

Steps In Establishing A Covenant

'Covenant' is something that is very unknown in the western mindset. We do not know what it is all about, how it's established, what it stands for, the good and bad that is made available through it, etc. Yet, 'Covenant' is at the very heart of how God deals with the human race. Is it any wonder that we can't understand what God is doing, and why he is working in our lives the way he does at times.

Most eastern people understand 'Covenant' very well. It is still used as common practice in making agreements and commitments in many parts of the eastern world. There are numerous steps involved in the process of making a covenant. If you study eastern culture, you will readily find these steps. It was God who originated 'Covenant'. How it is made/cut was designed by God. In eastern culture, the concept has stayed intact. In our western culture, it is pretty much an unknown concept.

Below are listed the basic steps of making/cutting covenant. Included are some scriptures that show different aspects of the process. There does not seem to be any one place in scripture that lays out how 'Covenant' is made. The reason for that is likely because everyone in the eastern world already knew how to make a 'Covenant'. However, the Bible does give enough references to 'Covenants' that were made and how it happened, that we are able to use the scripture to confirm the various steps of making a covenant.

****As a side study, please notice how today's 'Marriage Ceremony' is formed after the steps of 'Covenant'. In marriage, people are making 'Covenant' and many times don't even know what the various traditions represent.*

1. *The two people making a covenant ALWAYS KNEW EACH OTHER VERY WELL.*
 - a. *Noah (Genesis 6-9) - God and Noah had a long relationship before covenant was established in chapter 9.*
 - b. *Abraham (Genesis 12-15) - God and Abraham went through quite a long process before covenant was actually established in chapter 15.*
 - c. *David and Jonathan (I Samuel 20:8,17) - The trust and love that had grown between the two shows a long standing relationship.*

2. *They would then meet in a public area like a field or courtyard. The purpose was so that THE COVENANT WOULD NOT BE A PRIVATE/ SECRET MATTER. It usually included A GROUP OF WITNESSES.*
 - a. *Noah (Genesis 9)*
 - b. *David & Jonathan (I Samuel 20:11,16,42)*
 - c. *Jesus & Us. (Matt. 10:32-33)*

3. *Then they would exchange robes. This signified an IDENTITY EXCHANGE. (They were no longer their own person. They had lost an individual identity. The two had now taken on each other's identity.)*
 - a. *We are given a Robe of Righteousness via the covenant Jesus cut for us. (Isaiah 6:1, 61:10; Revelation 3:18)*
 - b. *We are in Christ and he is in us. (John 15; Ephesians 1)*
 - c. *Jesus became like us (John 1:14; Romans 8:3; I John 4:2), and now we are to become like him so that when someone looks at us, they see Jesus in us. (Rom. 8:29; II Cor. 3:18; Phil. 3:21; I John 3:2)*

4. *Next they would exchange what was called the girdle or belt. (This was used to carry the weapons) This signified an EXCHANGE OF STRENGTHS.*
 - a. *Submission, Obedience, and Resistance of the Devil are the Strengths we give to God. (Rom. 6:13; James 4:7-11; I Peter 5:1-10)*
 - b. *Jesus gave us his strength. (II Cor. 12:9-10; Eph. 6:10; Phil. 4:13)*
 - c. *We are to give ourselves to Jesus. (Rom. 12:1; II Tim. 2:21)*

5. *The weapons were then exchanged. Signifying A COMMON UNITY AGAINST THE ENEMIES OF EITHER PARTY. It also signified that THE TWO WERE BECOMING ONE IN PURPOSE FOR LIFE.*
 - a. *The armor of God. (Ephesians 6:10-18)*
 - b. *Kingdom divided against itself can't stand. (Matt. 12:22-37)*
 - c. *Becoming one in purpose. (Rom. 8 - Esp. v. 28; Gal. 5:13-26)*
 - d. *Weapons we use that are acceptable to God. (II Cor. 10:4-6; Romans 12:17-21)*

6. *Then an animal was killed and split in half. The pieces were arranged so that the two people making covenant could walk around and between the pieces in a figure 8 fashion. This was called the walk of death. It signified that EACH PERSON WAS DYING TO WHAT THEY WERE - THEIR DESIRES, GOALS, AMBITIONS, AND ANYTHING ELSE THAT WOULD EVER CAUSE ANY TYPE OF CONFLICT BETWEEN THEM, or hinder them from walking in complete harmony and becoming one.*

Then each one would point at the pieces and declare that God should do to them (As was done to the pieces) if they were to ever break the covenant.

