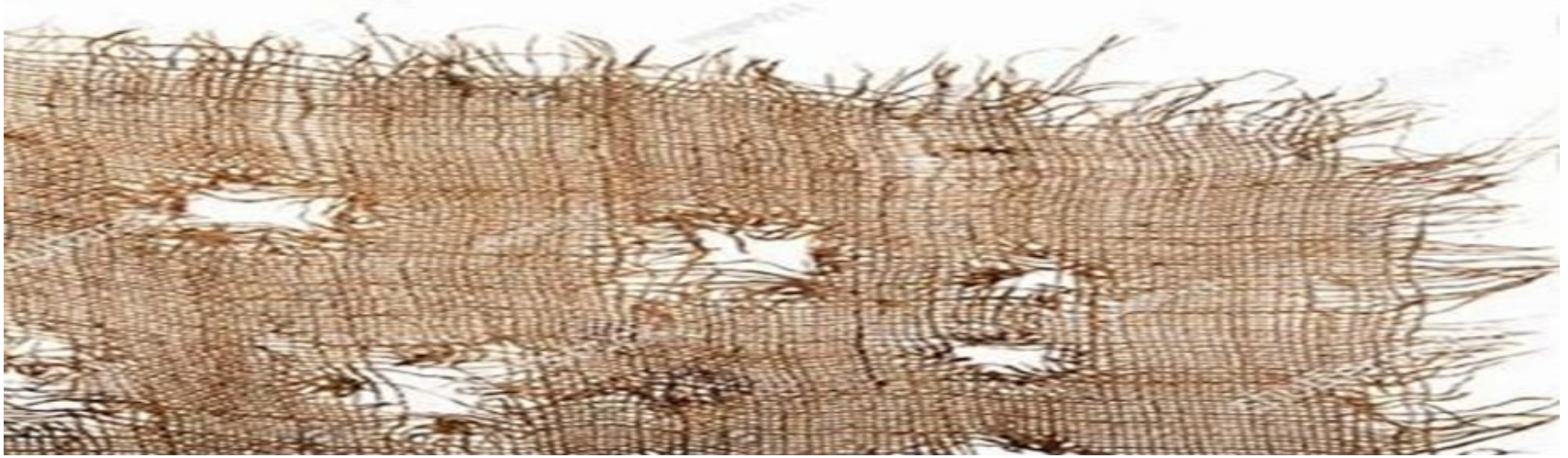


# Of Kingdoms and Covenants



## Lesson 1 – Introduction



**“The God of 20<sup>th</sup> Century America is a **helpless, effeminate being** who commands the trust of no truly thoughtful man” -- A.W. Pink**



## The Bible is:

- The tapestry of **God's eternal plan to establish His kingdom**
  - To **redeem** to Himself a people
  - To **destroy** all that is not holy
- It is a **comprehensive** plan; without gaps or voids
- It is **progressively revealed** plan, moving from shadows and types to realities

**“The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed,  
the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed”**

- **Reformed Theology** is the **whole-cloth** upon which God's Redemptive Plan is woven
- **Covenant Theology** is the **“needlework”**; the story portrayed
- Christ is the **scarlet thread** upon which the whole work is centered

## **The OT Speaks of Christ:**

**Lk 24:25,27 – And He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!” ... And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself**

**Lk 24:44 – Then He said to them, “These are My words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled”**

**Jn 5:39 – You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about Me**

**Jn 5:46 – If you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me**

**Jn 1:14 -- And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth**

# What is Covenant Theology?

- Covenant theology is the **Gospel set in the context of God's eternal plan of communion with His people**, and its historical outworking in the **Covenants of Works and Grace**
- Covenant theology is a **hermeneutic** – a way of reading, interpreting and understanding the whole Bible

**“The distance between God and the creature is so great that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto Him as their Creator, yet they could never have an fruition of Him as their blessedness and reward, but by some **voluntary condescension** on His part, which God has been pleased to express **by way of covenant**”** – WCF, 7.1

- God has and will always will **deal with man** by covenant
- **These covenants of God**, written by many Biblical authors over thousands of years, **unify the Bible**

# What is Covenant Theology?

- The message or theme that courses through the covenants is: **Emmanuel, God with us**
- God's covenants **progressively reveal** His outworking of the Emmanuel promise
- These covenants and this promise **permeate** the whole of Scripture
- The word **“covenant”** occurs **301 times** in Scripture
- These covenants with His people begin in **Genesis** with Adam and continue throughout all redemptive history and find their consummation in the book of **Revelation** at Christ's second coming

**“The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear Him, and He makes known to them His covenant”** (Psa 25:14)

# What is Covenant Theology?

- The Bible, then, as we shall see, is a **covenant Book** – it declares a **covenant purpose**
- **No other religion** has such a concept: A **personal God**
- Who, of His own free will, His own initiative, His own unconditional love, would **enter into covenant** with a people
- Covenant, then, is **not just another subject** in Scripture
- Covenant is the very **foundation** upon which everything in Scripture is based, and
- Covenant **binds** the Old Testament to the New Testament
- Declaring one **covenantal promise**:

**“I will be your God, you will be My people, and I will dwell with you”**

**(Gen 17:7, Ex 29:45-46, Lev 26:12, Jer 7:23, Jer 31:33,  
Ezk 37:27, Zech 8:8, 2 Cor 6:16, Heb 8:10, Rev 21:3)**

- This is the **central promise** of the Bible:
  - It is God’s means to **establish His kingdom**
  - It defines His **sovereign relationship** with us
  - It tells undergirds the **History of Salvation**
- We must **understand** it in order to faithfully **live** it

**OT: Concerning this salvation (of Jesus Christ), the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully (1 Pe 1:10)**

**NT: They (Bereans) received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so (Acts 17:11)**



# Why is Covenant Theology Important?

- In Puritan times, **Covenant Theology** was referred to as “**the marrow of divinity**” (or theology)
- Marrow is at the center of the bones which **shape** our body, and marrow gives **health** to the body
- So the doctrine of the covenants is at the **core of theology**, giving a **framework** for our understanding of Scripture

“The doctrine of the Covenant **lies at the root of all true theology**. It has been said that he who well understands the distinction between the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace is a master of divinity. I am persuaded that **most of the mistakes which men make concerning the doctrines of Scriptures are based upon fundamental errors with regard to the covenants of law and the covenants of grace**. May God grant us now the power to instruct and you the grace to receive instruction on this vital subject” -- **C.H. Spurgeon**

# What is a Covenant?

Dr. Grudem defines as **an unchangeable, divinely imposed legal agreement** between God and man that stipulates the condition of their **relationship**

O. Palmer Robertson defines it as **“a bond in blood sovereignly administered”**

*A covenant is an administration of God's lordship **consecrating a people to Himself under the sanction of divine law.** Or, in more general terms, a covenant is a sovereign administration of the **kingdom of God** -- Prof Meredith Kline*

Divine covenants are the **expression of God's will and purpose** for man. They are also **the effective means** by which His **kingdom is established**

# What is a Covenant?

- O. Palmer Robertson said that the term covenant means, ‘**A bond in blood sovereignly administered**’
- A covenant is indeed a **bond** – the parties become **"one"** when covenants are formed
- A covenant is always **formed by "touching blood"**
- Even in pagan times, **blood has always been the common thread that ties covenants together** - either animal blood, or men's own blood
- **"Blood brother"** covenants were made when **men cut themselves** and mingled their blood in various ways
- A covenant is the **giving of one's whole person and life** to another and the **wholehearted receiving** of that other person and their life

# What is a Covenant?

- The covenant partners of Old Testament times **called upon God**:
  - To be the witness of the **truth** of their words;
  - To be their **strength in the keeping** of the covenant terms
  - To keep an **ever-present watch** over the parties to ensure that the covenant is indeed being kept
- By **calling on God** while making an oath, He was made the **third party** to the covenant
- A covenant was always made **accompanied by the shedding of blood** and the swearing of an **oath**
- Covenant, then, is a **life and death relationship** that can **never be disregarded or abrogated**

# What is a Covenant?

- Thus, in **Scripture** covenant is a **blood pact for life or for death** between two parties, attended by a sacred oath, inaugurated, and **administered by a Sovereign God**
- In Biblical times a covenant was - and still is - the **strongest bond known among humanity** - it is the joining together of two parties in an **indissoluble union**
- In the Near East, the expression "**blood is thicker than milk**" is still used
- The meaning is that **brothers** who were weaned at the same breast may eventually become enemies; but men who have become **brothers by blood-covenant** can **never be parted**
- From that day on they share each others **strengths and weaknesses, fortunes or failures, assets and debts** in common

# Two Basic Types of **Divine** Covenants

## i) **Royal Grant Covenant**

- (1) Sovereignly initiated and administered
- (2) Promises **only**
- (3) God acts unilaterally
- (4) All of the commitments are His

## ii) **Suzerain/Vassal Covenant**

- (1) Sovereignly initiated and administered
- (2) Stipulations, promises and curses. This is vitally important; there are **requirements of both parties**

OT: Berith

OT: Diatheke

# Elements of a Covenant

## 1. Parties:

- Can Be Two Equals
- **Most Often**, a Greater (Suzerain) and Lesser King
- The Kings **represent their people** and by them **the people are incorporated and obligated**

## 2. Stipulation or Pledge : What the two parties commit to do

**3. Promises:** The rewards for faithfulness to the covenant stipulations/pledge

**4. Curses:** The punishment for unfaithfulness to the covenant stipulations/pledge

# Covenants

Our best example of a Covenant in modern day is **Marriage**:

- It is a **relational (love)** binding
- It is a **legal** binding. It is enacted under lawful authority
- The intimacy of marriage is not hindered by its legality, rather, **the legal vows intensify the intimacy of the relationship**
- Both **legal binding and love are necessary** to have a true marriage
- It invokes **obligations**
- It has **promises and curses** related to faithfulness –



# Covenants

Our best example of a Covenant in modern day is **Marriage**:

- **Parties:** "I, (insert name) take thee, (insert name), "
- **Stipulations/Pledge:** "To be my lawfully wedded husband/  
wife"
- **Promises:**
  - "To have and to hold, from this day forward,
  - for better, for worse,
  - for richer, for poorer,
  - in sickness and in health,
  - to love and to cherish"
- **Curses:** "Till death do us part"



# Ratification & Signs of a Covenant

- The **“Cutting Ceremony”** (e.g., Gen 15)
- The **Covenantal Meal** – The Bible often depicts meals as a bond of remembrance and fellowship
- The **Covenantal Sign(s)** – Given as a reminder of the covenant, both promise and warning
- God provides these for us as **an assurance** of His **faithfulness** to His covenant and His **love** for us
- All elements are **not always presented** in the Scriptures
- Some elements are **implied** or
- **Revealed progressively** over time

Our best example of a Covenant in modern day is **Marriage**:

- It has **signs and seals** to remind us of our commitments, to strengthen us in our marriages

- **Wedding Rings**

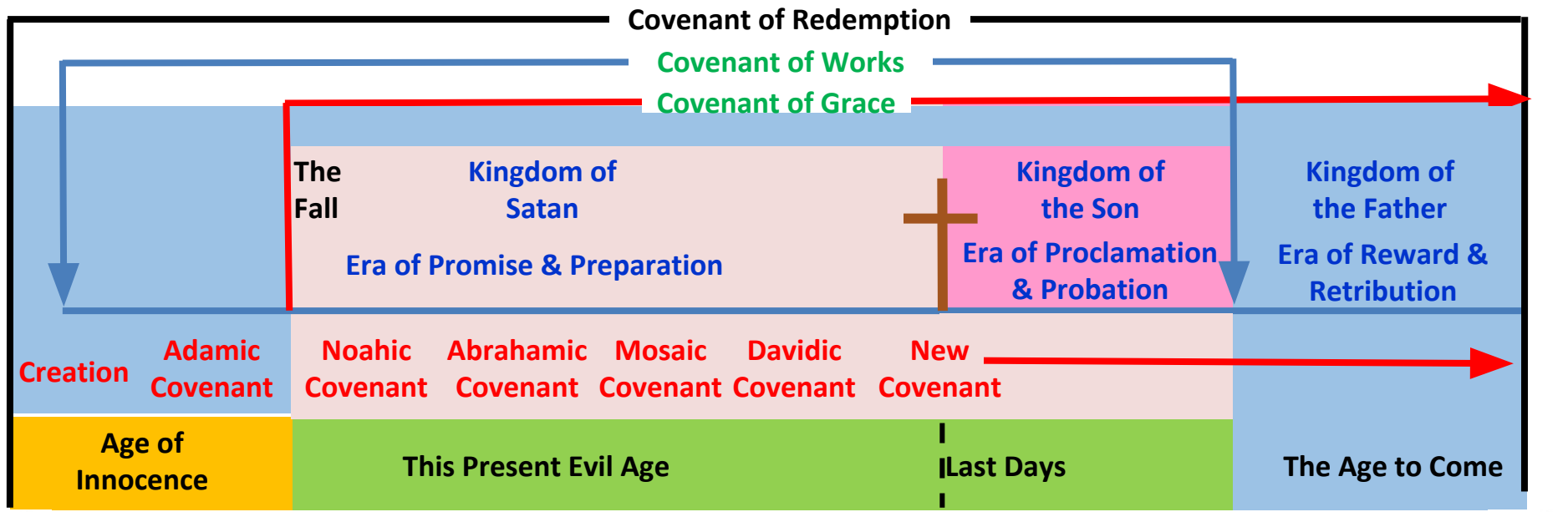
- **Marriage Certificates**

- **Anniversary Dates and Dinners**

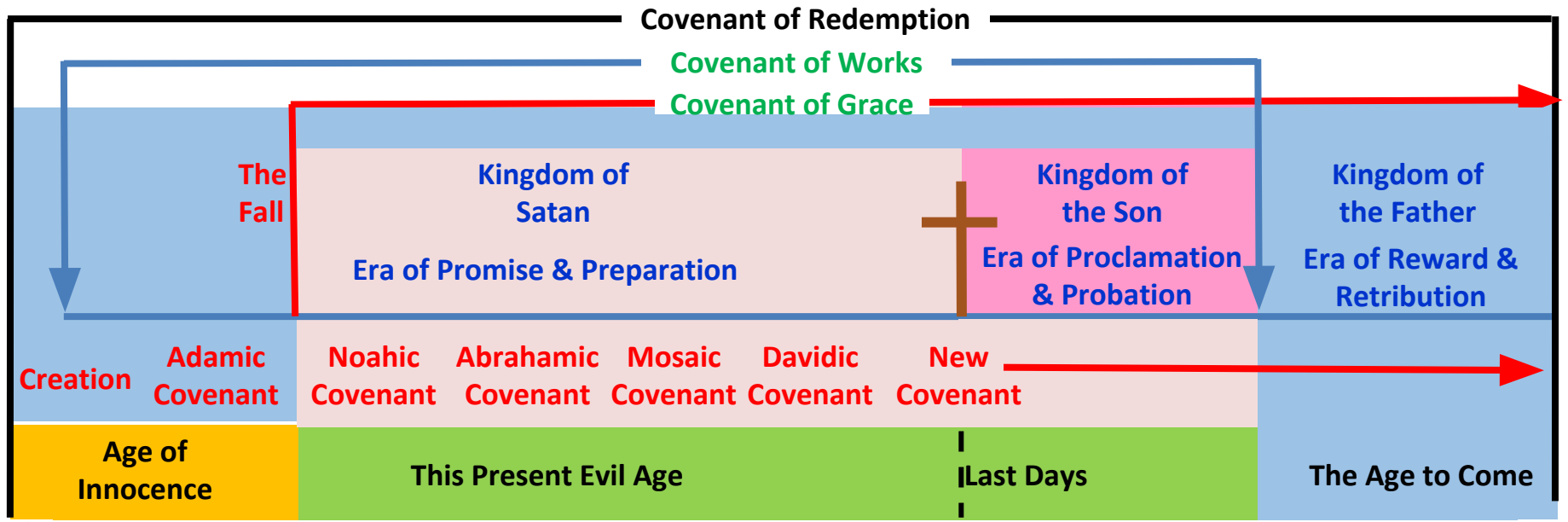


The Bible calls the people of God – the **Bride of Christ**

God is in a **legal and love relationship** with us  
as **revealed in His covenants**



- The three parts of the Covenant promise always stand together:
  - **God** is King, the One true Sovereign
  - He rules over a kingdom of **subjects**, His people
  - His people dwell in His **realm** under His sovereign rule and care
  - All of these **promises** are fulfilled in Christ
- The message or theme that **progressively courses** through the Bible's covenants is: "**Immanuel, God with us**" (Mt 1:23)



## FRAMEWORK

Three Major Covenants:  
(All three still in force)

- Redemption
- Works
- Grace

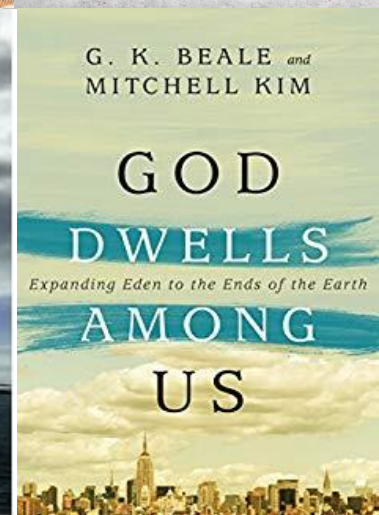
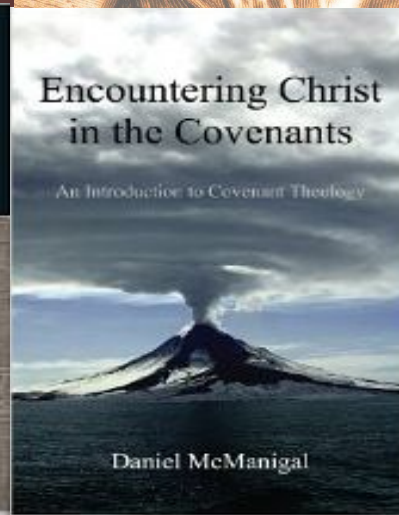
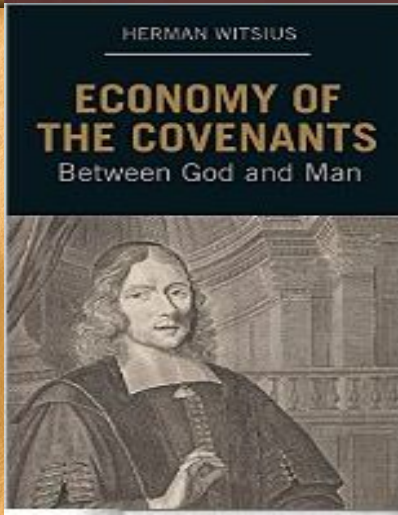
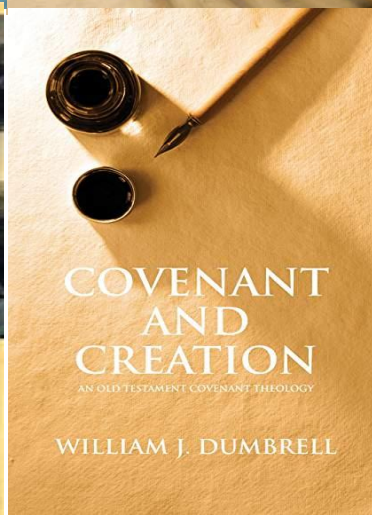
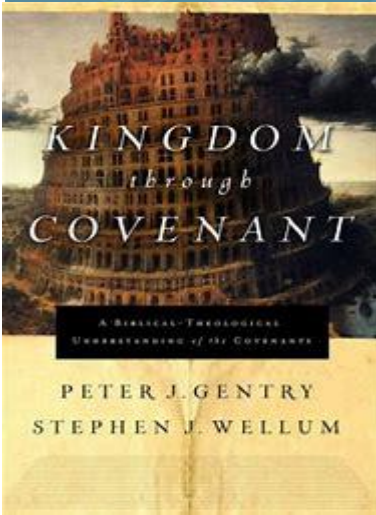
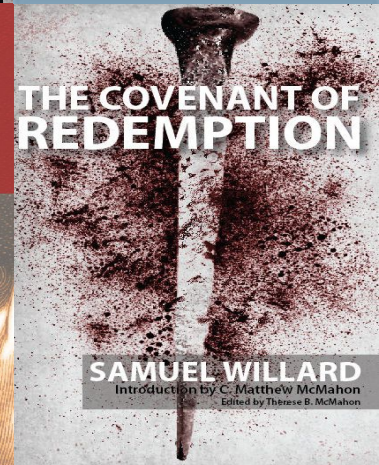
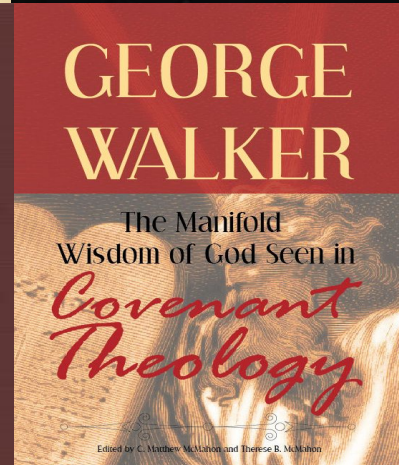
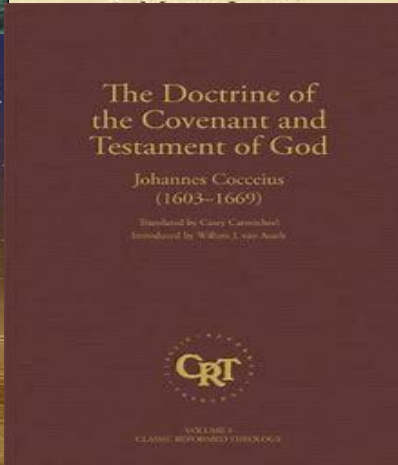
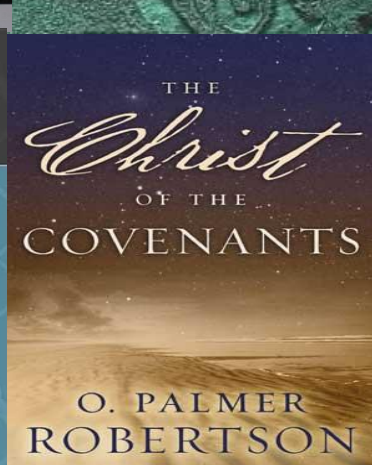
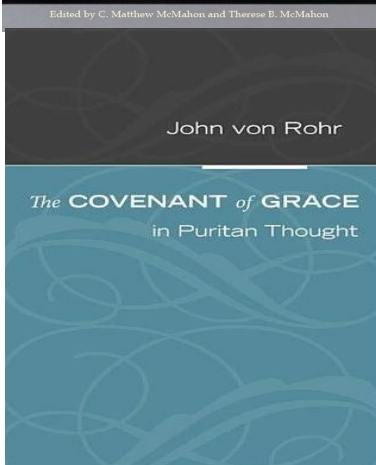
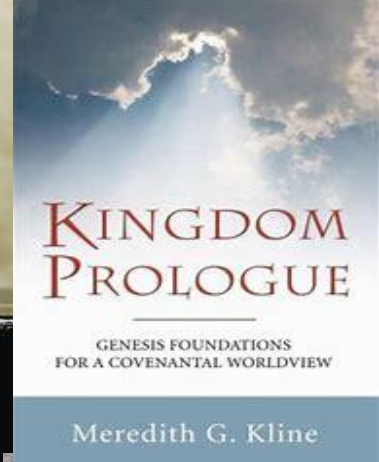
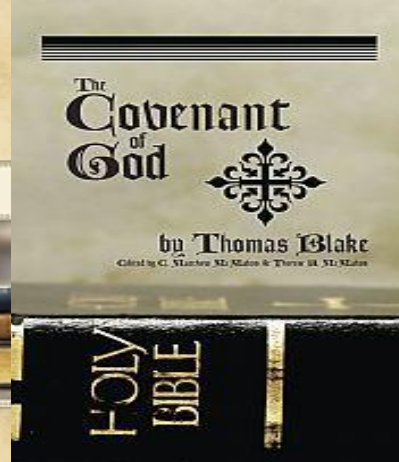
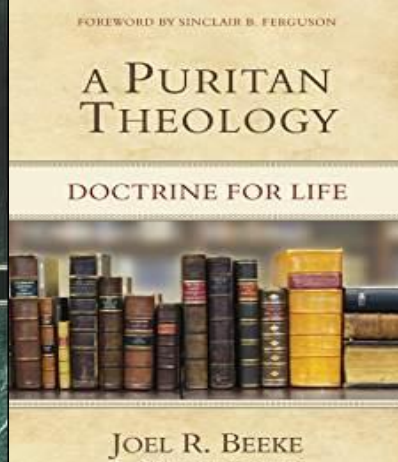
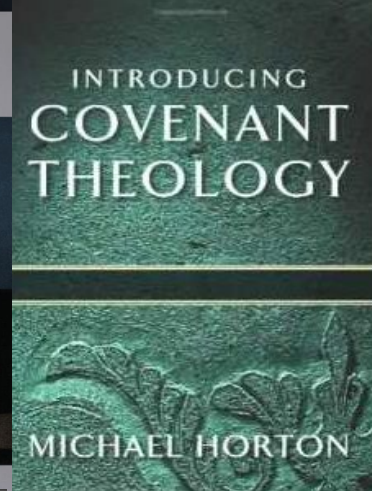
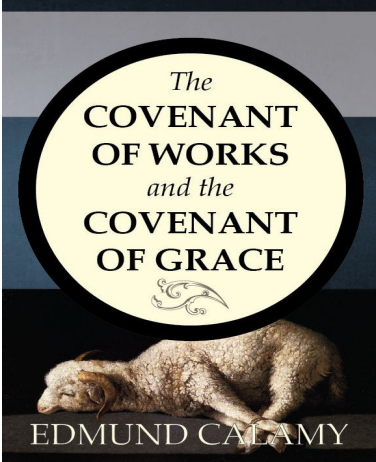
Six Administrations of the CoG

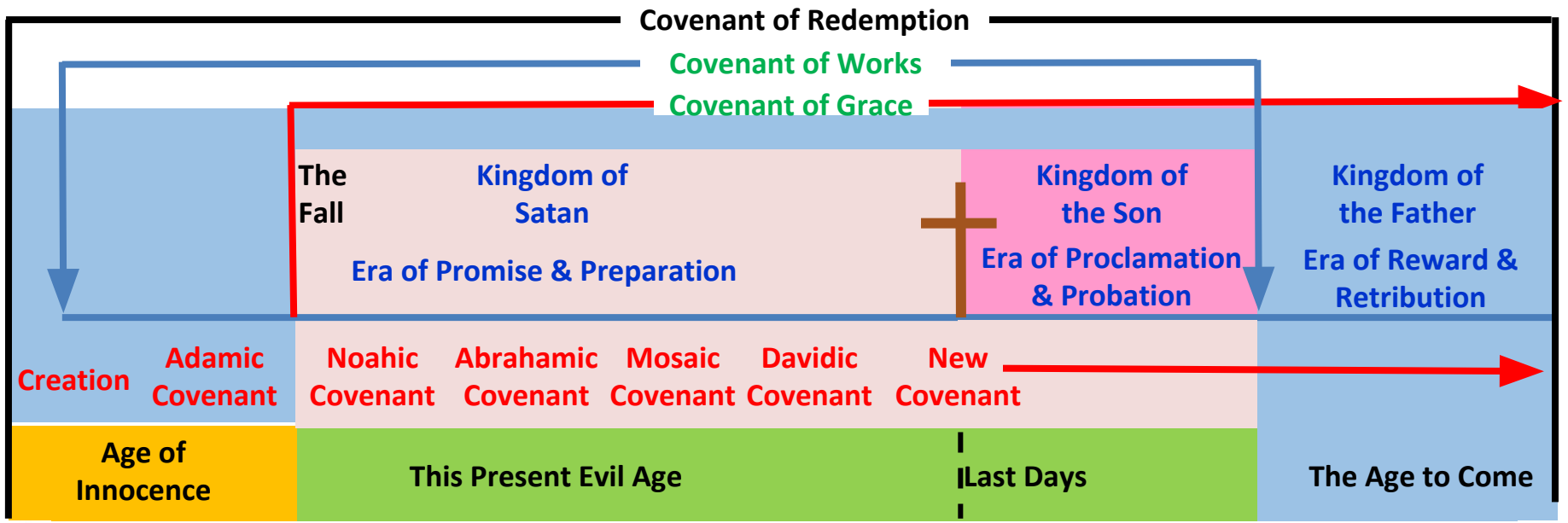
- Adamic
- Noachic
- Abrahamic
- Mosaic
- Davidic
- New

## “BIG ROCKS” – Covenant Theology Distinctives

- God **sovereignly initiates covenants** with whom He will according to His good pleasure
- The covenants are **unified, progressively revealing** God’s plan of redemption and the work of His Son our Messiah
- The basis of all of God’s covenants: **“I will be your God, you will be My people, and I will dwell with you”**
- This promise runs consistently throughout the Bible, from **Genesis to Revelation**
- God deals with **ALL men** through covenants; both **“sheep”** and **“goats”**
- Covenants are both **legal and relational**
- Throughout all time and eternally, there is **only ONE people** of God
- God has always established His covenants **through representatives**
- All who have ever believed in Christ (**OT & NT**) are the children of Abraham
- The promises God made to Abraham **are ours**, in all their fullness and glory
- These promises have a temporal fulfillment already realized and an eternal fulfillment still to come: **“Already, Not Yet”**
- Christianity is NOT a spectator religion; **God gifts His children for service**
- Scripture cannot be rightly understood apart from the Covenants of God because they are the **“needlework”** that portrays God’s redemption story & the base stitch is a **scarlet thread**

**BACK-UP SLIDES**





1. Introduction
2. Covenant of Works
3. Adamic Covenant
4. Kingdom of Satan
5. Protoevangelium
6. Covenant of Redemption
7. Noahic Covenant
8. Tale of Two Cities
9. Abrahamic Covenant
10. Covenant Ceremony
11. Covenant Sign
12. Exodus & Feasts of the Lord

13. Mosaic Covenant
14. Covenant Meals
15. The Tabernacle
16. David and Jonathan
17. Davidic Covenant
18. Covenants & Prophets
19. The New Covenant
20. Kingdom of Son
21. Covenant Marriage
22. Marriage Supper of the Lamb
23. Consummation of Covenants





## The OT Speaks of Christ:

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished” (Mt 5:17-18)

- To the Jew, "fulfill" did not mean "to do away with" but rather, "the true or correct interpretation" of something
- Throughout Scripture, Christ is progressively set forth through these various means
- Jesus was the human embodiment of the true meaning of Scripture; the spiritual reality
- Puritan Isaac Ambrose (1604–1664) claims that before His incarnation Christ was held forth in “Ceremonies, Rites, Figures, Types, Promises, and Covenants”



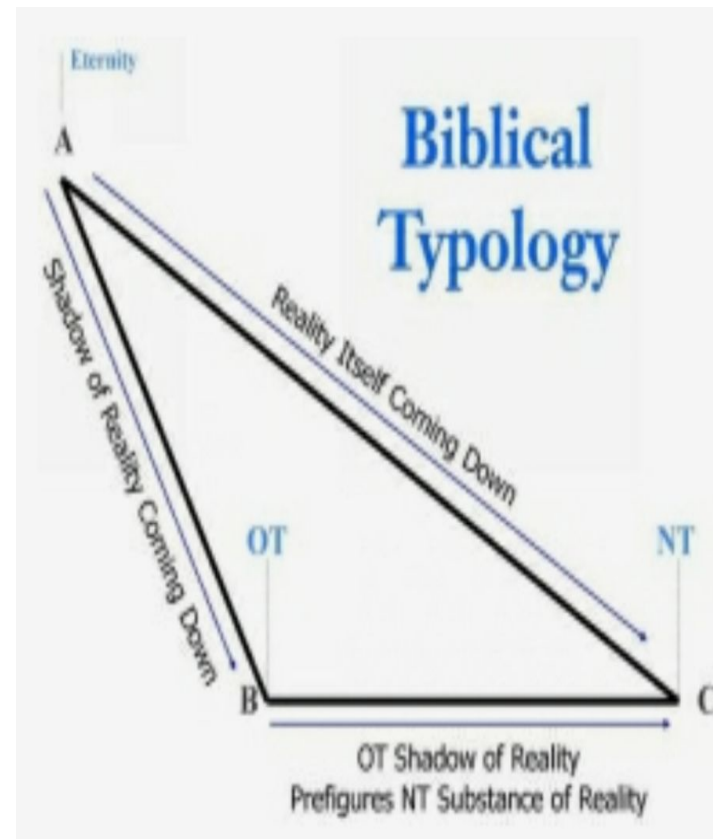
# Biblical Typology:

- Typology is a **method of interpretation** where one explains OT events, persons, and practices, as **prefiguring** the coming person and ministry of the Messiah and His covenant people
- Typology should not be confused with **allegory**
- An allegory is a **story, poem, or picture** that can be interpreted to reveal a **hidden meaning**
- First, types **presuppose history**; allegories do not
- Types can be applied only to some things, such as **persons, events and practices**
- Types deal with the **comparison of facts**, OT to NT

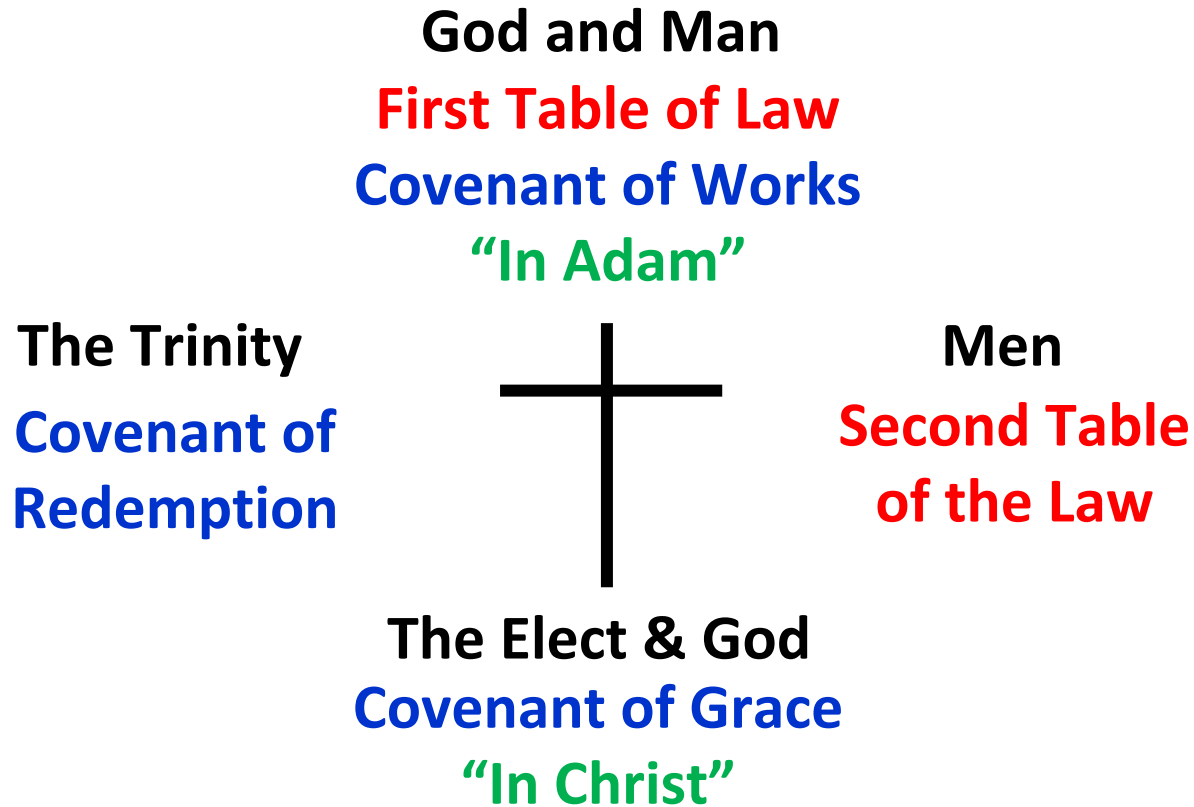
# Biblical Typology:

- We often **find Christ in the Old Testament** through the use of “types”, (g: typos)
- Christ is the archetype, original, who is “**struck**” into OT persons, places, and things
- For instance, **the tabernacle was a type** (model, copy, or shadow) of the heavenly temple
- It was not the heavenly temple itself, but a **representation** of its heavenly counterpart

**WARNING:** Types are **not perfect** images; they exhibit flaws not found in the original



# Mankind – Covenantal Beings



**Mt 22:36-39 -- Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets**

# Why is Covenant Theology Important?

- The plot of the biblical story may be summarized as “**creation-fall-redemption-consummation**”
- Unless we have an understanding of the initial state (**creation**) and the nature of the problem (**fall**), we will systematically misread the nature of this repair (**redemption**) — and thus the nature of the final fulfillment (**consummation**) of God’s purposes
- Just as our nation is harmed by ignoring our **Judeo-Christian heritage**,
- So too, the church is harmed by ignoring our **Jewish roots** and
- God’s **covenants** with men throughout redemptive history
- These lead to severe forms of **impoverishment**, the one **civic** and the other **spiritual**

## **The Thoughts of this Age are Opposed to God and His Covenants:**

- **Personal Autonomy; the god of this age**
- **Rugged Individualism**
- **Personal Rights**
- **Redefinition of Marriage**
- **Cohabitation**
- **No-Fault Divorce**
- **Erosion of Parental Rights**
- **Chronological Snobbery**
- **Therapeutic Moral Dism**
- **Dispensationalism**

**This thinking and messaging is centered on the Individual today and disregards most of redemptive history and the Old Testament**

## Moral Relativism

- “There is **no God**”
- If no God, **no truth**
- If no truth, **no sin**
  - Values, **not virtues**
  - Lifestyle, **not sexual sin**
  - Choice, **not murder**
- If no sin, **no salvation**
- If no salvation, **no Savior**

## Scripture

- “Love the **Lord your God**”
- “**I am the way, the truth**”
- “Sin is the **transgression of the law**”
- “I have come that **you might have life**”
- “There is **salvation in no one else**”

## DISPENSATIONAL THEOLOGY

(Lewis S. Chafer, John Walvoord, Tim LaHaye, John Nelson Darby, C.I. Scofield)

- Stresses **rigidly 'literal'** interpretation of the Bible
- Usually **does not accept** the idea of the 'Analogy of Faith'
- God has **2 peoples with 2 separate destinies**: Israel (earthly) and the Church (heavenly)

## COVENANT THEOLOGY

(Charles Hodge, Loraine Boettner, Louis Berkhof, John Murray, B.B. Warfield)

- **Allows both literal and figurative** interpretation of the Bible
- Relies upon the hermeneutic of The "**Analogy of Faith**" (Scripture interprets Scripture)
- God has always had **only ONE people**, throughout redemptive history



## DISPENSATIONAL THEOLOGY

- 'Israel' always means only the literal, **physical descendants** of Jacob
- The Church was born at **Pentecost**
- The Church was **not prophesied** as such in the OT
- All **OT prophecies** for 'Israel' are for literal Israel, not the Church

## COVENANT THEOLOGY

- May mean **literal, physical descendants** of Jacob or the **figurative, spiritual Israel**, depending on context
- The Church **began in the OT** and reached fulfillment in the NT
- There are **many OT prophecies** of the NT Church
- OT prophecies are **for both** the literal nation of Israel and for spiritual Israel -- **"Already, Not Yet"**

## DISPENSATIONAL THEOLOGY

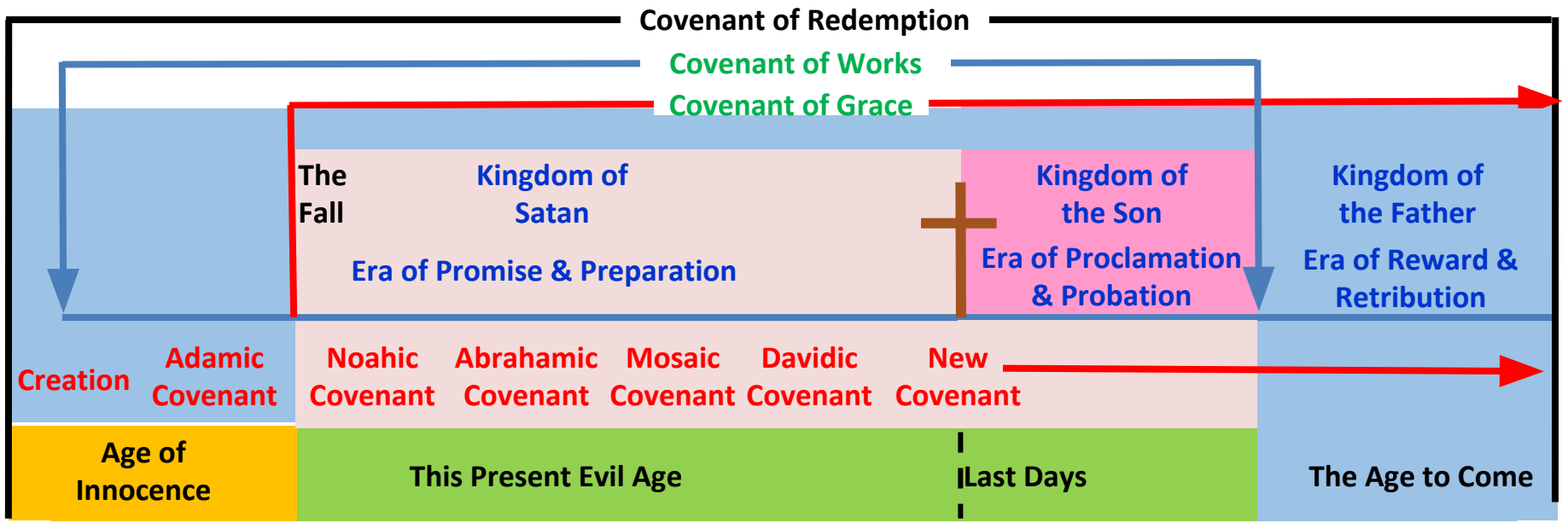
- God's main purpose in history is **literal Israel**
- The Church is a **parenthesis** in God's program for the ages
- The main heir to Abraham's covenant was Isaac and **literal Israel**

## COVENANT THEOLOGY

- God's main purpose in history is **Christ and His people – of all ages**
- The Church is the **culmination of God's saving purpose for the ages**
- The main heir to Abraham's covenant was **Christ and spiritual Israel**

God's Covenant Promise,

**“I will be their God, they will be My people and I will dwell with them”**  
runs throughout the Bible from **Genesis to Revelation**



- **Three Kingdoms**
- **Two Covenants with men**
- **Six Covenantal Administrations**
- **Four Ages:**
- **One Purpose:**

**“I will be your God, you will be My people, and I will dwell with you”**

**(Gen 17:7, Ex 29:45-46, Lev 26:12, Jer 7:23, Jer 31:33, Ezk 37:27, Zech 8:8, 2 Cor 6:16, Heb 8:10, Rev 21:3)**