

...you shall be my people, and I will be your God.
Ezekiel 36:28b

The covenants contained in the Bible not only provide us with a framework with which to understand the Scriptures, they reveal the very nature of God and his relationship with humanity, especially his chosen covenant people. There is nothing more secure and assuring than being in covenant relationship with God – *we are his people and he will be our God*. God commits himself to us in covenant relationship and holds himself responsible for those under his care. I pray these studies will encourage and comfort us in the sure knowledge of the saving and sanctifying love of our Covenant Father who has appointed his Son, Jesus Christ, to be the “guarantor of a better covenant” and has sealed us in that better covenant with the promised Holy Spirit.

The Biblical Covenants

What is a covenant?

- The Framework of God’s Grand Plan of Redemption
- Revelation and Relationship

Suzerain-Vassal Treaties

- Hittites
- Nahash the Ammonite
- Responsibility & Obligation

A 'formula' & formal declaration

- Preamble; Historical Prologue; Stipulations; Sanctions; Treaty Tables
 - Formal, public ceremony – passing between the halves of slaughtered animals.
 - o But... - God's unique, unilateral covenant promises.
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Covenant ≠ Contract

- *For those who see every covenant as contractual, then God is not a covenanting God but a contracting Deity. This is not the biblical idea of a covenant, although doubtless it is an idea of fallen human beings.*
- *Whilst [covenant] is not contractual it certainly has obligation in it, the obligation love and gratitude always feel without thinking of a contract. (p. 2. Geoff Bingham, Comprehending the Covenant, © 1999 NCPI)*

The Creational Covenant

- A covenant 'of works' or 'of life'?
- More implied than explicit
 - o Special relationship with humanity in Creation
 - o Blessings and curses
 - o Two trees
 - o Reiteration after the flood
 - o Hosea 6:7 – “...like Adam they transgressed the covenant.”

So what!?

No longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” Jeremiah 31:34