

Built On a Rock: The Heart of Christianity from Genesis to Revelation
Living the Message 2022-2023
January 2023 Study Guide for Participants and Facilitators

East of Eden: *Covenant, Law & Community* with Pastor Ruud

[Click here to watch the video.](#)

Opening Prayer

Dear God, you desire only good for us and all people. Help us to recognize your continued blessing of us through the laws which you use to help maintain order and civility in our world. Through our study, draw us more deeply into this community of faith that we also may know ourselves to be blessed in order to be a blessing. Amen.

Focus Statement

God responds to human sin by making a covenant to reestablish the relationship between God and humanity, giving the law to repair and nurture our relationships with each other and creation, and establishing a community to model these relationships and bless the whole world.

Key Scriptures

Noahic Covenant [Genesis 9:11-13](#)

¹¹I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth. ¹²God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

Abrahamic Covenant [Genesis 12:1-3](#)

Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'

Mosaic Covenant [Exodus 19:3-6a](#)

³Then Moses went up to God; the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, 'Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the Israelites: ⁴You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, ⁶but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation.

Davidic Covenant [2 Samuel 7:11b-16](#)

Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. ¹²When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. ¹⁴I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. When he commits iniquity, I will punish him with a rod such as mortals use, with blows inflicted by human beings. ¹⁵But I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever.

Questions

1. What stuck out to you the most about Pastor Ruud's presentation? What did you notice? What questions do you have?
2. Which of the four covenants Pastor Ruud talked about spoke to you the most? Why?
3. Pastor Ruud spoke of covenants as promises. How do promises function in your lives? How do they affect the future? How does it feel to have a promise kept? Or broken? If God makes and keeps promises, how does that shape our sense of God's covenant?
4. What are the most significant covenants (or promises) in your life? How do they keep you in relationship with others?
5. Laws and covenants become a way for God to reestablish a relationship with people, and for people to live in community with each other and creation. What are some current laws that help us treat our neighbor well?

Deeper Dive with Pastor Lose

Read [Exodus 19-20](#)

1. God declares Israel to be God's chosen people *before* giving Israel the law. What difference does that make?
2. Behind each "you shall not" phrase in the Old Testament is a positive value. How would you rewrite a law to express its intent in more positive terms?
3. The Ten Commandments deal with our relationships with God and with each other and creation. Are there any laws that seem to be missing? Any essential relationships that we would want to add today?

Closing Prayer

Dear God, help us to recognize your love for us and all the world in the giving of the covenant and the law, and help us to be open to how you knit us together as a community today. Amen.

Next Month:

God con Carne: *Incarnation* with Pastor Lose

In-person presentation Tuesday, February 7, 6:30-7:30pm at Mpls Campus - Room 207

Video emailed out on or before end of day Monday, February 6

