

6.30.19

Covenants

Karat-Bariyt

Just Beginning

Covenant Language of western civilization generally is verbalized and sounds like this...

- You made a promise
- I gave you my word
- We had an understanding
- We all knew the deal...
- We made a pact
- We exchanged vows
- You swore you would never do that again
- I pledge allegiance
- We took an oath
- Our guarantee is in fine print on the box
- She assured us this would not happen
- My word is my bond
- We came to an agreement
- They made a commitment
- That's not what the contract says
- They had an arrangement
- All I know is that we shook on it
- I heard they formed an alliance

- Partners?
- Together they formed a Union
- Yep, fraternity sisters
- Runnin' in the same posse
- On the same page
- That's between him and his crew
- Making the same journey

As a general definition, covenant is a written agreement or promise usually under seal between two or more parties especially for the performance of some action or exchange of shared expectations.

A world without covenants would be anarchy. A world with covenants constantly broken and violated is as we have discovered just as bad if not worse.

God has used covenants with mankind forever as His way of confirming His promises and expectations. Our present-day versions of covenants, promises, agreements, contracts and giving our word has become an endangered right before the very eyes. The impact on our thinking about and responses to relationships, doing business and our simple day to day interactions has become adversely altered. Our ability to live rightly and love completely has been damaged and become mostly toxic... no truth - no honor - no trust - no absolutes - no reason - no stability - no accountability - no genuineness - no good faith. This cannot continue to digress or stand as the new norm for human interaction and living, or we will collapse.

The good news is that we can recover, and we will overcome. We can recover we will overcome because we still have knowledge and complete access to the truth - we just need to keep our covenant. To do it, we must recover the biblical patterns and principles of "cutting or making a covenant" and then begin to faithfully implement them into our daily lives and the people we live our lives with.

In spite of our protests - covenants remain as God's way. It is the best way to bring back the best intentions and expectations in human relationship and interaction - it is a more excellent way. The process of this recovery and discovery will amaze and empower us all.

I want to show over the next four weeks how if we as a faith based community of Spirit-filled believers and followers of Christ will learn or rediscover the biblical patterns and principles of making covenant - how it will miraculously change and empower our lives in every aspect and avenue. God, marriages, friendships, work and business, church and ministry, children, finance and finally how it will radically change the outcomes of our future.

As your pastor, I'm going to ask each of you to make a small covenant with God and with myself for 4 weeks of faithful attendance, faithful tithing, faithful prayer and faithful reading of God's word. At the end of those four-weeks I will ask you to join me here on Sunday morning to hear and share the results. I am convinced and I am confident that the windows of heaven will open and there will be miracles and movement in our lives as we have never known or experienced. It is time to cut a covenant Reunion.

Context and Content

Genesis 26:28

They said, "We see plainly that the Lord has been with you. So we said, let there be a sworn pact between us, between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you."

The Hebrew word for a covenant is b'ariyt, which means "to select the best."

1 Samuel 17:8

He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me."

In this passage the Hebrew verb barah is used for the choosing of the best man to fight Goliath. This word can also mean to eat, in the sense of selecting, such as we see in the following verse.

2 Samuel 13:6

So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. And when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, "Please let my sister Tamar come and make a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat from her hand."

Introduction

The Hebrew language is a root-oriented language, meaning that every Hebrew word is derived from a root word and that root word is the foundation to other Hebrew words. Each word derived from one root will be closely related in meaning to all the other words derived from the same root.

In the case of the word bariyt its foundation was derived from the root verb barut, meaning "choice meat." But it is also derived from the verbal root bir'yah, meaning "fattened." As they are today in ancient Israel livestock that will be slaughtered are fed special grains to make them fat to make them the best or choiced meat of the fattened livestock the choicest.

So how is fattened choice meat related to the word for "covenant?" The phrase "make a covenant," appears eighty times in the Hebrew Bible and in every instance, it is the Hebrew phrase karat bariyt, which literally means "cut a covenant."

