**Note to preacher:**

Keith preaches content at a good pace to keep things interesting.

We have edited this into sections with titles to reveal the structure.

Freely edit this however you desire. Freely delete sections. May God minister through you!

**OUTLINE:**

There are a few treaty stories here:

* A. As an introduction God’s treaty with (1) Abraham then (2) Moses
* B. Then Israel’s treaty with the Gibeonites
	+ …leading to the betrayal of this Treaty, and its re-establishing in the time of David, from which a direct parallel can be drawn to…
* C. Te Tiriti o Waitangi – a covenant we are under,
* D. Then marriage explained – another treaty many of us are also under
* E. And finally our relationship with God - which is a treaty through Christ.

God is faithful to all his covenants / treaties!

Enjoy the story-telling!

**SERVICE WELCOME**

Nau mai, haere mai

Welcome everyone to this service on Waitangi weekend

As we worship today we are aware of the unique partnership that forged this nation

A partnership that affirmed that Maori and Pakeha and all who follow are equal under the sovereignty of God

A partnership that acknowledges that there are different cultures in NZ and that each is valid

A partnership that guarantees freedom of religion in NZ

As we come to worship this morning… (song in Te Reo, with translation)

**INTRO – TREATIES WITH ISRAEL**

4000 years ago God made a treaty with a man called Abraham. He said he would bless his descendants , make them a great nation, he would give them a land and that the whole earth would be blessed through their decendants.

These descendants became known as the Jewish people. 200 years later because of famine his descendants ended up in Eqypt, and eventually became slaves. After years of slavey, God raises up Moses who leads the people out of Egypt. Series of amazing miralcles.

God makes a second treaty with the Israelites, though Moses. This treaty says that God will protect and bring physical blessing to the people if they obey the law but if they don’t they will suffer and be exiled.

 Despite this the people rebel and God does not allow that generation to enter the land. Then a new generation is born, and Joshua begins to lead the people into the land.

So the Israelties were a people of under two treaties with God as they began to move into the land promised them under the Abramic treaty.

**JOSHUA 9 – THE TREATY WITH THE GIBEONITES (STORY AND CHALLENGE SUMMARISED)**

They began by capturing the city of Jericho and Ai. Then we get to Chapter 9. Find that the surrounding people are getting nervous about the Israelites. Jericho had tried the strategy of shutting themselves behind their walls. Lost. City of Ai had gone on the offensive and lost.

Surrounding people formed a coalition to fight. One people choose a different strategy.

One day a small group arrived at the Isrealite camp. They looked exhausted. Their sandles were worn out. Their clothes were ragged. They explained that they came from a distant land. Wanted to make a peace treaty.

Joshua said How do we know you don’t live close by?

Gibeonites acted very humbly. Said heard all these great things about them. Great God they had. Mouldy old bread. Old wine skins. Clothes.

The Israelites were feeling pretty good about campaign. Victories. Been a bit suspicious. Flattery. Evidence in front of them. They didn’t pray about it. Went ahead and signed the peace treaty.

**THE DECEPTION DISCOVERED**

Few days later they found out these guys Gibeonites. Lived down the road. 3 days walk away. 4 towns/ main one Gibeon large city They had decided that deception was their best strategy. Not that they were weak. Good reputation as fighters. Well trained. But they believed, rightly best hope was deception.

All the people began to grumble against Joshua and his team. Let down by their leaders. Surely we don’t have to keep this treaty. Made in deception. Free to ignore it.

Leaders said. No, we made a commitment in the presence of God. We must honour it. They can become the water and wood carriers for us for the alter of God.

Wider coalition were most unhappy with the Gibeonites. Traitors. So they all ganged up, combined armies. Surrounded Gibeon. Wipe out the traitors. Gibeonites sent message to Isrealities for help. Suddenly this mistake they had made was proving very costly. Now they had to defend these guys.

God encouraged them as they prepared to send their army out. Won a famous battle against the coalition forces.

