

# MARRIAGE COVENANT THEOLOGY



**DENVER  
REFORMED  
CHURCH**

## 1. THE PATTERN OF SALVATION.

**All saving relationships between God and man in the Bible are a marriage covenant<sup>1</sup>. There are five<sup>2</sup> major marriage covenants in the Bible: the Adamic Covenant<sup>3</sup>, Noahic Covenant, Abrahamic Covenant, Mosaic Covenant and New Covenant.**

1.1. The Mosaic Covenant (OC) is spoken of using marriage terms and conditions:

1.1.1. God as husband, Israel as wife (Isa 54:5; Jer 3:20, 31:31-32).

1.1.2. Marriage vows are taken (Eze 16:1-8).

1.1.3. Israel is seen as committing adultery and becoming an adulterer (harlot, whore) when unfaithful to the covenant (Eze 16:15-32).

1.1.4. God threatens divorce for unrepentant unfaithfulness even threatening the “no remarriage rule” of Deuteronomy 24:1-4 (Jer 3:1-8; Isa 50:1).

1.2. The first covenant (Adamic) is revealed to be the same kind of covenant as the Mosaic Covenant (Hos 6:7 – consider it is “the covenant” v. “their covenant”).

1.3. Every other salvation covenant in the Old Testament which follows the first (Adamic) is referenced in the possessive (“My covenant”) demonstrating this to be their antecedent in kind (Gen 6:18, 17:2; Exo 19:5).

1.4. The New Covenant also uses marriage terms and conditions, and is considered to be the same kind of covenant<sup>4</sup> as the Mosaic Covenant (Eph 5:22-32; Rev 19:7; Jer 31:31-32).

---

<sup>1</sup> Such marriage covenants however are “betrothal” in nature (“inchoate marriages”) since this was the first act of the ancient marriage covenant and the point at which the contract was agreed upon. Though spousal terms would oftentimes be used during this period (e.g. Deu 20:7), the marriage covenant was not consummated until the actual ceremony and intimate union between the husband and his wife were achieved (see Gordon P. Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant*, p.243-279). In the case of God’s marriage to humans, such consummating ceremony takes place only after we have passed from this life (Consider: 2Co 11:2, Rev 19:6-9; Consider also the fact that Joseph pursues “divorce” in relation to Mary though they are only betrothed. This implies some sort of marriage covenant/contract is already in place – see Mat 1:18-20).

<sup>2</sup> Covenant Theology recognizes six including also the Davidic Covenant. Though an important covenant in God’s redemptive plan, it was established in relation to kingship not salvation (see 2Sa 7 and 23). In this regard David himself operated under the Mosaic covenant.

<sup>3</sup> Though one may initially question calling the Adamic Covenant a “saving relationship” since there was no sin at the time it was inaugurated, what must be considered is the fact that this is where it ended up: in God providing an addendum and means of atonement thus taking the role of Savior in that covenant as well (Gen 3:21).

<sup>4</sup> This does not infer there are no differences between the Old and New Covenant but rather that the New --like the Old --is viewed and operates as a marriage covenant.

## 2. JUSTIFICATION<sup>5</sup>

Justification which refers to a person possessing a righteous state before God is the necessary prerequisite to entering into the marriage covenant relationship w/God. In the redemptive history of the Bible, we experience two forms: one which is now obsolete, the other which is presently in force. They may be referred to as Passover Justification and Payment Justification.

Passover Justification existed before the New Covenant and was realized by the worshipper through the observance of animal sacrifices and the additional clean laws<sup>6</sup> established under the Mosaic Covenant. However, the atonement producing this justification was only superficial, merely passing over sin and therefore rapidly became obsolete and unacceptable before God once Payment Justification was secured.

Payment Justification was secured exclusively through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ under the New Covenant and is realized by the worshipper simply through putting faith in Christ and His death alone. Unlike the former however, the atonement producing this justification effects real payment for and removal of sin. Payment Justification which will remain in force until the end of the Age, now exists as mankind's only legitimate form of justification.

2.1. The words translated "justification" or "righteousness" (or one of their derivatives) share the same δικαιο root (e.g. Rom 4:5 - δικαιοσύνην; Rom 4:25 - δικαίωσιν ), mean the same thing and are therefore used interchangeably throughout the Bible (e.g. Rom 3:28 w/ 9:30).

2.2. Without justification there is no hope of entering into a marriage covenant relationship w/God (e.g. Eph 2:11-13<sup>7</sup>).

2.3. The OT words "forgiven, washed, cleansed"<sup>8</sup>, sanctified" are used interchangeably w/the word or doctrine of justification in the NT and therefore reveal this to not only be their meaning in the OT, but also the existence of some form of justification during that time<sup>9</sup> (Rom 4:5-6; Psa 32:1-5; Lev 4:20-35; 1Co 6:11; Tit 3:5-7; 1Jo 1:9; Psa 51:2, 7, 10; Lev 16:30; Eze 36:25, 33, 37:23; Zec 13:1; Exo 31:13).

2.4. That some form of justification did exist under the OT is also made apparent by the considering the fact that the NT uses the OT priesthood and their work in atoning for sin as the basis for Christ's in securing justification<sup>10</sup> (e.g. Heb 4:14-5:9, 7:26-28, 10:11-12).

2.5. Re: "...justification before the NC was superficial, passing over sins only whereas justification through Christ and under the NC offers real payment for and removal of sin." (Rom 3:23-25; Heb 9:9-14, 24-10:18).

