

Fulfilled in Christ

Part one: the covenants

By Duane Troyer 8/8/21

I want to greet everybody in Jesus' name this morning. I am very thankful to be here. I have a lot of mixed feelings this morning but nevertheless I'm very thankful to be here, thankful to be able to share a message with you that has become precious to me. Let's stand for a word of prayer. Our Father in heaven, we thank you for giving us this day and this opportunity to gather, and for all your loving kindness and all your tender mercies. We thank you for brothers and sisters to gather with, and we thank you for the faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints. We pray, Lord, that you would instruct us in that faith and help us to live it. We pray that you would help us as we look into your word, open our eyes that we can see, our ears that we can hear in our hearts, that we can understand. I pray that your spirit would abide with us here and that everything we do and say can be in your will and bring glory to your name. In Jesus' name we pray, amen

I know I gathered with you all last Sunday, but there were about three weeks or so before that, that I didn't gather with you because I wanted to stay with my wife. It was coming close to time to have the baby and praise God! The baby was born this past week on Thursday. Baby and Carol are both doing well and we are so thankful beyond what I can express, and so I'm thankful to be here and not have to worry that maybe I have to rush home.

This message I'd like to share today is the first message of a of a series of messages, probably three: I'm not quite sure yet, and I feel it's kind of unique how this how this subject came about. About four weeks ago when I when I started staying at home more from work and from the meetings, I thought I'll start getting a message ready for the next time I can gather with you all, and I had a very hard time deciding between three different subjects, what I wanted to study on. I thought about the three subjects, trying to think which one's most urgent, which one's most relevant. I'd still like to teach about the other two sometime, and but through both thinking and reasoning and praying, I didn't feel like I had much of an answer and I did something I don't think I ever did before: I cast lots, and I wrote these three subjects on three separate papers and prayed about it, and had my wife pick one out for me. She picked out the subject of the sabbath. Back when I started studying this subject, and it to do justice I feel like I need to do more than one message, back then I did not know that there were even people among us who were starting to ask this question, "should we rethink the sabbath? is it something we should be keeping?" I didn't know that back then and so I think it was the Lord's doing, let's put it that way. And I have been blessed in studying this. I keep notes and it has been one of the subjects on my list of possible things to give a teaching on for a long time, but so are a whole bunch of other things, that sometimes I just have this little inspiration about something like, maybe we need to hear a teaching about this sometime and I'll make a little note.

Anyway, the reason I want to do more than one message on this subject is because how we interpret scripture depends so much on our view of God. It depends so much on our view of scripture, all these things have bearings it's on how we then interpret the written word. It's called a paradigm or a framework of thinking and reasoning that affect how we interpret scripture, for example, a protestant who has gone through seminary and he has he has been indoctrinated with Calvinist thinking, he has this framework in which he reads the scriptures and it's hard for him to see it in any other way: everything he reads, he reads through those lens and everything needs to fit that framework. It's pretty hard to read the scriptures in any other way. Someone who's in some kind of a cult, a very closed cult that maybe has a one-man leader, he has a framework in which he reads the scriptures and everything he reads somehow has to be fit on there: every passage he reads about a leader, applies to his leader, right? I don't think any of us can necessarily escape that we have some kind of a of a platform on which we stand or a framework which we have in which we view the scriptures. I'm not saying that we shouldn't have that, I'm just saying we have it. What I read in scriptures, I read through the lens of what I grew up with, and on this particular subject of the sabbath, I was taught growing up that Sunday is the sabbath. I didn't have any other understanding. Maybe I had an understanding that it used to be the seventh day and somehow I understood it changed to the first day, but when I read anything old or new testament, when I read that the conditions for the sabbath, I understood it to mean this is what we do on Sunday: we do not work. I remember sitting under sermons of preachers giving a lesson about all the things in the sabbath, and being like, *I need to be more careful that I set this day aside to rest and to not do work*. But sometimes your paradigms shift. Sometimes this whole framework in which you were reading, sometimes that whole framework shifts: you have a you have what we call a paradigm shift, and all of a sudden you can read the same scriptures you've read over and over and over again, and they look totally different. Everything starts looking different because you're reading it through a different framework. That's what happened to the apostles and the first believers. They had a concept of the kingdom of God that was promised, they had a concept of what these promises would be, they had a framework in which they thought this kingdom was going to come and everything they read in the Old Testament fit on there. They thought it was going to be this way and they read the scriptures that way and it's how they understood every promise out of the Old Testament. They speculated and they anticipated how it would happen and how it would look and it's why when Jesus came, they missed it. It's why when Jesus came and He said even to his close disciples, something like, "I will be delivered to the wicked man and they will they will crucify me", Peter is like, "no! no that can't happen to you!" That did not fit onto his framework, it didn't work until something happened, until the spirit of God came down upon these men, and they were born anew, they were born again, and they started seeing everything in a completely and utterly different light. All the old testament scriptures and the promises that they had studied now all of a sudden looked totally different than what they had thought.

