

What is Covenant Theology?

January 23, 2022

Harvest Fellowship PCA

An Overview

Review Material

Covenant of Redemption (& new detail)

Covenant of CREATION

~ Covenant of Works

Covenant with Adam (Part 1)

Covenant Map (notional with arrows)

Covenant with Adam (Part 2)

References

Review

COVENANT of REDEMPTION

Inter-Trinitarian Covenant

- a. Glorify God
- b. Redeem mankind

**The Father - Giving a people to the Son; Salvation of all the elect – Christ’s brothers adapted into HIM and as His bride given to HIM. –
Dominion over all things Through His Resurrection from the Grave (Hebrews 10: 8 – 12)**

The SON - Take on Human flesh (Galatians 4: 4 – 5)

To fulfill the Law of God on behalf of the Elect, achieving in them full righteousness where Adam failed (Romans 5: 12 – 14, Matt 5: 17 – 18, Isaiah 42:21)

To be take on the Punishment in the place of the Elect who deserved to die in their sins, by shedding his blood on the cross (Isaiah 53, II Cor 5: 21, Galatians 3;3)

Th Holy Spirit – To “make alive” the Elect unto salvation (Ephesians 2: 8-9, John 17)

The Eternal Covenant Established:

- who would be saved
- What the Son must do to save them
- How their salvation would be accomplished – ushering in a New kingdom

