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AIR STUDY SESSION 3 - COVENANTS 1

THE COVENANTS OF GENESIS CHAPTER 1, 2, AND 3
ROMANS CHAPTER 7, VERSES 1 TO 25

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A covenant (Hebrew. berit) is a solemn, **BINDING** arrangement between two parties and solemnizes various responsibilities, benefits, and **PENALTIES** depending on the specific covenant being studied.

When studying covenants we must accept the four faith-facts about God's Word.



The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

ISAIAH 40:8 (ESV)

Old Testament covenants were made between God and **MAN** (God with Noah - Genesis 6:18, with Abram – Genesis 15:18) or between men (Abraham and Abimelech - Genesis 21:27, Isaac and Abimelech - Genesis 26:28, Jacob and Laban - Genesis 31:44)

The word “covenant” isn’t explicitly used in Genesis 1-3, but the covenantal story and examples of the heart of God in covenantal **RELATIONSHIP** with us can be seen.

Adam and Eve, before they decided to take on the responsibility of managing what was right and wrong, did not need **REDEMPTION** or a savior.

On behalf of all mankind, Adam and Eve received a supernatural gift that gave them substantial status in the universe. (Spiritual authority)



You made him lower than the angels for a little while. You placed your glory and honor upon his head as a crown. And you have given him dominion over the works of your hands...

HEBREWS 2:7 (TPT)

God Himself breathed upon **FRAILTY** (dust). That breath changed Adam and Eve's relationship. They were now supernatural beings in unity with the **SOURCE** of life Himself. That unity was so close that no agreement or contract was needed.

Within the confines of Eden, everything operated on a spiritual and **SUPERNATURAL** level. There was no separation between what is now referred to as heaven and earth. Heaven or the presence of God was everywhere, in everything, and operating all the time.

Wrong could not be chosen because it was not available as a choice for image bearers, only the responsibility of the image giver Himself.

God did not need to covenant with the perfect Adam and Eve because they were operating as supernatural **AGENTS** of His Divine character. They were destined to spread the impact of that character throughout the rest of the world.



Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

GENESIS 1:26-28 (ESV)

UNITY MISPLACED

Covenants in the Old Testament were only required once **FLESH** became involved. Agreements between natural, flesh-based thinkers and supernatural spirit beings became a requirement. Covenants were used to reestablish what had been established in Eden through the Word of God. Covenants were never made to judge, condemn or show God's **ANGER**.

After the fall, humans were not bound to God supernaturally; they had to be given **GUIDELINES** on managing the responsibility of right and wrong. **Covenants would help humans make supernatural decisions that their natural minds could not comprehend.**

The Mosaic Covenant, for example, demonstrated what was wrong in the flesh and helped convict its followers to adhere to what is right - even if that was simply an acknowledgment.



So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

ROMANS 7:12-13 (ESV)

Covenants between supernatural (God) and natural participants (man burdened with the decision of right and wrong) handled the inability to adjudicate between **LIGHT** and **DARK**. Once wrong had been chosen, it was only through a supernatural act (sacrifices) that wrong could be made right on the Divine level.



Covenants in scripture were always put in place to help fallen humans restore their exalted position and restore the burden of right and wrong to the Perfect Judge.

Before Jesus, those restorations were brief; after Jesus, they were **PERMANENTLY** available.

STATUS	RELATIONSHIP	COVENANT
Before Sin	Supernatural (God) in unity with supernatural (man)	None needed due to supernatural unity - Genesis 1-2 disposition.
After Sin	Supernatural (God) in covenant with natural (man)	Covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses and David
After Jesus	Supernatural (God) in blood covenant with supernatural (Jesus) making natural (man) supernatural again.	The New Covenant - Love relationship restored.

Based on God’s character that was displayed in Genesis 1-3, the New Covenant restored the supernatural (God) to the supernatural (man, made righteous through Jesus) unity found in Eden.



For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

ISAIAH 55:10-11 (ESV)

God’s Word, spoken in Eden, was His **BOND**. He knew we could never keep to that Word unless we were restored to our proper supernatural disposition. And that was His motivation for every interaction and covenant from the moment Adam hid behind the bush.

Covenants were never made to judge, condemn or show off God's anger. They were always used to restore our divine authority, purpose, and blessing.



But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction.

ROMANS 3:21-22 (ESV)

THE SUPERNATURAL COVENANT OF GRACE

If the Word is Jesus, and Jesus is the epitome of grace, then the Word is Grace. If the Word was always with God, then so was grace. And if the Word is the bond of all God's covenants, then Grace is at the heart of all covenants. In the beginning, there was grace.

Grace existed long before sin.

THE GRACE-COVENANT ELEMENTS FOUND IN GENESIS 1-3

1 **Grace is displayed in that God desires light instead of dark - even though dark sometimes does not even cry out for the light.**

The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and

there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.

GENESIS 1:2-4 (ESV)

2 Grace is displayed in that He gives of Himself sacrificially, without any desire for a return on His investment.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

GENESIS 1:27 (ESV)

3 Grace is displayed in that frailty becomes powerful in the presence of God so that we do not have to remain frail but have life in abundance.



Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

GENESIS 2:7 (ESV)

4 Grace displays that without deserving it, He blesses us and desires us to play the highest role in His kingdom.



And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

GENESIS 1:28 (ESV)

5 Grace is displayed that we can trust God always to have our best interests at heart.



Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

GENESIS 2:18 (ESV)

6 Grace is displayed in that the Creator's Grace can be enjoyed by the created by sharing it with others. Commitments can be made and kept; we can submit to one another, give sacrificially without desired return, love each other, and operate in supernatural unity.



Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

GENESIS 2:24 (ESV)



***STUDY CHALLENGE:** *The Hebrew word for covenant describes a "compact made by passing between pieces of flesh." Why is this part of the Hebrew definition of the covenant?*

7 Grace is displayed in that there is no condemnation or shame in divine unity.



And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

GENESIS 2:25 (ESV)

8 Grace is displayed in that God has compassion for our situation and will always seek us out to rescue us.



But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"

GENESIS 3:9 (ESV)

9 Grace is displayed in that God can see to the heart of any matter, and His judgment is always just.



The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.

GENESIS 3:14 (ESV)

10 Grace is displayed in that God always seeks to make a way to restore divine order.



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 (ESV)

11 Grace is displayed in that the Holy Spirit always protects, guides, and convicts us. He is always seeking to protect our divine status from our flesh condition.



Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his

Every covenant ever made is made on the premise of divine grace and for the provision of Grace Himself, Jesus.

hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever –” therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

GENESIS 3:22-24 (ESV)



The heart of God, as displayed in Genesis 1-3, is covenantal because it manifests the covenant maker and keeper. God keeps His word. He is in covenant with Himself.

SUMMARY QUESTIONS

1. Give three examples of grace found in Genesis 1-3.
2. Describe how grace can be stated as an element of all covenants.
3. Why was there no need for covenants before the fall?
4. In what way does God covenant with Himself?
5. How do we reflect God’s covenantal elements in marriage?

LEARNING AND MEDITATIONS

After AIR studying HEBREWS 11:4-12 and meditating on your study, write down your learnings and journal the thoughts of your meditation.

Conduct an AIR Study on Romans 7:21-25

STUDY CHALLENGE: The Hebrew word for covenant describes a “compact made by passing between pieces of flesh.” Why is this part of the Hebrew definition of the covenant?