The Hebrew covenant was instituted by the two parties of the covenant who would take a fattened animal, the best of the flock or herd, and "cut" it into two pieces. Then the two parties of the covenant would pass through the pieces symbolizing their dedication to the covenant and by that act were saying, "If I do not hold to the agreements of this covenant, you can do to me what we did to this animal." Pretty radical. This methodology of "making" a covenant is clearly recorded in the bible.

Jeremiah 34:18-20.

“And the men who transgressed my covenant and did not keep the terms of the covenant that they made before me, I will make them like the calf that they cut in two and passed between its parts— the officials of Judah, the officials of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, the priests, and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf. And I will give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their lives. Their dead bodies shall be food for the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth.”

The Hebrew word “know” (yada'), which is a common root in the semitic languages, has a wide range of meanings depending upon the context in which the word is found. Like our English word “know”, the Hebrew word can indicate mental knowledge, that is, that a person "understands" or "has knowledge" of something, as when we say, "I know that 2+2 is 4 and 4+4 is 8." But the concept of “knowing” something or someone takes on a special meaning in the semitic languages, and this specialized meaning has to do with relationship, and primarily a relationship that is based on the making of or cutting a covenant. We know this not only from the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament style) but also from literature outside of the Bible from the Ancient Near East.

We need to add one more word to our mix. In the Bible, we can see how the Hebrew word yada' which means "to know" can also have the meaning “enter into covenant together” in a verse like Genesis 18:19. Many of the modern English

translations (such as the NASB, NIV, ESV) use the word “chosen” to translate yada' in this verse, where God is speaking of Abraham...

“For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him.” (NASB)

For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him.” (NIV)

For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.” (ESV)

In this case the old KJV, translates the verse more literally:

For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. (KJV)

What does God mean when He says that “I have known him (speaking of Abraham)”? He means “I have entered into a covenant relationship with Abraham.”

It is clear from other literature of the Ancient Near East that the semitic root yada' (to know) was used in this covenant sense.

So, what does the word “know” mean in direct relationship to Hebrew word Covenant? It means to be loyal to the stipulations and expectations of the covenant that is being enacted between two people of honor whose intentions are to give their best to make sure the agreement or covenant is fulfilled. This definition is clear in Genesis 18:19 when God says that He has “known” Abraham. Obviously, He is not saying that He “knows about Abraham” or simply that He “has knowledge about Abraham.” Moses, in writing the text of Genesis, is using the word “know” or yada' in a common way that the word was used in the Ancient Near East and at the time he lived.

But why would the word “know” (yada') be used to denote a covenant relationship between two people? It is because in the Ancient Near East, a covenant between two people or between a King and his people was considered to be a relationship that could not be broken and that if it were to be broken, it would result in severe consequences (the curses of the covenant).

From the beginning of the Bible, we discover that God is the One Who established marriage between one man and one woman. Marriage does not just occur naturally in the created world. In cultures where the Bible has not been the foundation, we see all manner of male-female relationships. Even in some ancient African cultures, men swap wives annually, and in other cultures, polygamy is the norm. In the animal kingdom, the phenomenon where one male animal selects one female as a life-long mate is extremely rare. But when God created Eve, He brought her to Adam, and Adam exclaimed: "This time it is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh," and Moses gives us the inspired conclusion: (Genesis 2:24), "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and they shall be one flesh." Thus, from the beginning, marriage is cast as a joining together in covenant of one man and one woman. This is why the prophet Malachi emphasizes that God hates divorce:

Mal 2:13-16

This is another thing you do: you cover the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping and with groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. Yet you say, 'For what reason?' Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. But not one has done so who has a remnant of the Spirit. And what did that one do while he was seeking a godly offspring? Take heed then to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth. For I hate divorce," says the LORD, the God of Israel, "and him who covers his

garment with wrong," says the LORD of hosts. "So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously."

