

And if the bugler doesn't sound a clear call, how will the soldiers know they are being called to battle? 1st Corinthians 14:8 NLV

FLM PRAYER STUDY #129

The Covenant Making God

Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation....

Exodus 19:5

What is a Covenant? (Kevin Conner & Ken Malmin, *The Covenants*)

A covenant is an interpersonal arrangement made by one person for or with another. God originates covenants with men which man may accept or reject but cannot alter. Man does not come to God with a proposal seeking God's approval, rather God comes to man declaring His will and seeking man's adherence and obedience to that will. The purpose of a covenant is to provide a binding sense of commitment to an interpersonal relationship.

Difference between a Contract and a Covenant (Bill Gothard, *The True Significance of the Wedding Covenant*)

1. A covenant is based on trust between parties. A contract is based on distrust.
2. A covenant is based on unlimited responsibility. A contract involves limited liability.
3. A covenant cannot be broken if new circumstances occur. A contract can be voided by mutual consent.

Ratification of a Covenant

Because a covenant involved a life and death commitment, it was ratified in Biblical times by the shedding of blood. The blood represented life and was used to symbolize a life commitment of those entering the covenant. There had to be a sacrifice to obtain this blood. We see this in Genesis 15:7-17 when God passed between the pieces to "cut the covenant" with Abraham. In Genesis 22 God called for the sacrifice to be Isaac, Abraham's only son, but provided a substitution, a ram, at the last minute. This foreshadowed the act of incredible love that our Father later did when He gave His only son for the sacrifice so that we could legally enter into covenant relationship with Him.

Our God of Covenant Kevin Conner and Ken Malmin, *The Covenants*)

1. **A Covenant-Making God:** God established His covenant with Noah(Genesis 6:18). He made a covenant with Abraham(Genesis 15:18, 17:2). God made a covenant with David(II Samuel 23:5). He promised to make a new covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah(Jeremiah 31:31-34). He also made an everlasting covenant(Isaiah 55:3, 61:8).
2. **A Covenant-Keeping God:** God reveals His faithfulness and trustworthiness in that He keeps the covenant that He makes. Once God has made a covenant He does not forget it nor become negligent of it. He always follows through with the commitments He has made(Deuteronomy 7:9, II Chronicles 6:14; Psalms 111:5,9; Romans 1:31)
3. **A Covenant-Revealing God:** In order for man to be in covenant relationship with God He must reveal the covenant to man, openly declaring the promises and terms. Apart from God taking the initiative and revealing His covenant to man, man would be ignorant of the availability of covenantal relationship with Him(Psalms 25:14; Deuteronomy 4:13).
4. **A Covenant-Enabling God:** The same God who makes, keeps and reveals His covenants to man also enables man to fulfill his part of the covenant. Apart from the enabling grace of God man has proven his inability to keep the terms of any covenant. This was particularly illustrated under the Mosaic Covenant(Ephesians 2:4-13

THE FATHER

The covenant maker

The WORDS/PROMISES

The Father's Words
to us

THE SON

The sacrifice

The BLOOD

The Son's Work
for us

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The executor

The SEAL/SIGNS

The Holy Spirit's
Work in us

The Major Biblical Covenants

1. EDENIC COVENANT

The Words: Man would be made in God's image, be fruitful and multiply, would subdue the earth, would have dominion, would eat herbs and fruit, would till the ground, and would be cursed if he ate of the forbidden fruit (Genesis 1 and 2).

The sacrifice: Adam sacrificially lying down in a deep sleep while God opened his side and taking the rib from which He fashioned a

bride. This well may have involved the shedding of innocent blood and certainly foreshadows the bridegroom and bride of redemption.