---

<sup>5</sup> For a more in depth study of this subject, see Jarrett, R. Scott, *Justification Rediscovered*.

<sup>6</sup> Clean laws include those described in Leviticus 1-18. All clean laws fit into one of 5 categories: circumcision, sacrifices, Sabbaths, separation and kosher foods.

<sup>7</sup> This passage reveals that Jesus Christ is the specific person w/in Godhead responsible for making covenant w/Israel just as He is the One Who makes it w/the church under the NC (Luk 22:20). The Scriptures may point in this direction as it relates to all covenants and Jesus (consider Jud 1:5; 1Co 10:1-9; Joh 8:56-58; Heb 7:1-3; 1Pe 3:18-20).

<sup>8</sup> Though not necessarily pertinent to this discussion, the words "wash, cleanse" do communicate an important aspect regarding our justification: that it is more than just forensic, but also moral (for further explanation see Jarrett, R. Scott, *Justification Rediscovered*, p.10-11).

<sup>9</sup> The fact that these words in the OT most often deal either explicitly or implicitly w/issues of sin and being set apart to God as holy further support the fact that there are indeed communicating some form of justification (i.e. a person possessing a righteous state before God).

<sup>10</sup> The fact that some form of justification was needed in the OT becomes all the more apparent when one again considers it is impossible to be in relationship w/God unless that is case (as supported in 2.2.)

2.6. Re: “...*Christ’s death alone as the exclusive basis for payment justification.*” (passive obedience v. active obedience) (Rom 5:18; 2Co 5:21; Eph 1:7; Col 1:9-23; 1Pe 2:24; Heb 10:10, 14, 13:12)<sup>11</sup>.

2.7. Re: “...*justification before the NC as obsolete and now realized exclusively through faith alone in Christ alone and as the only legitimate form of justification and salvation until the end of the Age.*”

(Heb 7:12, 8:13, 9:8-15; Rom 3:28; Act 4:12; 2Th 1:5-8 w/Mat 13:39-42).

---

<sup>11</sup> Where this truth becomes most important is when considering the place of the Law. Those holding to the Active Obedience position believe that Justification through Christ required also meritorious works which Christ accomplished before His death. This however creates a works-based system of righteousness that is nowhere found in the Bible nor was ever a part of God’s purpose in establishing the Law. This will be further discussed under the section entitled “Law”.

### 3. BAPTISM, THE NEW BIRTH AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Before the New Covenant circumcision was the mandatory physical sign established by God to confirm one's justification, entrance into the marriage covenant and later the marriage covenant community<sup>12</sup>. However, because of the superior form of justification and marriage gift offered under the New Covenant, both the sign and its requirement have changed. Baptism is now the mandatory physical sign which both replaces circumcision and improves upon it by the faith it requires<sup>14</sup>, the superior form of justification it points to and the marriage gift of the New Birth and Holy Spirit it promises<sup>15</sup>.

3.1. Circumcision was first established as a mandatory physical sign of God's justification and covenant relationship with Abraham and his offspring (including the Israelites). It also represented their entrance into the covenant community of Israel (Gen 17:1-2, 10-14; Lev 12:3; Rom 4:11).

3.2. Baptism was established by Christ Himself after His justifying death and resurrection confirming its replacement of circumcision as the new mandatory physical sign of our justification before God and entrance into marriage covenant w/Him (Mat 28:18-19; Mar 16:16)<sup>16</sup>.

3.3. Further confirmation that circumcision has been replaced is the fact that baptism is also considered the sign of our entrance into the covenant community of the church (Act 2:41).

3.4. Re: "...baptism as improving upon circumcision by:

3.4.1. *The faith it requires* (NAS: Act 8:36-37, 16:31-34; 1Pe 3:21. Improves: Jer 31:31-34).

3.4.2. *The superior form of justification it points to: Payment Justification v. Passover Justification.*<sup>17</sup>

3.4.3. *The marriage gift of the New Birth and Holy Spirit it promises.*" (Joh 3:1-15; Eph 2:5-8; Eze 36:25-27; Jer 31:31-34; Act 2:38; Rom 6-8; Joh 16:7; Tit 2:11-12, 3:5-7).

---

<sup>12</sup> After Abraham, God's marriage covenant only exists w/the covenant community and not the individual. This is clearly seen by the fact that spousal terminology is reserved for the nation of Israel and the church (e.g. Jer 31:32; Eph 5:22-24).

<sup>13</sup> All of the signs which God has commanded that man observe function as mandatory in this way: Anyone unwilling to observe the sign—or to observe it correctly will not only fail to receive what it represents/symbolizes—but should also expect a curse (e.g. Exo 12:1-13; 1Co 11:27-30).

<sup>14</sup> This in no way negates the promise and special provision God makes in relation to the infant offspring of His people. They are conceived with faith (consider Psa 22:9-10; Isa 44:3, 54:13 w/Act 2:39). As such, faith is not theirs to gain, but only lose as they get older.

<sup>15</sup> This gift is also referred to as "regeneration" (Tit 3:5). For a more in depth study of this subject please see Jarrett, R. Scott, *The New Birth Rediscovered*.

<sup>16</sup> In further support of baptism also being mandatory, consider that provision (not exception) is made for anyone unable but not refusing (Jam 5:14-15). Even the thief on the cross received a provisional form of baptism (through literal death and resurrection w/Christ!-Luk 23:43).

<sup>17</sup> See section entitled "Justification" for detailed discussion of the distinction between these two forms of justification. Consider also the fact that though Abraham's justification came through faith and is therefore connected to those expressing faith under the New Covenant, he nonetheless received circumcision as the sign, since his was Passover and not Payment Justification.

## 4. LAW

In the Bible the phrase “the Law” typically refers to either the specific words of instruction given to Moses under the Old Covenant or the entire first five books of the Old Testament. It can however also refer to the Old/Mosaic Covenant.

From a theological perspective however, God’s laws are embodied in far more than just what was communicated to Moses. The establishing of law is the purpose behind all of His words in the Bible<sup>18</sup>. Because of this, timeless instruction is to be derived not simply from His direct commands, but everything else we find in the Scriptures including its narrative accounts and historical paradigms<sup>19</sup>. That being said, there is a bi-partite distinction that must be made when understanding God’s law<sup>20</sup>. Those distinctions may be referred to as the Clean Laws and the Moral Commands.

Clean Laws are those laws given by God as the means to gaining a justified state and marriage covenant relationship with Him<sup>21</sup>. Moral Commands on the other hand, include all the remaining instruction which those justified and in marriage covenant with God must faithfully obey if they are to maintain this state and relationship. Every marriage covenant in the Bible contains both and improves on rather than destroys the laws of the covenant before it. This is especially true of the New Covenant which does not abolish any of the Clean Laws or Moral Commands of the prior marriage covenants, but rather seeks to fulfill<sup>22</sup> all of them: the Clean Laws through faith in Christ and the Moral Commands through the law of Christ<sup>23</sup>.

Therefore, from an hermeneutical perspective, the Bible is a book whose entire content from Genesis to Revelation is to be seen as God’s relevant and authoritative law for mankind today—even for those not in marriage covenant with Him (i.e. The New Covenant). In other words, it is both Testaments of

---

<sup>18</sup> This truth exposes the false dichotomies of “essentials and non-essentials” or “salvific versus non-salvific issues” so common within popular Christianity. If all God’s word establishes authoritative law, then none can be considered “non-essential” or “non-salvific” in the sense that someone can choose to ignore or refuse to embrace. In a phrase, “Revelation always establishes obligation”. For a legitimate understanding of what is essential and non-essential consider: (Deu 29:29).

<sup>19</sup> An historical paradigm is a form of narrative account whose instruction is established more by the pattern of events/actions associated with it rather than the meaning behind each event/action. For something in Scripture to be considered an historical paradigm it must meet one of the following criteria: 1) it is explicitly referenced as such (see 4.4.), 2) it is repeated as the consistent practice/response in relation to the same situation/subject (e.g. baptism after repentance/faith), 3) it exists in Scripture as the exclusive approach to producing fundamental change in a situation/subject (e.g. Act 11:19-26—“them” v23 to “church” v26).

<sup>20</sup> Though this may seem strange, it is not the first time such distinctions in God’s law have been made. Covenant Theology for instance, views the Mosaic Law according to a tri-partite distinction: civil, ceremonial, moral.

<sup>21</sup> OC Clean laws include those described in Leviticus 1-18. All OC Clean Laws fit into one of 5 categories: circumcision, sacrifices, Sabbaths, separation and kosher foods.

<sup>22</sup> This word is to be understood in the same way Jesus uses it in Mat 5:17. It means to “fully obey or carry out” as in, “*The soldier fulfilled the orders of his commanding officer.*”

<sup>23</sup> “Law of Christ” = The OT laws as interpreted by Christ and the NT authors. This then becomes the real task of the Christian when attempting to understand and apply the OT law to their own lives: determining what such laws look like as interpreted by Christ and the NT authors. This requires more than just a literal understanding of the particular OT law in question. It requires also understanding God’s purpose in giving it since it is here that we most often find its NC fulfillment/equivalent. Therefore the proper question to ask when dealing w/the commands of the OT is, “Where do I find this law (or what does it look like) in the law of Christ?” versus “What has been repeated/repealed?”

**the Bible that inform and establish for us what is pleasing to God as well as what judgment will be based upon for those who live in rebellion<sup>24</sup>.**

4.1. Re: *“...the phrase “the Law” typically referring to either the specific words of instruction given to Moses under the Old Covenant or the entire first five books of the Old Testament. It can however, refer to the Old/Mosaic Covenant”*

(typically = 90%; e.g. Jos 8:31-34; Neh 10:34-36; Luk 2:22-39, 16:16, 24:44; Mat 7:12; Joh 1:17, 45, 8:5; Act 13:15, 28:23; Gal 3:5-6, 17-19; Heb 10:1, 8, 28; Mosaic Covenant = this seems to be what Paul is referring to by his use of the phrase “the law” in the book of Romans – the Old/Mosaic Covenant).

4.2. We are explicitly told in the Bible that all Scripture (which is predominately non-didactic) is given for our instruction (Rom 15:4; 2Ti 3:15-16).

4.3. Narrative accounts from the OT are used on a regular basis in the NT as a means of support for direct commands (e.g. 1Co 10:1-11; Jam 5:10-11; Jud 5-7; Mat 19:3 w/Gen 1:27, 2:24).

4.4. We are commanded to keep certain “traditions” which exclusively refer to historical paradigms handed down to the church (1Co 11:2; 2Th 2:15, 3:6).

4.5. Re: *“...there is a bi-partite distinction that must be made when understanding God’s law.”*

(Lev 10:10-11; Eze 44:23-24; 1Co 7:19).