So, when Moses writes in Gen 4:1 that "Adam knew his wife Eve and she conceived...", he is using the word "know" (yada') in its covenant sense: Adam was faithful to the covenant of marriage into which he and Eve had entered, a covenant which meant he would have a spiritual and physical oneness with her and she with him, and they would have no such relationship with anyone else. The physical relationship in marriage is an essential part of the "being one" which God intends in marriage. But the physical relationship does not exhaust the meaning of "know" in its covenant sense relating to marriage. To "know" one's spouse means to be faithful to one's spouse, not only in the physical relationship but also in all aspects of the marriage: support, comfort, friendship, service to each other, etc.

In the Scriptures (as well as in non-biblical Ancient Near Eastern literature), there is a difference between "knowing someone" and "knowing something." Since the word "know" in semitic languages can mean "to have knowledge of something," to "know something" means "to understand it, to be aware of it, to be able to explain it to someone else, etc." In other words, to "know something" means "to have intellectual understanding of something." But more often than not, however, in the semitic cultures and languages, to "know someone" means to have a relationship with that person, and very often, to have a covenant relationship with that person.

Another important thing to remember about studying the original Hebrew translation of the Bible and the Hebrew words in the Bible: words, in and of

themselves, do not have meaning. Words gain their meaning by the context in which they are found. So the cut, copy, paste approach of western Christianity is not what they would call a "best practice" approach. So, just because the word "know" (yada') is found in one place like Genesis 4:1, does not mean that its meaning in another context will be the same.

For instance, the Hebrew word yada' is found six times in Psalm 139:

O LORD, You have searched me and known [me]. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar.

Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all.

I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well.

Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts;

In this specific Psalm, you will notice that the word "me" of verse 1 is actually not in the Hebrew - it was supplied by the translators. Literally the verse reads: "Adonai, You have searched me and You know." Then, if you will look carefully at the other five times the word yada' is found in the passage, it never has the Psalmist himself

as the object of the verb but always the object of the verb is some- thing (not someone):

1. **You know when translates** You know and understand the reason for all of the movements of my life (when I sit; when I stand).
2. **You know it translates** You know the words I'm about to speak, even before I speak them.
3. **My soul knows it very well translates** to recognize and acknowledge the beauty and majestic work of God in creating mankind
4. **Know my heart translates** I willfully acknowledge and openly display my heart (my thoughts, intents, wishes), before You, O God, because I know that nothing is hidden from You. You know my heart.
5. **Know my anxious thoughts translates** You even know what I'm unable to fully express, and I acknowledge that You know all of these things.

So even in Psalm 139, the use of the word "know" (yada') does not relate specifically to an intimate relationship as in the marriage relationship. Surely, the Psalmist (who is David) had a covenant relationship with God, and even a relationship of kingly covenant with God, for God had appointed him to his throne. It is in the context of covenant, then, that we should also understand the word "know" in this Psalm. David is acknowledging and therefore affirming that he is maintaining loyalty of the covenant with God, for he is not hiding anything from God, and knows that he cannot hide anything from Him. David therefore confessing full covenant faithfulness to God as king over Israel, and pledges his ongoing faithfulness to God, the Great King (check out Psalms 47:2; 48:2).

7.7.19

Context and Glossary for "Yada Karat B'ariyt"

"Our Humanity is the Corruption of Covenant - Emanuel is the Fullness and Fulfillment of Covenant."

Genesis 26:28

They said, "We see plainly that the Lord has been with you. So we said, let there be a sworn pact between us, between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you."

The Hebrew word **yada'**, which is a common root in the Semitic languages, has a wide range of meanings depending upon the context in which the word is found. When **yada'** is found in connection with the Hebrew words **karat b'ariyt** the meaning is simply; **to know - as in a relationship.**

The Hebrew word **karat** literally means **"to cut or make a covenant.**

The Hebrew word for a covenant is **b'ariyt**, which means **"to select the best."**

The definition of the Hebrew words **yada' karat b'ariyt**

Introduction

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Hebrew words. Each word derived from **one root** will be **closely related in meaning to all the other words derived from the same root.** Another important thing to remember about studying the original Hebrew translation of the Bible and the Hebrew words in the Bible: **words by themselves, do not have meaning. Words only gain their meaning within the context in which they are written and found.** So the cut, copy, and paste approach of western Christianity is not what they would call a "best practice" approach to understanding the biblical Hebrew language.

