

Covenant Basics

The word "covenant, " is infrequently heard in ordinary conversation, but is quite commonly used in legal, social (marriage), and religious and theological contexts.

*Where does the idea of covenants come from? Is it mans idea or did it originate in the heart of God – Elohim? Every culture contains the knowledge of Blood Covenants

Does the Bible give the answer?

God says to Noah: But I will establish **My covenant with you.... Gen.6:18*

*To Abraham: And I will make **My covenant** between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly." 17:2*

*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. Ex.19:5*

*...then I will remember **My covenant** with Jacob, and **My covenant** with Isaac and **My covenant** with Abraham I will remember; Lev.26:42*

*"Thus says the LORD: 'If you can break **My covenant** with the day and **My covenant** with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season,... Jer.33:20*

*I could carry on quoting Scripture for a lot longer, God never talks about our covenant, it is always **My Covenant**; when I went to school "my" was a possessive adjective, it showed what belonged to who! Therefore when God says "My Covenant" the covenant being made belongs to Him, He is the initiator of it, it appears from Scripture that it isn't a concept that originates with man.

When we look at verses like Jer.33:20 it suggests that the idea of covenant was on the scene before Adam was created, and that covenant was instituted by no other than Elohim Himself.

How seriously does God take covenant? This is what He declares about Himself in this regard.

**"Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments; Deut.7:9*

**Joshua and the Gibeonites bound themselves, by oath, to live in peace together (Joshua 9:15), although Yahweh commanded that Israel was not to bind themselves to the people living in the land of Canaan (Deut 7:2 ; Judges 2:2). When Saul several generations later tried to wipe out the Gibeonites God's wrath was aroused 1Sam.21:1-14 – God holds covenants as something incredibly sacred – that is why God states in*

**Malachi 2:16 "For the LORD God of Israel says
That He hates divorce,
For it covers one's garment with violence,"
Says the LORD of hosts.
"Therefore take heed to your spirit,
That you do not deal treacherously."*

Marriage is a blood covenant, it use to be refered to as Holy Matrimony. See my wedding ring on the third finger of my hand, it's a covenant thing. Somewhere along the line rings became part of the symbol of covenant, the wedding ring was placed on the 3rd finger of the left hand because of a nerve that was believed to go from that 3rd finger to the heart, the heart pumps blood and several

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centuries ago when 2 people made a blood covenant – whether it was a marriage covenant or a brotherhood covenant or a protection covenant, they would make an incision in the 3th finger for they believed, back in that time, that blood flowed there directly from the heart. Then a mark of the covenant, a ring, was placed on that finger. Later in Europe it changed to the thumb, the most prominent place, that is where the saying comes from “it sticks out like a sore thumb”. In later centuries gunpowder was rubbed in the incision so that after it healed you could always see by the ring around the thumb that person was a covenant man – it stuck out like a sore thumb!

*“Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments; Deut.7:9

*The secret of the LORD is with those who fear Him,
And He will show them His covenant.
Ps.25:14

*When the Word of God is refracted through the prism of Covenant you see a glorious spectrum of truth.

Let us look more closely at the meaning of the word “covenant ” as I lay the foundation for our topic.

The English word covenant is of Latin origin (con venire), meaning a coming together; It presupposes two or more parties who come together to make a contract, agreeing on promises, stipulations, privileges, and responsibilities.

*The biblical words most often translated "covenant" are berit [[tyir.B](#)] in the Old Testament (appearing about 280 times) The origin of the Old Testament word appears to come from 2 roots, on meaning to eat together and the other to cut.

*The New Testament word diatheke (at least 33 times) is a legal term denoting a formal and legally binding declaration of benefits to be given by one party to another, with or without conditions attached. In secular contexts it was most often used of a “last will and testament.” In its use in the Sept., it is the rendering of a Hebrew word meaning a "covenant" or agreement (from a verb signifying "to cut or divide," in allusion to a sacrificial custom in connection with "covenant-making," e.g., [Gen 15:10](#), "divided" [Jer 34:18](#), [19](#)). In contradistinction to the English word "covenant" (lit., "a coming together"), which signifies a mutual undertaking between two parties or more, each binding himself to fulfill obligations, it does not in itself contain the idea of joint obligation, it mostly signifies an obligation undertaken by a single person. (Diatheke' does not involve the action of two parties. It is the action of one party on behalf of another. It involves two parties in the sense that one is the benefactor the other is the beneficiary.)

For instance, in [Gal 3:17](#) it is used as an alternative to a "promise" (vv. [16-18](#)). God enjoined upon Abraham the rite of circumcision, but His promise to Abraham, here called a "covenant," was not conditional upon the observance of circumcision, though a penalty attached to its non-observance.

The Division of our Bibles tells us much, it is divided into two parts The Old Covenant/Testament and The New Covenant/Testament. There are actually 8 covenants in the Bible made by God with men and many others made between humans.

