# **Foundational Truths - Covenants**

**Covenant** – briyth (ber-eeth) “Hebrew” – to cut an alliance, pledge, constitution, ordinance, agreement, between two parties.

The KJV bible translates Covenant as **diathēkē** (dee-ath-ay'-kay) 13x as Testament, and 20x as Covenant.

Our bible is a bible of Covenants, you could really call the Old and New Testament, the Old and New covenant. God's Covenant with us, and our covenant with him!

### **Primary Reasons People Entered into Covenant**

In Bible times, people entered into covenant agreements for four main reasons:

* **Relationship** – To establish a binding partnership or alliance that went deeper than a casual friendship.
* **Protection & Mutual Benefit** – One group might be mighty warriors while another were skilled farmers. Together they could ensure safety and share the benefit of food, shelter, and resources.
* **Trust & Integrity** – Much like two people working together in business, covenant guaranteed that neither would take advantage of the other. It created a foundation of faithfulness, loyalty, and dependability.
* **Love & Commitment** – Sometimes covenant was made simply out of love and devotion, sealing a bond of loyalty that extended not just for a lifetime but for generations (often considered up to seven generations — essentially forever).

### **Components of a Covenant**

**The Blood Sacrifice and Promises being Made**

**Genesis 8:18-22 NKJV**

“So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him. Every animal, every creeping thing, every bird, and whatever creeps on the earth, according to their families, went out of the ark. Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma. Then the Lord said in His heart, ‘I will never again curse the ground for man’s sake, although the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done. “While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, Cold and heat, Winter and summer, And day and night Shall not cease.”’”

* Partners would pledge never ending commitments to one another, never ending blessings.
* The word Covenant in Hebrew means to cut until the blood flows (Rick Renner).
* If no Blood was shed than it was not a covenant. There would normally be an animal sacrifice.

**Genesis 9:1 NKJV**

“So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.’”

* In a covenant, there is a blessing for keeping the covenant and a curse for not keeping it.

**I Corinthians 11:27-31 NKJV**

“Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.”

### **Our Part in the Covenant**

**Genesis 9:7-11 NKJV**

“And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth And multiply in it.” Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying: “And as for Me, behold, I establish My covenant with you and with your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth. Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.””

* “As for you” – this is your part of the covenant.
* “As for me” – this is my part of the covenant.

### **A Sign That Marks the Covenant**

**Genesis 9:12-17 NKJV**

“And God said: ‘This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud, and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.’ And God said to Noah, ‘This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth.’”

* There is always a sign or mark of a covenant. This sign or mark indicates that we have a covenant together.
* In a blood covenant, typically the scar would be the sign between two people, but God didn’t have a physical body to cut in this agreement, so they used animals instead, and God gave the most amazing mark or sign of the covenant. Everyone will see it from now on.

**Remember** means “always keep at the forefront of my mind.” Always on my mind.

* God is a covenant making and covenant keeping God and He is serious about it.

**Revelation 4:1-3 NKJV**

“After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, ‘Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.’ Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne, and He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.”

### **Exchange of Gifts**

**I Samuel 18:3-4 NKJV**

“Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan took off the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt.”

* Jonathan gave David his robe, his armor, his sword, his bow, and his belt.
* Exchange of coats – represents exchanging authority.
* Exchange of weapons – represents fighting together.
* Exchange of belts – represents possessions/wealth.

**Ephesians 6:10-11 NKJV**

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

* God has given us His armor to join forces with us to fight against the devil in our covenant with Him.

### **An Everlasting Covenant**

**II Samuel 9:1 NKJV**

“Now David said, ‘Is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan’s sake?’”

**II Samuel 9:3-7 NKJV**

“Then the king said, ‘Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, to whom I may show the kindness of God?’ And Ziba said to the king, ‘There is still a son of Jonathan who is lame in his feet.’ So the king said to him, ‘Where is he?’ And Ziba said to the king, ‘Indeed he is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, in Lo Debar.’ Then King David sent and brought him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo Debar. Now when Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, had come to David, he fell on his face and prostrated himself. Then David said, ‘Mephibosheth?’ And he answered, ‘Here is your servant!’ So David said to him, ‘Do not fear, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father’s sake, and will restore to you all the land of Saul your grandfather; and you shall eat bread at my table continually.’”

**II Samuel 9:8-10 NKJV**

“Then he bowed himself, and said, ‘What is your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I?’ And the king called to Ziba, Saul’s servant, and said to him, ‘I have given to your master’s son all that belonged to Saul and to all his house. You therefore, and your sons and your servants, shall work the land for him, and you shall bring in the harvest, that your master’s son may have food to eat. But Mephibosheth your master’s son shall eat bread at my table always.’ Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.”

* David didn’t do all of this because Mephibosheth deserved it or earned it. He did it because of the covenant he had made with Jonathan.

### **The New Covenant**

**John 3:16 NKJV**

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

* Love was God’s motivation to cut covenant with Abraham (Genesis 14, 15, 16).
* To bring Jesus to the earth, and usher in the New Covenant in Jesus’ blood.
* He treats us as if we’ve never sinned. Our covenant is based on God’s love for us.

### **Ancient Process of Cutting a Covenant**

1. Two parties agree to cut a covenant based on strengths and weaknesses each other had.
2. Each family would choose a representative.
3. The two covenant partners/families would choose a covenant site to perform the ceremony.
4. Sacrificial animals were selected to be killed in the covenant ceremony.
5. The animals would be cut from the neck down the backbone where two halves were laid beside each other.
6. The two family representatives would exchange their coats and weapons.
7. The two family representatives would state the terms/agreement of the covenant (blessings for keeping, cursings for breaking) and would walk between the two halves of animals stating those terms.
8. The two family representatives would then cut their wrist, hand, or finger, and mingle their blood together representing the two families now becoming one. The scar was a sign of the covenant and often they would add things to the wound to ensure the scar was profound.
9. The two families would then exchange names, and each would add the other's name to theirs.
10. Finally, the covenant meal of bread and wine representing the body and blood that was shed. They were giving themselves to the other family.