We now have the old and the new testament, we are persuaded that in this book is the message to the way of life, but we too can read this through a framework that gives us a wrong understanding of what this message is. I'm somewhat amused when I hear people emphatically take this book and declare that they go only by this book from Genesis to Revelations: they follow what's in here and nothing else. Really, first of all I think that's a very narrow-minded illusion - I don't even think that's possible. Secondly, why do literally thousands of people, and thousands of denominations all claim that same thing and nobody agrees with what the message is? I think it's a narrow-minded illusion. The bible is the most printed book in the world and also the most disputed book, as people grapple over life's most serious questions: where do we come from and where are we going? There's no wonder that we need

to take this serious. There's also no wonder that somebody might come away wondering *is the God of the Old Testament the same as the God of the New Testament?* and it's a bit unsettling to think that He changes. I hope in this series of messages to show you that God does not change. I hope to show you that He is the same yesterday today and forever. He is so unchangeable: in fact, there is no variableness nor shadow of turning in Him. What changes and must change is not God, but the framework or the paradigm in which we stand to interpret scriptures.

One of those core things among others, is having a proper one of those core things in proper biblical interpretation, is having an understanding of the covenant of God, that there was an old covenant and that there is a new covenant, and what they are and what stays the same from one to the other and what doesn't. Over the years I've met a lot of people through our evangelistic efforts, and in life I met a lot of people who I know are confused about this: from messianic Jews who openly declare and live that the torah, the first five books of Moses, are the foundation on which we stand, on which all the rest of scripture must be interpreted. To people who object to the idea that the torah is necessarily the everlasting word, but that the ten commandments, the ones that are written on stone, that they're somehow different, those are the ones that stay. To people who just don't necessarily claim all of those, but they will insist on Old Testament scriptures if they support what they believe, and reject them if they don't, and do the same thing with the new testament scriptures. I've met lots and lots of people like that and I think even among us we grapple with some of some of the finer details of things like divorce/reconciliation, leadership, a whole list of things, but I think often they could be linked to how we understand the covenants. So in this first part of this series, I mostly want to talk about the various covenants that God made. In this first message I want to create a skeleton for the rest of the messages, and I do believe that this skeleton, though it be a skeleton, is what the whole redemptive story is built on. I apologize in advance a lot of this may be over the children's heads, maybe it'll even be a little dry. I'm going to do a bunch of reading but that's kind of how skeletons are - they're a little dry. I want to put some meat on them in the next messages.

A covenant is a solemn binding agreement between two or more people, it's a chosen relationship or partnership in which two parties make a binding promise to each other and work toward and work together to reach a common goal. A covenant is similar to a contract but it's also different: there's a spiritual and solemn understanding to a covenant. A covenant and a contract differ from one another in that a covenant is very, very relational and personal. The difference is like unto a business partnership and a marriage partnership: they have technical similarities but they're very different in nature. A covenant is often accompanied by oaths signs and ceremonies. The covenants that God makes with man usually include a shedding of blood as part of the ceremony. There seems to be a pattern in God's covenants (remember God is spirit) in which you see the spirit coming down into or through flesh. You'll see some of that, but there seems to be a pattern that a lot of these covenants are that. In fact, from what I could find, the Hebrew word for covenant *beriyth* seems to either be derived from or related from the idea of a cut between pieces of flesh.

