

Am I in Covenant? (Part 1)

Happy Sabbath to everyone.

This week our topic begins to address the question, “Am I in Covenant?”

It is a topic that I believe merits some serious and detailed examining, and some meditation on all our parts, because there is new light to be gained, and therefore I am devoting two weeks to its consideration. It is also a continuation of our study from last week, where we saw from the Scriptures that Yahweh speaks to His people, especially in these last days, through both His Spirit and His Church. This does not in any way undermine the importance of the Bible as the source of every right principle, and the foundation of every true doctrine... but there are times when the Word is not explicit on the details of its instructions.

At this point, the Scriptures themselves tell us to seek safety and wisdom from Spirit-led brethren, from the “counselors” that our Father has given to us in His Body, through His teachers and prophets. While going through some relevant passages in Revelation, I commented:

“The Spirit and the Bride say, ‘Come.’ Thus saith the Lord. Those who will be saved will hear what the Spirit says to the Churches, to the congregations of the Bride. They will not lean on their own understanding. They will follow no independent ministries, Covenant-less messengers, or private interpretations of even those doctrines that are not clearly spelled out in the Bible.”

So, we pick up from there this week with the obvious observation that, of course, not everyone will be pleased with this Biblical instruction. Where there is pride, there will be resistance. During our own movement’s evangelism work, we have encountered those who have claimed to be God’s servants, bringing a work of reformation, bringing new light, restoring old paths, etc. But when confronted by the simple Biblical truth – that our Father has always, always worked through a formal covenant – they have revealed their rebellious character, for this is a true test of those who respect and follow the Third Angel of Revelation 14.

Revelation 14 speaks of three angels’ messages that are designed to gather the 144,000 out of every nation, tongue and people. We have seen this passage many times, so I will just summarize that the first announces the impending judgment of Yahweh, and calls for worship of Him through victory over sin and a “coming to life” spiritually. The second announces the fall of Babylon, the end of confusion and falsehood, and a call for purity of belief and practice.

The third angel speaks of avoiding the mark of the beast, of overcoming through adherence to protestant principles, to overcoming through the word of our testimony, the testimony of Yahshua. More recent inspiration has told us that it is the third angel that is “leading a people” to Heaven; and all who are faithful Christians must move with him unitedly.

Thus, interestingly enough, it is not any specific doctrine that unites and leads the people of Yahweh into and through the time of trouble. While the angels are given in their declared order

for a reason, so that victory over sin and righteousness by faith are critical for beginning to follow the third angel, it is not any position on this or that belief, not feasts, New Moons, Godhead teachings, nor the labors that we may do to promote “the truth” that leads to the path of unity and life everlasting. The Spirit of Prophecy writings indicate that it is our understanding of the Mark of The Beast, and our united resistance to Satan’s final weapon against the saints... this is the trumpet that calls the Redeemed together and through which they will find unity. This is the context in which the true doctrines, the sin-free lives, the worship of the true God, the belief in the proper Sabbath, the observance of the appointed times, etc... These are all important, yes, but according to the inspired writings, these only have value within the context of unity of faith, and resistance to the Beast and his image. It is the Third Angel that leads Yahweh’s united people.

Now, as Creation Seventh Day Adventists, we have raised an alarm within Adventism, because most Adventists, like most Jews at the fall of Jerusalem, are saying, “We are the people! We have the oracles of God, and the Sabbath, and knowledge of the tabernacle.”

“We have the promises of our Father that we will never fail, the ship will go through to the end, and no matter what the critics say, there will be a shaking, and the pure will remain in the Church.”

The prophet Jeremiah faced precisely the same situation that CSDAs now face: We have the voices of the prophets who have gone before us teaching that the Church will endure to the end. However... while the promises are loved and recited, the warnings and conditions are routinely ignored – Adventists, Christians in general, just like the Hebrews of old, love the promises of Yahweh, but because they do not understand what a “covenant” means, they neglect the conditions of their salvation, and so they cannot receive a messenger who arises and says, “All the promises given to you are true... but they have passed on to a people who will bring forth the fruits of the vineyard,” as Yahshua said to the Pharisees in Matthew 21.

No matter how high and exalted the promises are that have been made to a people, if that people ignore the conditions that have been placed upon their relationship, the kingdom will be taken from them, and Yah will call another. Now this is where there is danger. Satan has another snare for those who hear the voice of Yah calling them out of fallen bodies. In calling a people “out” of a fallen Body, Yah may leave them to wander in the desert for a time, but He is always calling them “to” a Body, to a promised land, to a new country, and to a new covenant through which He intends to operate.

We have indications of this in what we have just seen: Yah gathers His people by means of three Gospel Angels, and He leads His people by the third, which is an angel of unity and protest, an angel of judgment and warnings, because the urgency of the time must be impressed upon the souls that will be saved.

In such a time as this, many messengers will arise, some impressive speakers, some charismatic leaders... but if they do not know the Covenant of Yahweh, and are not leading others unto this Covenant, then they are not of Him. So, the question that must be foremost for any who have become seekers of the truth, who have not yet settled into that truth “so that they cannot be moved,” is, “How do I know who is in the Covenant of Yahweh? How do I recognize the Covenant when I see it?”

Yahweh always works through covenant, through agreement. It is written specifically, “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3) It is in the context of the covenant that we are prepared for the trials and temptations of the final hour, as it is again written, “Surely the Lord Yahweh will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets.” (Amos 3:7)

The messenger Amos has said much that is relevant to us in this time, and if we know for certain that we are in Yah’s covenant, we can be comforted by His words. We can be confident that, while disaster will come upon the world quickly, as a thief in the night, we who are of the day will be ready, even eagerly anticipating, the light that breaks after the darkness has come.

