

**SPIRIT OF LIFE MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL
MINISTRY SCHOOL
SESSION 45: THE BLOOD COVENANT**

Do you understand the underlying principle involved in the Lord's Supper? When Jesus said ***"This is my blood of the New Testament (Covenant), which is shed for many unto the remission (forgiveness) of sins"*** (Matthew 26:28) the disciples didn't say anything. Why?

They understood blood covenants. They understood the Passover, which was a blood covenant between God and Israel. Blood covenants are the basis for most all religions. When Stanley went to Africa, he tells in his books that he cut the covenant more than fifty times with fifty different tribes. The word covenant means to "cut", a passing between pieces of flesh. Abraham cut the covenant with his neighbors before he entered into the covenant with Jehovah God.

The Blood Covenant that we know about is called the Lord's Supper, or Lord's table. It came about in the Garden of Eden. God made a Covenant with Adam when He killed the animal and placed it's skin on Adam and eve.

Blood covenants were used by Stanley and Livingston in Africa and it opened doors for them. When the tribes would understand the significance of the Lord's supper (Covenant) then they were able to minister Christ to them.

The whole Redemptive plan is about two covenants. The Old Testament (Covenant) and the New Testament (Covenant)

There are three reasons for men cutting the covenant with each other.

1. If a strong tribe lives by the side of a weaker tribe, and there is danger of the weaker tribe being destroyed, the weaker tribe will seek to "cut the Covenant" with the stronger tribe that they may be preserved.
2. If two businessmen enter into a partnership, they might cut the Covenant to ensure that neither would take advantage of the other.

3. Thirdly, if two men loved each other as devotedly as David and Jonathan, or as Damon and Pythias, they would cut the covenant for that love's sake.

The method of cutting the covenant is practically the same all over the world. There are some differences of course, and in some cases it has degenerated into a grotesque rite, but nevertheless it is a blood covenant.

The way it is practiced by native tribes of Africa, by the Arabs, Syrians and the Balkans is this:

Two men wish to cut the covenant; they come together with their friends and a priest.

1. First, they exchange gifts. By this exchange of gifts, they indicate that all that one has the other owns if necessary.
2. After the exchange of gifts, they bring a cup of wine, the priest makes an incision the arm or wrist of one man and the blood drips into the wine. An incision is made in the other man's arm or wrist and his blood drips into the same cup.
3. Thirdly the wine is stirred up and the bloods are mixed.
4. Then the cup is handed to one man and he drinks part of it and the other man drinks the rest of it.
5. Fifthly, oftentimes they will put their wrists together so that their bloods mingle, or they will touch their tongues to each other's wounds.

NOW THEY HAVE BECOME **BLOOD BROTHERS!!**

THE SACREDNESS OF THE BLOOD COVENANT

Mr. Stanley said he never knew this covenant to be broken in Africa, no matter what the provocation. Dr. Livingston also bore witness saying that he never knew it to be broken. It is one covenant that is perfectly sacred among all primitive peoples.

In Africa, if one was to break the covenant, his own mother, or wife, or his nearest relatives would seek his death, would turn him over to the hands of the avenger for destruction. No man can live in Africa who breaks the covenanthe curses the very ground he walks on.

The vilest enemies become trusted friends as soon as the covenant is cut. No man takes advantage of the covenant or breaks it. It is so sacred that the children to the third and fourth generations revere it and keep it.

In other words, it is a perpetual covenant, indissoluble, a covenant that cannot be annulled.

THE COVENANT IN AFRICA

When Stanley was looking for Livingston, he came in contact with a powerful equatorial tribe. They were very war-like. Stanley was in a weakened condition and was not able to fight them. His interpreter asked him "Why didn't he make a strong covenant with them." Livingston asked what it meant, and was told it meant drinking each other's blood.

Stanley revolted from such a rite, but his condition kept growing worse until finally his interpreter asked him again to cut the covenant. Stanley asked what the results of the covenant would be and the interpreter told him "Everything that the chieftain has will be yours if you need it." That appealed to Stanley and he investigated it. After several days they came up with a covenant which consisted of:

1. First there was a parley in which the chieftain questioned Stanley as to his motives and standing and his ability to keep the covenant.
2. The next step was an exchange of gifts. The chieftain wanted Stanley's goat. Stanley was in such poor health, and the goat's milk was about all he could take for nourishment so it was hard for him to give the goat up but the chieftain seemed to want nothing else. So, finally he gave up the goat and the chieftain gave him his seven-foot copper-wound spear. Stanley felt that he had been beaten, but he found that wherever he went in Africa with that spear, everybody bowed to him and submitted to him.