So the Israelites were a people who lived under 3 treaties. The Abrahamic treaty God and Abram, the Mosaic treaty. God and the nation and the Gibeonite treaty Israelites and Gibeonites.

**THE GIBEONITE TREATY IN THE TIME OF KING DAVID**

500 years later. God makes a treaty with King David. 4 treaties. Covenants. Binding commitments.

Easy to say. Well, really just 3 important ones. God. Other one. Well, it was just a little minor one. 500 years ago. Ratbags that tricked us. But one day late in King David’s reign famine. Not unusual. After 3 years they started to get a bit concerned about this. Asked God if there was any reason for this famine. God said it was because Saul, king before David had killed some of the Gibeonites. Tried to wipe them out.

David went to the Gibeonites asked what he could do to make amends. Nothing you can do to bring back your ancestors that had been killed. Gibeonites asked that seven of Saul’s family be killed as a sacrifice. So that is what happened. Famine ended.

**CONCLUSION**

Isreal was people of treaty 4 treaties.

God is a treaty making God.

**ENCOURAGEMENT**

Come to Waitangi Day.

NZ is a people of treaty. Not one Treaty. But 2, or 3 treaties

Waitangi Treaty.

Treaty that was made in the presence of God. Many Maori had turned to Christ. Huge waves.

Treaty was born out of Clapham sect, in England. Group that William Wilberfoce was part of. Group of evangelical Christain, deeply concerned for the well-being of indigenous peoples having seen the terrible record of the past.

Missionaries were central in persuading Maori that the treaty was good. Maori understanding of the terms used was from the language used to translate the Bible. Maori saw it as a covenant between them and the Crown. Similar to the treaty, covenants of the Bible. Document singed in the presence of God. Refer to it in these terms.

 Treaty that is flawed. Interpretetation not clear

 Treaty that was made with good intentions.

 Treaty that is the founding document of NZ. Gives all non Maori the legal right to be here. We are not here as invaders or conquers but because of the treaty. We belong to the land because of the treaty.

A treaty that was broken - consequences of this. Alienation of Maori from the church . Division in our nation. Economic poverty

God is grieved by when the Waitangi Treaty is not honoured. His name is dishonoured.

NZers are a people of the treaty.

**Lesson from Isrealite treaty with the Gibeontes is really clear**. The Israelites grumbled. Why do we have to keep it. Costly when they did, yet God moved powerfully when they did. When Saul broke it, they paid a price. When restitution was made, blessing came again. Treaties in god’s eyes are not just for that generation.

**A PARALLEL TO MARRIAGE**

Marriage - under a marriage treaty / covenant / agreement. Made in the presence of God. Some of you God is stated. Others no mention of God. Still under his presence. Marriage is designed by God. Vows before God. Modelled on the unconditional love of God.

It is God’s will that we keep his promises no matter what. His faithfulness is not dependent on our faithfulness. Not a conditional treaty like the mosaic law. ***It is unconditional contract.*** To have and to hold, for better or worse, sickness and in health, richers or poorers. Old vows.

New reality is that our marriages have become conditional contracts. I will love you if you if you continue to be nice to me and have a good job and don’t get sick. But if you go from a size 10 to a size 20, and you lose you job and we have to live in a cheap flat, and then you get hit by a bus and end up in a wheel chair - well I am free from any obligation to love you. ‘Clearly the treaty is invalid and I could never be expected to love someone and who would look after my needs.’

Grieves God when marriage treaty is broken. Consequences to the breaking of the marriage treaty. Seeing that today abuse, poverty, fatherless children.

NZer, married, under 2 treaties.

If NZer, and married, is a Christian then you are under 3 treaties.

3rd treaty is the one that God made . Treaty of the Cross New covenant. Covenant is simply a binding treaty. Difference is that this one is between a divine supreme God and us as humans.

New Treaty replaces the Mosaic treaty - founding constitution of the nation of Israel.