But we must know, “Am I in a covenant with Yahweh?” We must know, “Are those who claim to be teaching the truth in covenant with Yahweh, or are they speaking from the sparks of their own kindling?”

Our Father has not left us in darkness or ignorance. He has given us the way to know the truth.

In previous studies, I have spoken about the elements of a covenant. There are different features that must be present in order for it to be valid. After reviewing some of this, in light of our present situation with regard to the General Conference, the message of righteousness by faith, and the coming time of trouble, it has become necessary to revisit it, perhaps to refine our understanding of it, and I will say here that in every covenant that the Bible describes, there are five elements that may be identified.

In seeking knowledge of Yah’s covenant, we may discover whether or not it is present, or if a mere invention of flawed, human thinking has been substituted, by considering the presence (or absence) of these elements. Since I have spent time laying the foundation and explaining its significance, we will look at the first two tonight, and then the final three in our study next week.

1) Foundation

The first element of a Biblical covenant is its foundation. This is a law that serves as an environment in which the “rules” become binding, and the conditions made sure. In a covenant with Yahweh, the eternal Law is the foundation of every agreement. A violation of the Law is a violation of any covenant based thereupon, and as Yahshua said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” (John 14:15)

This verse has found obvious use in explaining the importance of the 10 Commandments, usually during a discussion of the Sabbath in the New Testament era... but it has a much deeper meaning than that.

It reveals that while the foundation of any covenant is the Law, the foundation of the Law is Love. Thus, any covenant with Yahweh, on its most basic level, is one founded in agape, in divine love.

Observance of the commandments of Yahweh identify those who truly love Him, that is, as He defines love. We would not lightly question any Christian's sincerity and love for God, but we understand that there are different definitions of "love," and if an individual loves God with deep emotion and commitment, but does not believe in the importance of His law, then this love is not the same love that Yahshua is describing in His teachings.

In order to be in covenant, in agreement, with the Divine, we must understand what Yah means (not what we mean) when He says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God."

It means, among other things, being a Sabbath-keeper, and this is the Sabbath "more fully," a "rest" of body, mind and spirit that excludes not only Sunday-keepers, but also those who keep the 7th day while maintaining the practices and policies of the world, who "have no rest day and night." If we are going to be completely open among the brethren here, we may add that this also identifies members of the mainstream Seventh-Day Adventist Church, who are corporately responsible for the persecution and imprisonment of Christians, as covenant-breakers along with any who violate the commandments while claiming to be Christ's people.

Their actions are not based on agape-love, and therefore any covenant to which they may lay claim is literally "without foundation."

2) Promises

The second element of a Biblical covenant is the set of promises made by the one who initiates the covenant. In an agreement of two people, there is always one who serves as the instigator, the one who proposes that the agreement be made, and then formally recognized (because a covenant is, by its definition, a "formal" agreement). Even secular definitions will apply such words to a covenant as: contract, pledge, commitment, and guarantee. These indicate that the covenant is formed with a well-defined purpose in mind, which originates, especially in this case, in the mind of the one who creates it.

It is this element of the covenant in which Yah's people find their strength and their comfort. The promises of Yah to His people are (among the many, many examples we can cite):

"But they that wait upon Yahweh shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." (Isa 40:31) This one is particularly relevant to those of us who have been doing a lot of walking lately :)

A few others:

“Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” (Luke 10:19)

“But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Yahshua from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.” (Rom 8:11)

“And Yahweh shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” (Rev 21:4)

They who are truly in the Covenant with Yahweh will claim these promises, and abide in them. They will have an invincible testimony, and can claim in sincerity, “I do always those things that please my Father.”

But note, these are not promises that the Father and Son make to the world. Not at all; in fact, the Son specifically says that these promises are exclusively for His covenanted people in such places as this: “I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.” (John 17:9)

The world, of course, would not rejoice much over this aspect of the Son’s character. Surely, they will say, Yahshua had love for the world, and gave Himself, His very own life, for those who hated and rejected Him. Surely, He agreed with the Father to come down to us, to suffer, and to sacrifice Himself, to redeem the world, and it is written that “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” (2Cor 5:19)

This is all true, and we have hope only because it IS true. But the reconciliation was a uni-directional act. What that means is, Yahshua opened the door to salvation for every man, woman and child, but He did not “save” them all in an absolute sense. Not all are saved. They who WILL be saved must respond to the open door. Yahshua gave to the world no promises of salvation other than that those who sought Him would find Him. And then, when they find Him, then the covenant is theirs. Then the precious promises and most precious promises are theirs. The promises are given freely, but they must be claimed, they must be bound to us through His proposed covenant, or they will be of no effect.

Just as the Law is the foundation, the environment in which the covenant functions, so the covenant is the environment in which the promises function. Those who have begun to seek Yahweh, who pray to Him, they may receive the blessing and protection of His Spirit as a man may give gifts to His beloved bride-to-be, as a token of the love to come... but we who have been saved, are being saved, and shall surely be saved, must be “sealed” by these promises, and established in them as the very spiritual air that we breathe. It is not enough for us to claim this

or that promise occasionally, but we are those who live only because of, and according to, the things that our Father has blessed us to provide. Yahshua is coming back for His Bride, not for His merely betrothed, and certainly not for those who have flirted with Him with no thought of true marriage.

The Covenant of Yahweh is an agreement more solemn than any human marriage, and those who follow the footsteps of the Lamb know this as no others.

I will end here this week with the following thoughts with regard to the importance of Covenant-agreement to our Father:

““This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days,’ saith Yahweh, ‘I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” (Heb 10:16, 17)

“Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” (Exo 19:5, 6)

Creation 7th day Adventism
flyinglecreature@hotmail.com