

## The School of Biblical Law

### Covenant and Law

#### Lesson One: "The Covenant Model Part 1"

To properly understand the concept of biblical law, the believer must identify the role of law in the context of covenant. God created man in Adam and then placed man into a covenantal structure. That original structure found in Eden was reused every time God called another man or even a nation into a covenant with Him. This section of our School of Biblical Law entitled Covenant and Law will explore the covenant model and look at the Ten Commandments in to context of covenant law.

1. Covenant means a contract or agreement between two parties, a legal bond, a personal bond, a kind of contract.

Old Testament (Strong's #1285) is the Hebrew noun *berit*, based upon the verb *bara* (#1254) meaning to cut; so *berit* is an agreement entered into by cutting (usually fulfilled by the cutting of animals used in the covenant-making ceremony).

New Testament (Strong's #124 ) is the Greek noun *diatheke*, based upon the verb *diatithemi* (#1303) meaning to put apart or to dispose by assignment, compact or bequest; so *diatheke* is a will, a testament, or a contract.

2. The five-point structure of a covenant was revealed to and developed through the works of Meredith Kline and Ray Sutton. Sutton refined the concept and published his first book on the structure entitled *That You may Prosper*. Tyler, Texas: Institute for Christian Economics, [1987, 1992] 1997.

The five points answer the following five questions:

Who is the giver of the covenant?

To whom is the covenant given?

What are the rules of the covenant?

What are the results of obeying or disobeying the rules?

What is the future of the covenant?

THEOS, which is the Greek word for God, has been proposed as a helpful memorization tool for the 5 points:

T – Transcendence

H – Hierarchy

E – Ethics

O – Oath (also referred to as sanctions)

S – Succession (also referred to as continuity)

3. The five covenant points are seen clearly in the relationship between God and Adam.

T – Transcendence – God was the Creator who offered man life, relationship, and work.

H – Hierarchy – Adam received the terms of the covenant as son and steward.

E – Ethics – "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shall not eat of it."

O – Oath – "for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." (Gen.2:17)

S – Succession – "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Gen. 3:15)

In the original covenant and in every successive biblical covenant, the Transcendent one gave the rule or ethics as part of the covenant terms. Any boss not only offers the job, but he also defines the right and wrong way to do the job. Labor rules or contract stipulations are part of every contract or every covenant. Obedience to the rules releases blessings from the covenant-giver; and conversely, disobedience to the rules releases curses from the covenant-giver. Sanctions follow ethics. Setting law in the context of covenant not only places the concept of rules into a life-giving framework, but also settles the issue as to any thought of receiving a covenant void of law.