God is a God of covenant. He is a covenant maker; He is a covenant keeper. In the 103rd psalm the psalmist says **the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him and his righteousness, unto children's children, to such as keep his covenant.** Covenant is at the heart of how God has communicated with His creation. God is love. Can we let that sink into our minds? I'm not saying that God does love, though he does, but it says God is love, He is love. Now love is a selfless relationship with another, so God cannot just love himself- that's not love. And so He builds this great

universe and in this universe He makes earth, He makes life in there, He puts man in there and He partners with him. He enters into this relationship with man in which man is given the charge to take care of the whole earth and spread goodness. God wants to partner with man to spread goodness over the whole world, though the word covenant is not used in this creation story with Adam, the relationships and partnerships are very similar. We know how that all went. In short, man messed it up.

He messed up this partnership agreement and that's just the beginning of something that kept on happening over and over and over again. God would make a covenant and man would mess it up, and God would make another covenant and man would mess it. God could have walked away. That may be debatable whether God could have walked away, but what I know for sure, His love for humanity didn't allow Him to walk away. It could almost appear as we read through the biblical narrative that God went to the drawing table and He and He drew up a plan for this covenant, this agreement, this contract and He brings it to man and man messes it up, and He goes back to the drawing table again and He draws up another one and He comes to man again and man messes it up, and He goes back and He draws up another one. I believe God knew before He even made Adam that His Son was going to be the last Adam or the second Adam. I don't think God had any surprises in any of this that happened, but as you read through the biblical narrative you could almost get that impression.

With Adam and Eve, God promised to deliver. This promise involved bloodshed, there was the slaying of animals in which God took their skins and He clothed Adam and even covered them and sent them out from the garden, and He told them there's a promise in your seed, there's a promise of deliverance and it'll be from your seed. From there, man multiplied, and they sinned ever more grievously to the point that God wished He hadn't made them. Then he found Noah to be righteous, and He said, okay I'll establish my covenant with Noah now. And He flooded the earth. He saved Noah and his family, and after the flood in Genesis it says Noah came out, and it says then, **Noah built an altar to God and took of every clean animal, and every clean bird, and offered whole burnt offerings on the altar, so the Lord God smelled a sweet aroma. Then the Lord God thought it over and He said, "I will never again curse the earth because of man's works, although the mind of man is diligently involved with evil things 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 summer and spring shall not cease by day or by night."** We see what happened here again. Noah offered up an animal, he shed the blood of an animal, he put it on the offering. God smelled this, He reconsidered, I think, and He made a promise: *I will not do this again, instead, I will make my covenant, Noah, with you and your seed.* This is what He says further in chapter nine, starting in verse eight, **then God spoke to Noah and his sons with him, saying, behold I am establishing my covenant with you and with your seed after you, and every living creature with you, the birds and the cattle and all the wild animals of the earth, and all that come out of the ark with you. Thus I will establish my covenant with you and never again shall all flesh be cut off by the water of the flood, nor shall there ever again be a flood to destroy the earth. Then the Lord God said to Noah, this is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you, and every living creature with you for perpetual generations. I am setting my rainbow in the clouds and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. It shall be when I bring the a cloud over the earth, the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud and I will remember my covenant between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. The water shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. My rainbow shall be in the cloud and I will certainly remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living**

creature and all flesh on the earth. Again, God said to Noah, this is the sign of the covenant I established between me and all flesh on the earth. And so in this covenant we see these things again. We see bloodshed, we see a sign: this one the sign is the rainbow that God has established this covenant with Noah.

