



## COVENANT CHURCH

In Covenant – Part 1  
“Our Covenant With God”  
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**Main Idea** – As a Christian, everything you do ultimately has to do with your blood covenant with God through Jesus. This covenant offers you protection, accountability, and prosperity, and returns you to a face-to-face relationship with God.

### **Life is about relationships**

- Everything we do in life requires some type of relationship.
- The covenants (contracts/pledges) we make enable us to function as members of society as well as the Church.
- The most important covenants stay with us most of our lives.

### **Adam’s original covenant relationship with God**

- Immediately after he was created, Adam had a face-to-face relationship with God because he had not yet disobeyed and fallen into sin.
- Adam was innocent perfection. He did not know about evil, and had not yet been tested. **Genesis 1:25 – And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.**
- Adam and Eve remained in that state of innocent perfection until they failed the test administered by Satan in **Genesis 3**, and were removed from their privileged face-to-face relationship with God.
- But God had already determined the plan that would return humanity to its original face-to-face relationship with Him.
- That plan used a sequence of covenants identified in the Old Testament, and culminated with the New Covenant established by Jesus.

### **Some of the important Old Testament covenants**

- *Noahic Covenant* – God’s promise to humans - and the earth itself - that He would never again destroy it. **Genesis 8: 20-22 – Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma. Then the Lord said in His heart, “I will never again curse the ground for man’s sake, although the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.**

**“While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease.”**

- *Mosaic Covenant* – the numerous Old Testament laws given to Moses (**Exodus thru Deuteronomy**) that required complete obedience to God in return for His blessing on the Israelite culture and nation.
- *Abrahamic Covenant* - God’s blood covenant with Abraham - where God promised Abraham an earthly inheritance of many descendants who would be privileged and in relationship with God. This was a preview of our own New Testament Covenant with Jesus where we receive an eternal inheritance. **Genesis 15: 9-10, 12, & 17-18 – So He said to him, “Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. . . Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him. . . And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying: “To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates –“**
- “Berith” is the Hebrew word for covenant. Literally, it can be understood as “to walk between sacrificed flesh.”

### **Blood covenants of Abraham’s time**

- Blood covenants were common, and very meaningful, in Abraham’s time.
- Blood covenants between leaders were essential to survival.
- Blood covenants involved the sacrifice of innocent animals, as well as the personal, face-to-face exchange of blood between two individuals.
- The sacrifice of an innocent animal was made first as payment for the vows that would follow between the individuals.
- Blood covenants involved serious, somber ceremonies and the exchange of vows.
- Blood covenants were not casual relationships of convenience, but intentional commitments of devotion and loyalty.
- Blood covenants offered protection, accountability, and prosperity.

### **How God administered His covenant with Abraham**

- In establishing His covenant with Abraham, God used procedures common to blood covenants of that time so that Abraham could understand what was happening.
- The covenant ceremony described above in **Genesis 15** was experienced by Abraham

as a vision as he slept, because Abraham himself was not capable of participating: he couldn't stand face-to-face with God - nor was he capable of fulfilling the requirements of his part of the covenant vows.

- Therefore, in the vision, Jesus stood in as each of the three participants: the two principal partners (God and Abraham), and the sacrifice. As he experienced the vision, Abraham was actually observing the significance for Jesus' later ministry in the New Covenant. **John 8: 56-58** – **“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.”** Then the Jews said to Him, **“You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?”** Jesus said to them, **“Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”**
- The Abrahamic Covenant - and the New Covenant to follow - superseded the Mosaic Covenant because the Mosaic Covenant was flawed: it was not possible for man to uphold its requirements. **Hebrews 8: 7-12** – **For if the first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with them, He says: “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah – not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”**

### Christians' blood covenants today

- Because of the New Covenant established by Jesus, Christians today have face-to-face “blood” relationships with God, spouses, children, and fellow believers.
- You should take seriously your blood covenants under Jesus. Your blood covenants connect you to others in ways other contracts & agreements do not.
- God will always uphold His part of His covenant with you. Work hard – be intentional – at being the best person you can be according to what the Bible teaches.
- Know that when you occasionally fail in your covenant obligations – which is inevitable - Jesus has already fulfilled your obligation for you. Pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and continue your upward trajectory in life.

## Reflective Questions for In Covenant – Part 1

1. If, as the Bible teaches, the earlier Old Testament Mosaic Covenant was flawed (see Hebrews 8 above) why – do you suppose – God even bothered to require all those rules and regulations? Why didn't He just go directly to the Abrahamic Covenant?
2. Pastor Mike said that today Christians have blood covenants with God, their spouses, their children, and other believers. Therefore, how might those covenant relationships be different from other contractual relationships with business partners, neighbors, or financial institutions?
3. Explain Jesus' various roles in the New Covenant. For example: Jesus as God, human, and innocent sacrifice all at the same time. Can you explain it in simple words that could be understood by someone who doesn't yet know Jesus?