For example: the foundation for the word **bariyt** was derived from the root word **barut**, meaning "**choice meat.**" However, it is also derived from the verbal root **bir'yah**, meaning "fattened." Just as they are today, in ancient Israel, livestock that are to be slaughtered are fed special grains to fatten and to make them the **best cut** or the **premium choice meat from** the herd.

So how is **grain-fed and fattened choice meat** related to the word for "covenant?" The phrase "**make a covenant,**" appears eighty times in the Hebrew Bible and in every instance it is the Hebrew phrase **karat bariyt**, which literally means "**cut a covenant.**"

The Hebrew covenant was instituted by the two parties of the covenant who would take a fattened animal, the best of the flock or herd, and "cut" it into two pieces. Then the two parties of the covenant would pass through the half pieces symbolizing their dedication to the covenant and by that act were saying, "**If I do not hold to the agreements of this covenant, you can do to me what we did to**

this animal." A literal cut it in half? Hey, I guess that's what they call "**going Old Testament style**" on you! Now... eventually it moved away from literal translation - but evolved certainly into consequences that cut deep. The idea would be that the covenant breaker would be made half of what he or she were before breaking covenant. Such as; cut of one's family name, cut of one's public reputation, cut of one's business opportunity, cut of one's community influence, and definitely a cut into the respect and regard held for one's word. Pretty radical - but very real and very effective. This methodology of "making" a covenant is clearly recorded in the bible.

Jeremiah 34:18-20.

“And the men who transgressed my covenant and did not keep the terms of the covenant that they made before me, I will make them like the calf that they cut in two and passed between its parts— the officials of Judah, the officials of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, the priests, and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf. And I will give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their lives. The dead bodies will be the food for birds of the air and the beasts of the earth.”

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knowledge" of something, as when we say "I know that 2+2 is 4 and 4+4 is 8." But the concept of **"knowing"** something or someone takes on a special meaning in the Semitic languages, and this specialized meaning has to do with **relationship**, and primarily a **relationship** that is based on the **making of or cutting a covenant**. We know this not only from the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament style) but also from literature outside of the Bible from the Ancient Near East.

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"For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him."

For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him."

For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness

and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.”

In this case the old KJV, translates the verse more literally:

For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

What does God mean when He says that “I have **known** him (speaking of Abraham)”? He means “**I have entered into a covenant relationship with Abraham.**”

It is clear from other literature of the Ancient Near East that the Semitic root **yada'** (to know) was used specifically with covenant as its intent.

And what does the word “**know**” mean in direct relationship to the Hebrew word **Covenant**? It means to be loyal to the stipulations and expectations of the covenant that is being enacted between two people of honor whose intentions are to give their best to make sure the agreement or covenant is fulfilled. This definition is clear in Genesis 18:19 when God says that He has “**known**” Abraham. Obviously He is not saying that He “**knows about Abraham**” or simply that He

“has knowledge about Abraham.” Moses, in writing the text of Genesis, is using the word **“know”** or **yada'** in a common way that the word was used in the Ancient Near East and at the time he lived.

But why would the word **“know” (yada‘)** be used to denote a covenant relationship between two people? Primarily when it is used in context with the words **Karat** or **B’ariyt** that it takes on that sense or meaning. It is also because in the Ancient Near East, a covenant between two people or between a King and his people was considered to be a relationship that could not be broken and that if it were to be broken, it would result in severe consequences. In the Levitical biblical context there is covenant relationship with God and man, with man and God, with husbands and wives, with families, Kings, rulers, and their people, with nations, with friends and neighbors, with business partners and civil service, with religious believers/leaders and temple worship etc. All of those covenants whether conditional or unconditional had one thing in common. When broken - each of those covenant relationships had severe consequences.

