

1. Covenant Relationship:

- Covenants are found throughout the ancient Near East and are the cultural method God uses to convey His relationship with the Israelites.

Covenant – (Hebrew B’reit): A covenant is an agreement between two parties in which one or both make promises under oath to perform or refrain from certain actions stipulated in advance.

- Covenants create and govern relationships -

Fictive Kinship – Legal mechanisms or devices by which outsiders (non-kin) would be incorporated into a kinship group.

- Examples: marriage or adoption.
- Marriage is both a **covenant** event (vows and expectation of behavior) and a fictive kinship that brings two families into a relationship where one did not exist.
- Marriage is also one of the primary metaphors used throughout the Bible for us to understand the relationship between God and His people (Exodus, Song of Songs) or Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelation 19:7-9)
- Adoption is a metaphor for God’s relationship to those outside the covenant – see Ephesians 1:5 & 2:19.

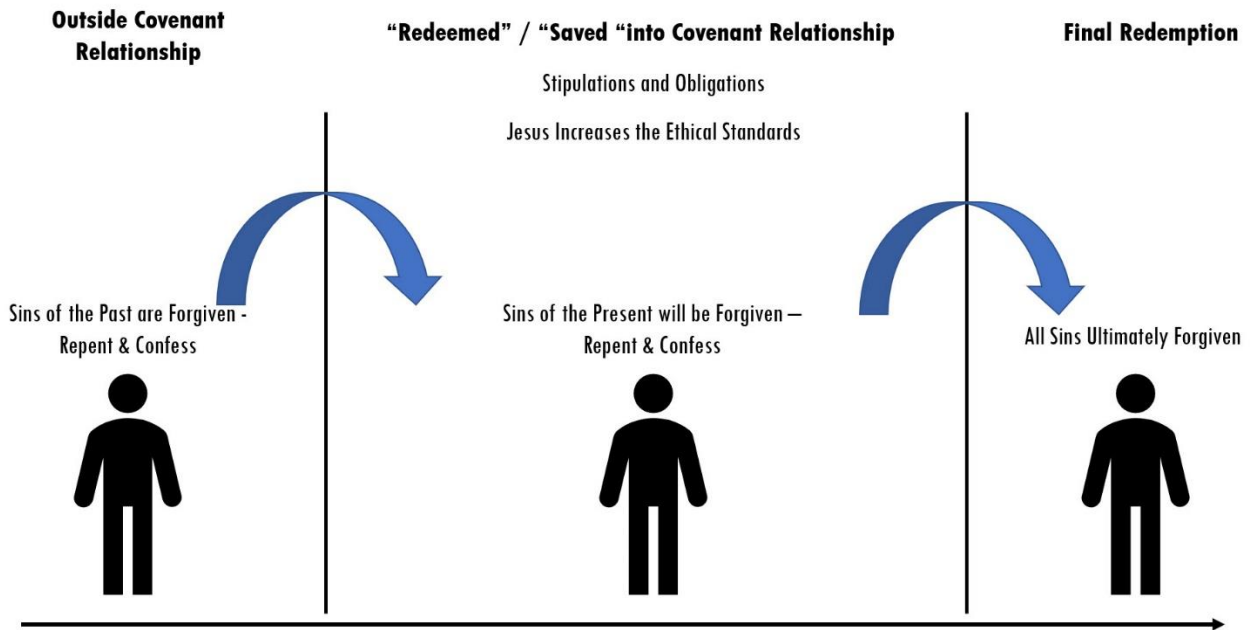
2. Elements of a Suzerain / Vassal Covenant:

I. Preamble	- names the covenant giver
II. Historical Prologue	- why you should obey the covenant
III. Stipulation and Obligations	- what is expected out of each party
IV. Deposition	- where a copy of the covenant is to be kept. Usually within the temple of a god.
- Periodic reading	- everyone is to be aware of the covenant and should review it regularly
V. List of Witnesses	- usually a pantheon of gods
VI. Curses and Blessings	- what happens if you keep or do not keep the covenant requirements

- Covenant ratification ceremony – usually involving the blood of a sacrifice
- A shared meal.

3. See page 3 – ANE Covenant

3. Redemption in Two Stages:



4. New Covenant Relationship:

- Our Christian walk is in a covenant relationship with God through Jesus.
- Jesus has high ethical standards –
 - “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Leviticus 19:18)
 - Pray for those who persecute you.
 - Love your enemy.
- We also have stipulations and obligations for spiritual transformation -