

**“God’s Covenant-Keeping Heart”**  
**January 28, 2017**

*“Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments.” Deuteronomy 7:9*

*“O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart.” 1 Kings 8:23*

*“For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, But My lovingkindness will not be removed from you, And My covenant of peace will not be shaken,” Says the LORD who has compassion on you.” Isaiah 54:10*

**CORE:** If there is one theme permeating the Bible—reflecting the essence of God’s heart—it could be summarized in the word: **“COVENANT.”**

**1. For many, COVENANT is a FOREIGN CONCEPT**

- **In the history of Western culture, covenants have been made—and broken**
- **In many ways, “covenant” has been replaced by:**
  - **Contracts** (*Built on distrust; crafted to protect; separate interests*)
  - **Convenience** (*Conditional commitments—based on options*)

**2. For others, COVENANT has become a LIFESTYLE**

- **Documented in ancient societies**
- **Yet, still practiced among people in the Third World.**
- **Still honored as a uniting force between nations, clans, & individuals.**

**3. Here are some WORKING DEFINITIONS:**

**COVENANT** is a binding, life-changing agreement between two parties that is—

- **Birthed in unconditional love & trust**
- **Established on blood sacrifice & sacred oaths/promises**
- **Enduring over time**

**COVENANT** comes from the Latin word *“convinere”* meaning *“to come together in agreement.”* The Hebrew word *“berith”* speaks of *binding or welding.*

**COVENANT** is more than a “legal transaction”—it is an on-going, fulfilling “interaction” with a **LIVING GOD**. It’s a **LIFESTYLE**—not a mere **LEGALITY**. A **SACRED RELATIONSHIP** of **SUPERNATURAL ONENESS**.

- 4. There are several KEY COMPONENTS involved in COVENANT-MAKING:**
- a. INITIATED by a person of SUPERIOR power, authority, position, & resources.** (NOTE: God initiated the covenant with Abraham, with Moses, and (ultimately) with all of us at the Cross)
  - b. ENACTED by a REPRESENTATIVE—one who is both acting & speaking with authority on behalf of another.** NOTE: This is a unique way of thinking—in which people are “in” a representative person whose actions & achievements become the actions & achievements of the whole family/tribe.
    - a. In 1 Samuel 17- Goliath represented the Philistines; David—represented Israel. David’s victory became Israel’s victory!**
    - b. In Judges 6:34 “the LORD clothed Himself in Gideon” ESV**
    - c. On the Cross, “God was *in Christ* reconciling the world to Himself” (2 Corinthians 5:19)**
    - d. SEE Romans 6:4-8; we were also carried to the Cross, represented in Him! Jesus became our “*guarantor*” (*living guarantee!*)**
  - c. BOUND BY AN OATH—establishing a non-negotiable reality!**
    - a. Contracts involve concessions & protections**
    - b. BUT in an OATH a person gives their WHOLE LIFE to another—holding nothing back.**
    - c. Contracts are re-negotiated because of inconvenience, distrust, betrayal, & selfishness. BUT COVENANT OATHS are made with UNCONDITIONAL LOVE, responsibility, & devotion. (Deut. 7:9). Also 1 Thessalonians 5:24.**
  - d. UNITED through a BLOOD SACRIFICE.**
    - a. Walking thru an animal carcass that was split in two—symbolized the journey into a new life—sacrificing for one another—emerging in unity.**
    - b. SCARS became COVENANT SEALS. (i.e., on the hand; male circumcision; NT- 1 Cor. 1:22- “The HS—the seal of ownership.”**
  - e. CREATION OF A NEW COMMUNITY. NOTE: “*In covenant, a new kind of family bond is created—joining us together with Jesus in a radically new life relationship. “Hesed” is the Hebrew word used to describe this new covenant culture—relationships knit by the lovingkindness of God...first generation believers would say- ‘(Jesus’) blood is thicker than milk.’—meaning that those bound by the blood of covenant are held in a stronger bond than those who drank the same mother’s milk.*”**

**READ Ephesians 3:16-19**