When Moses writes in Genesis 4:1 that **“Adam knew his wife Eve and she conceived...”**, he is using the word **“know” (yada‘)** in its covenant sense: Adam was faithful to the covenant relationship (original marriage) into which he and Eve had entered, a covenant which meant he would have a spiritual and physical oneness with her and she with him, and they would have no such relationship with anyone else. The physical relationship in marriage is an essential part of the **“being one”** which God intends in marriage. But the physical relationship does not

exhaust the meaning of **“know”** in its covenant sense relating to marriage. It goes much further, much deeper. To **“know”** one’s spouse means to be faithful to the vows made in covenant to God and to one’s spouse. This is not just about natural promises but also about a spiritual covenant. God acknowledges and approves because God created and designed the original covenant marriage. This is directly connected to not only the physical relationship, but the spiritual relationship to God and each partner. It is connected in all aspects of the marriage: support, comfort, friendship, service, and of course physical, verbal and emotional responses and behavior. These promised and vowed responses are the best and premium choice of the marriage covenant. And if that covenant is knowingly and intentionally violated and abused without genuine repentance or correction by one or both parties then that covenant has been broken and has been cut in two - there are consequences. It either must be restored, honored and renewed under accountable circumstances or disavowed, dissolved and can no longer carry the expectation of being honored. Let’s move on.

In the Scriptures (as well as in non-biblical Ancient Near Eastern literature), there is a difference between **“knowing someone”** and **“knowing something.”** Since the word **“know”** in Semitic languages can mean **“to have knowledge of something,”** to **“know something”** means **“to understand it, to be aware of it, to be able to explain it to someone else, etc.”** In other words, to **“know something”** means **“to have intellectual understanding of something.”** But more often than not, however, in the Semitic cultures and languages, to **“know someone”** means to have a relationship with that person, and very often, to have a covenant relationship with that person.

Just because the word “**know**” (**yada’**) is found in one place like Genesis 4:1, does not mean that its meaning in another context will be the same.

For instance, the Hebrew word **yada’** is found six times in Psalm 139:

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In this specific Psalm, the word “**me**” of verse 1 is actually not in the Hebrew - it was supplied much later by the translators. Literally the verse reads: “**Adonai, You have searched me and You know.**” Then, if you will look carefully at the other five times the word **yada’** is found in the passage, it never has the Psalmist himself as the object of the verb but always the object of the verb is something - not someone.

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So even in Psalm 139, the use of the word **“know” (yada’)** does not relate specifically to an intimate relationship as in the marriage relationship. The writer David, was a walking living breathing covenant. He had not only a covenant relationship with God, but also a relationship of kingly covenant with Him as well. God had anointed and appointed David to his throne. It is in the context of covenant, then, that we should also understand the word **“know”** in this Psalm. David is acknowledging and therefore affirming that he is maintaining loyalty of the covenant with God, for he is not hiding anything from God, and knows that he cannot hide anything from Him. David therefore confessing full covenant faithfulness to God as king over Israel, and pledges his ongoing faithfulness to God, the Great King (check out Psalms 47:2; 48:2).

Yada Karat Beriyt

You know the intentions of my heart; they are to give the best I have to offer in faithful obedience to my faith in God through Christ - to lead and to love my

family through Christ - to faithfully serve, support and worship God as part of the Church - the body of Jesus Christ. This is my covenant - in Jesus name.

7.14.19

Spiritual Covering and the Provisions and Conditions of Biblical Covenants in Christ Jesus

If we are to understand the principles and protocols for Spiritual Covering and Practical Conditions of biblical covenants in Christ Jesus then we must be in agreement that they exist.

What is a spiritual covering within the context of a biblical covenant? Some have taught (Shepherding Movement circa; 1970's) that a spiritual covering is provided through the authority structure of the Church and submission to those who hold that authority. The biblical principle is submission to authority. We submit to God in Christ, wives to husbands, sheep to shepherd, leaders to Pastor, the church to Christ and so on. Most overlook the very specific parameters attached to each submission. There certainly is biblical validity (New Testament) and precedent for that teaching - but the abuses and misuses eventually pushed people away from covenant relationships altogether, most never return. The practical expression of that biblical principle is "chain of command." It is valid and is important but wasn't fully what God had in mind for the biblical provision of spiritual covering. Spiritual Covering is fulfilled and completed within the New Covenant established in and through direct relationship with Jesus Christ (Hebrews chapter 9).

