

# **Chapter 7**

## ***CHARACTER OF GOD 2*** ***TYPES OF COVENANTS*** ***OLD TESTAMENT COVENANTS***

### ***SECTION 1: TYPES OF COVENANTS***

- I. In Scripture we can see that there are different types of Covenants God has made with and for man. This lesson lists and explains these covenants and their significance for us.
  - A. **Blood covenant**
    - 1. The blood covenant began when God killed animals to use their skins to cover Adam and Eve after they had broken covenant with Him in the garden. This is a covenant that signifies total commitment and is sealed with blood. The shed blood indicates total commitment.
    - 2. In initiating the blood covenant the parties to the covenant would often pass between the cut-up pieces of an animal sacrifice. This signified a ratification or sealing of the covenant. Passing between the cut-up pieces of the sacrifice was a symbolic statement; "If I break this covenant may I suffer the same fate as this sacrifice animal." God Himself sealed the covenant he made with Abraham. (Genesis 15:9-17; Jeremiah 34:18-19)
    - 3. The blood covenant was ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ who gave himself as a willing sacrifice and shed His blood for us. God the Father accepts the blood of Jesus as the sacrifice to establish a New Covenant between God and man. (Matthew 26:28; Luke 22:20)
  - B. **Salt covenant**
    - 1. Salt stands for permanence and incorruption. Salt preserves, which is to show that it was to be an enduring covenant. God required salt to be part of the sacrifices and offerings given by the people. A covenant of salt could not be changed or done away with. (Leviticus 2:13; Numbers 18:19; 2 Chronicles 13:5)
    - 2. Eating a meal together was often part of entering into a salt covenant. Covenants were generally confirmed by sacrificial meals and salt was always present at these meals. (Genesis 31:54; Genesis 26:30)
  - C. **Marriage covenant: spreading the corner of a garment.** (Ruth 3:9)
    - 1. Boaz in this story is a picture of Jesus our Kinsman-redeemer. Boaz redeemed Ruth at the point of her need because he had the ability and right to do so. In the same way Jesus redeems us at our point of need because He has the right and the

ability to do it.

2. There is also a picture of God's Covenant of Marriage with Israel in the book of Ezekiel. God saw the people of Israel as naked (without hope) and entered into a covenant with them making them his own; covering them with His own garment. (Ezekiel 16:8)

**D. Covenant of friendship or relationship.**

1. We see this covenant of friendship and relationship best illustrated in the story of David and Jonathan. (1 Samuel 18:1-4; 1 Samuel 20:11-17; 1 Samuel 20:41-42; 1 Samuel 23:15-18)
2. Love was the basis of this covenant between David and Jonathan. Jonathan was the prince and David was the peasant, and so only Jonathan could take the initiative. In this covenant of friendship Jonathan gave of himself, who he was, what he had. And he also freely gave up his rightful position as the next in line to the kingship.
3. Through this story of David and Jonathan's covenant of friendship, we see a picture of Jesus as our friend. Jesus took the initiative in making a covenant with us. Jesus covered us with His robes of righteousness. Jesus gave us the tools and weapons we need to live and work. Jesus gave us a position. He gave up His rightful place so that we could be seated with Him in heavenly places.
4. We can see that this covenant of friendship continued even after the death of Jonathan. Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son always had a place at the king's table because King David followed through on the promise he had made to Jonathan. (2 Samuel 9:1-7)
5. We need to make and keep covenant relationships within the Body of Christ. They are key in the Body of Christ functioning as it should today. Are we ready to believe the worst before the best? Love and loyalty needs to be the basis in our covenant relationships within the Body of Christ. We say we love one another, but then we gossip, criticize, backbite, and belittle one another, our leaders, pastors, our church. We need to show love and loyalty in our covenant relationships within the Body of Christ.

***Never let loyalty and kindness get away from you! Wear them like a necklace; write them deep within your heart. Proverbs 3:3 New Living Translation***

- II. Do we enter into or make covenants in everyday life? What are some of these covenants and what is required of us in them?
- A. Some everyday covenants that we enter into might be a lease or mortgage on a home, our job, a school course, or contracts for things we buy such as a car, furniture, etc. These all require commitment to time, money, discipline and effort on our part.