*The 8 God ordained covenants of the Bible are:

1. The Edenic Covenant Gen.1:28-30; 2:15-17

2. The Adamic Covenant Gen.3:14-19 (Hosea 6:7)
3. The Noahic Covenant Gen.9:1-17
4. The Abrahamic Covenant Gen.12:1-3; 12:7; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-21;22:15-18
5. The Mosaic Covenant Ex.20 – Deut.28:68
6. The Palestinian Covenant Deut.29:1-30;10 (note Deut.29:1)
7. The Davidic Covenant 2Sam.11b-17;1Chron.17:10b-15;
8. The New Covenant Jer.31:31-34;(Matt.26:28; Mk.14:24;Lk.22:14-20;
1Cor.11:25; 2Cor.3:6; Heb7:22; 8:6-13; 9:15; 10:16,29; 12:24; 13:20)

There are different types of covenants; the covenants of the Bible fall into 2 categories:

*1. **Conditional:** - a proposal of God to man conditioned by a formula "if you will" whereby God promises to grant special blessings to man providing he fulfills certain conditions contained within the covenant.

The Edenic and Mosaic Covenants are conditional

2. **Unconditional:** is a sovereign act of God whereby He unconditionally obligates Himself to bring to pass definite blessings and conditions for the covenanted people. It is characterized by God's "I Will" showing He determines to do what He has promised.

The Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New Covenant

*There are **Bilateral Covenants** – those made between two persons and equal parties; the bond was sealed by both parties vowing, often by oath, that each, having equal privileges and responsibilities, would carry out their assigned roles. Abimelech and Isaac (Gen.26:26-31) David and Jonathon (1Sam.20:3,16-17)

Then there are **Unilateral Covenants** - God initiated, determined the elements, and confirmed his covenant with humanity. Persons are recipients, not contributors; they are not expected to offer elements to the bond; they are called to accept it as offered, to keep it as demanded, and to receive the results that God, by oath, assures will not be withheld.

*While there are several types of covenants: Threshold Covenants, Salt, Covenants and Blood Covenants (H.Clay Trumbull); I only want to address the subject of Blood Covenants and narrow our Covenant topic down to 2, the Mosaic Covenant and the New Covenant.

*Elohim put together covenant before the foundation of the world – God the Father made a covenant with The Son before they created the world: *All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

In all cultures there is a history of Blood Covenant, in some cultures right up to the present day these are still made. There is a marked similarity as to enactment of these and understanding of what they stand for.

*The typical blood covenant contained roughly nine steps. These steps are as follows,

1) The two people exchange coats or robes. To a Hebrew, the coat or robe represented the person himself; so when he offered the other person his robe, he was offering himself; even his very life itself. (1Sam.18:4)

2) They take off their belt and offer it to the other person. The belt, also called the girdle, was used to hold your sword, your knife, and other fighting instruments. In this way you were saying to the other person that you were offering him your protection. If someone attacks you, they also have me to deal with. Your battles are my battles. (1Sam.18:4)

3)"CUT THE COVENANT". In this part, an animal is killed and cut down the middle and the two halves are laid opposite each other. The two parties to the covenant pass between the two halves of the animal and are saying, "May God do so to me and more if I break this covenant. This is a blood covenant, and can not be broken. (Gen.15)

4).The blood of both parties is put into a cup of wine and then they both drink from that cup. To intermingle the blood is to intermingle the very life of both people. Or, each raise the right arm and cut the palm of the hand and clasp each other's hand and mingle their blood. This is saying to the other person, "We are becoming one with each other

5) Exchange names. Each one takes part of the others name and incorporates it into their own. (Acts 4:12)

6) Make a scar or some identifying mark. The scar was the outward evidence of the covenant that others could see and know that the covenant was made. Some times they would rub the cut in the hand to make the scar, then anyone who wanted to fight you would know that he not only had to fight you but another as well. (Gen.32;Jn.20:27-29)

7) Give terms of the covenant. Both parties to the covenant stand before a witness and list all of their assets and liabilities, because each one takes all of these upon the himself. You are saying, "Every thing I have is yours and everything you have is mine. If something happens to you, your covenant partner will see to it that your wife and children are taken care of. (Deut.29; Deut.31:26)

8) Eat the memorial meal. A loaf of bread is broken in half. Each feeds his half to the other saying, "This is my body, and I am now giving it to you." Then they take wine as a symbol of his blood and says, "This is my blood which is now your blood." (Ex.12; Lk.22:14-20)

9) Plant a memorial tree. The two then plant a tree as a memorial to the covenant and sprinkle it with the blood of the animal that was killed for the covenant offering. (Gen.21:27-33;Jn.19:17; Gal.6:14)

If you look at these Blood Covenant traditions most of them are found in some form in the Scriptures.

Lev.17:11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.

