

# Understanding Blood Covenant

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Credit must be given to E.W. Kenyon from whose books I learned most of this.

## FOUNDATION SCRIPTURES:

*Psalms 89:34 - My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.*

(Read Hebrews chapter 8-10)

*Hebrews 8:6 - But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.*

Other Words Meaning The Same As Covenant: Contract, Commitment, Testament, Will, Compact, Pact, Last Disposition.

OT Hebrew - "Berith"

NT Greek - "Diatheke"

LITERALLY in the Hebrew "TO CUT"

## Primitive Cultures

1. In more primitive cultures where covenants are still made between landowners, tribes, and leaders, a COVENANT is always marked by The Exchange Of Certain Things:

a. CUTTING OF BLOOD - Mixing of parties' own blood, cut in hands, gripping together and draining it over a chalice of wine –OR- the cutting of animals in half and both parties walking between them.

b. Vows with Blessings for upholding & Curses for breaking the covenant.

c. Garments, especially stately robes or clan unique patterns.

d. Armor, such as a breastplate or shield.

e. Property, such as staffs, or animals.

f. Weapons, such as swords or spears.

*1 Samuel 18:1 - And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. 2 And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house. 3 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. 4 And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.*

g. Always a Shared Meal in the presence of witnesses.

h. Jewelry such as signet rings, neck chains (not just an engagement ring, not just a wedding band - rather it is a

COVENANT RING, A MARK, A SEAL, A BRANDING, A SIGN OF COVENANT... I HAVE CUT COVENANT WITH GOD & THIS WOMAN. I AM PLEDGED, I AM SOLD OUT! Even Marriage is a covenant:

*Malachi 2:14 NLT - You cry out, "Why has the LORD abandoned us?" I'll tell you why! Because the LORD witnessed the vows you and your wife made to each other on your wedding day when you were young. But you have been disloyal to her, though she remained your faithful companion, the wife of your marriage vows. (KJV: she is the wife of they covenant) 2:15 Didn't the LORD make you one with your wife? In body and spirit you are his. • And what does he want? Godly children from your union. So guard yourself; remain loyal to the wife of your youth. 2:16 "For I hate divorce!" says the LORD, the God of Israel. "It is as cruel as putting on a victim's bloodstained coat," says the LORD Almighty. "So guard yourself; always remain loyal to your wife."*

i. A Memorial is usually set up as an Everlasting Witness to all parties - Tree Planting, Pile of Stones as a monument.

### **What Does Covenant Mean to the believer?**

My enemies have now become God's enemies.

My needs have now become His needs to meet.

My problems have now become His problems to solve.

My weaknesses have become His (on the cross) and His strengths have become mine (today).

### **God's-Side & Our-Side**

#### Covenant Making God & Covenant Entering People

*Deuteronomy 29:12 - That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the LORD thy God, and into his oath, which the LORD thy God maketh with thee this day:*

#### Covenant Keeping God & Covenant Keeping People

*Deuteronomy 7:9 - Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;*

*Psalms 103:17-18 - But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.*

#### Covenant Remembering God & Covenant Reminding People

*Psalms 105:8-10 - He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant:*

*Isaiah 43:26 - Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.*

#### Covenant Shewing God & Covenant Searching People

*Psalms 25:14 The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant. (One has to SEARCH for a SECRET!)*

## More Covenant Thoughts

The Father "cut" covenant with us through the blood of His Son Jesus Christ. Jesus was at once 100% man and 100% God, the "Son of Man" as he called himself and the "Son of God" as the scriptures declare. Therefore in the mind of the Father it was both divine blood and human blood that intermingled when the covenant was "cut" on the cross. Because it was both God and a man who hung there on that cross, the new covenant is the most binding agreement and the most powerful force ever to be unleashed on humankind. It naturally follows then...