4.6. Adamic Covenant (Gen 2:15-17, 3:21, 4:3-5), Noahic (Gen 6:8-9, 8:20), Abrahamic (Gen 15:9-10, 17:1-2), Mosaic/Old (Lev 1-17; Exo 20-24); New (Rom 3-5, 12-16).

4.7. Re: *“...the New Covenant does not abolish any of the clean laws or moral commands of the prior marriage covenants, but rather seeks to fulfill all of them: the Clean Laws through the Clean Law of faith in Christ and the Moral Commands as interpreted by the law of Christ.”*

(Luk 16:17; Mat 5:17-21ff; Joh 1:29, 3:14-15 w/3:36; Act 2:38, 15:8-11, 22:16; 1Co 9:7-9 w/21; Gal 6:2; Jam 2:10-12 w/1:25; 1Ti 1:8-10) (e.g. Exo 20:8) Keeping the Sabbath: Christians are perpetual Sabbath keepers through their faith in Christ (Heb 4:1-10).

4.8. Re: *“...the Bible (as) a book whose entire content from Genesis to Revelation is to be seen as God’s relevant and authoritative law for mankind today—even for those not in marriage covenant with Him (i.e. The New Covenant). (And) it is both Testaments of the Bible that inform and establish for us what is pleasing to God as well as what judgment will be based upon for those who live in rebellion.”*

Jesus and the NT authors quote the OT often as support for their instruction. It is not w/o warrant to state that everything in the NT is a direct allusion to something (law?) in the OT. Consider also the fact that every time Jesus’ actions are drawn into question as though they are in violation to OT law, Jesus always defends them using the OT Scriptures (Luk 13:14-16). The OT again is what Jesus and the NT writers use to support their own instruction (e.g. Mat 19:17; 1Co 9:8; 14:34); In addition consider: (Rom

---

<sup>24</sup> It is important to note also that the extent of God’s law for mankind today goes no further than what is found in the 66 books historically recognized as the inspired Old and New Testament Bible. In other words, it is the Christian canon of Scripture which now represents God’s perfect law and complete commands to us (Jam 1:25; 1Co 13:10). This then is also what should be considered “the essentials” of Christian doctrine and practice (consider Deu 29:29).

2:6-27) These verses make it clear that the “written code” of the Mosaic Law will be at the very least a part of what will be used to judge all people (both those in and outside the marriage covenant); (1Co 6:9-10) Many of the categories of sinful practice in these verses require the OT to understand: “sexually immoral”—what does this include?—Bestiality, Pedophilia? Without the OT informing and establishing the parameters of this otherwise vague term—we are left guessing or to what society considers acceptable.



## 5. THE GOSPEL AND SALVATION<sup>25</sup>

Since mankind's fall into sin, the gospel of God's gracious salvation<sup>26</sup> has both existed and operated based upon the three fundamental categories of a marriage covenant: Procurement, Promises and Penalty.

Procurement refers to the act which makes the marriage covenant between two parties possible<sup>27</sup>. In salvation this refers to both the act by which God establishes man's justification and the act by which man gains it. Prior to the New Covenant God established animal sacrifice and other rituals associated with the Clean Laws as the means by which man would procure justification and the covenant relationship. Under the New Covenant however, the basis of justification is Christ's death alone, and the means to procurement, faith alone<sup>28</sup>.

Promises refer to those vows of commitment which are made as part of the bi-lateral agreement associated with all marriage covenants. In the gospel, man must not only exercise belief, but also commit to faithfully submit his life in complete repentance<sup>29</sup> from sin and perfect obedience to all of God's laws<sup>30</sup>, exclusively granting to God the place of Lord and Savior both temporally and eternally. In return, God promises to not only forgive man's sin<sup>31</sup>, but also grant the abundant life blessings of earthly provision and purpose, eternal salvation and life<sup>32</sup>. Under the New Covenant this includes the additional blessing of the New Birth and Holy Spirit<sup>33</sup> which function in freeing man from his bondage to sin and empowering him to fulfill his obligations<sup>34</sup>. Such promises by God are therefore

---

<sup>25</sup> For a contemporary presentation of the gospel see Jarrett, R. Scott, *The Sound Gospel Explained In 8 Truths*.

<sup>26</sup> It is gracious since mankind does not deserve it. All are guilty of sin and deserving rather of God's wrath and death (Rom 1:18, 3:23, 6:23).

<sup>27</sup> In human marriages, this would be the granting of a marriage license.

<sup>28</sup> For biblical support see section 2, *Justification*.

<sup>29</sup> "Complete repentance" refers to repentance that is more than just a change of mind but also a change of behavior/actions. This is the only kind of repentance prescribed in the Bible (e.g. Mat 3:8; Act 26:20).

<sup>30</sup> For a proper understanding as to what constitutes "God's laws", see section 4, *The Law*.

<sup>31</sup> God forgiving man's sin always leaves man in a justified state. Therefore to say that God promises to forgive is equivalent to say that God promises to justify (e.g. Rom 4:5-8). This then is where the procurement discussed previously is applied.

<sup>32</sup> Richard Baxter, the esteemed 17<sup>th</sup> English puritan echoes this by saying, "*In our first Believing we take Christ in the Relation of a Saviour, and Teacher, and Lord, to save us from all sin, and to lead us to glory. This therefore importeth that we accordingly submit unto him, in those his Relations, as a necessary means to the obtaining of the benefits of the Relations. Our first faith is our Contract with Christ...And all Contracts of such nature, do impose a necessity of performing what we consent to and promise, in order to the benefits...And in humane contracts it is so. Barely to take a Prince for her husband may entitle a woman to his honours and lands; But conjugal fidelity is also necessary for the continuance of them; for Adultery would cause a divorce...Covenant-making may admit you, but its the Covenant-keeping that must continue you in your priviledges.*" In other words, a believer enters the salvific relationship with God by faith, but must remain in that relationship by his (the believer's) *faithfulness*. Notice what Baxter says: "Our first faith is our Contract with Christ," but, as in human contracts, in order to obtain the benefits of that contract, we must perform "what we consent to and promise." Christ may be our faithful Husband, but we must be his faithful bride if want to continue in the privileges of salvation and reach final justification. Again quoting Baxter, "Faith, Repentance, Love, Thankfulness, sincere Obedience, together with final Perseverance, do make up the Condition of our final Absolution in judgment, and our eternal Glorification." (Richard Baxter, *Of Justification*).

<sup>33</sup> Under section 3, *Baptism, the New Birth and Holy Spirit* this is referred to as the "marriage gift".

<sup>34</sup> Regeneration, see footnote 13 under section 3, *Baptism, The New Birth And The Holy Spirit*.

conditioned and dependent upon man's willingness to commit himself in faith and faithful submission<sup>35</sup>.

Penalty refers to the consequences of divorce associated with a failed marriage covenant. In the gospel, this occurs when man fails to maintain his vows of faithful submission and as a result loses both the promises of abundant life and procurement of justification once gained. This loss of justification represents the end of the marriage covenant which may or may not be restored<sup>36</sup>. Though not all prior marriage covenants have ended in divorce, this was true as it concerns Old Covenant Israel. Due to Israel's unrepentant unfaithfulness and embracing of a false gospel, God has eternally divorced Himself from her and His covenant promises to her. She therefore serves as a warning sign of what will happen to all those under the New Covenant if the justification gained by faith likewise fails to be maintained through faithfulness.

5.1. Re: *"Since mankind's fall into sin, the gospel of God's gracious salvation has...existed..."* (Adam = Gen 3:15 w/Rom 16:20, Heb 2:14; Noah = 1Pe 3:20 w/2Pe 2:5; Abraham = Gal 3:8; Israel = Rom 10:16-21, Heb 4:2, 6).

5.2. Just as in the United States, so also in the Bible: all marriage covenants between God and man are bi-lateral (versus unilateral) agreements. In other words, both parties commit themselves to certain obligations in the relationship (e.g. Adamic = Gen 1:26-29 w/ 2:7-17; Noahic = Gen 6:8 w/18-19 w/Gen 6:9 also Gen 9:1-9; Abrahamic = Gen 17:1-2<sup>37</sup>; Mosaic/Old = Exo 19:5-6; New = Luk 6:46-49).

5.3. Re: *"In the gospel, man must not only exercise belief, but also commit to faithfully submit his life in complete repentance from sin and perfect obedience to all of God's laws..."*

5.3.1. belief along with a commitment to faithful submission is the definition of saving faith (e.g. Mat 8:5-10).

5.3.2. a commitment to complete repentance and perfect obedience is the standard established in Scripture as the key to attaining faithfulness in a person's life (Luk 9:23-25; Deu 28:1-2; Exo 24:7-8; Lev 20:22; Deu 3:2, 5:32-6:6, 11:8,22, 12:28, 32, 13:18, 15:5, 19:9, 26:17, 28:1-2, 15; Mat 5:17-19, 48, 10:24-39, 19:16-21, 25:14-30; Luk 16:17 Rom 12:1; 1Jo 2:1).

5.4. Re: *"...exclusively granting to God the place of Lord and Savior both temporally and eternally."* (Rom 10:9; Act 4:12).

5.5. Re: *"In return, God promises to not only forgive man's sin, but also grant the abundant life blessings of earthly provision and purpose, eternal salvation and life."* (Exo 19:5; Deu 11:22-28, 28:1-14; 30:8-9; Mat 6:24-33, 7:7-11, Joh 4:10, 10:10, 27-28; Rom 6:23, 8:28; 1Th 5:9).

---

<sup>35</sup> This is sometimes referred to as "Lord Before Savior". God (or Jesus) will refuse to be Savior to anyone not willing to faithfully submit to Him as Lord.

<sup>36</sup> According to Hebrews 6:1-6, the acceptance of a false gospel after one has embraced the true gospel and come into marriage covenant relationship with God will result in permanent or final apostasy—a state from which a person cannot be restored.

<sup>37</sup> Some have contended that this is the second covenant that God made with Abraham stating that Genesis 15 establishes the first which was unilateral in nature. Genesis 15 however does not record the establishing of a unilateral covenant prior to the bilateral one we find in Genesis 17. Rather it records God's procurement of Abraham's justification: the prerequisite to the marriage covenant relationship and the basis for God's promise and offer of covenant relationship in chapter 17. In light of this understanding, a more accurate interpretation of Genesis 15:18 would be, "On that day, the Lord made a covenant *promise* with Abram..."

5.6. Re: *“Such promises by God are therefore conditioned and dependent upon man’s willingness to commit himself in faith and faithful submission.”* (e.g. Deu 5:10, 6:9-10; Jer 11:1-11; Mat 7:21-29; Luk 14:25-35; Heb 5:9).

