

## Understanding God's Covenant



### *Key Scripture:*

*"Nevertheless, My lovingkindness I will not utterly take from him, Nor allow My faithfulness to fail. My covenant I will not break, Nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips. Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: His seed shall endure forever, And his throne as the sun before Me; It shall be established forever like the moon, Even like the faithful witness in the sky. Selah" Ps. 89:33-37 (NKJV)*

### *Portion for the Journey:*

#### **Understanding the Meaning of Covenant**

Although our Bibles frequently mention Covenants, the word is almost obsolete in our English language. Modern Christians are sadly lacking in their ability to understand the full meaning behind the word "Covenant." The understanding of God's covenant is the structure to which all understanding of theology depends. It is important for us to fully comprehend the meaning of the Word covenant in order to fully realize the potential of walking in a covenant relationship with God.

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*"There was a time when the concept of covenant was the keynote of theology and the basis for the Christian life of strong, holy men... It entered into national life and thought. It made mighty men. It made men to whom God and His promise and His power were wonderfully real."*

*~~ Andrew Murray~~*

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**God's Word is His Written Covenant:** His Covenant is central to the message of the Word and the Gospel. Although we use the word "Testament" to describe the Old Testament or the New Testament, the more appropriate word to use is Covenant. The Old Covenant points the way to the New, but the

New Testament speaks of the New Covenant, which is a much better Covenant than the Old Covenant. The New Covenant is a fulfillment of all of God's grace and purposes in establishing all other covenants.

*“The Secret [of the sweet, satisfying companionship] of the LORD is for those who fear Him, ...and He will make them know His Covenant and reveal to them it [deep inner] meaning.” Ps 25:14 (AMPC)*

### **Importance of God’s Covenant to Intercessors:**

As Intercessors, we need to understand God’s covenant keeping nature so that we can boldly approach His Throne and ask for Him to move in response to His Covenants. When we KNOW His Covenants, we will have greater FAITH and POWER in the place of prayer. **Heb. 4:16 (AMPC)**

### **Definitions:** Webster’s Dictionary

1. A covenant is an agreement between two or more persons to do or not to do something specified.
2. The conditional promises made to humanity by God, as revealed in the Scriptures.
3. A formal agreement of legal validity.
4. A promise, legal contract.

**Definition in Hebrew Old Testament:** **Beriyth** (H1285) To form a confederacy; Agreement, pledge, promise or oath; An alliance or treaty between nations, to become allies; Alliance of friendship; Alliance of marriage. In the Old Testament, the word “Covenant” carried the idea of promise, commitment, faithfulness and intense loyalty. The Covenant would be maintained, ...even unto death. Our covenant with God is more powerful, even beyond death!

**New Testament Definition of Covenant:** The Greek word for covenant is ‘diatheke’ (G 1242). It is translated ‘covenant’ 20x in the New Testament and 13x as ‘testament.’ Literally, it means ‘a coming together’ which signifies a mutual undertaking between two parties or more, each binding himself to fulfill obligations. It does not imply joint obligation, but an obligation undertaken by a single person.

- 1) A promise or undertaking, human or Divine,
- 2) A disposition, arrangement, of any sort, which one wishes to be valid, the last disposition which one makes of his earthly possessions after his death, a testament or will
- 3) A compact, a covenant, a testament, i.e. God's covenant with Noah, etc.

**God illustrates His covenant in terms of family:** Bible scholars describe God’s covenant less with legal descriptors and more with religious practice.

Father and Son:	David <b>(2 Sam. 7)</b>
Husband and Wife:	Hosea <b>(entire book)</b>
Mother and Child:	<b>Isaiah 49:15</b>

**In God’s covenant promises we can find the firm foundations for stability in our times:**

**Ps. 89:34** “I will not violate my covenant, or alter the word that went forth from my lips.”

**Nu 23:19** “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?”

**Mt 24:35** "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

**Job 42:2** "I know that You can do all things and no purpose of Yours can be thwarted [foiled or frustrated]."

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***"The term covenant plays an integral part in the Christian faith. The holy Scriptures themselves are divided into an Old Covenant (or Testament) and a New Covenant. I believe it is vitally important for the Church of Jesus Christ to grasp the New Covenant as we face the coming perilous times. The Bible tells us that in the last days Satan is going to pour out his wrath on the earth because he knows his time is short. As that happens, God's people are going to need the full assurance of this covenant. This ironclad pledge has the power to release in all of us the overcoming strength we need to be more than conquerors in any situation." The New Covenant Unveiled" by David Wilkerson 2000***

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## Hebrew Covenant rituals give understanding of God's covenant of Jesus Christ

### Components of a Covenant:

**God's Covenants are borne out of love.** "Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself." The Hebrew word for 'love' in this passage is 'ahăbâ. It is used to describe Jonathan's affection for David in **1 Samuel 18:3; 20:17; cf. 2 Samuel 1:26**

- ♥ It is the same word that is used to describe God's love for His people. **Deut. 7:8; 2 Chron. 2:11.**
- ♥ It describes a love that is intense, lasting and strong. "His banner over me is love." **Song 2:4**
- ♥ "I am sick of love." **Song 2:5; Song 5:8** "Love is strong as death." **Song 8:6** "Many waters cannot quench love." **Song 8:7**
- ♥ Famous passages in the prophets use this word as well. "I have loved you with an everlasting love" **Jeremiah 31:3** "I drew them . . . with bands of love" **Hosea 11:4**

1. **Take off the coat or robe:** "Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, including his sword and his bow and his belt." **1 Sam 18:3-4** Jonathan wore the princely robes of the king's son. He was heir to the throne. He gave David these robes, acknowledging the position David would one day receive. Jesus, laid down His kingly garments to take on the robes of a servant, even girding His loins with a towel to wash His disciple's feet! He also gives us His robes by which we can live and reign with Him in the heavenlies. **John 13:4-11**
2. **Take of the belt:** "Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, including his sword and his bow and his belt." **1 Sam. 18:3-4** This belt wasn't to hold up his pants, but to hold all of one's weapons. It is what held the person's armor together. In giving up the belt, one made oneself completely vulnerable. This showed the greatest of trust. It also says, "Here is my strength and all of my ability to fight. Your battles become my battles, I will fight with you. I will defend you. I will protect you." Jesus emptied Himself and the King of Kings made Himself as helpless and vulnerable as a sacrificial lamb for our sakes. His covenant promises that He will fight our battles. He has made them His own.
3. **The Shedding of blood:** In the Covenant ceremony an animal was sacrificed and cut into two pieces down the middle. The two parties of the covenant would then walk between the two bloody pieces

of the sacrifice. The blood covenant is the closest, the most enduring, the most solemn and sacred of all contracts. It absolutely cannot be broken. When you enter into a blood covenant with someone, you promise to give them your life, your love, your protection forever.

- ♥ Jesus' blood was shed for us at the cross and it was sealed the promise of our forgiveness for sin, cleansing of all unrighteousness. "For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many *for the forgiveness of sins.*" **Matt. 26:28; Eph. 1:16-17; 1 John 1:7; Heb. 9:22**
  - ♥ His blood covenant allows us to approach His throne in worship and prayer. **Heb. 10:19; Eph. 2:13-14**
  - ♥ The blood of Jesus brings us to peace with God. **Col. 1:20-24; Ezek. 16:60-63**
  - ♥ We have our consciences cleansed from dead works. **Heb. 9:14**
  - ♥ The power of His blood also sanctifies us so that we progressively are changed into His image. **Hebrews 13:12; 20-21**
  - ♥ Jesus blood conquered the enemy on our behalf. **Heb. 2:14; Revelation 12:11** says, "*And they have conquered him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.*"
  - ♥ We are ransomed from our old life by Jesus' blood. **1 Peter 1:18-19**
  - ♥ Jesus blood contains life. The life is in the blood. 'Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, ye have no life in you.' The blood not only removes death (judicial and spiritual), but it gives and preserves life (judicial and spiritual). **John 6:53**
4. **Exchange of names:** As the two stand with blood intermingling, they exchange names. Your name becomes part of my name and my name becomes part of your name. As such our very identity becomes united with the other party. Jesus has given us His name and promises to give us a new name. **Rev. 3:12**
  5. **A scar is made.** A scar is made as a part of the permanent testimony to the covenant. This scar is an everlasting witness and sign of the covenant that was made. It is the guarantee of our covenant. **Zech. 33:6d; John 20:20, 27**
  6. **Give covenant terms:** This is the verbal or written promise or oath that is made. It is the terms of the covenant. This involved giving of all one's assets and liabilities. All that is mine is yours and all that is yours is mine.
    - ♥ "They shall be My people, and I will be their God. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me." **Jer 32:38, 40**
    - ♥ "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them: it shall be an everlasting covenant with them." **Eze 36:26, 27; 37:26**
  7. **Eat a memorial covenant meal:** Traditionally, the blood and the flesh of the sacrificed animal was eaten. In its place, the wine and the bread represent the life blood and the body which was broken (cut) in the sacrifice of the covenant. The Last Supper was the covenant meal. We take communion in remembrance of the covenant Jesus made with those who believe. **Luke 22:20; Ex. 24:8**
  8. **Plant a memorial.** The memorial was usually a tree which was planted and then sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifice to be a permanent testimony of the covenant. The cross became our blood-spattered tree by which we always remember God's covenant.

**God is the originator of covenants. He is a covenant keeping God  
and this is an essential aspect of His nature. The Word is full of examples  
of how He takes covenants very seriously.**

**Eight Covenants in the Word of God:** Each of these covenants is a ever deepening revelation of God's purposes and covenant relationship with His people. The Covenants of God are fragments of the whole. They are inter-related and woven together from the beginning to the end of time.

1. **Marriage is a blood covenant.** Our society does not honor marriage as a blood covenant, but God says that it is. Marriage is meant to be a demonstration of God's covenant relationship with His people. Blood is shed on the night the marriage is consummated. **Mal 2:14; Ezekiel 16:8**
2. **Edenic Covenant Gen. 1-2** Made before the entrance of sin, this covenant with the original man and woman revealed God's purposes for Adam's race. Man was given life, dominion and relationship with God. Even in this first covenant we are introduced to God's requirement that man must obey Him. It is the Covenant that declares God's creative purposes for mankind. His covenant name revealed at this time is Elohim, the God who is over all of His creation. The Edenic covenant applies to all of humanity. In this passage, God gives mankind the mandate to procreate and God gives mankind dominion over the earth and all the animals. **Gen. 1:28-30; 2:8-9; 16-17**
3. **Noahic Covenant Gen. 9:9-17** This covenant was given to Noah, who was the second father of the entire human race. It reaffirms God's plan for redemption of mankind. This covenant occurred after the flood, and involves not only man, but all of His living creatures, as well as all future generations of man upon the earth. It is an everlasting covenant. **Rev. 4:2-3** describes a rainbow around God's throne in heaven.
4. **Abrahamic Covenant Gen. 12-22** This Covenant is made with Abraham, the father of all who believe. This covenant was with both his natural born offspring and those spiritual children (those who believe.) Abraham and his offspring would be blessed and through them all the nations of the world will be blessed. This covenant prophesies that Israel will be raised up, a chosen nation through whom the Messiah would come.
5. **The Mosaic Covenant (Sinai) Exodus 19-24** This covenant is the most detailed and complicated of all of the Old Testament Covenants. It sets forth the pattern for redemption which Jesus fulfills in the New Covenant. The Mosaic Covenant shows the blood, the mediator, the priesthood, as well as the detailed commandments and requirements. This covenant was made strictly with Moses & the chosen nation of Israel at Horeb-Sinai, which is found in and the book of Deuteronomy. The promise was to bring Israel from slavery to freedom through the chosen seed. This covenant was founded on the basis of God's holiness and righteous demands. This covenant was a schoolmaster, showing Israel His requirements of righteousness. God promises to make the Israelites his treasured possession among all people. **Ex. 19:5** and "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." **Ex. 19:6**, if they follow God's commandments. As part of the terms of this covenant, God gives Moses the Ten Commandments. **Ex. 24:8** These terms are later embellished or elaborated on in the rest of the Torah. This covenant was never intended as a means of salvation, but only to point to the need for a Mediator, the promised Messiah.

6. **The Palestinian Covenant Deut. 29:1** The Palestinian Covenant is closely associated with the Mosaic Covenant, but the Word shows that it clearly was another covenant, separate from the Mosaic Covenant. “Beside the covenant which He made with them at Horeb...” This covenant was given at the end of the 40 years of wandering. It was a detailed list of conditions for entering and maintaining the Promised Land. The word “land” is used approximately 180 times in the book of Deuteronomy.
7. **The Davidic Covenant 2 Sam. 7; 1 Chron. 17; Ps. 132; Ps. 89** This covenant promised an Everlasting Kingship to David and his seed, both physical and spiritual. It established that through David’s line, the Messiah would come and the establishment of His everlasting throne and eternal Kingdom of Jesus Christ. We see through all of the kings of Israel, God’s commitment to be faithful to His covenant with David, even when Israel and David’s offspring were unfaithful to God. The covenant of David is actually a part of the New Covenant which links the Old Covenant establishing Israel as a nation and a Kingdom and establishing the lineage of Jesus Christ to establish the New Covenant.