The sign: The tree of life, the tree that Adam was allowed to eat of before the fall

2. ADAMIC COVENANT

The Words: The seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head. Curses were unleashed on the serpent, on the Devil, on the earth, and on the animal kingdom(that became wild and carnivorous). Judgment came to the woman(sorrow in child birth, subservient to husband), and to the man(sweat, toil and sorrow in laboring on a cursed earth until his death). There would be spiritual and physical and eternal death. God expelled them from the Edenic Paradise because He loved them so much and did not want them to eat of the tree of life and thus live forever in an unredeemable state (Revelations 2:7; 22:14)

The sacrifice: Substitutionary, sacrificial death of innocent animals

The sign: The animal skins that covered Adam and Eve's nakedness

3. NOAHIC COVENANT

The Words: God promised to never flood the earth. This covenant introduced human government to curb sin, the normal order of nature reaffirmed(Genesis 8 and 9), and the permission of man to eat the flesh of animals. Man was not to eat blood, not to commit murder, and the allowing of the death penalty for murderers.

The sacrifice: Animal sacrifices of clean animals(Genesis 6,7,8)

The Sign: The rainbow

4. ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

The Words: God gave personal promises to Abraham to bless him and make his name great(Genesis 12, 13, 15, & 17). He gave national promises to Abraham to make Abraham's descendants a great nation(Genesis 12). He gave a universal promise to Abraham that all the families of the earth would be blessed through Abraham's lineage(Genesis 12, 22, 28)

The Sacrifice: Bread and Wine of communion from Melchisedek; the five specific offerings(heifer, a she-goat, a ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon)(God Himself walked between the division as a burning lamp and smoking furnace) (Genesis 15:78-17); and the sacrifice of Isaac.

The Sign: Circumcision, Multiplicity of stars

5. MOSAIC COVENANT

The Words: Israel would be the chosen people of God, a kingdom of priests, to be used to bring the nations of the world to God(Exodus 19:6), and a holy people who would live their lives following His laws (Exodus 19:6)

The Sacrifice: This is known as the Blood Covenant because of the elaborate ritual sacrifices of animals to atone for sin in general and for specific sins.

The Sign: Sabbath-This reminded the Israelites that they were separate from the nations of the world and taught them to trust God since they could not work on the Sabbath(Exodus 31). The fourth commandment of the Ten Commandments to keep the Sabbath holy(Exodus 20:8) is the only one of the Ten Commandments not repeated in the New Testament.

6. PALESTINIAN COVENANT OR DEUTERONOMIC COVENANT

The Words: God promised a promise land of fruitfulness, mineral wealth, former and latter rains, etc. He promised many specific blessings for those who obeyed Him and specific curses for those who disobeyed.

The Sacrifice: The Mosaic sacrifices on the altar

The Sign: The Sabbath Rest and the Former and Latter Rains

7. DAVIDIC COVENANT

The Words: David's lineage would endure forever (2nd Samuel 7, Psalm 89), the people of Israel will never be eliminated, David's kingdom will be established forever (2nd Samuel 7, Luke 1:32-33), David's seed would build the temple, the Messiah would come through David's lineage, God would be merciful to David's seed.

The Sacrifice: Animal sacrifices and the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving

The Sign: The sun, moon and stars-God promised that as long as these existed, David's throne would continue to exist-and Jesus Christ

8. NEW COVENANT

The Words: God promised regeneration (Jeremiah 31:33, Ezekiel 36:26), forgiveness of sins (Jeremiah 31; 34, Ezekiel 36:25), the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Ezekiel 36:27), knowledge of God

(Jeremiah 31:34), salvation(safety, security, preservation, deliverance, and wholeness), pardon, sanctification, justification, adoption, and glorification. God promised His people would obey Him (Ezekiel 36:27; 37:23-24, Jeremiah 32:39-40) and He promised certain national promises (Ezekiel 34-37). This was totally unconditional. God indicated that He gave it because of Israel's inability to obey(Ezekiel 26:21-22)and that He would eventually bring them to a place of obedience. It is eternal and can never be annulled. It is in contrast with the Mosaic Covenant(which called Israel to obtain redemption through animal sacrifice and obedience to the law) in the New Testament in 2nd Corinthians 3 and Hebrews 8:7-13. It made available through the cross salvation for the whole world(Jeremiah 31, Hebrews 8, Matthew 26). He also promised curses on the Jews who reject Christ, on the wicked nations, and those who never come into covenantal relationship with Christ.

