Ge 1.28)
3. Partial reinstatement of mankind's dominion over the animal kingdom (Ge 9.2-5)
4. Reaffirmation of man as God's image bearer (Ge 9.6; cf. Ge 1.26)
5. Enactment of fundamental laws (Ge 9.4-6)
6. Establishment of kinship bond for *successive generations* (Ge 9.1,9)

Abrahamic Covenant: Restoration Of Man's Dominion Of The Earth Begun

7. The reversal of man's loss of dominion over the earth *begun* by the divine grant of land to Abraham and his descendants as a permanent possession (Ge 12.7; 15.7,18-21; 17.8)
8. Affirmation of God's intent that all families of the earth be blessed (Ge 12.3)
9. Affirmation of relational righteousness (Ge 15.6)
10. Establishment of kinship bond *through Isaac's line* for *endless generations* (Ge 17.7,19)
11. Gift of a covenant sign to mark the kindred of Yahveh (Ge 17.10-14)
12. Illustration of the principle of sacrificial substitution (Ge 22.8,13)
13. Divine oath establishing supremacy of Abraham's Seed and the blessing of all nations through that Seed (Ge 22.15-18)

Sinaitic Covenant: A Nuptial Bond, Limited Access To God's Manifest Presence, And Witness To Righteousness Through Faith

14. Yahveh demonstrates His covenant faithfulness by redeeming His kin adopted under the Abrahamic covenant from their oppression in Egypt (Ex 2.24; 3.7-8)
15. Substitution and redemption reemphasized in the institution of the Passover and other blood sacrifices (Ex 12), which witnessed to "a righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe" (Ro 3.21-22)
16. Covenant elevated to a nuptial bond (Ex 19.5; Dt 7.6; 14.2; cf. So 2.16; Eze 16.8-13; 23.4)
17. Yahveh's kindred corporately given royal status as a kingdom (Ex 19.6)

18. Yahveh's kindred given a missional purpose as priests (Yahveh's firstborn), both among themselves and among the nations (Ex 19.6)
19. Provision of religious, moral, and civil law for the kindred of Yahveh as a national entity (Ex 20; etc.)
- 20. Divine grant of an Eden-like sacred space, architecturally enclosed in the tabernacle and subsequent temples**, which partially (and conditionally) restored mankind's access to God's manifest presence (Ex 23.19; 1Sa 1.7,9,24; 1Ki 8.10-11; Ps 26.8; 122.1; 134.1; 135.2; etc.)
21. Principles of redemption further defined by rituals and festivals

Levitical And Davidic Addenda: Lasting Purpose Of The Levitical Priesthood And Permanent Establishment Of The Davidic Dynasty

22. Perpetual purpose affirmed for the Levitical priesthood with clarification that the priests are not above the law but are subject to its blessings and curses (Nu 25.10-13; Mal 1.6 to 2.9)
23. Clarification of God's intent that His kindred be forever ruled by a Davidic king, implying (A) the eventual installation of a human-divine King, and (B) the continuing status of Yahveh's kindred as a royal kingdom (cf. Re 22.3-5)

The New Covenant: Substance Replaces The Shadow

24. Affirmation of the necessity of changed hearts for the true kindred of Yahveh (Dt 30.1-6; Je 32.39-40)
25. Arrival of the human-divine covenant Mediator and High Priest (Heb 5.1-10; 7.25; 8.6; 9.15; 12.24; 1Ti 2.5)
26. The sacrifice that truly expiates sin and propitiates the Father is accomplished and fulfills all the symbolic blood sacrifices that foreshadowed it (Heb 7.27; 9.12-15)
27. The Mediator declares new and better covenant promises (Heb 8.6)
28. The Mediator's sacrifice and promises provides new assurance for God's adopted kindred (Jn 10.27-29)
29. Abolition of covenant curses (Ro 8.1; Ga 3.13)
30. The Mediator provides new teaching and wisdom (Mt 12.42; Mk 1.27)

31. Religious and cultural doors opened wide to the nations (Mt 8.11; Lk 24.47; Jn 10.16; 12.32; cf. Mt 24.14; 28.19)
32. A temple of living stones replaces the finite and static temple (1Co 3.16-17; 6.19; 2Co 6.16; 1Pe 2.5)
- 33. New rituals commemorate the ultimate sacrifice (Lord's Supper, 1Co 11.23-26) and illustrate the covenant subject's consecration to priestly service (Baptism, Mt 28.19)**
34. The seal of the Holy Spirit's fruit-bearing and gift-giving presence supplements circumcision for Jewish subjects and makes circumcision unnecessary for Gentile believers (2Co 1.22; Eph 1.13; 4.30)
35. Direct access to the Father in Jesus' name for all God's kindred from anywhere in the world (Jn 14.13-14; 15.16; 16.23-24; Heb 10.19-22)
- 36. A new commandment summarizing all preceding legislation in a single principle based upon the example of the New-Covenant Mediator and High Priest (Jn 13.34; 1Jn 3.16)**