- B. Marriage is also a covenant. We need to be careful not to treat it lightly. It is a serious covenant between two people and before God. (Proverbs 2:16-17; Malachi 2:13-15)
- C. Is church involvement to be a convenience or a serious commitment? Is it church hopping; going from church to church as the "spirit leads?" Is it merely going as a spectator and expecting everything to be done to or for you? Or is it to be a covenant commitment to the leaders and fellow members?
- D. Are the friendships we form seen as a convenience or a serious commitment? Is it, "I will be your friend until you offend me or don't do what I want you to do?" Is it, "I will be your friend as long as it does not cost me anything in time, effort, and is convenient for me.?"
- E. Are ministry relationships seen only as conveniences for what I need and want? Do we need relationships with spiritual fathers and mothers? (1 Corinthians 4:15)
- F. What are some simple covenants that we enter into every day? Perhaps it is, "I'll be by to see you tomorrow;" "I'll pay you that \$20 I owe you on...;" or "I'll do this job for you." Are these covenants of convenience only? Do we fulfill them only as long as we feel like it; as long as it suits us; as long as it doesn't cost us anything; until something better comes along? So many of the covenants we live with every day are things that we do if we feel like it or not if we don't. As Christians we need to change that. Our "word" as a Christian needs to mean something again. If we say we will do something, we need to do it. (Psalm 15:4)

## ***SECTION 2: COVENANTS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT***

The covenants of God can be seen as progressive. Each covenant assumes the purpose of the previous covenant and then unfolds God's purposes step by step. Each covenant also expands and develops aspects of the previous covenants. In this supplement we will look at some Old Testament covenants, the person or people with whom they were made, their terms and conditions, promises, and the sign or symbol of the covenant.

### **I. A COVENANT OF PROTECTION**

**Person:** Noah was a righteous man. He was blameless among the people, and he walked in the ways of God.

**Scriptures:** Genesis 6:9-7:5; Genesis 8:20-22; Genesis 9:9-17

**Terms and Conditions:** Noah was to build an ark according to God's specifications. Then he was to go into the ark with his family and take the animals into the ark as God had told him.

**Promises and Benefits:** God said He would not again destroy the world by a flood. It also gives us the promise of seedtime and harvest and the seasons.

**Sign:** Rainbow (when we see it we will be reminded of God's faithfulness and God will see it and

remember His promise). (Genesis 9:16)

II. A COVENANT OF PROMISE

**Person:** Abraham, a friend of God.

**Scriptures:** Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 15; Genesis 17

**Terms and Conditions:** Abraham was to leave his country, his people and his father's household. Circumcision was initiated by God at this time.

**Promises and Benefits:** Abraham and his family would increase into a numerous people and have material and spiritual prosperity. The name of Abraham would be exalted. Abraham would be blessed and be a blessing.

**Sign:** Circumcision

III. A COVENANT OF LAW OR JEHOVAH'S COVENANT

**Person:** Moses, Israelites

**Scriptures:** Exodus 19:5-6; Exodus 20; Exodus 23:20-33; Exodus 24:3,7; Exodus 34:27-35

**Terms and Conditions:** Obedience to the laws of God.

**Promises and Benefits:** The nation of Israel would have God's constant care. There would also be temporal prosperity. The nation would have victory over their enemies. God would pour out of His Spirit.

**Sign:** Sabbath, Exodus 31:16-17

**Renewed:** Deuteronomy 29; Joshua 24; 2 Chronicles 15, 23, 29, 34; 2 Kings 23:1-3; Ezra 10; Nehemiah 9, 10

IV. A COVENANT OF PEACE AND LASTING PRIESTHOOD

**Person:** Levites and Phinehas

**Scriptures:** Malachi 2:4,8; Psalm 106:30-31; Numbers 25:6-13

**Terms and Conditions:** Phinehas was zealous for the honor of God and had a reverence for God and His ways.

**Promises and Benefits:** Lasting Priesthood

V. DAVIDIC COVENANT

**Person:** David, a man after God's own heart.

**Scriptures:** 2 Samuel 7:12-16; 2 Samuel 22:51; 1 Chronicles 17:12-27; 2 Chronicles 7:12-22; Psalm 2; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 33:19-26

**Terms and Conditions:** David was to walk before God, do all His commands, and observe His decrees and laws.

**Promises and Benefits:** David would have a son who would succeed him and establish his kingdom. David's throne would be established forever, though chastised, and God's love would be forever.

**Sign:** Jesus is the fulfillment

VI. PROMISES OF A NEW COVENANT

Jeremiah 31:31-34  
Isaiah 42:1-9

Isaiah 59:20-21  
Ezekiel 37:15-28

**QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION**

Chapter 7 Character of God 2 - Types of Covenants

1. Which of the covenants described in this lesson might be more important in today's society? Give some reasons for your answer.
2. Jesus said he would build His church. How can our commitment or lack of commitment to our local church affect the building of the church?