**Ps. 89:20-37** "I have found David My servant; With My holy oil I have anointed him, With whom My hand will be established; My arm also will strengthen him. ... "My faithfulness and My lovingkindness will be with him, And in My name his horn will be exalted.... "I also shall make him My firstborn, The highest of the kings of the earth. ...My lovingkindness I will keep for him forever, And My covenant shall be confirmed to him. So I will establish his descendants forever And his throne as the days of heaven."

**Isaiah 9:6-7** “ For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.”

#### The lineage of our KING was promised in covenant

<b>Abraham Gen. 17:6</b>	<b>The Covenant Father</b>
<b>Sarah Gen. 17:16</b>	<b>The Covenant Mother</b>
<b>Jacob Gen. 35:11</b>	<b>The Covenant son</b>
<b>Israel Num. 23:21 Deut. 17:14-20</b>	<b>The Covenant Nation</b>
<b>Judah Gen. 49:8-12</b>	<b>The Covenant Tribe</b>
<b>David: 2 Sam. 7:8-17, 27-29</b>	<b>The Covenant House</b>

8. **The New Covenant (also called the Everlasting Covenant)** This covenant was made before Time, before Creation. It was made between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. It is as eternal and unchanging as God Himself. Man is not a partner in this covenant but an object. It is the summation and fulfillment of God’s plans for mankind to become His children in His eternal kingdom. “...the kind of truth that changes lives—so that they can have eternal life, which God promised [covenanted} them before the world began—and he cannot lie. **Titus 1:2**

**The New Covenant was inaugurated in three stages:**



- ♥ The advent of Jesus Christ on earth. He came to announce the New Covenant and invite men to follow Him. Jesus fulfilled many of the expectations of the Covenant during his life as the Son of Man.
- ♥ His death and resurrection. At the Last Supper, He told the disciples “This cup which is poured out for you, is the New Covenant in my blood.” **Luke 22:20**
- ♥ His Second Advent will bring the consummation of all aspects of the Covenant and we will live with Him forever.

**Jesus fulfilled all of the terms of this covenant set forth by the Father during His life on earth** and the terms were completed with His death on the cross. This covenant was the fulfillment of all previous covenants and makes possible for those who believe to be brought into the Everlasting Covenant. “In the same way, after the supper, He took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.” **Luke 22:20**

**The New Covenant was originally promised to Israel** and includes the promise of a new heart and new spirit with fruitfulness and blessing. **Ezek. 36:28-30; Jer. 31**

After the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the New Covenant was made available to Gentiles as well. Gentiles do not replace God’s covenants made with the Jews, but are adopted into His family. **Acts 10; Eph. 2:13-14**

**Jesus, as Mediator, fulfilled all requirements of this covenant**

“Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. ...there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, “SEE,” He says, “THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN.” But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. For finding fault with them, He says, “BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE LORD, WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH; ....I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.” **Heb. 8:1-13**

**The Holy Spirit is given as a seal of the New Covenant and is the means by which we are able to fulfill all of our obligations.** Paul wrote, “You are our letter, ...written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. Such confidence we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” **2 Cor. 3:2-6**

**Our assurance of victory comes through the New Covenant Promises:** In his book, “The New Covenant Unveiled,” David Wilkerson wrote, “*In forming the new covenant, God obligated [or*

chained] Himself by an oath to supply all the enabling power and strength to fulfill every condition and demand of the covenant. So, when God says by oath, "I will do it," faith responds, "Let it be so." ...The New Covenant suggests that the Lord can never get near enough to His people, and that he can never get them as close to Him as He desires. Therefore, He unites and binds and fashions us close to Himself and Him to us, by this binding covenant. The New Covenant is all about our Lord's commitment to keep His children from falling, and to console, comfort and assure us that the power and dominion of sin can and will be broken by the Holy Spirit that dwells in us. ...Only by having the New Covenant unveiled to us can we learn the secret of having total victory over sin." "Entering the New Covenant Way of Death" p. 47-48



## Difference between Old Covenant and New Covenant

*The Old Covenant  
says...  
... you are blessed  
IF you obey.*

*The New Covenant  
says...  
...you are blessed  
BECAUSE Jesus obeyed!*

Old covenant:  
Man says "I will" and breaks his word again and again.

New covenant:  
God says "I will" and keeps his word forever and ever.

Source: Exodus 19:8, Hebrews 8:8-12

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Can you spot the difference?

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>OLD</span> <span>COVENANT</span> </div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>NEW</span> <span>COVENANT</span> </div>
<p style="font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">If you do...</p> <p>If you listen (Ex 23:22)</p> <p>If you look (Deu 4:29)</p> <p>If you bring (Lev 2:4)</p> <p>If you follow (Lev 26:3)</p> <p>If you pay attention (Deu 7:12)</p> <p>If you make (Deu 23:21)</p> <p>If you obey (Deu 28:2)</p> <p>If you disobey (Deu 28:15)</p>	<p style="font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">It is done...</p> <p>You are forgiven! (Col 2:13)</p> <p>You are healed! (1 Pe 2:24)</p> <p>You are blessed! (Eph 1:3)</p> <p>You are righteous! (2 Co 5:21)</p> <p>You are holy! (Heb 10:10)</p> <p>You are mighty! (Eph 1:19)</p> <p>You are accepted! (Rm 15:7)</p> <p>You are loved! (Rm 8:39)</p>

Answer: Old Covenant preachers focus on you and what you must do. New Covenant preachers focus on Christ and what He has done. Under law, God requires. Under grace, God provides. Which do you prefer?

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## The Terms of the New Covenant

- ♥ The New Testament is a revelation of the New Covenant.
- ♥ The Good News of the Gospel is the revelation of this covenant for all who believe.
- ♥ By His blood, all men can be fully reconciled to God through faith in Jesus Christ
- ♥ Translated from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light to become a people belonging to God
- ♥ To be born again in Christ's image & given a totally new heart & new spirit pleasing to God
- ♥ To have the Holy Spirit without measure
- ♥ To have full knowledge of God & access to Him beyond the veil
- ♥ Unity of believers from every nation, tribe and tongue, walls of separation are torn down
- ♥ Freedom for captives and complete defeat of Satan's power
- ♥ Promise of Israel's restoration to their Messiah, Jesus Christ
- ♥ He will fight all of our battles in the Victorious Name of Jesus Christ!
- ♥ An eternal inheritance and position in God's Kingdom with Jesus

**Heb. 7:22; 9:14-15; Jer. 31:31,33; John 1:29; Luke 22:20; Ezek. 36:26, 27; Rom. 8:34; 1 Tim. 2:5-6**

## Characteristics of our Covenant Keeping God

- ♥ God is always the one who initiates and establishes the covenant with us.
- ♥ God's Covenants reveal His divine purposes and plans.
- ♥ God's Covenant is meant to be a source of great security and guarantee.
- ♥ It is meant to give us a hold upon God. (The Horns of the altar.)
- ♥ It is meant to give us a future and a hope.
- ♥ It shows His intercessors what He wants to do and assures us that it will be done.

To understand covenant is...

- to discover a promise that has been there all the time, hidden in vague shadows, and blurred by the veil of my ignorance.
- to understand the intimacy and intricate details of God's plan and purpose.
- It frees us to bask in His love and to move through every circumstance of life in the security of His promises. ...It will take you through a blood-washed door into a whole new world of understanding of what it means to be a child of God, bidden to come through the rent veil of the flesh of His only begotten Son into the presence of your Covenant God and cry, "Abba, Father!"  
"Our Covenant God: Learning to Trust" by Kay Arthur

Andrew Murray said, "There is something more necessary than the effort to exercise faith in each separate promise that comes to our attention. That is the cultivation of a trustful attitude toward God—the habit of always thinking of Him, of His ways and of His works, with bright, confident hopefulness. In such promises alone, the individual promises take root and grow up."<sup>1</sup>

1. Andrew Murray, quoted in Thomas R. Yeakley, *Praying Over God's Promises: The Lost Art of Taking Him at His Word* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2015), 1.

## **The exceedingly great and precious promises of God**

According to 2 Peter 1:4, God has not just given us promises, He has given us “exceedingly great and precious promises.” They communicate His power and sustain our faith. They lift our gaze from the challenges we face to God’s infinite love and His endless supply of grace. By revealing what is possible, what has already been promised to us in God’s Word, they equip us to face life’s obstacles with unshakeable confidence. And God’s promises cannot be broken.

*God’s New Covenant is based upon*  
*Unconditional*  
*Unfailing*  
*Enduring*  
**LOVE**

***What is God Speaking to my Heart?*** Meditate on God’s Word with a view toward knowing Him and the fullness of the promises His New Covenant brings us. Seek to understand the reality of His covenant as it relates to you personally! Ask Him to show You His heart and show you how to pray to fulfill all of His covenant promises for the Church!

***What is My Response to God?***