

# The Covenant of Grace

Oakwood Presbyterian Church

2016



THE  
*Christ*  
OF THE  
COVENANTS

O. PALMER  
ROBERTSON



# Seeing the Big Picture

“Dr. Robertson explained the comprehensive and unbreakable nature of God’s covenant, demonstrating how all the promises of Scripture have realized their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Because of what Christ has accomplished, those promises are ours to claim... I had never heard the Christian faith explained in such cosmic and powerful terms. I was stunned... All at once, as if in a moment, I experienced a stretching of my mind, a reenergizing of my soul, and a kindling of fervor in my heart such as I had never known before.”

*T. M. Moore, I Will Be Your God*



# Covenant – The Key to Scripture

What do these three things have in common?

- Dogs
- Diamonds
- Double Plays



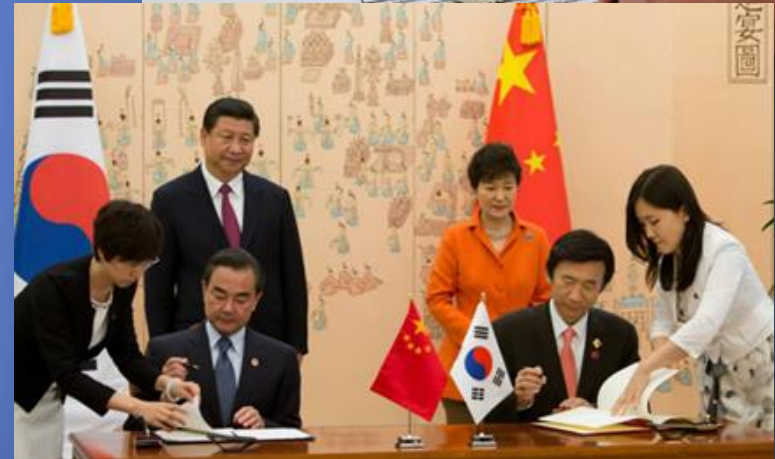
# The Structure of Scripture's Message

“So what brings all of these [Biblical] themes together? What unites them is not itself a central dogma but an architectonic structure, a matrix of beams and pillars that hold together the structure of Biblical faith and practice. That particular architectural structure that we believe the Scriptures themselves to yield is the covenant. It is not simply the concept of the covenant, but the concrete existence of God’s covenantal dealings in our history that provides the context within which we recognize the unity of Scripture amid its remarkable variety.”

*Michael Horton, Introducing Covenant Theology*



# What Is a “Covenant”?



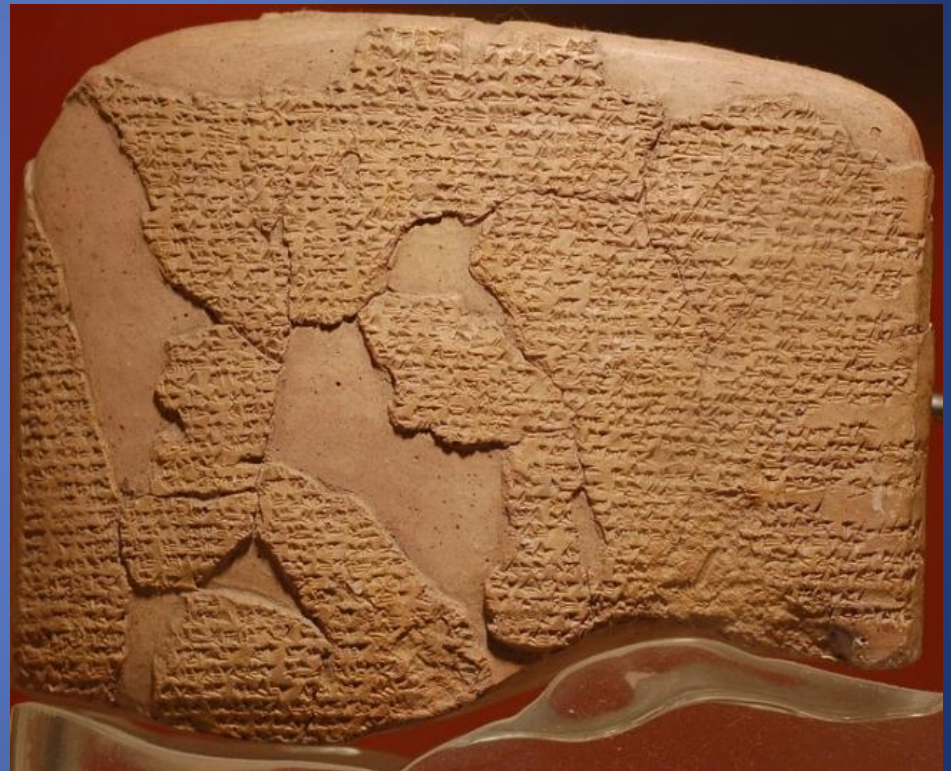
“A covenant is a formal agreement that creates a relationship with legal aspects.”