Questions

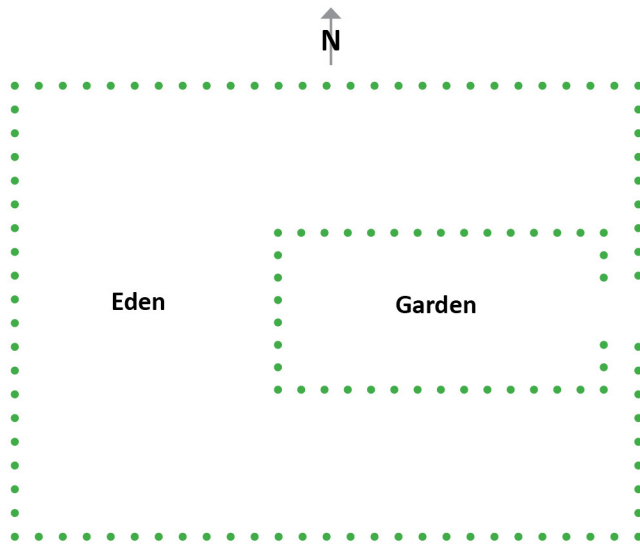
How did phenomena occurring in conjunction with the Sinaitic Covenant parallel the traditions of Jewish wedding?

1. Moses friend of bridegroom
2. Red sea pre-nuptial washing
3. Plundering the Egyptians for bride price, part of betrothal, the *eyrusin*
4. Accompanied by the friend of the bridegroom to the "house" of the bridegroom
5. The *kiddushin*, consecration at Mt. Sinai
6. Under a canopy of smoke and glory-cloud
7. The *ketubah*, marriage document of obligations
8. The wedding feast on Mt. Sinai (Ex 24)

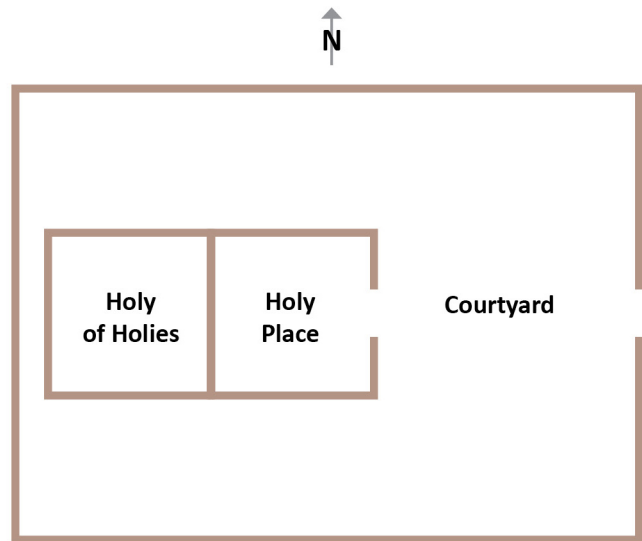
New Covenant Promises	References
1. Many Gentiles will join patriarchs in the kingdom	Mt 8.10-11
2. Gift of utterance and wisdom for witnesses	Mt 10.17-20
3. Faithful confessed before the Father	Mt 10.32
4. Rest for souls in Jesus	Mt 11.28-30
5. Jesus' followers will be fishers of men	Mk 1.17
6. Some present will see new phase of the kingdom	Mk 9.1
7. Present-age goods, persecutions, eternal life	Mk 10.29-30
8. All things possible by believing prayer	Mk 11.22-24
9. Dead coming to life <i>now</i>	Jn 5.24-25
10. Those who come to Christ never cast out	Jn 6.37
11. Eternal life by faith in Jesus	Jn 6.47-51
12. Obedient believers will never see death	Jn 8.51
13. Believers will do Messiah's works	Jn 14.12
14. Christ ever present with His disciples	Jn 14.18,23
15. Father will give what is asked in Jesus' name	Jn 16.23
16. Gift of the Holy Spirit <i>through</i> Jesus Christ	Ac 2.38-39
17. Right to eat from the tree of life in Paradise	Re 2.7
18. No harm from the second death	Re 2.11
19. Gift of the hidden manna	Re 2.17
20. A new name	Re 2.17
21. Authority over the nations	Re 2.26-27
22. Possession of the morning star	Re 2.28
23. Overcomers serve as pillars in God's temple	Re 3.12
24. Name of God, city and Christ upon overcomer	Re 3.12; 22.4

Part 4

Tabernacle & Temples



The Edenic environment with its extendable boundaries and unpartitioned sacred space.



The tabernacle with its set boundaries and partitioned sacred space.

Part 5

Família Dei Restored

And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.” — Revelation 21.3-4

I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. — Revelation 21.22-23

There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; they will see His face, and His name *will be* on their foreheads. — Revelation 22.3-4

Want To Continue Learning About This Topic?

Here are some recommended resources:

Resources

Note: With the exception of our own works, inclusion of a book in this list does not imply complete endorsement of a work's contents by Roderick Graciano or Timothy Ministries.

Graciano, Roderick A. with Carlos S. Martínez. *Redemption By Jesus And The Restoration Of All Things: An In-Depth Look At The Truths That Will Define Our Eternal Destiny*. This book should be finished and available as a free PDF file by the end of 2025.

— “A House Like The Garden Of Eden, And Its Message For Our World.” This is an excerpt from the above book, available now at: https://www.tmin.org/pdfs/House_Like_The_Garden.pdf.

Hahn, Scott W. *Kinship by Covenant: A Canonical Approach to the Fulfillment of God's Saving Promises*, (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2009).

Trumbull, H. Clay. *The Blood Covenant: A Primitive Rite And Its Bearings On Scripture*, (Kirkwood, MO: Impact Christian Books, Inc., 1975).

E-mail The Instructor

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