FRAMEWORK – Covenant of Redemption



Covenant of Works

**Between God and man, requiring
perfect, personal obedience,**

OFFERING LIFE

AND

THREATENING DEATH

Covenant of Grace

**Between God and the ELECT,
requiring FAITH,**

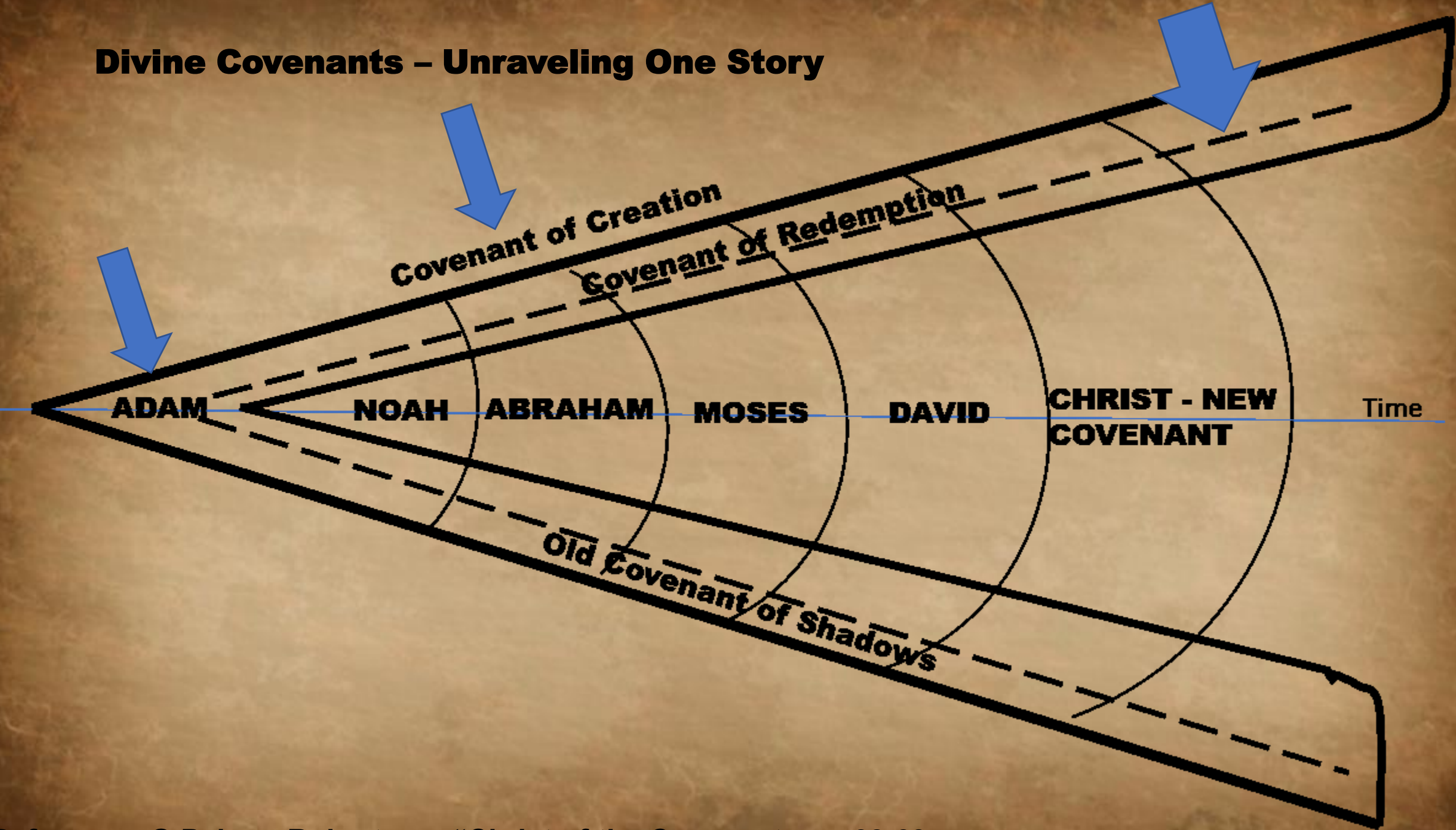
Offering FORGIVENESS

AND

ETERNAL LIFE

**Secured by God's promise
(or oath) (e.g. John 3:16)**

Divine Covenants – Unraveling One Story



Reference: O Palmer Robertson: "Christ of the Covenants pg 62-63

Covenant of Works

- This Covenant of Creation (or Works) is “ God’s pact with Adam in his integrity as the **head of the whole human race** , by which **God requiring of man the perfect obedience of the law of works** promised him **if obedient eternal life in heaven**, it threatened him **if he transgressed with eternal death**; and on his part **man promised perfect obedience to God’s requirements...**”.
(citation from Heppe “ Reformed Dogmatics” pg 283)
- **Key ideas:**
 - Adam is representee head of Humanity
 - Covenant is conditional; it has reward and repercussions
 - Covenant has elements of life and death
 - Conditions imposed on Adam is only one requirement – OBEDIENCE to God’s Law
- **Characteristic Idea about Adam in this Covenant of Works:**
Covenant God made with Adam in his “integrity”:
 - 1. Adam was neither sinful nor confirmed in his righteousness**
 - 2. Adam had the capacity to follow his lords pattern of working and resting, subduing and reigning in Eden.**
 - 3. Created FOR OBEDIENCE , he was entirely capable of maintaining himself in a state of integrity**

Covenant with Adam (Part 1) SUMMARY

- **Biblical Reference (Genesis 2 & 3)**

“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die’” (Gen. 2:16-17).

- **Participating Parties:**

God and Adam (and FUTURE OFFSPRING...all the way down to me..)

- **Covenant Relationship Type:**

Suzerain- Vassal

- **Covenant Conditions and Obligations**

“DO NOT eat of the Tree of Knowledge of GOOD and EVIL”

- **Sanctions and Curses**

“YOU shall surely DIE” (Covenant with ADAM Part 2...Covenant of Commencement)

- **Promise and Blessing**

ETERNAL LIFE

- **WHAT does it mean to ME?**

I have inherited through ADAM, my Federal Head, The imputation of Adam’s Sin into me
(Romans 5: 12 – 14)

Reference: Attributed to Rev Richard Phillips ; Second Presbyterian Church, Greenville, SC

**Covenant with Adam (Part 2):
Covenant of Commencement**

The Sanctions and Curses

- **To the SERPENT**
- **To the WOMAN**
- **To the MAN**

Covenant with Adam (Part 2): Covenant of Commencement

To the SERPENT:

Genesis 3: 14 – 15 (ESV)

¹⁴ 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 all the days of your life;

**¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring[e] and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.”**

Covenant with Adam (Part 2): Covenant of Commencement

Implications:

1) A Cosmic War is being waged at the level of Life and Death

Warfare in the past; A striving of Creature to be Like God:

¹² “How you are fallen from heaven,
O Day Star, son of Dawn!
How you are cut down to the ground,
you who laid the nations low!

¹³ You said in your heart,
‘I will ascend to heaven;
above the stars of God

I will set my throne on high;
I will sit on the mount of assembly
in the far reaches of the north;[c]

¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will make myself **like the Most High.**’

- Isaiah 14: 12 – 14

(context – God mentions to Isaiah the same description to the King of Babylon to another war that occurred in the past...)

Covenant with Adam (Part 2): Covenant of Commencement

Implications:

- 1) A Cosmic War is being waged at the level of Life and Death (pg 95)
- 2) For man ; the war is not limited to the MATERIAL world that he interacts with, but it is a manifestation of a larger war in the SPIRITUAL world:

¹² "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."

- Ephesians 6: 12 (pg 95)

- 3) The SERPENT deceived the woman by quoting God and then distorting the command to sow doubt with a lie;

"Hath not GOD said...?...'You will not surely die'...you will be like God'

Here – Satan proclaims the same reasoning to "be like the MOST High", by turning MANKIND against the CREATOR (in this sense attempting to destroy him)

Covenant with Adam (Part 2): Covenant of Commencement

Implications:

4) “..I curse you above all livestock:...”

The serpent – the means for Satan to tempt the woman is condemned to

- a) crawl on its belly for the rest of its life
- b) “eat dust” – live on the ground all the days of its life

5) I WILL put ENMITY* ...GOD sovereignly imposed a PERPETUAL Warfare between men and the Serpent (pg 96):

- a) ...between you and the woman...
- b) ...between your OFFSPRING and her OFFSPRING (or seed)
- c) ..He shall bruise your head...and you shall bruise his heel

*Enmity n. pl. en·mi·ties¹. Deep-seated, often mutual hatred.

2. A feeling or state of hatred or animosity.

Ref: <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/enmity>

Robertson O Palmer; “Christ of the Covenants page 93 - 107

Covenant with Adam (Part 2): Covenant of Commencement

Implications:

5) I WILL put ENMITY*...GOD sovereignly imposed a PERPETUAL Warfare between men and the Serpent (pg 96) on THREE FRONTS:

1) GOD established the enmity between the WOMAN and the SERPENT

Q: Why does God designate the woman specifically as the SOURCE of opposition to Satan? Why did He not start with man?

A: 1.The woman was first to be seduced , therefore God talks to her first. By “DIVINE Initiative”, she shall set in opposition to Satan.

2. Pride of man might lead him to disparage his wife, BUT NOW, it is clear that redemption will not be accomplished apart from the WOMAN!

3. The woman is the focus because she WILL be the bearer of the child who will deliver man from the forces of Satan (II Timothy 2: 15). Through this woman, GOD will provide the ONE who will save people from their sins (Matthew 1: 21).

Covenant with Adam (Part 2): Covenant of Commencement

Implications:

5) I WILL put ENMITY*...GOD sovereignly imposed a PERPETUAL Warfare between men and the Serpent (pg 96) on THREE FRONTS:

Note: What happened?

Eve bore a firstborn son....his name was Cain (Genesis 4:1)

..Cain descended from Eve...

- Cain killed his brother Abel! (Gen 4: 8)

....Then there is a larger story...

Covenant with Adam (Part 2): Covenant of Commencement

Implications:

6) Q: Who is the “WOMAN”? ...more precisely, what is meant “Seed “ of the woman?

Larger question: What is a “Seed”?

- the working definition would be “progeny“..or children

so are the “Seed” of the woman human and the serpent ..”little snakes”?

A: It has to be figurative and mean something else. The SEED of the serpent is:

- I John 3:12 ..”¹² We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.”

➔ It describes an internal state of man (Gen 4: 6 – 7..on Cain..”sin crouching at the door”

➔ It also describes Satan and his “angels” ...as the Serpent’s seed (Matt 25:41, Rev 12: 7 -9)

➔ John the Baptist describing his opponents as “generation of vipers” (Luke 3:7)

➔ Jesus describing the scribes and Pharisees; their “father is the devil..and do his desires (John 8:44)”.

Covenant with Adam (Part 2): Covenant of Commencement

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A: It has to be figurative and mean something else. The SEED of the WOMAN is:

Galatians ..” · ¹⁶ Now the promises were made bto Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, “And to offsprings,” referring to many, but

referring to one, “And to your offspring,” who is Christ.

7) That child Jesus , the promised seed of the woman did come and entered into “mortal conflict “ with Satan. This was accomplished by suffering at the cross.

Colossians 2: 13-14, 15 ..” ¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ **He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.”**

Covenant with Adam (Part 2): Covenant of Commencement

To the WOMAN (she had no NAME yet until vs 20):

Genesis 3: 16 (ESV)

- ¹⁶ To the woman he said,
“I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing;
in pain you shall bring forth children.
Your desire shall be contrary to your husband,
but he shall rule over you.”

Covenant with Adam (Part 2): Covenant of Commencement

Implications:

1) Curse

- 1) Pain in childbirth (16a)
- 2) “Desire will be contrary husband” (ESV) (16b)
..”Desire shall be for your husband”...(NIV)
- 3) ...and he shall rule over you... (16c)

Q What does “DESIRE” mean in this context?

A: Can mean several definitions

- 1) Excessive dependence or longings for the husband (pg 103)
- 2) “Excessive determination to”control him, possess him, and dominate him..”

The phraseology..is similar to Cain’s description for “sin to possess him”...

And the reversal of husband’s prerogative – i.e. the order of authority (in marriage... that is now damaged by sin...)

Curse of marital imbalance (pg 104). She perpetually attempts to possess her husband , he in turn responds by dominating excessively”. (pg 104).

The motif: - Satan the creature wants to dominate God...the cascading effect of sin now affects the marriage bond.

Covenant with Adam (Part 2): Covenant of Commencement

To the MAN (Adam):

Genesis 3: 17 (ESV)

¹⁷ To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’

“Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful toil you will eat food from it
all the days of your life.

¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
and you will eat the plants of the field.

¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow
you will eat your food
until you return to the ground,
since from it you were taken;
for dust you are
and to dust you will return.”

Covenant with Adam (Part 2): Covenant of Commencement

Implications:

1) Curse

- 1) Ground is cursed “because of you” – It is full of Thorns (ESV) (vs 17-18)**
- 2) You will work excessively(19a) and be able to eat (of the yield from the corps grown from the ground)(19b) ...all the days of your life (ESV) (17b & 18b).**
- 3) You will be consigned to the grave**
 - 1) “you will be RETURNED to the ground (contrast Genesis 2: 7 Adams origins from the dust)**
“¹⁹ By the sweat of your face
you shall eat bread,
till you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken;
for you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.”

Covenant with Adam (Part 2): Covenant of Commencement

Implications:

1) Blessings, in the midst of the curse

- 1) God continues to provide man; the soil, rain, seeds, crops, and the wisdom (and the “know how”) to**
 - a) Subdue the earth (Genesis 1: 26 – 28)**
 - b) Subdue the earth even when other men do not seek him**
 - called “common grace”**
 - e.g.: Jesus references God’s common grace by telling His disciples that He “makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matt. 5:45b)**

Tabletalk Magazine; Ligonier Ministries essay on “Providence and Common Grace” (March 6 2017)

URL: <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/providence-and-common-grace> , accessed: Jan 23 2022

Robertson O Palmer; “Christ of the Covenants page 93 - 107

Covenant with Adam (Part 2): Covenant of Commencement

Implications:

2) God's "words to Adam foreshadows the coming of a Redeemer, to remove the curse of the sin, when it is tied to the blessing pronounced on the Woman.. (Matthew 1: 21, John 1:12-13).

3) This future redeemer WILL TASTE DEATH for Adam (and me)

..." Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. ⁹ But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God **he might taste death for everyone. (Hebrews 2: 8 – 9)"**

<<<< The Story Continues>>>>

References

(used in this lesson)

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- Understanding Covenant Theology; by Rev. Richard D Phillips, Second Presbyterian Church, Greenville, SC
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Questions