

# Undeserving

Like a 10 karat diamond hidden just beneath the surface of a sandy beach on a remote South African seashore, a keenly insightful story and picture window into God's heart resides in 1 Samuel. Familiar to most Old Testament readers is the intense friendship between David and Jonathan. The historical friendship, like those rare, truly great friendships today, began with a commitment of loyalty and trust. Theirs went a step further. David and Jonathan made a "covenant." 1 Samuel 20:11-17 records the moment candidly, "Jonathan said to David, 'Come and let us go into the field.' So both of them went out to the field. The Jonathan said to David, 'The Lord, the God of Israel, be witness! When I have sounded out my father about this time tomorrow, or the third day, behold if there is a good feeling toward David, shall I not then send to you and make it known to you? If it please my father to do you harm, may the Lord do so to Jonathan and more also, if I do not make it known to you and send you away, that you may go in safety. And may the Lord be with you as he has been with my father. If I am still alive, will you not show me the loving kindness of the Lord that I may not die? You shall not cut off your loving kindness from my house forever, not even when the Lord cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth.' So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, 'May the Lord require it at the hands of David's enemies.' Jonathan made David vow again because of his love for him, because he loved him as he loved his own life."

A Biblical covenant was much more than a handshake! Any two people desiring a covenant went through an ordeal to formalize and seal the relationship. First, the two parties would cut their right palm or right wrist. As they shook hands and "mixed their blood," they would pledge themselves to each other. They would put dye into the wound causing a noticeable scar where the covenant had been cut. Next, the two covenant partners would exchange coats saying, "All that I have is yours." They would exchange belts with weapons attached saying "If you ever have an enemy, he is my enemy as well. I'll give my life to defend yours." An enemy could see the scar on the wrist and take great caution in the fact that if I hurt this man, there's another man who would give his life to revenge the harm I've caused. After these things, the two would split an animal in half and separate the two halves on the ground. The two would walk through the animal halves in a figure-eight fashion saying, "If I ever break this covenant, may God do this to me and worse." After this foreboding ceremony, the two would exchange a meal and share bread and wine saying "I am yours. You are mine. If you ever have a need, I will automatically meet it. If you have an enemy, I have an enemy." Then and only then, they'd pledge "loving-kindness" (friendship) saying, "My love for you is based solely on what I do for you. The more I do for you, the more I love you." The pledge was not only to the man who made the covenant but to his children and grandchildren.

And so it was with David and Jonathan. After Jonathan's death and David's intense period of mourning was over, David said, "Is there yet anyone left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" (2 Samuel 9:1)

History records that Jonathan had a son named Mephibosheth who was crippled in both feet. After Jonathan's death and David's successful quest to find Jonathan's offspring, David spoke resolutely to Mephibosheth. "I will surely show kindness to you for the sake of your father Jonathan, and will restore to you all the land of your grandfather Saul; and you shall eat at my table regularly." (2 Samuel 9:7) Mephibosheth did nothing to deserve this incredible endowment. It was bequeathed to him by the king because David and Jonathan had made a covenant.

When Jesus took the nails of crucifixion, He cut such a covenant on your behalf with the God of the universe. When you receive Him by faith and become a child of God, you became an "heir of God, a co-heir with Christ." Mephibosheth's amazement before David is a fraction of the amazement we walk in and live in before God because Jesus cut the covenant on our behalf.

In reverence and awe we will sing to our dying day, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me."

Mark these Key Words:

Covenant blood

## Old Testament Viewpoint

**Jeremiah 31:31-34**

**Jeremiah 31:31-34** Behold, days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them, declares the LORD. But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD, I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, "Know the LORD," for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, declares the LORD, for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.

## New Testament Viewpoint

**Hebrews 9:15-22; Luke 22:20**

**Hebrews 9:15-22** For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives.

Therefore even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood. For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, THIS IS THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT WHICH GOD COMMANDED YOU. And in the same way he sprinkled both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood. And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

**Luke 22:20** And in the same way He (*Jesus at the Last supper*) took the cup after they (*the disciples*) had eaten, saying, This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood. (*Italics added*)

### **OBSERVATION: What is God saying?**

- 1) The term "covenant" is an unbreakable promise made by God. The "old covenant" law was written on tablets of stone. The "new covenant" is written where? \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 2) What is necessary for the inauguration of the new covenant?
  - A. \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 3) How did Christ fulfill the requirements of the covenant?  
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\_\_\_\_\_

4) What do the new covenant and old covenant have in common?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

5) How do the new covenant and old covenant differ?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_



**PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS:** *What else of significance do you see God saying in this passage?*

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**APPLICATION:** *How does this passage relate to me today? What changes does it bring to my life?*

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**LOCKER ROOM:**



*What are some "spiritual disciplines" you can establish that will help you follow Jesus more fully?*

**MEMORY VERSE: Jeremiah 31:34**



They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.



**My Prayers**



**Adoration:** Father, today I praise You for...



**Confession:** Father, please forgive me for...



**Thanksgiving:** Father, today I'm thankful for...



**Supplication:** Father, the people & things that I wish to pray for today are...