Several hundred years go by. Humanity continues in their sin and in their evil imaginations and God makes another covenant. He narrows it down a little more and He finds Abraham and says, I'll make a covenant with this man and this time this covenant gets more personal, the signs of it even get far more intense. God said to Abraham, "I am your shield and your exceeding great reward," and Abraham said, what do you give me? I'm childless. You say you're going to establish a covenant with my seed, but I don't have any children, I'm an old man." I think Abraham suggested like, "just make the covenant with my servant: let him be the heir." And God said, "look toward the heavens and count the stars if you are able to number them, so shall your seed be. I want you to remember this little phrase for a future message: he says, *look toward the heaven and count the stars if you are able to number them, and then he says, so shall your seed be*, okay? We'll talk about that later. God said, "I promised this land to you to inherit it," and Abraham asked, "how shall I know I'll inherit it?" and here's a pretty amazing and a pretty intense thing that God requested as a sign, and to establish this covenant. God says to Abraham, "bring me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtle dove and a young pigeon. Kill these animals." They shed their blood, they cut them in half: they laid one half of the carcass over here, and the other half of the carcass over here. That's what they did with the three-year-old heifer. They did the same thing with the goat: cut the thing in half laid one carcass over here and one carcass over here. Same thing with the ram. The turtledove and the pigeon they didn't cut in half. I understand they put one on one side and one on the other there - was a little space in between these. They did this one day and throughout the day as the vultures came down and tried to mess with these carcasses, Abraham would drive them away. But about sundown, or as the sun was setting it says, Abraham fell into this trance and a darkness came upon him, and as the sun went down there appeared this smoking furnace and a burning lamp, and it passed right between those carcasses. It says, in the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham: *I will give this land to your seed.*

Now this whole scene seems a little grim and foreboding, in our idea here in our day and age, I should say. Here's these bloody, slaughtered carcasses laying there for some ceremonial thing. But I think in that day this was not an unheard-of way in which they made a ceremony for a covenant. In fact, as best as I could understand, it might have been a practice of the Chaldeans from which Abraham came out of, and we do read that it was something that the Jews continued to do. Jeremiah has this little phrase in which he describes a covenant just like that, an agreement, but what it was, they slaughtered an animal, they cut it in half, laid it apart/had this little path between it, and the parties involved in the covenant would together walk between these carcasses, as best as I can say, as if to say, *may it be done so to me if I do not stay faithful to this covenant.* Just think about that. Here God comes down in a smoke and a lamp, and he goes through these carcasses as if to say *this is what will happen to me if I do not stay faithful to this covenant.* The signs of the covenant weren't completely over, if we go just a few chapters further, this is what God says to Abraham.

Genesis 17 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. ² And I will make My covenant between

Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.”³ Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying:⁴ “As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations.”⁵ No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations.⁶ I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you.⁷ And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you.⁸ Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”⁹ And God said to Abraham: “As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.¹⁰ This *is* My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised;¹¹ and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.¹² He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant.¹³ He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.¹⁴ And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.”¹⁵ Then God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah *shall be* her name.¹⁶ And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be *a mother of nations*; kings of peoples shall be from her.”¹⁷ Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Shall *a child* be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear *a child*?”¹⁸ And Abraham said to God, “Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!”¹⁹ Then God said: “No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, *and* with his descendants after him.²⁰ And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.²¹ But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year.”²² Then He finished talking with him, and God went up from Abraham. So here here's where circumcision was established and became the sign of the Abrahamic covenant. I just want you to let this sink in how this reads: *the uncircumcised male child who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin on the eighth day, that person shall be cut off because he has broken my covenant*. There's really not much ambiguity there. We don't have to wonder too much when he says an everlasting covenant whether it means everlasting. We don't have to wonder too much what this means. I won't go in great description here, but this sign, this covenant, is something that the God who does not change, established. And he says, he who breaks this, breaks my covenant. (Don't run away just yet.)

