

COVENANTS

I'd like to share a few thoughts and some scriptures with you about blood covenants.

If you've been a Christian for a while you've heard covenants mentioned quite a bit. The old Covenant, the New Covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant etc.

Blood covenants are some of the oldest agreements between men, but growing up in this modern world, most of us have very little concept of what is involved in a blood Covenant.

My first exposure to a blood covenant was on television. When in the western movies, the Lone Ranger and Tonto cut their skin, and rubbed their hands together to mix their blood, they became blood brothers. I still had no concept of what they were doing.

In a blood covenant, both parties agree that, everything that I am, and everything I have, will be available to the other whenever they need it.

It was an eternal agreement that couldn't be dissolved. The party's descendants were even bound by the agreement. As far as we know, there are very few records that any of them were ever broken.

They've since been replaced with paper contracts, that are broken all the time, and require an army of lawyers to settle them.

These covenants were ratified in different ways.

For example,

If a conquering King decided not to kill the defeated King and his family, they sometimes offered to "cut" a covenant with them. It was ratified by cutting animals in half and the defeated King walked between the pieces. This signified that if the defeated King ever rose up in revolt or challenged the King in any way, he would be cut in pieces just as the animals were.

Another way a blood Covenant was ratified was that both parties would cut their skin and squeeze a couple drops of their blood into a glass of wine. Each party would then drink half of the glass agreeing to the covenant forever.

One of the most well-known covenants in the scriptures is the Abrahamic Covenant.

In Genesis 15, God made a covenant with Abram. Abram's wife, Sarai, was barren. God promised him a son.

In chapter 17, God confirmed his covenant with Abram and his wife.

He declared that Abram would be the father of many nations and that kings would come from his descendants.

God's everlasting covenant with Abram and his descendants, promised them the land to which Abram had traveled forever. He gave circumcision as the sign of the covenant for Abram's descendants.

God also changed their names to Abraham and Sarah and declared an everlasting covenant with their son Isaac that God would give them.

I said before that God is very serious about keeping his covenants. He also wants us to be fully assured and confident that he can and will perform His promises for our benefit.

Hebrew 6.16-18 amp

God also, in His desire to show more convincingly *and* beyond doubt to those who were to inherit the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose *and* plan, intervened with an oath.

This was so that, by two unchangeable things [His promise and His oath] in which it is impossible for God ever to prove false *or* deceive us, we who have fled [to Him] for refuge might have mighty indwelling strength *and* strong encouragement to grasp *and* hold fast the hope appointed for us *and* set before [us].

God's covenants with His people were conditional. Meaning if you do certain things that I request, then I will perform for you the things that I promised.

Deuteronomy 28, 29, and 30 are a great example of a conditional Covenant.

Moses restated to the people the law that God had set up for the Jews and spelled out the blessings for obeying the covenant and the curses for breaking the covenant.

29.13 shows God's purpose in doing this.

In order that He may establish you today as His people and that He may be your God, just as He spoke to you and as He swore to your father's, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

God was totally committed to be their God and to bring them into eternal fellowship with him.

In chapter 30.5, God promises that if they ever broke the covenant and ended up in captivity to other nations, He would bring them back to possess their land.

In verse 6, God reveals His ultimate purpose for them.

The Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live.

God didn't just want control and responsibility for His people. He wanted an eternal spiritual relationship with them.

In verse 19 Moses told God's people,

I call Heaven and Earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse.

So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving the Lord your God, by obeying his voice, and by holding fast to him, for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land Lord swore to your father's, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.

A large portion of the Old Testament records the continual breaking of God's covenant by His people, them ending up in bondage to other nations, and God faithfully rescuing them and restoring them to the land that He promised.

I'd like to share a few examples of people in the Old Testament who operated under this Covenant with God.

Their covenant with God instilled within them confidence to overcome extreme trials.

In 1 Samuel 17 is the familiar story of David and Goliath.

David was not ignorant of how large and ferocious Goliath was when he ran out to meet him with nothing but a slingshot.

He said, who does this uncircumcised Philistine think he is that he can taunt the armies of the Living God? When Goliath said, I will cut off your head and feed you to the birds, David knew that he would not be the one dying that day, because of his covenant with God.

