

Intro:

Main Point of Text: At the end of forty days on Mt. Sinai with Moses, God prints covenant receipts in stone as an eternal witness to His kingly rule over His purchased people who agreed to His peace treaty sealed in blood.

In the Ten Commandments, we see the document structure of their contemporary Ancient Near East suzerain peace treaty formula between a conquering king (suzerain) and his vassal (servant) subjects. R.C. Sproul describes the elements: 1) *preamble*, where the overlord identified himself over his vassals, Ex. 20:1-2a; 2) *historical prologue*, in which the king summarized their mutual history, Ex. 20:2; 3) *promises and stipulations*, Ex. 20:3-17; 4) *sanctions*, Ex. 19:8; 24:3, 7; 5) *oath /sacred vow* to establish covenant by way of blood ratification, Ex. 24:3-8; and 6) duplicate copies of the covenant were made, one for the king and one for the vassals as a mutual witness, Ex. 31:18 (as promised in 24:12); Deut. 4:13.

Sermon Point: *Can I Get a Witness (of Your Covenant Love)?*

Move 1: Your King and Husband Has Given a Loving Witness by Delivering and Protecting You.

Words on tables are “of the covenant/ten commandments” (Ex. 34:28; Deut. 4:13); Moral Law. God now writes down in formal contract. Suzerain preamble formula: “I/thou”, as in Ex. 20:1-2a; historical prologue, the King reviewed their historic relations and benefits to justify his continual reign, as in Ex. 20:2. The context of Sinai was merciful deliverance. The tables of testimony are placed under the Mercy Seat. People first marked by the blood of the Passover Lamb. Tabernacle bears atonement witness. Meredith Kline: God’s copy like His rainbow. Acts 20:28. Only God gives eternal guarantee: Jn. 3:16. Heb. 13:20-21.

Move 2: King Jesus Will Rule Over You and Lead You in Perfect and Perpetual Love.

Cut with Own Finger (32:16) in stone: living everlasting life with Him His way in view. Suzerain treaties listed the king’s stipulations for life/loyalty in exclusive relationship in his land. So Ex. 20:3-17. Acts 20:28: God purchased the church: ownership. To follow His Law of love: Mt.. 22:37-40 re: Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18.

Move 3: King Jesus Reminds You of Your Public Marriage Vows to Always Love Only Him.

Tables of “Testimony” or “witness”. In Ark of “Testimony” (31:7), or “Covenant” (Deut. 10:8). Tables also “of the covenant” (Deut. 9:9, 11, 15) witnessed mutual commitment. Standard Ancient Near Eastern procedure made written treaty documents like 31:18 and 32:15 (two copies of same, front and back). Suzerain’s dynastic seal of ownership in center (so covenant “sign”, vss. 12-17). Copy put in sanctuaries of vassal and suzerain to witness to their oaths. Moses to put both copies in the Ark (Exod. 25:16, 21; Deut. 10:2) in Tabernacle “of testimony” (Ex. 38:21). Kline: Ancient Hittite treaties can be rendered "under (the feet of)" the god. So Two Tables in the Ark, from where God ruled (Ex. 25:22; 1 Chron. 28:2; Lev. 16:2; Num. 7:89; 1 Sam. 4:4). Written marriage vows. Still: 2 Cor. 3:3; Jer. 31:33; Heb. 10:16; Jn. 14:15.

Conclusion:

Can I Get a Witness (of Your Covenant) Love?

Meredith G. Kline, *Treaty of the Great King* (For reference with morning sermon on Ex. 31:18)

Commentary Outline of Deuteronomy's Structure [Bold and Inserts by PECA re: Ex. 20:1-17; 31:18]

This outline shows the Ancient Suzerain Peace Treaty Structure of Deuteronomy as the Renewing of Mount Sinai and its mini-version of the same written covenant in the Ten Commandments, to which Exodus 31:18 is pointing.

- I. **Preamble:** Covenant Mediator, 1:1-5 [Exodus 20:1]
- II. **Historical Prologue:** Covenant History, 1:6-4:49 [Exodus 20:1-2a]
 - A. From Horeb to Hormah, 1:6-2:1
 - B. Advance to the Arnon, 2:2-23
 - C. Conquest of Transjordan, 2:24-3:29
 - D. Summary of the Covenant, 4:1-49
- III. **Stipulations:** Covenant Life, 5:1-26:49 [Exodus 20:3-17]
 - A. The Great Commandment, 5:1-11:32
 1. God's Covenant Lordship, 5:1-11:32
 2. The Principle of Consecration, 6:1-25
 3. The Program of Conquest, 7:1-26
 4. The Law of the Manna, 8:1-20
 5. The Warning of the Broken Tablets, 9:1-10:11
 6. A Call to Commitment, 10:12-11:32
 - B. Ancillary Commandments, 12:1-26:19
 1. Cultic-Ceremonial Consecration, 12:1-16:17
 - a. Allegiance to God's Altar, 12:1-32
 - b. Resistance to Apostasy, 13:1-18
 - c. Filial Obligations, 14:1-15:23
 - d. Tributary Pilgrimages, 16:1-17
 2. Judicial-Governmental Righteousness, 16:18-21:23
 - a. Judges and God's Altar, 16:18-17:13
 - b. Kings and God's Covenant, 17:14-20
 - c. Priests and Prophets, 18:1-22
 - d. Guarantees of Justice, 19:1-21
 - e. Judgment of the Nations, 20:1-20
 3. Sanctity of the Divine Order, 22:1-25:19
 - a. The Realm of Nature, 22:1-30
 - b. The Theocratic Kingdom, 23:1-25:19
 4. Confessions of God as Redeemer-King, 26:1-19
- IV. **Sanctions:** Covenant Ratification [oaths/vows], 27:1-30:20 [Ex. 19:8; 24:3-8]
 - A. Ratification Ceremony in Canaan, 27:1-26
 - B. Blessings and Curses, 28:1-68
 - C. Summons to the Covenant Oath, 29:1-29
 - D. Ultimate Restoration, 30:1-10
 - E. Radical Decision, 30:11-20
- V. **Dynastic Disposition:** Covenant Continuity [mutual witness], 31:1-34:12 [Ex. 31:18]
 - A. Final Arrangements, 31:1-29
 - B. The Song of Witness, 31:30-32:47
 - C. Moses' Testament, 32:48-33:29
 - D. Dynastic Succession, 34:1-12

For further study on each Table of the Ten Commandments being one full copy of the same covenant document (addressed in today's sermon on Ex. 31:18), see Kline's two articles (originally in Westminster Theological Journal) shared in this book, free online at <http://www.meredithkline.com/klines-works/articles-and-essays/>: "The Two Tables of the Covenant" and "Dynastic Covenant".