5.7. Re: *“In the gospel, this occurs when man fails to maintain his vows of faithful submission and as a result loses both the promises of abundant life and procurement of justification once gained. This loss of justification represents the end of the marriage covenant...”* (Deu 28:15-68, 29:18-20; Mat 6:14-15, 7:21-27, 8:11-12, 13:20-22, 18:15-20, 21-35, 24:43-51, 25:14-30; Luk 14:34-35; Joh 15:6; Rom 2:25; 1Co 6:11 w/2Co 5:20; 1Co 10:1-12; Gal 6:7-10; Heb 6:4-8, 10:19-36; Jam 2:14-26; 2Pe 1:9, 2:1, 20-22; 2Jo 1:8; Jud 1:5; Rev 2-3).

5.8. Re: *“Due to Israel’s unrepentant unfaithfulness and embracing of a false gospel, God has eternally divorced Himself from her and His covenant promises to her. She therefore serves as a warning sign of what will happen to all those under the New Covenant if the justification gained by faith likewise fails to be maintained through faithfulness.”* (Isa 50:1; Jer 3:1-8, 31:31-32; Mat 21:33-43, 22:1-14, 23:32-38, 24:1-35; Rev 1:7; 16:19-18:23-24-19:1-18; Rom 9:27; 1Co 10:1-10).

## 6. ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH

**Old Covenant Israel is no longer the wife of God, the people of God, the holy nation or place where His holy city, priests and prophetic promises reside. Per God's divorce from her and His plan under the New Covenant, this role now belongs to the Church. She exists as the reconstituted Israel, built on the foundation of her Jewish apostles and prophets with Jesus Christ, the true seed of Abraham as her Davidic King and High Priest. Therefore, through Christ, the Church comprised of both Jew and Gentile believers has also become God's new wife<sup>38</sup>, people, priests, holy nation, holy city and the place where His prophetic promises will be remain forever.**

6.1. Re: *"Old Covenant Israel is no longer the wife of God, the people of God, the holy nation or place where His holy city, priests and prophetic promises reside."* (Mat 21:33-43; Luk 13:22-30; Rev 16:19-18:23-24-19:1-8; Rom 9:27).

6.2. Re: *"Per God's divorce from her and His plan under the New Covenant, this role now belongs to the Church. She exists as the reconstituted Israel"* (Isa 50:1; Jer 3:1-8; Mat 21:43; Rev 18:23; Jer 31:31 w/Heb 8:6-13; Heb 12:22-24, 28 w/ Rev 21:9-10 and Rev 19:7; Amo 9:11-12 w/Act 15:13-21; 1Co 10:1-6).

6.3. Re: *"built on the foundation of her Jewish apostles and prophets with Jesus Christ, the true seed of Abraham as her Davidic King and High Priest."* (Eph 2:20; Gal 3:16; Rom 1:3; Heb 4:14).

6.4. Re: *"Therefore, through Christ, the Church comprised of both Jew and Gentile believers has also become God's new wife, people, priests, holy nation, holy city and the place where His prophetic promises will be remain forever."* (Rev 7:9 w/19:6-7; Rom 9:25-26; Eph 2:11-19; 1Pe 2:9-10; Heb 12:22-24, 28, Gal 4:26-30; 2Co 1:20; Gal 3:28-29).

---

<sup>38</sup> Though it could be argued that it has always been Christ, the second person of the Godhead who functions as the husband or bride-groom in every marriage covenant in Scripture (see also footnote number 5 under section 2, *Justification*), it is abundantly clear that this is the case under the New Covenant (Rev 19:7).

## 7. KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH

The Kingdom of God on earth<sup>39</sup> is the covenant community where God's presence, power, people, precepts, provision and salvific promises reside as the typological picture of its heavenly counterpart and God's eschatological plan for the new heaven on earth. At one time, this Kingdom was co-extensive with Old Covenant Israel. However due to her apostasy and the establishing of the New Covenant, this Kingdom has been permanently transferred to the Church<sup>40</sup>, the re-constituted or New Covenant Israel. The Kingdom of God on earth is now therefore eternally co-extensive with and exclusive to, the Church alone.

7.1. Re: *"The Kingdom of God on earth..."* (Mat 6:9-10, 11:12, 13:31-33, 24-30 w/36-43; Mar 1:14-15, 9:1; Rev 11:15).

7.2. Re: *"(it as) the covenant community where God's presence, people, precepts, promises and power reside..."*

7.2.1. Though God implies that He will make Abraham's progeny into a kingdom (Gen 15:6), never are Abraham or those before him ever identified as the Kingdom of God. It is not until the establishment of the first covenant community (the nation of Israel) that the word "kingdom" is used in reference to God (Exo 19:6).

7.2.2. It is also used of the covenant community of the church (Rev 1:4-6).

7.2.3. Though God's presence and power can at times be experienced by those outside the covenant community (e.g. Luke 11:20), they along with God's people, precepts, provision and salvific promises are the special inheritance of the covenant community (Israel = Exo 19:5-8, 25:8, 29:45-46; Deu 8:17-20, 9:29, 28:1-14; Jos 1:5 21:45; 2Sa 7:12-29; 1Ki 6:12-13, 8:54-59; 2Ch 6:2, 9:8; Psa 37:28, 39, 63:1-2, 68:28-35, 118:1-7; 1Co 10:1-4; Rom 3:1-2, 9:4; Eph 2:12; Psa 98:2-3) (The Church = Mat 6:25-33; 16:18, 18:17-20; Joh 20:23; 2Co 1:20; Eph 1:22-23; 1Ti 3:15; Heb 13:5-6; 1Pe 2:5, 10; 1Jo 3:1; Rev 5:10; Mat 13:24-30, 36-43, 44-46).

7.3. Re: *"...(It) as the typological picture of its heavenly counterpart..."* (e.g. Mat 6:9-10; Heb 8:5, 12:22-24; Mat 13:36-43).

7.4. Re: *"(It as the typological picture of) God's eschatological plan for the new heaven on earth."* (Rev 21:2, 9-10).

---

<sup>39</sup> This particular kingdom goes by many different names in the biblical text: kingdom of priests (Exo 19:1-8; Rev 1:5, 5:10, God's inheritance (1Sa 10:1, 16), the kingdom of Israel (1Sa 24:20), house of Israel (Eze 34:30, 39:29, 43:7), kingdom of David (2Sa 7:12-17), kingdom of heaven (Mat 4:17 w/ Mar 1:15), kingdom of our Lord (1Ch 28:5; Rev 11:15), vineyard (Isa 5:1-7; Jer 12:7-10; Mat 21:33-45), kingdom of this world (Rev 11:15).

<sup>40</sup> The word "church" is being used here to refer to what it always refers to in the NT which is visible, organized institutions. In other words it does not refer to believers in general—or throughout history. This can be seen clearly by considering: who Paul is addressing when he writes letters to the churches (he writes to visible, organized institutions—1Co 1:2; Gal 1:2; 1Th 1:1 ); the terms used to describe the church ("household of God"—1Ti 3:15; "the Body of Christ"—Eph 4:12 ); what criteria defines a church in the New Testament (according to Act 11:19-26 it is more than just a group of professing believers but also elders, and a commitment to faithfulness and faithful teaching—all things which require a visible, organized institution!).

7.5. Re: *“At one time, this Kingdom was co-extensive with Old Covenant Israel. However due to her apostasy and the establishing of the New Covenant, this Kingdom has been permanently transferred to the Church, the re-constituted or New Covenant Israel.”* (Mat 21:43; 1Sa 28:17; Jer 31:31-32 w/Heb 8:7-12 w/10:16-24 w/Heb 12:24).

7.6. Re: *“The Kingdom of God on earth is now therefore eternally co-extensive with and exclusive to, the Church alone.”* (2Sa 7:12; Psa 45:6-7; Isa 2:2-3, 11:10, 42:6 w/Luk 2:32; Hos 2:19-23 w/Rom 9:24-26; Dan 7:13-14, 18, 22 w/ Heb 12:22-24; Rev 21:9-10 and 19:7-8; Eph 1:22; Mat 16:18-19, 21:43).

## 8. ESCHATOLOGY

God's purpose in creating and coming into marriage covenant with man was the establishment of an Edenic Temple Kingdom<sup>41</sup> on earth whose borders and population would expand, subdue and cover the earth. Accordingly, each marriage covenant has possessed a temple, priestly roles, the responsibility of worship and the propagation of worshippers. However, sin and the lack of payment justification meant that all other covenants before the New Covenant merely anticipated rather than achieved the goal. It is therefore only through the New Covenant that all of God's purposes will be realized. Hence, the eschatology of the Bible points toward Christ Who through His Church and the New Creation<sup>42</sup> will provide such a Kingdom as the resting place of both God and all His people throughout eternity.

8.1. Re: *"God's purpose in creating and coming into marriage covenant with man was the establishment of an Edenic ("Abundant Life") Temple ("Household Of God") Kingdom ("Assembly Of Holy People") on earth whose borders and population would expand, subdue and cover the earth. Accordingly, each marriage covenant has possessed a temple, priestly roles, the responsibility of worship and the propagation of worshippers. "*

8.1.1. Adamic: (Exo 28:9-23, Psa 78:68-69, Isa 2:2, Exo 5:17; Eze 40:2, 43:12; Rev 21:10) (Gen 1:28) (Gen 2:15<sup>43</sup> – "work it and keep it" = (lit.) to serve/cultivate it and guard it; this couplet is used elsewhere in the OT to refer exclusively to the duties of the priests – Num 1:53, 3:6-8, 10, 32, 38, 8:25-26, 18:1-7; 1Sa 7:1; 1Ki 6:23-35; 2Ki 12:9; 1Chr 9:17-27, 23:32; 2Chr 23:19, 34:9; Neh 1:19; Eze 40:45, 44:14-15, 48:11)(Gen 3:8 – "walking (in the garden)" = same verbal form used to speak of God's presence in the tabernacle – Lev 26:12; Deu 23:14-15; 2Sa 7:6-7)(Gen 2:8 w/Eze 40:6) (Gen 3:21, 4:3-4).

8.1.2. Noahic: (Gen 6:8 – "Noah" (*nuah*) – rest -- 2Chr 4:8; Psa 132:7-8; Isa 66:1) (Gen 8:20<sup>44</sup>; cf. 7:2,8) (Gen 9:1, 7; cf. 8:17 (Gen 8:4 – Eden?<sup>45</sup>)).