*Michael G. Brown and Zach Keele, Sacred Bond*



# Ancient Suzerain-Vassal Treaties

- Preamble
- Historical Prologue
- Stipulations
- Sanctions
- Periodic Public Readings
- Sealing Rituals



***“A covenant is a bond in blood  
sovereignly administered.***

When God enters into a  
covenantal relationship with  
men, he sovereignly institutes  
a life-and-death bond. A  
covenant is a bond in blood, or  
a bond of life and death,  
sovereignly administered.”

*O. Palmer Robertson,  
The Christ of the Covenants*





# A Covenant is *a Bond*

- Often used synonymously with “oath”
- By a covenant people become committed to one another
- Often the commitment is accompanied by a symbolic action – a shared meal, a memorial, an animal sacrifice, etc.

Berith ברית



# A Covenant is a *Bond-in-Blood*

Divine covenants are always a matter of life and death

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.”

Leviticus 17:11

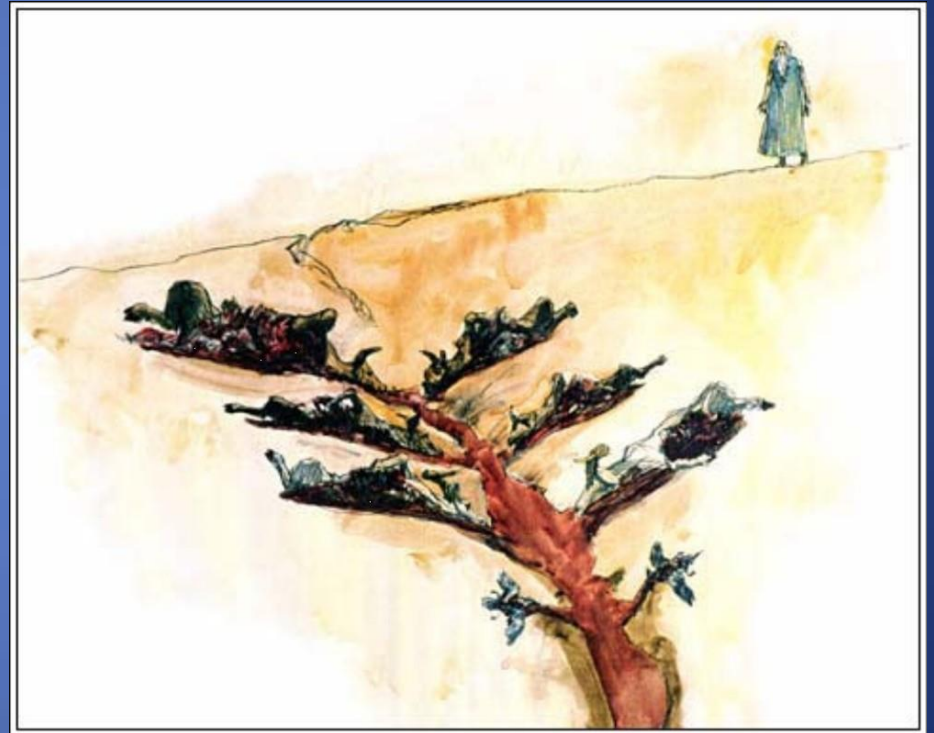
“Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood... Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.”

