

The Covenants of God
Lesson 1 - The Blessing of Having a Covenant With God
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Introduction: Everything that God does is a *reflection of His character*.

- A. All of God's actions are designed *to bless His people*. **(Deut 6:24-25)**
 - 1. Whatever provisions God makes for us is for our good always.
 - 2. Men often pervert and fail to understand God's actions because they do not know God! If God provides and directs then I will trust Him! **(Rom 3:4)**
- B. When God describes His nature it *gives us great confidence in His covenant* with us!
 - 1. God will tell us what He will do and be faithful to that! **(Deut 7:9; Ex 34:6-7)**
 - 2. Those who trust the Lord will *never be ashamed!* **(Ps 25:2-3, 20-21)**

I. Some Covenant Basics

- A. God uses the word "covenant" to *describe all relationships to Him*.
 - 1. Covenant - διαθήκη diatheke - 1) a disposition, arrangement, of any sort, which one wishes to be valid, the last disposition which one makes of his earthly possessions after his death, a testament or will 2) a compact, a covenant, a testament 2a) God's covenant with Noah, etc.
 - 3. Why was a covenant so significant to Noah? **(Gen 6:18; Deut 7:12-13)**
- B. God's covenant is *unilateral and full of blessings*.
 - 1. God wants man to *know His character* and His desire to bless us.
 - 2. God will only bless us in consistency with His character. We then must be in a teachable relationship so we can *know God and His ways!* **(Ps 25:8-10)**
 - 3. God's covenant is delivered in *words that are unchangeable and knowable!*

II. God's Covenants Reveal His Character and Purposes

- A. God's *covenant with Noah* teaches us about God. **(Gen 9:8-16)**
 - 1. The sign of this covenant is seen by all today in the rainbow. There are no conditions made upon man to receive the blessing of this covenant!
 - 2. God promises that there will be no future worldwide flood. *He is faithful.*
 - 3. God's wrath will be revealed against sin in another way! *God is Holy.*
 - 4. Noah did not let others rob him of his fellowship with God. *God will bless those that "walk" with Him!* **(Gen 6:9, 22)**
 - 5. Those who honor and follow God's covenant will *have a future home with God!* **(Heb 11:7)**
- B. God's *covenant with Abraham* revealed God's eternal plan for mankind.
 - 1. This covenant had conditional promises for Abraham. **(Gen 12:1-3)**
 - 2. God commanded that all male descendants of this covenant receive the "sign of the covenant" in circumcision. **(Gen 17:10-14)**
 - 3. Abraham met the conditions of the covenant by walking by faith. He left his home and walked by faith in this new land. **(Gen 15:5-6, 18)**
 - 4. The rest of the Bible is the history of How God fulfilled this covenant! **(Mt 1:1, 17)**
 - 5. God would be faithful even if Abraham's descendants were not! **(Deut 9:4-6)**

Questions

1. What is a covenant? How does one make a covenant with God? (Think!)
2. Why do men need a covenant with God?
3. What false concepts do men have concerning the covenants of God?
4. What does the covenant of Noah teach us about God?
5. Why is God's covenant with Abraham so important?
6. Why did God command the sign of circumcision?
7. How did this covenant later bless Israel even after their unfaithfulness? (**Ps 106:43-45**)

C. The Mosaic covenant was to prepare a people for the Christ who would come.

1. God remembered His covenant with Abraham and would now make them a great nation. God's power and faithfulness is magnified. (**Ex 2:24; 32:11**)
2. God prepared His people for a national covenant. These people would now be taught more fully about the nature of God. (**Ex 19:3-11**)
3. The people were taught all the words and the people agreed to keep the covenant. This covenant was sealed with blood! (**Ex 24:1-8**)
4. Those under the covenant should have come to know God and thus see their sin and their need of a savior. Sacrifice for sin is central. (**Gal 3:20-27**)

III. A covenant with God provides great blessing and assurance

A. God described His rescue of Israel being like a cast off newborn in a field. (**Ezk 16:4-5**)

1. We live in a world of "throw-away people." This is not so with God.
2. Listen carefully to what our God is like. He wants to heal, cleanse and provide for the utterly helpless ones! (**Ezk 16:7-13**)
3. Some view God's covenants as "rules and legalism." They do not know God.

B. We must learn to serve and be blessed by a holy God! (**Lev 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:26**)

1. Anyone in a covenant of God lives a lifetime of teaching and change.
2. What a tragedy when men fear the anger of other men rather than plainly teach the Holy ways of God. Blessings and holiness must be found together!
3. Within the paths of holiness are provisions of forgiveness. Many will turn away.
4. Those who yield their spirits to God will find "the secret of the Lord." You will never regret trusting God. (**Ps 25:12-14**)

Questions

1. Why did the covenant given to Israel begin with great terror as they heard the voice of God and the scene around Mt. Sinai? What did they need to know?
2. Why do men need to know that God is Holy?
3. How did God describe His purposes in giving His covenant to Israel in Ezekiel 16?
4. What were some of the weaknesses in the covenant made with Israel?
5. Are gentiles a part of this covenant with Israel? How should this teach us about how we handle the Old Testament?
6. How do these covenants prepare Israel to receive the Messiah when He came?