If God is a Covenant Making God, we should be a Covenant Entering People Deuteronomy 29:12 - That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the LORD thy God, and into his oath, which the LORD thy God maketh with thee this day:

If God is a Covenant Keeping God, we should be a Covenant Keeping People Deuteronomy 7:9 - Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;

If God is a Covenant Remembering God, we should be a Covenant Reminding People. Psalm 105:8-10 - He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant. Isaiah 43:26 Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.

If God is a Covenant Showing God, we should be a Covenant Searching People. Psalms 25:14 The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant. (One has to SEARCH for a SECRET!)

As western Christians with very little understanding of eastern cultures and more primitive peoples, it is very needful that we study the practice of blood covenant, in order that we gain a greater appreciation for the New Covenant. Covenant practices such as our covenant meal - the Lord's supper, our covenant rings - wedding bands and engagement rings, become much more significant and sacred in light of both Biblical and historical study.

The great African explorer Stanley, entered into blood covenant with over 50 tribal chieftains. Over the process of time this gave him carte blanche access into every territory of Africa guaranteeing him safety from war-like tribes, as well as their help.

The chieftain of the most powerful equatorial tribe demanded that Stanley give him his goat. Stanley was in poor health, and the only kind of liquid he could take for nourishment was goats milk. Reluctantly after cutting blood covenant with this chieftain, he gave up his goat. In exchange, the chieftain gave Stanley his own copper-wound spear. Stanley felt he had gotten the raw end of the deal, but he later found that wherever he travelled holding that copper spear, tribal leaders and whole nations of people bowed down before him and gave him unlimited favor and assistance.

Ever since the garden of Eden when God himself "cut" covenant with Adam and Eve by shedding the blood of an animal and giving his fallen man and woman skins as clothing, all cultures and peoples have retained some vestige and form of blood covenant. It is as if God has left His testimony in the heart of all men so that they could grasp the power of His Covenant when at last the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ would be presented to them.

In blood covenant between men or leaders in primitive cultures, the ceremony is always marked by EXCHANGES OF CERTAIN THINGS. (As you read the following, ask the Holy Spirit to help you see analogies with what Jesus has done for you.) Always there is an exchange and intermingling of blood such as an incision in the wrists or palm and the dripping of blood over a chalice of wine, and/or the gripping of wrists

together. In some cultures both parties will then drink the wine after it has been stirred with the two bloods. Then often gun powder or some substance was placed in the wounds that the incision might forever mark or brand the persons as being in covenant with one another. Sometimes it is the leaders themselves whose blood is shed, other times it is a substitute from their staff whose blood is actually shed. Afterwards, blessings and privileges of the covenant are spoken loudly and forcefully between the parties, usually by an intermediary or priest. Then, curses are heralded over each party, in the event either party should dare break the covenant. Each party then begins to exchange property. Often prized pets or animals are exchanged as gifts. Then garments such as tribal robes are given to one another. Sometimes these gifts are demanded by the opposite party; other times these gifts are voluntarily showered on them by the other. Often jewelry such as finger rings, nose rings, ear rings, or chains are exchanged, and nearly always prized weapons are given to one another. Armor or shields are almost always exchanged, and swords, bows, and spears are common items that are swapped. Sometimes head coverings may be exchanged as well. After these exchanges have taken place, a monument is always erected. This monument is usually the planting of trees in a new plot of ground or either erecting a pile of stones. Finally, a covenant meal is always shared in a jubilant setting, often followed by a party or celebration of some type. What is remarkable about blood covenants in primitive cultures and there reverence of the same, is that adamant enemies INSTANTLY become friends and partners for the rest of their lifetimes and the generations to follow. And to break such a covenant was to be penalized by death by the hands of one's own family members.

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The best words we have in our language to describe the word "covenant" are contract, pact, compact, league, agreement, last disposition, testament, will, and partnership. All these words help in describing the concept of covenant, but still fall short of painting the whole picture of the sacredness of covenant. Covenant is more binding and eternal than a mere contract because both the Hebrew and Greek words translated "covenant" mean "to cut." It takes both some historical study and enlightenment from the scripture to even begin to comprehend the concept of covenant as birthed in the heart of God.