---

<sup>41</sup> "Edenic" refers to Eden, the place identified in Scripture as a paradise garden (Gen 2:5-25, 13:10; Isa 51:3; Eze 28:13, 31:8; Joe 2:3; Rev 2:7, 22:2,14) and therefore is the symbol of abundant life. "Temple" refers to those households of God built under the Old Covenant (e.g. 1Ki 5-6) which therefore are a symbol of all households of God in the Scriptures. "Kingdom" refers to the assembly of God's covenant (or holy) people as discussed under section 7. For further consideration of these ideas see Beale, G.K. *The Temple and the Church's Mission*.

<sup>42</sup> This implies what has already been started through the gift of regeneration (2Co 5:17) and what is yet to come in the regeneration of this present world through its destruction and the creation of a new heaven and earth (Mat 19:28 NAS; 2Pe 3:1-13).

<sup>43</sup> Beale states, "There may also be significance that the word used for God 'putting' Adam 'into the garden' is not the usual Hebrew word for 'put' (*sum*) but is the word typically translated as 'to rest' (*nuah*). That this verb was intentionally chosen is pointed to further by the observation that is used elsewhere to refer to the installation of sacred furniture (2Chr 4:8) and divine images into temples (2Ki 17:29; Zec 5:5-11) and especially of God's resting place in his heavenly palace-temple (Psa 132:7-8, 14; Isa 66:1). Thus the implication may be that God places Adam into a royal temple to begin to reign as his priestly vice-regent." (ibid, p. 70).

<sup>44</sup> Beale, *"The only other place where 'burnt offerings' are a 'soothing aroma' to God are the offerings in the tabernacle. Furthermore, Noah's ark was divided into three levels, just as was Israel's later tabernacle and temple. Likewise, detailed architectural plans elsewhere in the OT describe only the tabernacle or temple (e.g. cf. Exo 25ff. and Eze 40-48)."*, ibid, p.104-105.

<sup>45</sup> Some believe this to be the location of Eden. Of course after the flood the earth's topography changed.

8.1.3. Abrahamic: (Gen 12:2-3 w/8, 13:3-4 – “Bethel” = house of God; Gen 17:2, 6, 8, 22:1-2, 13-14, 17-18, 26:3-4, 24, 28:10-22, 35:11-15—embryonic sanctuaries/sacred space meant to foreshadow what was to come ) (Gen 13:18, 18:19, 22ff, 20:7).

8.1.4. Old/Mosaic: (Exo 25:18-22, Num 24:5-9, 1Ki 6:18, 29, 32-35, 7:18-20, 22, 24-26, 42, 49, 8:6-7, Eze 41:18-20 w/ Gen 3:24 and 2:8-9) (Isa 54:2 w/Gen 1:28) (Psa 36:8-9, Jer 17:7-8, 12-13 w/Gen 2:10) (Deu 7:13, 28:1-14; Exo 1:7, 3:8) (Psa 78:69—a type of what was in heaven—and yet to come in the New Creation) (Gen 2:9 w/Exo 25:31-36 – the lampstand in the holy of holies was modeled after a tree. Given this was the place where sinners “gained back their life unto eternal life” it most likely represented the tree of life in the garden<sup>46</sup>).

8.1.5. New: (see Eze 36:22-38, 40-48; Isa 65-66; Mat 16:18-19—“the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” = the unclean shall be kept out) (Mat 18:15-20; Joh 20:23) (Mat 28:18-20 w/Dan 7:13-14) (Joh 1:14 – “dwelt” = lit. tabernacle; 2:19-20; Act 15:16-18; Rom 12:1; Eph 2:19-22, 4:4-11; w/Psa 68:16-18; 1Ti 3:15; Heb 10:19-22, 13:5-6, 10; 1Pe 2:5-9; Rev 1:6, 20<sup>47</sup>) (Joh 10:10) (1Co 3:6-17).

8.2. Re: *“However, sin and the lack of payment justification meant that all other covenants before the New Covenant merely anticipated rather than achieved the goal. It is therefore only through the New Covenant that all of God’s purposes will be realized. Hence, the eschatology of the Bible points toward Christ Who through His Church and the New Creation to come will provide such a Kingdom as the resting place of both God and all His people throughout eternity.”*

8.2.1. Pre-church failure (e.g. Gen 3:23-24; Heb 3:15-4:11; Rom 3:25 w/1:5, 14:17—Eph 3:6, 2:19).

8.2.2. Pre-church foreshadowing (Heb 11:7-13, 39-40; Joh 8:56; Jer 3:15-18, 31:1-40, 32:36-41, 33:1-26; Isa 54:1-5, 60-62, 65:17-66:24; Eze 36-37-38, 40-48; Dan 2:44-45, 7:13-22; Zec 8-12).

8.2.3. The first and second coming of the Church: the now not yet of the New Creation (Mat 11:28; Heb 4:3, 12:28; 2Co 5:15-17, 6:16-7:1; 2Pe 3:11-13; Phi 3:20-21; Eph 2:6; Rom 8:19-25) (Mat 16:18-19 – “gates of Hades shall not prevail” = no death like Eden= Joh 11:25 w/Mat 22:31-32 w/Rev 20:4-5) (Dan 2:44-45 w/Mat 21:43-44 = Eden covering and conquering as the church—consider the context: the parable of the garden tenants) (Gen 1:28 w/Mat 28:18-20 and its results = Rev 7:9) (The church as a Edenic Temple Kingdom which is future and covers the earth - Joh 14:2-3; Rev 21:1-5, 9-16, 22:1-2).

---

<sup>46</sup> See Beale, p71.

<sup>47</sup> See notes on 8.1.4. : Exo 25:31-36 w/Gen 2:9