

Our Covenant Relationships

The Test

General

- God's covenants always test man to reveal his true nature

God's Covenant with Adam & Eve

- Gen 2:16-17, "And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.'"
 - Was this a test? Explain.
 - 2 Tim 1:9, God "has saved us and called us to a holy life — not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time."
 - Tit 1:2, ". . . a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time."
 - 1 Pet 1:19-20, ". . . but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world."
 - When did God know man would need a savior?

God's Covenant with Noah

- Gen 6:13-15, 18, "So God said to Noah, 'I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. So make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. . . . But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark — you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you.'"
 - ark (Heb, *tebah*): a container, box, chest
 - Was it a test for Noah to build this vessel?

God's Covenant with Abraham

- Gen 12:1, 4, "The Lord had said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.' . . . So Abram left, as the Lord had told him."
 - The test?
- Gen 15:5-6

He took him outside and said, "Look up at the heavens and count the stars — if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

- The test?
- Gen 22:1-3

Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, “Abraham!”

“Here I am,” he replied.

Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about.”

Early the next morning Abraham got up and saddled his donkey.

- The test?
- Heb 11:17, “By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice.”
 - test (Gk, *peirazo*): (1) examine, submit another to a test to learn true nature; (2) try to trap, catch in a mistake; (3) tempt, for purpose of making one sin
- Heb 11:19, “Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.”
- Does God learn something by testing man?

God’s First Covenant with Israel

- Ex 15:25-26, “There the Lord made a decree and a law for them, and there he tested them. He said, ‘If you listen carefully to the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, who heals you.’”
 - “test” (Heb, *nasah*): (1) test, try (attempt to learn the true nature of something); (2) attempt something
 - The test?
- Deut 8:2, “Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands.”
 - “test” (Heb, *nasah*, above)
 - “know” (Heb, *yada*): gain personal (firsthand) knowledge through the senses or by experience
 - The test?

God’s Second Covenant with Israel

- Deut 13:1-3, “If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder, and if the sign or wonder of which he has spoken takes place, and he says, ‘Let us follow other gods’ (gods you have not known) ‘and let us worship them,’ you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The Lord your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul.”
 - “test” (Heb, *nasah*, above)
 - “find” (Heb, *yadah*, above)
 - The test?
- Isa 48:10, “See, I have refined you, though not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.”
 - “refine” (Heb, *sarap*): (1) remove impurities; (2) discover level of purity; (3) figuratively, to purify through suffering
 - “test” (Heb, *bachar*): to choose or elect; in this verse, means God tested them and chose them on basis of the results
 - “affliction” (Heb, *oni*): misery, affliction, suffering
 - What does this reveal about the purpose of testing?

David and Jonathan’s Covenant

- 1 Sam 20:30-32 (David & Jonathan made covenant; David told Jonathan his father (King Saul) tried to kill him; Jonathan went to question his father)

Saul’s anger flared up at Jonathan and he said to him, “You son of a perverse and rebellious woman! Don’t I know that you have sided with the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of the mother who bore you? As long as the son of Jesse lives on this earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Now send and bring him to me, for he must die!

“Why should he be put to death? What has he done?” Jonathan asked his father. But Saul hurled his spear at him to kill him. Then Jonathan knew that his father intended to kill David.

 - Was this a covenant test for Jonathan? Explain

God’s Covenant with David

- Ps 139:23-24 (psalm of David), “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”
 - “search” (Heb, *haqar*): explore, search out, investigate, discover
 - “know” (twice) (Heb, *yadah*, above)

- “test” (Heb, *bachan*, above)
- What is David’s motivation for inviting God to test him?

God’s Covenant with Christians

- 1 Co 3:12-13, “If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work.”
 - test (Gk, *dokimazo*): (1) examine, try, test; (2) regard as worthwhile; (3) judge as good, genuine or worthy
 - The test?
- Jas 1:2-3, “Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.”
 - trial (Gk, *peirasmos*): (1) examination or test to learn true nature; (2) temptation, trial to make one stumble
 - test (Gk, *dokimion*, noun form of *dokimazo*)
 - The test?
- 2 Co 7:1, “Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.”
 - purify (Gk, *katharizo*): (1) cleanse; (2) purify, ceremonially cleanse by washing
 - How is purifying ourselves related to testing?

God’s New Covenant with Israel

- Jer 33:8, “I will cleanse them from all the sin they have committed against me and will forgive all their sins of rebellion against me.”
 - “cleanse” (Heb, *taher*): cleanse, purify, purge

Marriage Covenant

- A covenant is an unconditional commitment to the other person under all circumstances
- Self-centeredness is the most frequent unfaithfulness — doing what we want regardless of spouse’s desires or interests
- Acting in self-interest is violation of covenant

Blessing

- May Father test you to reveal those things that prevent you from becoming like him, so you purify yourself and be transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory.