**Basics Class 8/19/23**

My Sunday study is in the book of Genesis doing character studies with Abraham’s family. The emphasis of God’s plan from Gen 12 through Deuteronomy is the formation of the nation Israel. To remind us of the framework of human history & how it’s laid out in the scripture, I wanted to review God’s covenants.

Abraham: **Genesis 12:1-7** Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; 2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; 3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." 4 So Abram went forth as the LORD had spoken to him; and Lot went with him. Now Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. 5 And Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his nephew, and all their possessions which they had accumulated, and the persons which they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan; thus they came to the land of Canaan. 6 And Abram passed through the land as far as the site of Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. Now the Canaanite *was* then in the land. 7 And the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him.

Isaac: **Genesis 26:24-25** And the LORD appeared to him the same night and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; Do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you, and multiply your descendants, For the sake of My servant Abraham." 25 So he built an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well.

Jacob: **Genesis 28:13-15** And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. 14 "Your descendants shall also be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15 "And behold, I am with you, and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

**God’s Covenants with Mankind**

**The Covenants of God**

All through human history, God has made covenants/promises to express **His grace** to mankind through different agents, using different methods at different times. These promises as recorded in the scripture are called covenants. A covenant is a specific promise from God, to a specific group of people, at a specific time regarding the manner in which God revealed His grace through the person of the Messiah – The Lord Jesus Christ.

1. **Definition & Description:**
2. Hebrew: ***berith*;** Greek**: *diatheke*:** agreement, pact, promise, primarily from God to mankind/believers
3. The word covenant is mistranslated in the English by the word testament, which is a will that goes into effect when someone dies.
4. Testament – a will that only goes into effect at someone’s death, leaving an inheritance.
5. Covenant - a covenant is a promise of blessing made by God in favor of either believers only or a combination of believers and unbelievers.
6. All of the covenants operate on the concept of grace – God blessing mankind because He is good & He desires to share His goodness with others.

* Everything that God gives to mankind is controlled by His policy of grace – He graciously gives of Himself & His resources, with the only condition that the recipient receive His grace by non-meritorious faith.

1. **God’s Covenants to Man**
2. Edenic covenant – Gen 2:17 – the conditions for remaining in God’s will in the garden of Eden
3. Adamic covenant — Genesis 2:15; 3:15. In its Messianic paragraphs it indicates that the seed of the woman, the humanity of Christ, will come from the seed of Adam.
4. Noahic covenant — Genesis 6:18; 8:21-9:17 — depicts the seed of the woman, the humanity of Christ, coming through the line of Noah and specifically through Shem.

* Rainbow is a promise from God to never destroy mankind through a flood.

1. Abrahamic covenant, Gen 12 which while being a covenant to Israel is also a Messianic covenant, depicts the seed of the woman, the humanity of Christ, coming from the line of Abraham’s descent, through Judah.
2. Palestinian covenant – Gen 13:14-15, 15:18-21 – Promises of land ownership from the Nile on the west to the Euphrates on the east – fulfilled in the Millennium

* This promise to Abraham is yet to be fulfilled, providing biblical evidence for a distinction between Israel and the church, pointing to a future time when these land promises will be fulfilled.

1. Mosaic Covenant – Mosaic Law
2. Davidic covenant: The seed of the woman, the humanity of Christ will come from the line of David, specifically through Bathsheba’s children, Solomon and Nathan.
3. New covenant to Israel depicts the fact that the seed of the woman, the Lord Jesus, will return to the earth to reign for a thousand years (Millennium & forever), at which time the nation Israel will be restored and both the New covenant to Israel and the Davidic covenant will be fulfilled.
4. **There are 5 Covenants given to Israel for the Jewish Age & the Millennium**
5. Abrahamic
6. Palestinian
7. Mosaic
8. Davidic
9. New – Millennium
10. **The Covenants in relation to the Dispensations**
11. A dispensation is a period of history during which God manages His plan of evangelism to unbelievers and spiritual growth to believers (divine agency) in different ways.

**Gentile Age:** divine agency was the family; God spoke directly to men through theophany’s and angels.

* Adamic & Noahic

**Jewish Age**: God chose Abraham & his family to become the nation Israel, to be the divine agency; Moses given Mosaic Law - the divine method of revealing Christ in shadows through regulations & animal sacrifices.

* Abrahamic, Palestinian, Mosaic

**Church Age**: New Covenant to the church

**Millennium**: New Covenant to Israel

**Unfolding of the Divine Revelation**

1. **God has slowly, through a series of dispensations, in consecutive periods of time (ages), revealed His plan for the redemption of Mankind, centered in the person of God-Son, Jesus Christ.**
2. Gentile Age: Fall of Man – Abraham – seed of the woman through Seth 🡪 Noah
3. Jewish Age: Abraham – Pentecost – seed of Abraham 🡪 Judah 🡪 David 🡪 Mary

* Human history from the fall of Adam to the birth of Jesus was focused on who would be the Messiah (Gen 3:15) to pay for the sins of the world, freeing God to save whoever believes the gospel.
* God concealed His identity to avoid demonic attacks on His lineage, seeking to prevent His birth

1. Hypostatic Union: Life of Christ – Christ revealed in His humanity & briefly in His resurrected state

* Demonic attacks began immediately (Mat 2:16) to kill Jesus & then to tempt Him from His mission

1. Church Age: Pentecost – Rapture – Christ revealed through the church, specifically mature believers

* Mature believers have removed worldly functioning, to operate by the thinking of Christ, developing the capacity to express unconditional love to the world who needs to see Christ,

1. Millennium: Christ fully revealed in His full glory as He rules the earth
2. God did not reveal the entire plan with specifics at once, He unfolded it slowly through human history.
3. **During every successive dispensation and covenant, God revealed more about Christ, bringing greater personal understanding about Christ to the believer, enabling believers to become like Him.**
4. From the beginning, God’s primary means of communicating the gospel for salvation was animal sacrifice – a visual aid of the perfect person and death of the Messiah to pay for the sins of the world.

* Animal sacrifice transcended both the Gentile Age and the Jewish Age, foretelling the Messiah

1. In the New Covenant to the church, the believer experiences the greatest revelation of Christ given so far in history through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, enabling the believer to learn, assimilate and live out the same spiritual principles that Jesus used in His perfect, earthly life.
2. **Israel’s History in relation to the scriptures**
3. Gen 12 – Deut – Abraham – Moses: Formation of the nation of Israel
4. Joshua – Judges – Israel in the land under a theocracy
5. 1 Sam – 1King 11 – United Monarchy
6. 1King 11 – Isaiah - Divided Monarchies
7. Jeremiah – Malachi – Domination by Kingdoms: Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Persia, Greece, Rome

**New Covenant to the Church**

1. **The New Covenant to the church is God’s plan & method of revealing Christ through the church, during the period of history beginning with the day of Pentecost and ending with the Rapture of the church.**
2. Scripture records the discussion of the New Covenant to the church:

***Matthew 26:28*** *for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.*

***Luke 22:20*** *and in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.*

***1 Corinthians 11:25*** *in the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."*

***Hebrews 7:22*** *so much the more also Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.*

***Hebrews 9:15*** *And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.*

***Hebrews 12:24*** *and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.*

1. Blood of Christ – the work of Christ paying for the sins of the world on the cross, resolving the judicial charges against the entire human race.
2. Christ foretold the existence of a new entity, the church, other than Israel as His divine agency who would be responsible for explaining the gospel for salvation and bible doctrine for spiritual growth.

* Church – ***ek/klesia*** – called out, separated out from the rest – we are to be separate from the world

**Mat 16:18** "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.

**Mat 18:17** "And if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer.

1. **Israel’s time to be God’s agent was suspended and because the shadow image of Christ provided by the Mosaic Law had accomplished its purpose, God momentarily set Israel aside, replacing it with the church**

***Mat 5:17*** *"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.*

1. The Law wasn’t cancelled, its purpose to foretell Christ with shadows was fulfilled & therefore it ended

***Gal 4:4****-****5*** *But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, 5 in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive adoption as sons.*

1. Jesus was born under the Mosaic Law so that He could fulfill it by keeping it perfectly – free from sin

***Rom 10:4*** *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.*

***2 Cor 5:21*** *He made Him who committed no sin to be sin on our behalf (cross), that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

1. The end of the Law (shadow revelation) means that Jesus having resolved the sin and death issues the Law was revealing so that individuals could believe the promises for salvation, there is no longer any purpose for the Law – the Shadow image of Christ has given way to the reality.

***Mark 2:22*** *"And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and the skins as well; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins."*

1. **When Christ returned to heaven to sit on the place of privilege, the Father sent the Holy Spirit to indwell every believer, to empower us to learn, understand and utilize the thinking of Christ for daily living.**
2. GHS indwells every believer with body as the temple – 1Cor 3:16-17, 6:19-20, 1Cor 12:13; Eph 2:21

* Indwelling GHS making the believer’s body the temple of God is unique to the Church Age
* GHS indwelling every Church Age believer makes each believer a stone, together forming the temple

1. Filling of GHS – Eph 5:18 – ministry of influence through understanding & empowerment

* Pleroo – to fill completely, to fill a deficiency, to fully influence – GHS is the divine influence

1. Walking in GHS – Gal 5:16-17 – momentum by consistent obedience to the Spirit
2. GHS enables us to exchange old beliefs/ideas & replace them with the beliefs/ideas of Jesus Eph 4:22-24

* Transformation – Rom 12:2. 2Cor 3:18 ***metamorphoo*** – to fully change from the inside out

1. GHS enables the use of spiritual gifts by which the church builds itself up in love – Eph 5:12-16

***1 Peter 4:10-11*** *As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God* ***11*** *Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God; whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies; so* *that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

1. **The New Covenant to the church authorizes a new priesthood to replace the Levitical priesthood**
2. Royal Priesthood of Believers made up of Church Age Royal Family of God to make spiritual sacrifices

***1 Peter 2:5*** *you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

1. Spiritual sacrifices consist of giving your mind & heart to the Lord to be remade in His image

***Eph 4:22-24*** *that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.*

1. **The New Covenant to the church makes every believer a Royal Ambassador who is entrusted with the message of the gospel (1Cor 15:3-4) by which fallen man can be reconciled to God - evangelism**

***2 Cor 5:18-21*** *Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

1. Evangelism takes place in the Church Age by the personal witnessing of individual ambassadors
2. Evangelism takes place through the spiritual gift of evangelist – Eph 4:11, Act 21:8, 2Tim 4:5

**Victory in the Angelic Conflict**

**Angelic Conflict**

1. **Definition & Description**: the prehistoric conflict (war, hostilities, struggle, court case) between God and the elect angels who are at war with Satan and the fallen angels.
2. In eternity past, a cohort of angels decided that they did not like God’s rule over them, for reasons that are not clearly stated but we can surmise by comparing scripture with scripture.

