

Our Covenant Relationships

Sacrifice

General

- cutting & blood are key to covenant making
 - key Heb phrase translated “make covenant” is *karath berith*
 - *karath*: to cut off, sever, cut or make
 - *berith*: covenant
 - *karath berith*: literally means “to cut covenant”
- animal sacrifice was typical
 - covenant partners would sacrifice an animal, cut it in half, lay two halves on ground side by side
 - they walked between the carcass halves to ratify the covenant
 - symbolized surrendering their individuality
 - “walk of death”
 - total death to independent living

God’s Covenant with Adam & Eve

- no scriptural record of a sacrifice to cut covenant

God’s Covenant with Noah

- Gen 8:20 “Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and, taking some of all the clean animals and clean birds, he sacrificed burnt offerings on it.”

God’s Covenant with Abraham

- Gen 15:9-10, 12, “So the Lord said to him, ‘Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon.’ Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other; the birds, however, he did not cut in half. . . . As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him.”
 - What did Abram do that shows he knew this was a covenant sacrifice?
- Gen 15:17, “When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking fire pot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram.”
 - What did God do to ratify the covenant?

God’s First Covenant with Israel

- Ex 24:4-5, “Moses then wrote down everything the Lord had said. He got up early the next morning and

built an altar at the foot of the mountain and set up twelve stone pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he sent young Israelite men, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls as fellowship offerings to the Lord.”

- (Heb, *selem*) “fellowship offerings” or “peace offerings” or “alliance offerings” or “friendship offerings”
- Based on the translations of *selem*, what suggests these sacrifices actually ratified the covenant?

God’s Second Covenant with Israel

- Deut 27:4-5, 7, “And when you have crossed the Jordan, set up these stones on Mount Ebal, as I command you today, and coat them with plaster. Build there an altar to the Lord your God, an altar of stones. Do not use any iron tool upon them. Build the altar of the Lord your God with fieldstones and offer burnt offerings on it to the Lord your God. . . . Sacrifice fellowship offerings there, eating them and rejoicing in the presence of the Lord your God.”
 - fellowship offering (Heb, *selem*)
- Jer 34:18-20, “The men who have violated my covenant and have not fulfilled the terms of the covenant they made before me, I will treat like the calf they cut in two and then walked between its pieces. The leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the court officials, the priests and all the people of the land who walked between the pieces of the calf, I will hand over to their enemies who seek their lives. Their dead bodies will become food for the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth.”
 - “walk of death”

David and Jonathan’s Covenant

- no scriptural record of a sacrifice

God’s Covenant with David

- no scriptural record of a sacrifice

God’s New Covenant with Christians

- What was the Passover Lamb and what did it represent?
- 1 Co 5:7 “For Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed.”
- Jn 1:29 “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, ‘Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’”
 - “takes away” (Gk): lift, carry, take up, take away
 - “sin”: one sin (singular), the sin, sin in general; i.e.,

- one sacrifice for all sin
- What is the significance of John’s description of Jesus as the “Lamb of God”?
- What affect did Old Testament sacrifices have on a person’s sin?
- What affect did Jesus’ sacrifice have on a person’s sin and conscience?
- Rev 5:6, “Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain”
 - Who is the Lamb and what does this verse mean?
- 2 Co 5:21, “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”
 - According to this verse, what liability or obligation did we have that Jesus took on?
 - According to this verse, to what extent did Jesus take on our obligation?
- Gal 5:24 “Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.”
 - “sinful nature” (Gk, *sarx*): literally, flesh, soft body tissue; figuratively, human (sinful) nature resulting from being born into sinful world
 - How have we crucified the sinful nature?
 - What does this verse have to do with dying to independent living?
- Rom 12:1, “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship.”
 - Gk word for “urge” is both a personal plea and an authoritative command
 - Gk word for “offer” has a sense of doing it once for all
 - “body” (Gk, *soma*): physical body (human, animal, plant, etc.)
 - Sacrifice usually emphasizes death, so what does this verse mean, “offer your bodies as living sacrifices”?

God’s New Covenant with Israel

- no scriptural record of a sacrifice

Marriage Covenant

- Mk 10:8 (Jesus quoting Gen 2:24), “‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one.”

- According to this verse, what affect does marriage have on independence?
- 1 Co 7:39, “A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.”
 - According to this verse, what is the duration of the marriage covenant?

Blessing

- May you discover the absolute joy of living totally for your covenant partners, no longer living for yourself.