

# OPEN HEAVEN

Part 1 • June 23, 2024 • Pastor Jason Smotherman

## GOD

### **JOHN 4:24**

*God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.*

### **REVELATION 22:13**

*I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."*

## THE BIBLE

### **DEUTERONOMY 32:4**

*"The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.*

### **COLOSSIANS 1:16**

*For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.*

### **TITUS 1:2**

*In hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began*

### **1 TIMOTHY 1:17**

*To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.*

## THE WORD OF GOD

### **HEBREWS 4:12**

*For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*

## **2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17**

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

## **MATTHEW 24:35**

*Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.*

## **COLOSSIANS 3:16**

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.*

## **LUKE 11:28**

*But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"*

## **ISAIAH 40:8**

*The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.*

## **COVENANTS**

The term "covenant" is of Latin origin (con venire), meaning a coming together. It presupposes two or more parties who come together to make a contract, agreeing on promises, stipulations, privileges, and responsibilities. In religious and theological circles there has not been agreement on precisely what is to be understood by the biblical term. The preferred meaning of this Old Testament word is bond; **a covenant refers to two or more parties bound together.**

**A covenant with God is a promise that builds a lasting relationship between the Creator and His creation while redeeming those that were lost back to the Father who loves them.**

## **HEBREWS 9:15**

*For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.*

## **LUKE 22:20**

*In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."*

## **GENESIS 9:11 (NOAH'S COVENANT)**

*I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.*

## **EXODUS 19:5 (MOSAIC COVENANT)**

*Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine.*

## DEUTERONOMY 4:13

*He declared to you his covenant, the Ten Commandments, which he commanded you to follow and then wrote them on two stone tablets.*

### **Bakers Bible Dictionary**

"The biblical words most often translated "covenant" are berit in the Old Testament (appearing about 280 times) and diatheke in the New Testament (at least 33 times). The origin of the Old Testament word has been debated; some have said it comes from a custom of eating together (Gen 26:30 ; 31:54); others have emphasized the idea of cutting an animal (an animal was cut in half 15:18); still others have seen the ideas of perceiving or determining as root concepts. The preferred meaning of this Old Testament word is bond; a covenant refers to two or more parties bound together. Some may view covenant like a contract, where you both sign on the dotted line and get your rewards for doing your part. However, a covenant in God's mindset is more than just each party doing his or her part. A covenant with God is a promise that builds a lasting relationship between the Creator and His creation while redeeming those that were lost back to the Father who loves them.

### **Dispensations vs Covenants**

- Dispensations denote beginning and ending.
- Covenants denote building upon and growing.

Covenant Perspective is better in my opinion.

Dispensationalism is a theological framework for interpreting the Bible which maintains that history is divided into multiple ages called "dispensations" in which God interacts with his chosen people in different ways. It is often distinguished from covenant theology. These are two competing frameworks of Biblical Theology that attempt to explain overall continuity in the Bible. Coining of the term "dispensationalism" has been attributed to Philip Mauro, a critic of the system's teachings, in his 1928 book *The Gospel of the Kingdom*.

Dispensationalists use a literal interpretation of the Bible and believe that divine revelation unfolds throughout the Bible. They believe that there is a distinction between Israel and the Church, and that Christians are not bound by Mosaic law.

Covenant theology is an approach to biblical interpretation that appreciates the importance of the covenants for understanding the divine-human relationship and the unfolding of redemptive history in Scripture. Blending insights from systematic and biblical theology, covenant theology explains the economic Trinity, communion with God, the person and work of Christ, the sacraments, justification by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, the role of obedience in the Christian life, the believer's assurance of salvation, the unity and progress of redemptive history, and more, in light of the Bible's teaching on the divine covenants.

## **MATTHEW 5:17-20**

*<sup>17</sup> Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup> For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass away, not one jot or one tittle shall in any wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. <sup>19</sup> Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. <sup>20</sup> For I say unto you that unless your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

## **DECLARING OPEN HEAVEN**

Stephen declares open heaven, and ultimately gets murdered for declaring the new covenant. In Acts 7, Stephen preaches the "hinges" of the door. **We are entering a new era.**

**You have known the God of the tent, and the tabernacle, BUT He is the God of the open heaven.**

Declaring open heaven is declaring war over tradition. Gods desire is to speak to you directly. Mankind's desire has always been to create mediators, Jesus is our mediator.