* Ezek 28:11-19 Lucifer’s rebellion; Isa 14:12-17 Five I wills; Luk 10:18 Fall of Satan; Rev 12:9-10

1. Satan, originally Lucifer, told Eve that God was lying to her about the results of eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and that she would not die if she ate the fruit from it.

* Satan told her that instead of dying, when she disobeyed God, she would actually gain the knowledge of good and evil which would make her like God.
* Since his own fall through disobedience to God, Satan has promoted the lie that something desirable can be gained by rejecting God’s word & acting independently of His will.

1. Implied in his logic was the idea that she and Adam would be better served by breaking free from God’s limiting boundaries to seek their own destiny through knowledge that God was denying them.
2. Satan shared his own philosophy with Eve that all creatures should be free to pursue the life they want & choose for themselves, rather than live as servants, eternally doing only their Creator’s wishes.
3. Whatever Lucifer’s argument, it persuaded 1/3 of the angels (God’s smartest creatures) that he was right –righteous & that God’s insistence that they remain within His will was unrighteous.
4. The angels who demanded their freedom from God’s will rebelled, were judged and sentenced to spend eternity in the Lake of Fire – Mt 25:41

***Matthew 25:41*** *"Then He will also say to those on His left (unbelievers), 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;*

1. The angelic rebellion to gain unrestricted freedom from God’s will was judged & the criminals were sentenced but execution of the sentence has been delayed – an appeal is underway.
2. **While the bible never directly states that God is allowing the devil & his forces an appeal trial, the evidence for that view is compelling, giving us a model into which we can visualize the biblical facts.**

* Making the model work requires that we fill in a few blanks with some assumptions that we draw from God’s character as a pattern for His behavior

1. When the fallen angels sinned & were judged, God offered them salvation like He does mankind

* God is good, He is giving & generous, forgiving all sins & restoring those who fail – His nature

1. God created mankind, a creature with similar characteristics to angels, placed man in a similar perfect environment and gave man a choice to obey or disobey and face the consequences of their choice.

* Assumption: angels had a similar soul with volition, lived in a similar environment, with similar options; some chose to obey & remain with God, others chose to disobey God & they became unrighteous.

1. **God allowed mankind to fall through sin, putting man into the same situation as the fallen angels when they had sinned so that when God offered man grace salvation & some accepted, it proved that the doomed angels could have done the same – they are eternally doomed by their own choice.**
2. When Adam and Eve chose to believe the gospel, they proved that the fallen angels could have accepted whatever form of forgiveness that God offered them.
3. Every time someone believes in Christ for salvation or believes a promise from God, it proves that the issue in the Angelic Conflict is not God’s righteousness, it is creature volition.
4. God has so designed the universe that when a creature aligns itself with God’s righteous will, it is blessed but if a creature aligns itself outside of God’s will, the creature is cursed by dying spiritually.
5. When any creature chooses other than God’s will, they enter into a continuous & progressive process of degeneration and corruption analogous to entropy in the physical world.
6. **Satan deceived Eve, persuading her to eat the forbidden fruit, Adam knowingly chose her over God and in doing so, trapped the entire human race to be born into an unrighteous status, separated from God.**

***Rom 5:12*** *therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned*

1. The devil discovered God’s design of the consequences of sin when he sinned, and he used the same spiritual consequences that corrupted him to trap the human race in spiritual death.
2. When Christ had paid for the sins that were the basis of mankind’s spiritual death, the essence of God was freed to bless man with the grace gift of eternal salvation.
3. By paying for the sins of the world, Christ freed the human race from our slavery to sin and death, removing the devil’s hold on us – redemption: bought us from the slave market of sin.
4. **The victory of Jesus Christ over sin and death broke the devil’s hold over the human race, restoring the kingdoms of the world to God.**

***Luke 4:5*** *and he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6 And the devil said to Him, "I will give you all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. 7 "Therefore if you worship before me, it shall all be yours."*

1. The devil had authority over the kingdoms of the earth because they had been handed over to him when Adam sinned and lost dominion over the earth.
2. When Christ was resurrected, He regained the kingdoms for Himself.
3. **The victory on the cross and in the resurrection has defeated the devil permanently – why keep fighting?**
4. The forces of evil continue to fight to hold off the time for Christ to return, extending their freedom.
5. Is the devil hoping that the argument that persuaded the angels who rebelled with him might continue to persuade some of the elect angels in the end that their view is right?