The Sacrifice: The sacrificial lamb slain from the foundation of the World which is Jesus on the cross

The Sign: The Body and Blood of Jesus; The Lord's Supper, and specifically the cup which Jesus said in Luke 22:20 was the "New Covenant in My Blood" (This is repeated in 1st Corinthians 11:25. The New Covenant was promised by God to Israel in Jeremiah 31. Of course we know that we have been grafted in the vine and *first the natural and then the spiritual*, therefore we are spiritual Israel and heirs to this promise); Spiritual sacrifices(a. Sacrifice of righteousness-Psalms 4:5, 51:19); b. Sacrifices of joy(Psalm 27:6); c. Sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit (Psalms 51:17); d. Sacrifice of thanksgiving (Psalms 107:22, 116:17); e. Sacrifice of our bodies as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2); f. Sacrifice of praise (Hebrews 13:15); g. Sacrifice of good deeds (Hebrews 13:16); h. Sacrifice of fellowship (Hebrews 13:16).

9. THE EVERLASTING COVENANT

"The Everlasting Covenant is that Covenant made in Eternity, before Time began, in the counsels of the eternal Godhead, between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It was made before the creation of man and the entrance of sin into the human race. It embodies, as an all-encompassing Covenant, God's complete plan involving Creation and Redemption. It is the heavenly foundational Covenant in eternity for all Covenants revealed in Time. Man was not a party to it but the object of it." Kevin Conner and Ken Malmin

This covenant is possible because of God's Essential Attributes-He is eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, immutable, self-existent; because of His moral attributes-God is holy, righteous, love, faithful; and because He is the eternal. The Father is the originator or word giver of the covenant; the Son is the sacrifice or mediator of the covenant; and the Holy Spirit is the sign or seal of the covenant.

The Word: God in this covenant promises everlasting life(1st John 2:25), immortality(2nd Timothy 1:9-10), an everlasting kingdom(Psalm 145:13), an eternal inheritance(Hebrews 9:14), everlasting love and kindness and mercy(Isaiah 54:8), everlasting righteousness(Daniel 9:24), an everlasting habitation or dwelling place (Luke 16:9), everlasting joy (Isaiah 61:7), everlasting strength (Isaiah 26:4), everlasting name(Isaiah 56:5; 63:12,16), everlasting promises to the overcomers-tree of eternal life(Revelation 2:7), not be hurt by the second death(Revelation 2:11), Hidden manna and a white stone with a new name(Revelation 2:17; John 6:53-63); power over the nations(Revelation 2:26-28, 22:16); white raiments and name confessed before the Father and angels(Revelation 3:4,5); pillar in the temple of God and the name of the Father, the bride-city and the Son's new name written upon you(Revelation 3:12); restored dominion lost in Adam(Revelation 3:12); all the promises of God(Revelation 21:7).

God also promises those who are not in covenant relationship with Him that they will have everlasting shame and contempt(Daniel 12:2); everlasting lake of fire and brimstone(Matthew 18:8, Revelation 14:10, 11; 19:20; 20:14,15; 21:8); everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:41, 46); everlasting destruction(II Thessalonians 1:9); Everlasting chains of darkness(Jude 6; II Peter 2:4); perdition(utter destruction or eternal damnation) (Revelation 17:8, 1st Timothy 6:9); the second death(Revelation 2:11; 20:13-15; 21:8)

The Sacrifice: The Blood of Jesus

The Sign: The seal of the Holy Spirit and the Glorified Body

Was It Possible for People to be Saved prior to Jesus' Death?
(from Heavens Family)

YES!

1. Jesus once told a repentant woman that her sins had been forgiven, and He then told her that her faith had saved her. She was forgiven; thus she was saved. (Luke 7:48-50)
2. To whom did God offer salvation before Jesus died? Jews only? If so, salvation was not available to anyone for the first 2200 years of human history because there were no Jews before then, and it was not available to Gentiles for the first 4000 years of human history so millions had no opportunity to be saved. Yet God saved Abraham who it might surprise you was a Gentile since the Jews started with Abraham's grandson Jacob or Israel. Yet Genesis 15:16 tells us that God declared Abraham righteous because of his faith. Paul mentions this fact about Abraham in Romans 4:3 and Galatians 3:6 as an argument that Gentiles could be forgiven and declared righteous by God long before Jesus was born. There is also strong evidence that Abimelech(Genesis 20), Nebuchadnezzar and King Darius who gave world wide decrees honoring God(Daniel 3:29, 4:37, & 6:25-27) came to a knowledge of God. Did they go to Hell?
3. What about Nineveh? God sent Jonah to warn them that they needed to "turn or burn", even though they were not Jews and did not have the written law. He had, however given them His law written on their consciences, which He expected them to obey. Surprisingly, they did repent and were forgiven. The king of Nineveh issued a decree that everyone should "call on God earnestly that each may turn from his wicked way and from the violence which is in his hands." (Jonah 3:8) Jesus later said that "The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah." (Matthew 12:41) This certainly implies that God forgave the Ninevites and that at least some of them will be in heaven. They were saved by faith(Jonah 3:4). Their forgiveness was based on Jesus' future death, as He would ultimately pay the penalty for their sins. The Bible did not say, "God so loved the people who lived from the time of Jesus onward that He gave His only Son." It says

that “God so loved the world”(John 3:16) and that Jesus is the same YESTERDAY and today and forever.

4. What about those Israelites under Mosaic law with all the animal sacrifices? Scripture tells us, “It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.” (Hebrews 10:4) They were obeying scripture in doing the sacrifices but actually these in reality were just continual reminders of the need for a substitutionary sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins and a foreshadow of the only sacrifice, i.e. the sacrifice of the sinless God man on the cross, that could save anyone.
5. God has always been drawing people to Himself through creation and conscience, and He still is. This does not excuse us from the responsibility of sharing the Gospel. Nor does it give us excuse to be slack in our own walk with Jesus for whom much is given much is required, and we have been given more, most probably, than any civilization in any country in history.

Sources

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The Prophet's Dictionary by Dr. Paula Price

Heaven Word at Heaven's Family newsletter@heavensfamily.org

When His wounded hand touched mine,
When His wounded hand touched mine,
He did grace impart to this fainting heart,
When His wounded hand touched mine.

30 Things Accompanying Ministry 2nd Corinthians 4
from Don Van Hoosier, High Point Church

1. Endurance and patience needed with people
2. Pressure-tribulation as a vise
3. Hardships, lack of what is needed
4. Distress, calamities
5. Bodily beaten, suffering injury
6. Imprisoned unjustly
7. Rioting as a result of your message
8. Laboring tirelessly
9. Sleepless night watches of prayer
10. Hunger, no food available
11. Being innocent, desiring purity but accused of the opposite
12. Having knowledge and spiritual insight but ignored when sharing it
13. Having patience, longsuffering
14. Showing kindness, nor repaid in kind
15. Working with the Holy Spirit
16. Having genuine unfeigned love, no attempt to use people, but they use you
17. Speaking the truth, hated for it
18. Displaying power of God
19. Using weapons of righteousness
20. Ministering amid honor and dishonor
21. Being defamed, evil reports spread about you that are untrue, good reports also
22. Branded as deceivers by some, yet known by many as vindicated in truth, honesty
23. Treated as a nobody but known to God's people
24. Anguish of mind is as death at times
25. Chastened by suffering, yet not killed
26. Grieved, mourning
27. Poor but bestowing riches to others
28. Having nothing, possessing all
29. Having a mouth open to the sheep
30. Having a heart enlarged for them