So God's people do grow into a nation and from Abraham and Sarah we have Isaac, from Isaac we have Jacob, from Jacob we have the 12 sons of Israel. The 12 sons go into Egypt, they become slaves, they're slaves for 400 years, there's the exodus under Moses, and we come to mount Sinai here's the great covenant that God made with Israel, that we call the Mosaic covenant. I'll do a bunch of reading. Sometimes you can explain something just a little shorter/briefer but I'm just going to read exodus 19 and a good portion of 20. I know the amount of imagination that we have is not all given out similar or to the same measure, but these are the kind of areas where I think we have been given imagination for a good purpose. I want you to try to imagine being there. So this is out in the desert, they've left Egypt maybe a week or so ago, maybe 40 days: that part's not very important. But as you hear the description of what's going on there, as best as you can, try to put yourself into that desert.

In the third month after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on the same day, they came to the Wilderness of Sinai. ² For they had departed from Rephidim, had come to the Wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness. So Israel camped there before the mountain. ³ And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: ⁴ 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. ⁵ Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth *is* Mine. ⁶ And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel." ⁷ So Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before them all these words which the LORD commanded him. ⁸ Then all the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do." So Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD. ⁹ And the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I come to you in the thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever." So Moses told the words of the people to the LORD. ¹⁰ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes. ¹¹ And let them be ready for the third day. For on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. ¹² You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Take heed to yourselves *that* you do *not* go up to the mountain or touch its base. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. ¹³ Not a hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot *with an arrow*; whether man or beast, he shall not live.' When the trumpet sounds long, they shall come near the mountain." ¹⁴ So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and sanctified the people, and they washed their clothes. ¹⁵ And he said to the people, "Be ready for the third day; do not come near *your wives*." ¹⁶ Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who *were* in the camp trembled. ¹⁷ And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸ Now Mount Sinai *was* completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and ^[c]the whole mountain quaked greatly. ¹⁹ And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. ²⁰ Then the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. ²¹ And the LORD said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to gaze at the LORD, and many of them perish. ²² Also let the priests who come near the LORD consecrate themselves, lest the LORD break out against them." ²³ But Moses said to the LORD, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai; for You warned us, saying, 'Set bounds around the mountain and consecrate it.' " ²⁴ Then the LORD said to him, "Away! Get down and then come up, you and Aaron with you. But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, lest He break out against them." ²⁵ So Moses went down to the people and spoke to them.

So you get an idea what's going on, there's shaking, there's trembling, the very ground on which their feet are is shaking, there's a smoke coming up out of this mountain, there's thundering and lightnings, and there's a trumpet sound that is just getting louder and louder, and then this is what God says, chapter 20. **And God spoke all these words, saying:** ² "I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. ³ "You shall have no other gods before Me. ⁴ "You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness *of anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth; ⁵ you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me, ⁶ but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. ⁷ "You shall not take the

name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold *him* guiltless who takes His name in vain. ⁸ “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who *is* within your gates. ¹¹ For *in* six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that *is* in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. ¹² “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you. ¹³ “You shall not murder. ¹⁴ “You shall not commit adultery. ¹⁵ “You shall not steal. ¹⁶ “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. ¹⁷ “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that *is* your neighbor’s.”¹⁸ Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw *it*, they trembled and stood afar off. ¹⁹ Then they said to Moses, “You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.” ²⁰ And Moses said to the people, “Do not fear; for God has come to test you, and that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin.” ²¹ So the people stood afar off, but Moses drew near the thick darkness where God *was*.

It's much easier to read this than it would be to be there. I never felt the tremors of an earthquake or I've never witnessed a great explosion or something like that...the twin tower is crumbling, the...earthquaking beside you... like, I don't think any of this is quite comparable to what happened here at Sinai, and then in in the midst of this time when you're just struck with fear, you hear you hear the voice of God. This would not be something to be taken lightly: whatever He said here would not be something to dismiss the next day, or any thousands of years later for that matter. From there Moses went up into the mountain, just Moses, and he talked with God and God expounded on this. He told him a whole bunch of things pertaining to these things and I think what god spoke audibly was the summary of what of what He then explained to Moses in much, much greater detail, and what was ten commandments there, expanded into more and as time went on, it expanded into more and more for that matter. But I think those ten commandments are more or less a summary of what He then later told Moses.