3. The old chieftain then brought in one of his princes. Stanley led forth one of his men from England.
4. Then the priest came forward with a cup of wine, made an incision in the young Prince's wrist, and let the blood drip into the cup of wine. He cut a like incision in the wrist of the young Englishman, and let his blood also drip into the cup of wine. Then the wine was stirred up and the bloods were mixed. The priest handed the cup to the Englishman and he drank part of it and handed it to the young prince and he drank the rest of it.
5. As soon as the two young men had drunk each other's blood, a priest stepped out and pronounced the most awful curses that Stanley had ever heard; curses that were to come upon him if he broke the covenant. Then Stanley's interpreter took his part and pronounced curses upon the old king, his wife, his children, and his tribe, if they broke the covenant with Stanley.

In Deuteronomy 11 and 27 Moses apportioned the land to the different tribes, he called their attention to the mountain of cursing and blessing. Curses were pronounced from the mount of cursing each year, and the blessings were pronounced from the mount of blessing each year.

6. Next, they rubbed their wrists together so that their bloods mingled. Now they had become blood brothers. These two men were only substitutes, but they had bound Stanley and the chieftain, and Stanley's men and the chieftain's soldiers into a blood brotherhood that was indissoluble.
7. Then gunpowder was rubbed into the wound, so that when it healed there would be a black mark to indicate that they were covenant men.

8. The next step in this ceremony was the planting of trees, trees that were known for their long life. After the planting of the trees, then the chieftain stepped forward and shouted, "Come, buy and sell with Stanley, for he is our blood brother." In a place where trees do not grow, they set up a pile of stones or erect a monument as a memorial to remind them and their descendants that they are partners in an indissoluble covenant.

The moment a covenant is solemnized, everything that a blood covenant man owns in the world is at the disposal of his blood brother if he needs it, and yet this brother would never ask for anything unless he were absolutely driven by want to do it. Another feature of this is that as soon as they cut the covenant they are recognized as blood brothers by each other and others.

A few hours before they cut the covenant, Stanley's men had to stand on guard about their bales of cotton cloth and trinkets, but now he could open the bales and leave them on the street and nothing was disturbed. For anyone to steal from their blood brother, Stanley, was a death penalty. The old chieftain couldn't do enough for his new-found brother. Stanley couldn't understand the sacredness of it, and years later wondered about it.

JEHOVAH CUTS THE COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

When God entered into the covenant with Abraham, there were several events that took place.

1. He changed their names. Abram became Abraham which means a prince of God and Sarai became Sarah which means princess of God. In other words, He lifted them into the royal family before he cut the covenant with them.

The Abrahamic Covenant which is the basis of Judaism and Christianity is the most marvelous covenant. It was sealed by circumcision. (Genesis 17) Every male was circumcised on the eighth day of life, and entered into the Covenant. If the parent of that child should die another Israelite is obligated to care for the child; or if the husband should die, to care for the widow. It is the Law of the Covenant. All things are laid upon the altar of this covenant. It is everlasting (Genesis 17:13)

This covenant bound Abraham and his descendants by an indissoluble tie to Jehovah, and it bound Jehovah to Abraham and his descendants by the same solemn token.

2. As long as Israel kept this covenant that was renewed in Moses, there weren't enemies enough in the whole world to conquer one little village. When God led Israel out of Egypt by Moses they had no law, no priesthood.
3. God gave them the ten commandments, the priesthood, the Atonement, the sacrifices, the offerings, and the laws that govern the sacrifices and the scapegoat, and the worship. All these belonged to the Covenant. The covenant did not belong to the ten commandments, the Covenant was the reason for the Law. It was called the Law of the Covenant.

Israelites were the people of the Covenant

ABRAHAM'S SACRIFICE

God told Abraham in Genesis 17:19 that he would have a son and he was to call his name Isaac. He would establish his covenant with Isaac for an everlasting covenant for his seed after him. In the natural this seemed impossible because of their age, but Abraham didn't look at that. He looked at the "covenant" promise of God. He believed that God was able to make good on anything that he promised.

In Genesis 22:2 God instructed Abraham to take his son Isaac up a mountain and offer him as a burnt offering. Abraham did not hesitate though it meant giving up all he held dear. It took three days and three nights journey. (Genesis 22:4) Together Abraham and Isaac built an altar. Isaac asked his father where the lamb was for the burnt offering. Abraham said in v. 8 "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went to the place of the altar. Abraham proceeded to put Isaac on the altar, and had the knife ready to slay him when the angel of the LORD said **"Abraham, Abraham", and Abraham responded "Here am I." The angel said: "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me."** In vs. 15-18 the Abrahamic covenant is confirmed.

This Covenant bound God with Abraham and it is indissoluble. In the story of Sodom and Gomorrah God said in Genesis 18:17 "shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do." You see, Abraham had family in Sodom and Gomorrah, and God knew the covenant. It gave Abraham the right to arbitrate between the wicked men of the earth and the God of the whole world.

