

Covenant People

Introduction

Today we will begin to look at the Covenant. A covenant is a treaty, it is a legally binding agreement, it is the strongest kind of agreement known to man. It can only be broken by death.

In our study in the next few sessions we will be looking to remind you that you have a covenant. That you have an eternal bond with an everlasting God. There is an everlasting covenant that binds you to God.

For some the purpose of this will be to show you that the invitation to follow Jesus is not an invitation to a club or a religion, it is an invitation to into a love relationship, secured by an unbreakable treaty, an unbreakable covenant. It is an unbreakable relationship with the God who is love. Your bond with God is not flimsy. You are not ordinary people; you are covenant people!

The assault on the covenant

One of the things the enemy hates the most about you is the everlasting bond you have with God. Most of the attacks on you is really about this bond you have. He is the accuser of the brethren and his job is to accuse you before God so that you can be discredited before God. Where he is unable to discredit you before God, then he will get you to forget your covenant. Because so much of the goodness of God to us is through this tight unbreakable bond we have with God in Christ Jesus. So If we can break that bond or at least get you to forget it or lose confidence in that covenant, then he will be able to wreak havoc in your life.

In Daniel 11, the prophet Daniel writes about a king from the North who invaded the territories of the people of God. If you read the story, you will see that this Northern king was against the covenant. So he does something I think is very easy to fall for, even today, if we are not well versed in our covenant with God. Let's read this from the message translation;

Daniel 11:29-32 “One year later he will mount a fresh invasion of the south. But the second invasion won't compare to the first. When the Roman ships arrive, he will turn tail and go back home. But as he passes through the country, **he will be filled with anger at the holy covenant.** He will take up with all those who betray the holy covenant, favouring them. The bodyguards surrounding him will march in and desecrate the Sanctuary and citadel. They'll throw out the daily worship and set up in its place the obscene sacrilege. The king of the north will play up to those who betray the holy covenant, corrupting them even further with his seductive talk, but those who stay courageously loyal to their God will take a strong stand.

Notice that the kings favoured those who forgot the covenant. Those who betrayed the covenant they had with God. This is one of the age-old dilemmas of walking with God. It sometimes feels like those without a relationship with God are more favoured than those who have a relationship with God. The Psalmist said in **Psalm 73:3** That he envied the arrogant or the wicked for their prosperity.

Daniel says that this king was against the covenant so he found some people who turned their backs on the covenant, he favoured them only so that he can destroy the sanctuary and replace it with obscene sacrilege. Scholars believe that this prophecy was fulfilled when a Greek ruler called Antiochus deceived many Jews with all kinds of promises, but ultimately what he sought to do was to replace the God of Abraham with Zeus, his Greek God.

The strategy of the enemy in our lives today is no different. He seeks to frustrate you, attack your day to day life, then he offers options outside of the promises of God for you. He promises favours and possibilities outside of your covenant. He convinces you to hold unto that unforgiveness even though the promise of God is that vengeance belongs to God. The enemy flatters you by giving you the promise of peace and satisfaction outside of forgiveness. But the real plan is to invade your secret place, the place of the covenant communion, the plan is to fill that space with something else!

But the last line of Daniel 11:32 says that those who know their God shall do exploits! They will successfully resist the enemy. Today I believe that despite the plan of the enemy, the efforts to conform you into the patterns of this world, you are those who know their God. You will do exploits! You will not cave in, in the face of opposition, because you know your God! You will not give up and compromise on your faith because you know your God!

This is why we are looking at this matter of the covenant. It is because the thing that God wants to do in your life requires you to believe in the promises of God so much that you cannot be swayed by every wind of doctrine. So take these things to heart. Remember the covenant! You are not normal. You are a covenant person!

Covenant People

Let's see what the scripture says about us

Ephesians 2:12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Christ is the central figure of this covenant. When a covenant is cut, a representative from every side in the covenant needs to be present. We did not have the

qualification to offer God anything, so God became man, took our place, and now in Christ, we who were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ!

We do not need to be people without hope, we do not need to be people who do not sleep or people who are fearful, because we have God who has given some really wild promises, and these promises are covenant based. We have been brought near to an invisible all-powerful God. On the basis a covenant that He will not break!

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

Covenant, the end of all argument

Hebrews 6:16

¹⁶People swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument. ¹⁷Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. ¹⁸God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged. ¹⁹We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, ²⁰where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

God entered into a covenant with you, through Jesus because he wanted to end all arguments. Have you ever had an argument with God about what He said? Especially in the face of a disappointment, we often argue with God, we wonder if the promise of God was what you thought it to be. We wonder if God changed His mind. God foresaw that we will face those times in our lives, so He decided to enter into a covenant to put an end to every argument!

Listen, there is nothing more that God can do to prove to you that He keeps His promise.

Genesis 15:7-20

Then He said to him, "I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it." And he said, "Lord God, how shall I know that I will inherit it?"

So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. Now when the sun was

going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him. Then He said to Abram: “Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.” And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying:

“To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates— the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.”

The answer to all your how shall I know questions is a covenant. In the description of events above, God gives us instruction on how we walk through seasons of uncertainty as a covenant person.

Look to Jesus

All the animals requested are types and shadows of Jesus. If your answer in this season doesn't go all the way back to Jesus, keep looking. Until you find out how Jesus, His death and His resurrection features in your story. Solutions to any problem that does not include Jesus are half baked. Because according to heaven, Jesus is the answer to all your uncertainties. All other ground is sinking sand.

Understand that you will go through trials

- The **smoking pot** was a picture of their trials in Egypt. It is a picture of the trials that you will go through as a covenant partner with God. It's a picture of the fact that just like the children of Israel, there will be seasons when you will be trapped in Egypt and unable to see the way out because of all that smoke. It's a bit like where we are right now, it seems like there is no end to this virus. We don't know when we can go back to school, go back to business...things are hazy right now...don't act like something strange is going on.

God will always bring direction in your trial

But notice that the smoking furnace was not the only thing! There was a **burning lamp**, which speaks of direction...thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. Listen in the midst of all of this, there is direction in the Word! There is guidance in the Word. You might not see your way out yet, but you have a lamp. Believe that. God is guiding you step by step. Take that step to love, to give, it's contrary to what the smoke around you is suggesting, but that lamp that word of God is guidance in this season. This is not a season to listen to the news more than you listen to the Word.

Keep your relationship with the Holy Spirit alive.

Here is another thing to note...the lamp was burning. This is not a time to have a lamp that isn't burning. The fire like we see in Acts 2 is a type of the Holy Spirit. How is the fire on your lamp? Are you trimming out anything that is dimming your light? The Holy Spirit is your live connection to the privileges of the covenant, He is the executor of the promises of God in your life, you cannot be without Him.

Jesus is the basis of this assurance.

But all of this was in the midst of the pieces. As covenant people we cannot become people who forget that we come by the blood of Jesus. Jesus qualified us. This promise is covenant based.

Conclusion

God wants us to give special attention to His promises. He wants us to build our lives on the promises of God. But He doesn't want you wavering, He doesn't want you unsure. He wants you to know that anything you build on the foundation of His promises are secure. Any hopes you have with the Word as your foundation is secure.

In response, it is wise of us to review the promises of God for the season we find ourselves in. Those promises were given, because the giver intended to fulfil the promise!