Romans 8:35-39

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we

are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2 Corinthians 3:5-6

Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Here it is then; when we make a covenant relationship with God through Christ Jesus we are "spiritually covered." He covers us, He Shelters us, He stands over us, He prays for us, He hides and shields us. We are covered in our sin and we are covered in our salvation with the gift of eternal life. This covering comes from Christ and in its redeeming and eternal values - is unconditional. However, this spiritual covering comes also with expectations and provisions that require us to keep our covenant with Him if we expect or believe for temporal covering and blessing.

Listen to how the Hebrew language intertwines the context of "Cut Covenant" with the context of "Spiritual Covering."

sakak; to cover shelter and shield

kasah; to cover or conceal

kaphar; cover and atone

When the biblical Hebrew writers used these root words for covered in the same context with cut covenant there is a deep revealed truth available for us to understand the significance and meaning that God places on our shared covenant with Him and the covenants we share with others. In this pairing of the two a cut covenant now means;

If you will keep and not break your covenant with Me I will shelter you, I will stand over you, I will protect and shield you, I will Cover you and Hide you beneath My wings as an Everlasting Covenant.

Interestingly, the spiritual covering is upheld by the kept or fulfilled promises and vows made to the covenant made with God and His Word (Word -Christ Jesus). The spiritual covering can be seen and manifested through many expressions and life circumstances; from pardon, to protection, to plans and purposes, forms of favor, blessing and opportunity, access, influence and safety - authority and submission, accountability and expectations. All connected directly to covenant. But it also means that in order for that covering to have any meaning and effect the covenant must be kept and honored in good faith, just as was first intended. For example: The New Covenant begins and ends in right relationship with Jesus Christ. How

would we do that if we don't do what Jesus said to do? How do we do that if we do not keep our covenant?

Jesus said, **"if you love Me keep my commandments."** Then He said, **"This is My commandment, that you love one another."** When asked what commandments were most important He said, **"To love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Then... love your neighbor as yourself."** Here is how that spiritual covering plays out in a biblical provision and condition.

Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

What are the Practical Condition of a biblical covenant?

The expectations given, agreements and promises made, and the conditions and timelines accepted.

Practical Conditions for Biblical Covenants

- Our unilateral covenant relationships will mirror our bilateral covenant relationship with God.
- In covenant relationship with God (bilateral) we must destroy the things in our life that keep us from loving and obeying Him completely. To be successful and to be meaningful, this must also be true of unilateral covenant relationships as well.

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Spiritual Covering and the Provisions and Conditions of Biblical Covenants in Christ Jesus

Proverbs 3:3-4

Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.

Psalms 84:11

For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.

If we are to understand the principles and protocols for Spiritual Covering and Practical Conditions of biblical covenants in Christ Jesus then we must be in agreement that they exist.

What is a spiritual covering within the context of a biblical covenant?

Some have taught (Shepherding Movement circa; 1970's) that a spiritual covering is provided through the authority structure of the Church and strict submission to those who hold that authority. They ran into trouble when the lines got blurry between control and authority - **Authority doesn't always mean control and control doesn't always mean authority.** However the biblical principle of submission to authority is real and it is uniquely connected to covenant relationships. Here is how it works - we first submit to God in Christ, then it pushes

out from there; wives to husbands, sheep to shepherd, leaders to Pastor, the church to Christ, and so on. Unfortunately most overlook or push back from the very specific biblical parameters attached to each submission - those too are very real. Just so we are clear, there certainly is biblical validity (New Testament) and scriptural framework for that teaching - but because of the abuses and misuses eventually push people away from covenant relationships altogether, most never return. But we live in a day and a time where **keeping our word, honoring God's word**, and to live under the protection of the "Kept Covenant" is critically important to ourselves, our families and our church communities.

