



Building Faith Series - Covenant of Faith 12.17.23

The Blood covenant by H. Clay Trumbull, outlines an experience of Henry Stanley.

In 1869, the New York Herald newspaper sent their overseas news correspondent, Henry Stanley, to find the Scottish missionary and explorer, Dr. David Livingstone. Dr. Livingstone had disappeared for six years and Stanley was sent to prove he was not dead. In 1871, Stanley found Livingstone.

During his expedition, Stanley came in contact with a powerful African tribe, but he was in no condition to fight them. When his interpreter suggested he make a covenant with the tribal chieftain, Stanley did so which required days of negotiations with the chief. After the terms of the covenant were reached, an exchange of gifts ensued. The chief wanted Stanley's goat and nothing less in exchange for his seven-foot spear. Stanley reluctantly yielded, but felt he got the lesser end of the deal. The goat had provided Stanley's much-needed milk for his health, so what good would a spear be to him? More than he realized.

Next, the tribal priest brought forth a cup of wine. The old chief selected one of his sons, a prince, and required Stanley to select an Englishman. Both became substitutes for the covenant-makers and representatives of the two parties. The priest made an incision in each man's wrist and let their blood drip into the wine. The cup was stirred, and they each drank from the mixed blood and wine. Then the priest pronounced terrible curses over Stanley. Then Stanley's interpreter pronounced curses over the chieftain, his family and tribe; curses that would come upon anyone who broke the covenant. Finally, the two men rubbed their cut wrists together, along with gunpowder, to mingle their blood and become blood brothers. The gunpowder remained as a visible mark of their covenant.

This act not only bound Stanley and the chieftain together, it included the tribal warriors with the company of Englishmen. The blood brotherhood became permanent, and a tree was planted as a memorial of the covenant. After the covenant ceremony, the chieftain declared to his people, "Come, buy and sell with Stanley, for he is our blood brother." From then on, Stanley and his men no longer guarded their possessions. Nothing was touched. To steal from Stanley and his men was to break the covenant and steal from the chieftain himself—an act which brought the penalty of death.

Everywhere Stanley went in Africa, the spear proved to be more powerful than the goat. That copper-wound spear carried the old chieftain's authority, and everybody bowed to him and submitted to him. Blood covenant was so sacred it was never broken by anyone. Neither Stanley or Livingstone ever witnessed anyone breaking it. No one could remain alive in Africa who broke a covenant. The curses would overtake them, carried out by the people bound to the covenant. Covenants were so revered that children to the third and fourth generations would keep it.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT THE COVENANT?

God made covenants with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David.

Genesis 15 | God's covenant with Abram – Blood Covenant

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I *am* your shield, your exceedingly great reward."

² But Abram said, "Lord God, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³ Then Abram said, "Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!"

⁴ And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir." ⁵ Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."

⁶ And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

⁷ Then He said to him, "I *am* the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it."

⁸ And he said, "Lord God, how shall I know that I will inherit it?"

⁹ So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." ¹⁰ Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. ¹¹ And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

¹² Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him. ¹³ Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. ¹⁴ And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. ¹⁵ Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. ¹⁶ But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

¹⁷ And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. ¹⁸ On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying:

Ⓐ “To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates— ¹⁹ the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, ²⁰ the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, ²¹ the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.”

Genesis 17:4-6 | Abram to Abraham - Covenant Name Change!

⁴ “As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be Ⓐ a father of Ⓐ many nations. ⁵ No longer shall Ⓐ your name be called Ⓐ Abram, but your name shall be Ⓐ Abraham; Ⓐ for I have made you a father of Ⓐ many nations.

Genesis 17:6-7 NKJV | Generational Covenant

⁶ I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make Ⓐ nations of you, and Ⓐ kings shall come from you. ⁷ And I will Ⓐ establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, Ⓐ to be God to you and Ⓐ your descendants after you.

Hebrews 8:10 NKJV | Reminder of the generational Covenant

¹⁰ For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Ⓐ Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and Ⓐ I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Genesis 17:9-11 NKJV | Outward Sign of the Old Covenant

⁹ And God said to Abraham: “As for you, Ⓐ you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. ¹⁰ This *is* My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Ⓐ Every male child among you shall be circumcised; ¹¹ and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be Ⓐ a sign of the covenant between Me and you.

Romans 2:28-29 | Inward Sign of the New Covenant

²⁸ For Ⓐ he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, nor *is* circumcision that which *is* outward in the flesh; ²⁹ but *he is a Jew* Ⓐ who *is one* inwardly; and Ⓐ circumcision *is that* of the heart, Ⓐ in the Spirit, not in the letter; Ⓐ whose Ⓐ praise *is* not from men but from God.

Genesis 2:24 NKJV | Marriage Covenant – Is more than two people who love each other!

²⁴ Ⓐ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and Ⓐ be Ⓐ joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

This is the foreshadow of the blood Covenant – When the male parts break the hymen in a woman, there is a shedding of blood. Cannot occur between the man with man and woman with woman. Marriage between the Christ and the church. Covenant sanctity is so important to God.