Old treaty was carved in stone.

The new treaty, quoting Hebrews

*The old system under the law of Moses was only a shadow, a dim preview of the good things to come, not the good things themselves. The sacrifices under that system were repeated again and again, year after year, but they were never able to provide perfect cleansing for those who came to worship.* ***2***  *If they could have provided perfect cleansing, the sacrifices would have stopped, for the worshipers would have been purified once for all time, and their feelings of guilt would have disappeared.*

***3***  *But instead, those sacrifices actually reminded them of their sins year after year.* ***4***  *For it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.* ***5***  *That is why, when Christ came into the world, he said to God,*

*“You did not want animal sacrifices or sin offerings.*

*But you have given me a body to offer.*

***6***  *You were not pleased with burnt offerings*

*or other offerings for sin.*

***7***  *Then I said, ‘Look, I have come to do your will, O God—*

*as is written about me in the Scriptures.’ ”*

***8***  *First, Christ said, “You did not want animal sacrifices or sin offerings or burnt offerings or other offerings for sin, nor were you pleased with them” (though they are required by the law of Moses).* ***9***  *Then he said, “Look, I have come to do your will.” He cancels the first covenant in order to put the second into effect.* ***10***  *For God’s will was for us to be made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all time.*

***11***  *Under the old covenant, the priest stands and ministers before the altar day after day, offering the same sacrifices again and again, which can never take away sins.* ***12***  *But our High Priest offered himself to God as a single sacrifice for sins, good for all time. Then he sat down in the place of honor at God’s right hand.* ***13***  *There he waits until his enemies are humbled and made a footstool under his feet.* ***14***  *For by that one offering he forever made perfect those who are being made holy.*

***15***  *And the Holy Spirit also testifies that this is so. For he says,*

***16***  *“This is the new covenant I will make*

*with my people on that day, says the Lord:*

*I will put my laws in their hearts,*

*and I will write them on their minds.”*

***17***  *Then he says,*

*“I will never again remember*

*their sins and lawless deeds.”*

***18***  *And when sins have been forgiven, there is no need to offer any more sacrifices.*

*God also bound himself with an oath, so that those who received the promise could be perfectly sure that he would never change his mind.* ***18***  *So God has given both his promise and his oath. These two things are unchangeable because it is impossible for God to lie. Therefore, we who have fled to him for refuge can have great confidence as we hold to the hope that lies before us.* ***19***  *This hope is a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls. It leads us through the curtain into God’s inner sanctuary.* ***Hebrews 6:17-19***

 *But now Jesus, our High Priest, has been given a ministry that is far superior to the old priesthood, for he is the one who mediates for us a far better covenant with God, based on better promises.*

***7***  *If the first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no need for a second covenant to replace it.* ***Hebrews 8:6-7***

*That is why he is the one who mediates a new covenant between God and people, so that all who are called can receive the eternal inheritance God has promised them. For Christ died to set them free from the penalty of the sins they had committed under that first covenant.* ***Hebrews 9:15***

The new Treaty is based on the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. God is going to come into our hearts, live within us and transform us from the inside out. Guts of this treaty is God’s promise. We know that any treaty between humans is always flawed. Treaty of Waitangi was broken because of greed, selfishness. Even today the agreements around the treaty are not based on mutual partnership but often around rights and who can get the most. Not on compromise and working together and mutual respect.

In marriage divorce happens because of sin. Human hearts. Hard.

New Treaty with God is different. Because God can be trusted. God does not break his word. God is faithful. God cannot lie. God keeps his word. God is committed to his treaty obligations.

What is our response to this treaty? Believe that God is trustworthy. Respond to what he has promised in the treaty. Step out in faith.

Because of Jesus Christ our sins are forgiven. God is not angry towards us. God wants to live in us and transform us.

 Access God’s treaty promises by faith. God will do what he says.