Hebrews 9:22



# “to make a covenant” – lit., “to *cut* a covenant”

- Appears in all sections of the Old Testament (early and late)
- Represents the curse that the covenant-maker places himself under should he violate the terms of the covenant





# A Covenant is a Bond-in-Blood

## *Sovereignly Administered*

“In the first place, God’s covenant is precisely that – *His*. He constantly refers to it in that way – not as our covenant, or merely a covenant, but *My* covenant...”

T.M. Moore, [I Will Be Your God](#)

- God conceived the covenant
- God initiated the covenant
- God extends the covenant to whomever He will
- God alone exercises accountability over it



# The Unity of the Covenants

These covenants aren't distinct commitments that replace one another; instead, they build upon one another, shedding increasing light on the central promises of the one Covenant of Grace – culminating in the New Covenant in Jesus Christ

*“My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes. They shall dwell in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children shall dwell there forever, and David my servant shall be their prince forever. I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore. My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”*

Ezekiel 37:24-27



Jesus Christ

Jer 31:31-34

Luk 22:20

David

II Sam 7

Moses

Ex 20

Abraham

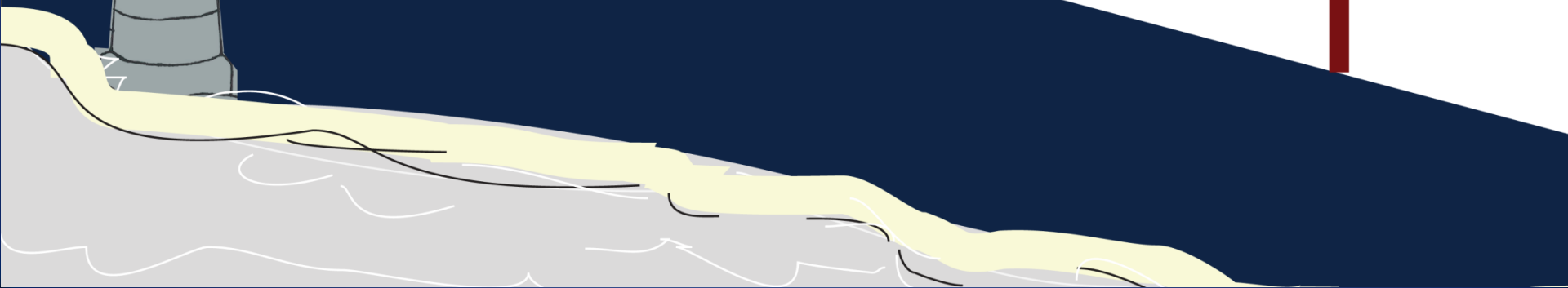
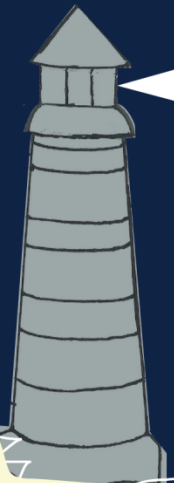
Gen 12

Noah

Gen 9

Adam

Gen 3:15





“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”  
Genesis 3:15

“The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.”  
Romans 16:20

“I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God.’”  
Revelation 21:2,3



“The reality of God’s residing among His people displays an ever-increasing significance throughout Scripture. It moves from the figure of the tabernacle to the figure of the temple to the figure of the city of God. It involves the incarnate Christ, the Church of Christ, and the final glorification of God’s people. In each case, God’s dwelling among His people is related directly to the heart of the covenant concept: ‘I shall be your God and you shall be My people.’”

*O. Palmer Robertson, The Christ of the Covenants*