

Genesis part 4 - Covenants - Genesis 49:28-31

Intro – Good morning church and wow can God make it cold! Good chance we're not meeting together because of weather – so I hope this video finds you cozy. For our survey in Genesis today we are going to consider the subject of "Covenants". God made several in this book and with today being 2/14 – the covenant of marriage is also a fitting. Hopefully we can get cozy with some covenants this morning.

GOD'S COVENANT

1. What is a covenant? It is a solemn and binding agreement between parties - promise
 - a. Hebrew word *berith* - "a fetter" or "obligation" "to bind" in a relationship
 - b. Sacred obligation that binds the parties together in solemn promised relationship
 - c. Covenants are foundational to understanding Scripture and how God deals with man
 - i. Testament (Latin) = Covenant OT and NT Old Covenant and New Cov.
2. God enters into covenant and makes promises. Several of them in this Book of Beginnings
3. God's covenant with Noah, humanity and the animals
 - a. Gen. 8:21b-22 God brought worldwide destruction and weather change
 - i. God promised a continual change of seasons until the end
 - ii. Seedtime and harvest. Cold and heat. Summer and winter. Day and night
 - iii. This is our Fathers world and He has made covenant about climate change
 - iv. The weather is a testament to Gods faithfulness in keeping promise (summer)
 - b. Gen. 9:11-17
 - i. God promised never to flood the whole earth again - sign of covenant=rainbow
 1. It is nice to see a rainbow after the rain
4. God made a covenant with Abram . God promises him a son and a section of land Gen. 15
 - i. Many descendants and much land. All nations blessed through Him (Gen. 12)
 - b. God "cuts and covenant" with Abram in Gen. 15:8-20
 - i. Abram told to make a sacrifice. Cut the animal in two 15:9-11
 - ii. God makes the promises about Abram's future and passes between the pieces
 1. If I don't live up to MY end of the bargain...do to Me what was done to these animals (Jer. 34:18) God promises on His life – swears by Himself
 - iii. Abram is asleep when this happens (15:12)
 1. One sided obligation on Gods part. GRACE - not up to Abram
 - c. God gives Abram a sign of the covenant in Gen. 17
 - i. God rehearsed the same promises - son, land, descendants
 1. God changes his name to Abraham
 - ii. God gives him the sign of covenant - circumcision
 1. permanent reminder of Gods permanent promise (cut a covenant)
 2. our "old man cut off" is a reminder of Gods promise to us - security
 - a. circumcision of the heart - Rom. 2:28-29 (Jer. 9:25-26)

MARRIAGE COVENANT

- Valentine's Day is a fitting time to mention the covenant of marriage
 - Not referred to as a "Covenant" in Genesis... Is elsewhere in Mal. 2:14 & Prov. 2:17
 - Genesis sets some foundational principles about marriage
- Marriage is established by God, between a man and woman, as a permanent union on promise
 - Marriage can only be a male and a female - created Male and female – Gen 1:27
 - Made different but made to be one. One flesh union Gen 2:24 Marital union
 - God unites people in marriage permanently Mark 10:6-9
- Marriage is the highest of human relationships
 - Leave father and mother to be united....
 - Couples need to remember that their highest allegiance goes to their spouse not parent
 - Parents and in-laws must not usurp the place that only belongs to their kids marriage
- Marriage is to be kept in the faith
 - Marriage is a binding arrangement and believers are not to be bound to unbelievers
 - Unequally yoked together. Could never have spiritual oneness
 - Abraham made clear that Isaac was not to take of wife from the Canaanites – Gen. 24:3
 - Isaac send Jacob away so he would not get a pagan wife like Esau did- Genesis 28:1
 - Free to marry anyone we wish – only in the Lord 1 Cor. 7:39
- Praying for right spouse is key
 - Gen. 24 let her be willing to serve (water for camel) servant and diligent
- Preparing yourself to be the right spouse is also key
 - Jacob worked 7 years for Rachel servant/diligent/ patient
- Commitment is the master key aspect of covenant. marital relationship can be challenging - Gen
 - Jacob worked for Rachel for 7 years Gen. 29
 - Father in law pulled the old switch-a-roo on the wedding night
 - Charlie Brown and Lucy- football. Jacob & Rachel ended up Jacob & Leah
 - Expectations were dashed....at the very least changed and altered – (7 more years)
 - Not what they bargained for but didn't bow out marriage was not annulled
 - Marriage was consummated so there was a covenant commitment- honored
 - Jacob and Leah's marriage might not have always been happy but it had security
- Gen. 49:31 ...and there I buried Leah
 - Rachel buried on the side of the road Bethlehem but Leah in family tomb - Jacob by her
- This may not be the most romantic stories for 2/14 but it is a good reminder of the covenant
 - In Heb. 6:13-19 – Gods promise is firm and secure – certainty – anchor for the soul
 - Our marriages are a picture of the gospel. Do our marriages exude security?
 - We believe in security of the believer. Does your spouse have assurance in love?
 - The two becoming one unity and security
- God has made promises to us and all the changing climate is just a reminder that His promises never fail. Hot/cold, summer/winter show Gods faithfulness to His covenant promise.
 - I hope the highs and lows in your marriage say the same about your covenant promise