This is why being faithful and keeping ones word is so emphazied in the Bible.

We are to reflect the character of a treaty making, treaty keeping, God.

God says.. *despite the fact that you are sinful, rebel, ignore me, I will keep my promise. I will fulfill my treaty obligations. If you come to be, I will forgive. I will cleanse. I will change you.*  God is a treaty keeping God.

**SUMMARY**

NZer’s are a people living under treaty. As we honour the treaty of Waitangi we honour God and bring healing to our land.

As we dishonour the treaty, we run the risk of bringing judgement on our nation.

Whether you like it or not. Flawed though it is. Misused and abused by many. The fact is you live under the treaty if you live in NZ.

Are you honouring the treaty put in place by your Christain forebearers. Honour it by our attitude, by how we seek to work out partnership with those with a Maori world view, by making sure it is being upheld by our politicians.

As we honour our marriage vows, to love our spouse, richer or poorer, sickness and in health, and better or worse, we model to the world the faithfulness of God.

Are you honouring your marriage vows today

As we step out in faith, trusting in the character of God, we can access the new Treaty that God has made.

Treaty that is for all New Zealanders. Rich and poor. Politicians and prisoners. Maori and Pakeha, Asian and African. Eastern and Western. Abusers and the abused.

Drug addicts and alcholocis. Doctors and Lawyer. Tradesman and teacher. The Treaty is not offered to just a few NZers. It is not offered to those who deserve it.

The new treaty is offered to all NZer’s it is signed with the blood of Jesus Christ.

Are you honouring the treaty that God has made with you through the cross.

You honour the third treaty by actions. Treaty not dependant on your actions. We didn’t do anything to deserve this treaty. Many of you have accepted this Treaty by faith many years ago.

**CALL TO RESPONSE**

The closing question I am asking is: Are you honouring the third treaty, by giving your life to the one who made it. Faith is to be shown by our actions.

Incredible thing God of universe. God of creation. God of all power God who flung the stars into space. God would enter a treaty with us. You and I.

Are you honouring the treaty that God has made with us?

Maybe some of you here today. Not ever understood that God has made such a treaty. Want to be in relationship with God. His cleansing, forgvivneenss and transformation. God to come and live within you. My Treaty is open to you today. Accept. You don’t have to earn it. Can’t earn it. Accept it.

This morning as we come to communion we come to the way that God tells us to remember his treaty with us.

* Waitangi reminds us of the Treaty we live under. Maori and Pakeha living as one people equal before each other and God.

May God speak to us today about what it means for us to be people living under treaty.

Challenging you attitude towards Waitangi Treaty. Good place start would be read The Bible and the Treaty.

* [Marriage] Ring on your finger reminds you of the treaty that many of you have made with another to love and chersihs no matter what. Made in the prensence of God.

Maybe he is challenging you about your vows made. Honour another.

Maybe he is reminding you of a commitment you made. Not kept. Not kept your word.

* [God] This table remember of the Treaty that God has made with you.

Maybe God is reminding you today. What it means to honour his treaty with you, sealed by blood of Jesus

Maybe God is speaking to you. Taking a step of faith. God I accept your treaty by faith.

You want to relate to me. I want to relate to you. Almighty God. Treaty means I can have access to you. Even though I am ratbag. You are holy. You invite me into your presence.

**PRAYER**

God we thank you that you choose to enter into a treaty with us.

We don’t deserve it. We have done nothing to earn it. We have nothing to offer in the treaty.

We thank you that you are faithful to your word. You are a treaty keeping God. Your character is one of faithfulness. You are love. You are truth. You are unchanging.

We thank you for your blood that seals the treaty before us.

We bring our sins to you now.

We thank you that as we confess our sins before you, you offer your forgiveness

In Jesus name Amen.

**19**  And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven’s Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. **20**  By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place. **21**  And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God’s house, **22**  let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ’s blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water.

**23**  Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. **24**  Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. **25**  And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

**26**