Satan has tried to twist and divert the blood covenanting rite into something we see as evil and primitive – he has tried to divest it of its power in our minds by our warped understanding of it – but he has never been able to annul its power. If we do begin to find out the terms and power of the covenant he wants us to attempt to apply it at the wrong place, at the wrong time, without the power of God, in your own strength. Why? So that we get the inner image that this doesn't work – all you do is loose heart and faith is undermined.

We believers are rendered powerless through lack of knowledge – Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. If you don't have knowledge you can't put anything into action -

Bezalel instructed to make the tabernacle items - *and He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom and understanding, in knowledge and all manner of workmanship,Ex.35:31*

Proverbs:

The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge 1:7

For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth *come* knowledge and understanding; 2:6

Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the LORD, 1:29

The fear of the Lord is something I choose, it is a decision I consciously make, God offers it to me – will I accept or reject the offer.

The secret of the LORD is with those who fear Him,
And He will show them His covenant.Ps.25:14

***Henry Stanley**, journalist and explorer who was famous for his exploration of central Africa and his search for missionary and explorer David Livingstone. Stanley set out on his missionary journey to Africa with no idea of the circumstances he would face and the strange customs he would encounter. Upon entering Africa, he ran into trouble with different African tribes. One Chief in particular was very determined that he should leave and not return. Stanley had a guide and advisor during his travels. Being familiar with the customs, this guide suggested that Stanley make a "blood covenant" with the Chief. This involved a ceremony where incisions were made on the wrists of both men. Drops of blood from each man was mixed in some kind of drink (either wine or goats milk) and both drank from the cup. They then clasped hands as in a handshake allowing the blood from the wounds on their wrists to mix together. Drinking the wine mingled with the two bloods and the handshake symbolized the two men becoming one blood, one life, one new man. A substance was applied to the wounds that left an indelible mark where the cut was made. Wherever these men went they bore the "mark of the covenant." At this point, these two men were considered "blood brothers." The ceremony concluded with an exchanging of gifts where each gave the other something of great value. What the Chief wanted from Stanley was the goat he owned. As he had a stomach disorder, Stanley needed the milk from this goat and didn't want to give it up. The guide persuaded Stanley that it would be wise to give up this goat. In exchange, the Chief gave Stanley his spear that had a large copper coil near the head. Stanley thought to himself, "Great! I give up my only source of food and relief and all I get is this spear!"

At that time, Stanley didn't know that this Chief was the head of the most powerful tribe in all of Africa—and this man was now his blood brother. He soon discovered that everywhere he went in Africa that spear was recognized as "the" symbol of authority. Whole tribes would literally bow their knee to it. That spear was the key that opened up the whole continent of Africa! Any tribe that chose to stand against Stanley knew they had to deal with this Chief, Stanley's blood brother.

Stanley and Livingstone stated that to their knowledge a blood covenant was never broken on the continent of Africa. To break a blood covenant made you a condemned man. A broken blood covenant caused your own family to hunt you down and kill you. The thing I find interesting in this story is reconciliation. These two men start out as being enemies. The blood covenant turned them into committed friends.

If you want to walk in your God given authority you have to understand Blood Covenant.

***Why do we overcome the enemy by the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony? We quote the verse often enough but do we realise the full impact of what we are saying!**

It is not the operating power of God that has troubled me for years but the authority to operate in that power – it has only been a recent revelation that my authority is tied up in the covenant. I hadn't really understood covenant and its power, once that comes into focus the authority I have has a context and an anchor.

***Blood covenants are backed up by the life of the one who made it.**

The blood is only as good as the covenant maker behind the blood; the covenant is only as good as the power of the covenant maker to fulfill the things that are promised in the covenant. **Jesus – it is written**

You will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you. Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; your enemies shall fall by the sword before you. 'For I will look on you favorably and make you fruitful, multiply you and confirm My covenant with you. Lev.26

If this was the case under the Old Covenant, how much more will this happen under the new!

*Jesus said: I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be[Ⓢ] bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be[Ⓢ] loosed in heaven." Matt.16:19

One of those keys is the knowledge of Covenant and how it works! Your God given authority comes from the covenant the Father made with Jesus.

When we go through believers baptism we enter into the Covenant the Father made with the Son! For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Col.3:3 Baptism is a covenant act

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go therefore[Ⓢ] and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Amen

²Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, ³as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, ⁴by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust. 2 Peter

*To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹and to make all see what *is* the fellowship^[a] of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; ^[b]¹⁰to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly *places*, ¹according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. Eph.3:8-12

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, ⁴just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, ⁵having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace ⁸which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, ⁹having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, ¹⁰that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both-which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. ¹¹In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, ¹²that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. Eph.1:2-12

This is covenant reality

Covenant one of the Keys to unlocking the authority and power of the Kingdom of Heaven.

- **You can get in but you can't get out and live!**