He was very confident in his covenant with the Living God and how much more powerful his God was, than the giant Phillistine.

Their Covenant with God empowered them to accomplish God's purposes.

1 Samuel 22

David was running from Saul and fled to the cave of Adullam.

Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who is discontented, gathered to him, and he became Captain over them. Now there were about four hundred men with him.

Since Samuel had already anointed David to be king, these men gave themselves to David by covenant and committed themselves to establish David's kingdom.

God empowered their commitment by equipping these men to do extraordinary exploits to make David King over all of the land.

Read through some of their exploits in 2 Samuel 23.8 to the end of the chapter. These men made Chuck Norris, Bruce Lee, and Rambo, look like school kids.

They became known as David's Mighty Men and there is no record that any of them ever died in battle.

They could also count on God's supernatural protection because of their covenant with God.

Daniel 3 is the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the three Hebrew children.

Nebuchadnezzar built a huge statue of gold and commanded that everyone in the land bow down to it when they heard the music play.

These three Hebrew boys refused and Nebuchadnezzar threaten to throw them in the fiery furnace.

They told him, our God will save us, but even if he doesn't we will not bow down. He became enraged and had the furnace stoked up seven times hotter.

They bound them hand and foot and threw them in the furnace. When they looked in the furnace they saw a fourth man with them. God was in the fire with them and rescued them, without so much as even the smell of smoke on them.

I always thought to myself, how can these young men be so bold and fearless? They had a covenant with God. God had promised to be everything that they ever needed.

If they broke that covenant, God promised that curses would pursue them for the rest of their lives.

They probably thought, you may kill us today, but we will not live the rest of our lives being pursued by curses.

Of course God saw their trust in His word and showed up big time for them in the fire.

How about some more scriptures?

In the New Testament, Jesus cut a blood covenant with his disciples at the last supper.

In Luke 22.14, He said, I have earnestly desired to eat this meal with you.

He explained that this bread symbolizes my body that is sacrificed for you and the wine was the New Covenant in My blood.

In many of our modern church services communion has become a religious ritual and a time of introspection about our sins and Jesus' sacrifice to forgive them.

In reality, communion is us ratifying this Eternal Blood Covenant with God. We are committing everything that we are and everything that we have to God forever. He has made a covenant to BE everything that we will ever need.

2 Peter 1.3+4 states that,

God's divine power has granted to us EVERYTHING PERTAINING TO LIFE AND GODLINESS.

And

HIS PROMISES (His covenants) ENABLE US TO BE PARTAKERS OF HIS DIVINE NATURE.

Jesus earnestly desired to cut this covenant with His disciples so that they could possess all of the benefits that the covenant provided to fulfill God's eternal purposes for all of mankind.

When the disciples cut this covenant with Jesus, their entire life changed. Let me mention just a few of the ways.

Their old unfixable nature inherited from Adam and Eve was crucified with Christ. (Romans 6.6)

They became new creations in Christ. (2 Corinthians 5.17)

Christ became their wisdom from God, their righteousness,

their sanctification, and their redemption. (1 Corinthians 1.30)

They were empowered by God's Holy Spirit. (Acts 1.8)

They were no longer Christ's disciples, they became His brothers. (John 20.17)

They became members of God's family, and were now heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. (Romans 8.17)

Jesus gave them the Holy Spirit to give them EVERYTHING that the Father has. (John 16,5-15)

They became one with God, just like Christ. (John 17.22)

They were seated with Christ at the Father's right hand. (Ephesians 2.6)

They were given power of attorney to use Christ's name. (John 16.33)

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit made their permanent dwelling place in them. (John 14.16-23)

Time doesn't permit to share all of the benefits of being in covenant with the God of Heaven and earth.

To sum this all up, 1 Corinthians 1.30 says, that by HIS doing we are in Christ Jesus.... Therefore

Because we are in Christ, what ever happened to Christ also happened to us.

Let's look at 1 John 5.11.

The witness is this, that God has given us His eternal life and this life is in His Son,

he who has the Son has the life...

I thank God for His indescribable Love for us. There is no Daddy like our Daddy!

God Bless you.

Jim Fuller

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