THE NEW COVENANT

When we come to the New Testament and see Jesus and the disciples gathered together that night before the Crucifixion, Jesus said in Luke 22:15 ***“And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”***

Then he took the cup and said in Matthew 26:26 and 28 ***“Take, eat: this is my body. ...and he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament (covenant) which is shed for many for the remission (forgiveness) of sins.”***

Now you can understand that when Jesus said, “This is my blood” that they knew that when they cut the Covenant with Jesus in that upper room that night, that they had entered into the strongest, most sacred covenant known to mankind.

Jesus brings us a New Covenant, having displaced and fulfilled the Old Covenant (Hebrews 10:9). With the fulfilling of the Old Covenant everything connected with it was set aside. As the Old Covenant was sealed with circumcision, the New Covenant is sealed with the New Birth. The Old Covenant had the Levitical Priesthood, and the New Covenant has Jesus as the High Priest, and we as the Royal and Holy Priesthood (I Peter 2:1-10)

The first priesthood had a temple in which God dwelt in the Holy of Holies with the Ark of the Covenant (Ex. 40).

In the New Covenant our bodies are the temple of God, and the Spirit dwells within them.

Jehovah was the surety of the Old Covenant in Hebrews 7:22, Jesus came the Surety of a better covenant.

Jesus backs up every part of the New covenant. He is the great Intercessor of the New Covenant. ***“He is able to save all that come unto God by Him, seeing that He ever liveth to make intercession for them”*** (Hebrews 7:24)

God bound Himself by an oath to the Old Covenant. He was the surety of the Old Covenant. He said, in Genesis 22:16 ***“By myself have I sworn.”*** Just as God stood behind the Old Covenant and was surety, so Jesus is the Surety of every Word in the New Covenant. The resources of Heaven are back of Jesus and back of the New Covenant!

BLESSINGS OF THE NEW COVENANT

1. The first blessing that comes with the Covenant is the Righteousness that God imparts to every member of the New Covenant. When you accept Jesus Christ as your Savior, the moment you are born again, at that moment God imparts to you Righteousness. This gives you a standing in the presence of the Father identical with the standing of Jesus. Many have not known about this. Often we shrink from it. If you believe the Bible, and believe that God is your Righteousness, and that you are a New Creation in Christ Jesus, you will have come to the conclusion that Jesus has put sin away for you by the sacrifice of Himself, and the only consciousness you will have of sin is when you do something that is not right; and then you will take advantage of the Blood of Christ and of the advocacy of Jesus.

What is the Gospel: It is that God, on the ground of the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ, is able to declare that He is righteous, and that He himself is our righteousness, the moment we believe on Jesus. Staggering thought? Yes, but God Almighty becomes our righteousness the moment we believe on the Lord Jesus

When we walk in this knowledge, and walk as Jesus walked, we have faith that will stagger the world. The thing that hinders our faith is that we listen to Satan instead of listening to God. Because of this we rob the work of Jesus Christ of its efficacy, and we stand powerless before the adversary because we have doubted the integrity of the Covenant and word of God. God's righteousness makes us fearless in Satan's presence.

2. The second blessing is that the New Covenant brings us union with God. When those two men drank each other's blood in the Old Testament, they became one, absolutely one. When Abraham and God cut the covenant, they became one. Jesus said he was the vine and we are the branches. (John 15:5) The Apostle Paul said in Galatians 2:20 ***"It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me."*** We are in Christ and He is in us! Glory

THE REDEMPITIVE WORK OF CHRIST

In Ephesians 1: 19-23 *“And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”* Since Jesus is the head of the Body (Col. 1:18) all that is beneath His feet is beneath ours. His victory is our victory.

Christ did not enter the contest for redemption for himself. He did it for us. Now what is ours requires nothing but the taking because of the Covenant. It is ours NOW.

In John 14: 13-14 it says *“And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask ANYTHING IN MY NAME, I WILL DO IT.”* This is not prayer. This is the promise of the use of the name of Jesus. Peter used it in Acts 3:6. *“Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of JESUS CHRIST OF NAZARETH, rise up and walk.”* That man who had been lame from birth leaped to his feet, perfectly well and strong. The word **ask** comes from the root word which means demand. No disease nor infirmity can stand against the name of Jesus. In the name of Jesus we cast out demons. In the name of Jesus we are not demanding it of God. We are demanding that forces injurious to us shall be broken, diseases shall be healed and that circumstances shall be changed, that needs be met.

Prayer is to be made to the Father in Jesus' Name, not to the Holy Spirit or to Jesus. This is divine order. Stand on your blood covenant rights. Dare to use the name of Jesus.

The Lord's Supper or Passover is a confession of our faith and our loyalty to love, just as the Father's giving Jesus is a confession of His love. Jesus' coming and giving himself for us was a confession of His love. They were both loyal to love. Jesus said “As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. (I Cor. 11:26) It is a love Covenant. It is our loyalty and love to Jesus, and it is our loyalty and love for His body, the Church.

It is a confession of our love for one another. It is a confession that you have eaten and drunk with them, and now you are going to bear each others' burdens.