

Those Who Covenant With God

Throughout the history of God's dealings with man, He has  revealed Himself as a covenant-making God. The Almighty made major covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses and David; He renewed His Abrahamic covenant in His call to Isaac and Jacob. Each covenant initiated a new wave of redemptive power into the world and forever impacted the human condition. The word *covenant* means, "to fetter" or chain together. It was the highest form of commitment that two individuals could share. Any of several rituals were employed to express the covenant partners' unity.

A sword might be passed, signifying that the two would be united against the enemy as one. They might pass a sandal between themselves, which symbolized they would travel any distance to be at one another's side. Or, they might cut an animal in two and pass between its halves. As the two halves, though separated, were still one animal, so the two covenant partners would become as one individual.

When the Lord initiated His covenant with a man, He did so as an extension of His eternal purpose; the man was a component in a series of divine initiatives. Contained within the Lord's covenant were His divine intervention, His supernatural wisdom and strategies, His love and forgiveness, and His provisions.

Thus, if we look at the Lord's call to Noah, we see that it was not the ark but the covenant of God that preserved Noah and his family during worldwide judgment (Gen. 6:18). Noah was a component, a factor in a series of divine initiatives, which accomplished the Lord's predetermined plans. God established the covenant, designed the ark and brought the animals. The Lord even shut the door after Noah entered the ark (Gen. 7:16).

When the Lord established His covenant with Abraham, a flaming torch passed twice through the two halves of the animals Abraham offered in sacrifice. The two passes signified that God would keep His part of the covenant and, remarkably, He would also be the strength in Abraham to fulfill his part of the covenant as well! Today, a restored Israel testifies to God's faithfulness in His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And it is God's covenant with Abraham, not merely the Israeli military, that preserves Israel in our times.

The agreement the Lord cut with His covenant partner was not only for His servant, but it also extended to His servant's descendants. The promise God made could be passed on generationally.

Payment And Pattern

Similarly, we are saved and sustained through life by Christ's covenant with the Father. Our salvation has been secured not only because Jesus died for our sins but also because His death was part of a covenant He had

with the Father.

The fact that Jesus suffered on my behalf is staggering; but His crucifixion was a component of an even more powerful reality: His covenant with the Father.

The terms of Christ's covenant were such that if He would live His life blamelessly and offer His holy life upon the cross for sins then everyone who believed in the Son of God would be granted forgiveness by God.

The Father would look to Christ's sacrifice and see justice; sinners would look to Jesus and find mercy. We are saved by this New Covenant.

Yet, as maturing disciples, we find in Christ's covenantal mission not only just our peace but also a pattern Christ calls us to follow.

He told His disciples, "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you"

(John 20:21). Having laid down His life in covenant surrender, He now bids us

to follow Him (Matt. 16:24). Of course, our cross does not replace His cross,

nor do the local covenants we make with God supersede Christ's eternal

covenant. *The truth is, our cross extends the power of Christ's cross into*

our world and times. Indeed, our covenant with God finds its backing because

of Christ's covenant with the Father.

Thus, the Lord invites us to follow Him; even as He covenanted with God for the sins of the world, so we covenant with God for our

homes, cities and nations. The covenant positions us in the same attitude

expressed by Christ, revealed again through us for our

families, cities and nations.

The Harvest and Covenant Power

To many, the idea of making a special covenant with God is unfamiliar. Yet, besides the major covenants we mentioned earlier, the Bible tells of many other times when men made a localized covenant with God. (See 2 Kings 11:17; 23:3; 2 Chr. 29:10; Ezra 10:3; etc.) I believe that many have already felt the Holy Spirit speaking, urging them to deepen their commitment to Christ on behalf of their families, cities and nations.

Even so, covenants—and our obedience to them—must not be made casually. They must come from our hearts in response to the Lord's initiative. You will know the depth of your covenant by the vision, faith and depth of burden God has given you.

A new authority is coming to those who desire full conformity to Christ. For a great harvest is indeed prophesied for the end of this age (Is. 60:1-3; Acts 2), and those leading the way will be individuals who understand Christ's covenant and, in surrender to Christ's initiative, have themselves covenanted with God for those they love.

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Power of Covenant Prayer (Creation House).