This is a day and a time where true spiritual authority is no longer appreciated or even understood because of those misuses and abuses. The practical expression of that biblical principle is "chain of command." Within God's chain of command there is also a spiritual covering of support and strength when leaders, husbands, parents, shepherds humbly yet decisively serve others with their authority rather than seek to control others with that authority. All of it is valid and important but our version wasn't fully what God had in mind for the biblical protocol and provision of spiritual covering. Spiritual Covering is fulfilled and completed within the New Covenant established in and through direct relationship with Jesus Christ (Hebrews chapter 9) - and is only fully realized and experienced when covenants have been honored and in good faith - kept. Kept Covenant. Let's dig in to this.

Romans 8:35-39

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we

are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2 Corinthians 3:5-6

Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Romans 1:21-23

For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

When God makes covenant with us through Christ Jesus it is unconditional - love is the condition. We walk and live in His grace knowing that we are His and have received the gift of eternal life in Christ alone.

When we make covenant with God through Christ Jesus it is conditional - we are the condition. But we now move from simply believing and receiving - to believing, receiving, following, and blessing! The covering, connection and covenant relationship revealed in these passages runs deep. Here it is then; when we make a covenant relationship with God through Christ Jesus we are "spiritually covered."

Psalms 5:12

For You bless the righteous O' Lord; You cover him with favor as with a shield.

The first layer of that covering comes in the form of our salvation and the eternal life promise we receive within the death and resurrection of Christ. Because we have believed and confessed we are covered. Nothing separates us from that. But according to scripture there is more. As we keep our covenant in faithfulness we see, know and can feel that He covers us, He Shelters us, He stands over us, He prays for us, He hides us and shields us. We are covered in our sin and we are covered in our salvation with the gift of eternal life. This covering comes from Christ and in its redeeming and eternal values - it is a condition and reward of His unconditional promise. However, this spiritual covering comes also with expectations and provisions that require us to keep our covenant with Him if we expect or believe for temporal covering and blessing. Listen to how the Hebrew

language intertwines the context of "Cut Covenant" with the context of "Spiritual Covering."

sakak; to cover shelter and shield

kasah; to cover or conceal

kaphar; cover and atone

When the biblical Hebrew writers used these root words for covered in the same context with cut covenant there is a deep revealed truth available for us to understand the significance and meaning that God places on our shared covenant with Him and the covenants we share with others. In this pairing of the two a cut covenant now means;

If you will keep and not break your covenant with Me I will shelter you, I will stand over you, I will protect and shield you, I will Cover you and Hide you beneath My wings as an Everlasting Covenant.

Interestingly, the spiritual covering is upheld by the kept or fulfilled promises and vows made to the covenant made with God and His Word (Word -Christ Jesus). The spiritual covering can be manifested and experienced through many expressions and life circumstances; as a pardon, as protection, for plans and purposes, forms of favor, as blessing and opportunity, as access, influence and safety - as authority and submission, and as accountability and expectations. All of these connected directly to covenant. But it also means that in order for that covering to have any meaning and effect the covenant must be kept and honored in good faith, just as was first intended. For example: The New Covenant begins and ends in right relationship

with Jesus Christ. How would we do that if we don't do what Jesus said to do? How do we do that if we do not keep our covenant with Him?

Jesus said, **"if you love Me keep my commandments."** Then He said, **"This is My commandment, that you love one another."** When asked what commandments were most important He said, **"To love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Then... love your neighbor as yourself."** Here is how that spiritual covering plays out in a biblical provision and condition.

Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

What are the Practical Conditions of a biblical covenant? The expectations given, agreements and promises made, and the conditions and timelines accepted.

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- In covenant relationship with God (bilateral) we must destroy the things in our life that keep us from loving and obeying Him completely. To be successful and to be meaningful, this must also be true of unilateral covenant relationships as well.
- Grace covers our day to day sins, temptation, and failure. The Kept Covenant is hallmarked by the willful and intentional condition of our heart, mind and strength to follow, honor, and serve the God who saved and loved through Christ Jesus.