- a. *Abraham. (Genesis 15:9-10)*
- b. *David & Jonathan. (I Samuel 20:3-4, 14-15)*
- c. *Jesus & Us. (Romans 5:8; John 10:15,17; Mark 10:45; Luke 9:23-24; Romans 6 & 8; Galatians 2:20; II Corinthians 4:7-12)*

7. *Then while standing between the pieces, each person would cut their wrist or hand and these would be joined in a symbol of mingling the blood with each other. This was the heart of establishing or cutting a blood covenant and it SYMBOLIZED BECOMING ONE.*

- a. *Blood used in Noah's Covenant - Genesis 9.*
- b. *Blood used in Abraham's Covenant - Genesis 15.*
- c. *Blood used in Moses' Covenant - Exodus 24.*
- d. *Blood in Jesus' Covenant - Matt. 26:26-29; I Cor. 11:23-26; Heb. 9. Romans 3:21-4:12)*

8. *Ground/Mud (sometimes gunpowder) would be taken and placed into the cut. This would cause a very definite scar. This was A LASTING SIGN OF THE COVENANT, AND AN OUTWARD EVIDENCE THAT THE PERSON WITH THE SCAR WAS IN COVENANT WITH SOMEONE.*

- a. *Noah's Covenant & The Rainbow - Genesis 9.*
- b. *Abraham's Covenant & Circumcision - Genesis 17:9-14.*
- c. *Moses' Covenant - an extension of Abraham's Covenant. (Circumcision)*
- d. *Jesus' Covenant & Circumcision of the Heart & Love - Romans 2:28-29; John 13:34-35.*

9. *At this point, BLESSINGS WOULD BE SPOKEN as a result of fulfilling the covenant. CURSES WERE ALSO SPOKEN which would take affect if the covenant was ever broken.*

- a. *Noah - Genesis 9:8-17.*
- b. *Abraham - Genesis 17.*
- c. *Moses - Deuteronomy 28 & 30.*
- d. *Jesus - Galatians 3 (Esp. v. 13-14); Hebrews 10 (Esp. v. 19-39)*

10. *Exchanging of names between the two parties involved in the covenant. Further signifying THE EXCHANGE OF IDENTITIES AND THE BECOMING ONE.*

- a. *Genesis 17:5 - Abram was changed to Abr-ah-am. God took part of his name Y-ah-weh and put it into Abram's name.*
- b. *Genesis 17:15 - Sarai was changed to Sar-ah. Again taking part of God's name, and putting it into her name.*
- c. *Genesis 24:12, 27,42,48 (And through the Old Test.) - God became known by the name of 'The God of Abraham'.*
- d. *Acts 11:26 - The followers of Jesus are known as 'Christ-ians'. Taking the name 'Christ' and making it into a new name that we are called by.*
- e. *Matt. 8:20 (Etc.) - Jesus became known as the 'Son of Man'. Again taking the human name 'Man', and putting it into a name that refers to Jesus.*

11. *A Covenant Meal was eaten. This signified each person was TAKING THE OTHER INTO THEIR VERY BEING/LIFE. BECOMING ONE.*

- a. *Abraham - Genesis 18.*
- b. *Moses - Exodus 24:11.*
- c. *Jesus - Matt. 26:26-29; I Cor. 11:23-26.*

12. *From that point on they were known as FRIENDS. Signifying that A BLOOD COVENANT/RELATIONSHIP HAD BEEN FORMED.*

- a. *Abraham - Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23.*
- b. *Jesus - John 15:13-15.*