One of the main things I'm focusing on in this series is the sabbath. I want to read part of what God would have expounded to Moses further, if we go ahead to chapter 31 in exodus, this is what he says: **again the Lord spoke to Moses saying, you shall direct the children of Israel saying, see to that you keep my sabbath, for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you. You shall keep the sabbath because this is holy for you to the Lord. Everyone who profanes it shall be put to death, for whoever works on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Work shall be done for six days but the seventh day is the sabbath, the holy rest of the Lord. Whoever works on the seventh day shall be put to death. Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath to observe them throughout their generations, as a perpetual covenant: it is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever. For in six days the Lord created heaven and earth and on the seventh day he ceased and rested.** Again, there's just not that much ambiguity: this is an everlasting sign of a covenant with God. We might be left with questions: “well, what consists of work?” But the question whether God was saying here that this is a day of rest, that's not really in question. At least if we read this right. So we could wonder: *what consists of work?* that's very fair, but you can read the old testament and it comes down to pretty minor stuff: if you gather

sticks and kindle a fire, that was worthy of death if you did that on the sabbath. If you gathered manna, you were violating the sabbath. If you carried a burden, that was considered profaning the sabbath. Remember those three: kindling a fire, gathering, and carrying a burden. Those are considered violations. We know already that that certainly rules out plowing and planting and harvesting and all those. And I know they were not supposed to kindle the fire- it was considered work on the sabbath.

This covenant was also confirmed by the sprinkling of blood. God had spoken these ten commandments audibly and then later He wrote them into tables of stone. I'm not sure if the tables of stone got sprinkled with blood, but I know that when He got done with Moses and He got done expounding all this, they killed animals, they offered up animals, they caught the blood, they sprinkled the people. There's not so much spoken about the seed here in this covenant, but remember this is still Abraham's seed, it still follows that, it is God renewing His covenant with them and expanding it.

The first part of the message is mostly about covenants. There's one more. These are not the only covenants, but these five are the main covenants. I think it's the covenant Abrahamic covenant, the Mosaic covenant, and the Davidic covenant God made a covenant with David. I'll read a little bit out of second Samuel, chapter 7, starting in verse 12., this is Nathan speaking to David what the Lord was saying to David. He says, **it shall come to pass when your days are fulfilled, and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your seed after you who will come from your body, and I will prepare his kingdom and he shall build a house for my name, and I will establish his throne forever. I will be a father to him and he shall be to me a son. And if he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men, but I will not take my mercy from him as I took it from those whom I withdrew from my presence. and his house will be made sure, and this kingdom shall be forever.** We see this covenant in David's psalms too, like in psalm 89 he says, **I have made a covenant with my chosen. I have sworn unto David my servant: thy seed will I establish forever and build up thy throne to all generations.** God is not a covenant breaker. He made these covenants with His people and He is not a covenant breaker. Maybe you children have been told that God can do everything or anything - that's not true. God cannot lie, God cannot die, God cannot break His covenants. We need to come to grips with some of these things. God made these covenants and man repeatedly broke them. God never broke one of them. He never has and He never will. He is still keeping His end of these covenants to this day. It's clear that all of them were everlasting covenants. Take note of the fact that all of them are a promise for a seed from the people that He made the promise with, from Adam to Noah, from Noah to Abraham, from Abraham to David.

Before I close this first part, I want to make mention of other promises. These are not the only promises that God made here in the Old Testament. In Deuteronomy chapter 18, this is what He said. Now I think this one is really important, in verse 15 of chapter 18. Remember what happened at Sinai. Remember what God told Moses and what Moses told the people. This is toward the end of Moses's life here on earth and this is what Moses says. **The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear. According to all you ask from the Lord your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, let us not hear again the voice of the Lord our God, nor let us see this great fire anymore lest we die.** (Remember, that's what they had said, like, we don't want to hear God anymore. You, Moses, you talk to us, we'll listen to it. We're going to die if we keep hearing God.) **The Lord said to me, what they have spoken as well, I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their**

brethren, and I will put my word in his mouth and he shall speak to them all I command him. It is pretty clear to me that Moses is not referring to an Isaiah or a Jeremiah or a Daniel. No, he's referring to someone like unto him who would come and who would say what the children of Israel said: let's not hear it from God, okay?

A couple more promises and prophecies in genesis 49:10, when Israel was blessing his twelve sons, this is what he said of Judah: **the scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from his loins until Shiloh comes.** Take a little thought into that there shall not depart a lawgiver from the loins of Judah till Shiloh comes. Moses is not from the line of Judah- he's from the line of Levi. Moses is not from Judah's loins, yet he's here in this covenant that God made here. He is the lawgiver, he gave the law to Israel and yet here is a prophecy that is already an indication there's something more about to happen, there's something different yet coming. Isaiah 2 has a very interesting prophecy. The more I think of this prophecy in Isaiah 2, the more I'm fascinated by it and what I think the fulfillment of it is. I'll probably get into the fulfillment of it in a later message, but Isaiah 2:2-4 says, **now it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord and the house of God shall be visible on the tops of the mountains and exalted above the hills. All the gentiles shall come to it, many gentiles shall travel and say, 'come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob and He will proclaim His way to us and we shall walk in it.'** For the law of the Lord shall go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, and He shall judge between the gentiles and rebuke many people. They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and nations shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. I'm pretty sure we've all heard that and been familiar with it, but I want to draw our attention again to this. This is many, many years after mount Sinai, neither is it at the same. This is in Israel. This is in the land that was called the land of Canaan: not out there in the wilderness of Sin where mount Sinai was, and he says out of here, out of Jerusalem, out of Zion, shall go my law and people from all over, the gentiles, are going to say 'let's go up here to the mountain of the Lord where the law comes forth'. Okay that's another promise that is indicating something is not yet full, there's something that is still lacking.

In Isaiah 42 the first couple verses is a very obvious prophecy of Jesus. Part of it says this: **he shall not cry nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard on the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and a smoking flax will he not quench. He shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail, nor be discouraged till he have set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait on his law.** When it says *the isles* it may be talking about the islands or the coastlands, maybe it's just talking about the gentiles in general, but there's this indication, there's this prophecy of this one who's going to come and we're waiting on His law. And perhaps the greatest of these prophecies is in the book of Jeremiah where he says, **behold the days are coming, says the Lord** (he uses a term here that he's not used before: *the days are coming*), **when I shall make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by their hands and brought them out of the land of Egypt, for they did not abide in my covenant and I disregarded them, says the Lord. For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord, I will surely put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be as a God to them and they shall be my people. Each shall not teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'know the Lord' for all shall know me from the least to the greatest of them, for I will be merciful to their wrong doings and I will no longer remember their sins.**

I think it's interesting, there he says, not like this other covenant where I took them by the hand, like, He's describing Israel at this time as if they were little babies, like little children who I had to take by the hand so they could get out. He says I won't make that kind of covenant. The covenant I make is for my sons and my daughters, for people that I don't have to do that with. Maybe saying *not have to do with* is not a good term, but He's going to make a covenant...I will not take you by the hand and basically drag you out of Egypt.

I'm going to close there, but I want to make it clear: this is not the end of this message, okay? In case somebody could hear what I said today and either run away in the wrong direction or be concerned that I'm a false teacher: I just want to make it clear, this is not the end of this message. I've only put a skeleton out there for you. We'll try to add we'll try to add some meat to it later. God bless you and feel free to share if you have something.