

## The Next Generation

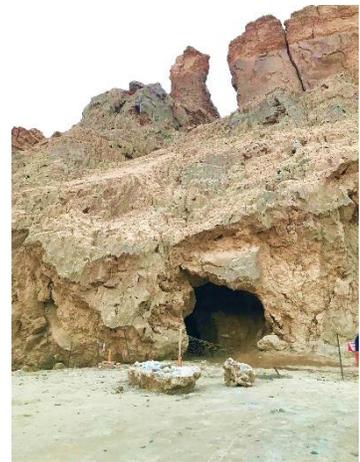
*I am making this covenant, with its oath, not only with you who are standing here with us today in the presence of the LORD our God but also with those who are not here today.*  
(Deut. 29:14-15)

### God and Covenants

A covenant is a personal agreement between parties where each side formally offers loyalty to the other in exchange for blessings. God has often worked through covenants: for God, it's \_\_\_\_\_. He offered Israel a covenant through Moses, and He offers us a *new* covenant through Jesus (Heb. 8:6-13; 1 Cor. 11:25). Once we enter God's covenant, we must honor our part. If we do, rich blessings will abound. If we do not, we curse ourselves and our \_\_\_\_\_.

### Sealing of the Covenant (29:1-29)

- **Deut. 29:1-4. Covenant.** God's covenant with Israel began as far back as Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3), was sealed after the Exodus at Sinai, and is here strengthened as Israel enters the promised land. Every step along the way, God sought a deep relationship with Israel. **Trials, signs, and wonders.** God kept His part of the covenant: He delivered Israel from bondage, made them a large people, and brought them to the land of promise. Now Israel must do its part.
- **29:5-9. Forty years.** God gives a short overview of how He brought Israel to the present point. Covenants in the ancient world often started with a historical overview. **Ate no bread.** God provided everything the Israelites needed for the sojourn in the wilderness. God provides for the people of His covenant. **Sihon and Og.** See Numbers 21. **Carefully follow.** For the covenant to remain in effect, Israel had to do its part.
- **29:10-15. All of you.** This is a sacred moment in Israel's history—analogue to the \_\_\_\_\_ part of a wedding ceremony. **Your fathers.** God's covenant with Israel goes back to the promise He made with Abraham—this was not a light-hearted contract; it was part of God's eternal plan. **Those not here.** The covenant was intended to last through the generations. How you respond to God's covenant affects all future generations.
- **29:16-18. Idols.** A covenant demands strict loyalty. God expects to be our only object of worship, so to worship anything other than God is to violate the terms of the covenant.
- **29:19-28. Safe.** Secret idolatry will bring public punishment. **Never willing to forgive.** A difficult text, perhaps meaning that God's punishment will be too swift for individuals to repent, since the very next chapter offers forgiveness when Israel does repent (Deut. 30:1ff.). Cf., 2 Pet. 3:9: God doesn't want anyone to be destroyed. **Why?** Israel's destruction is an example of what happens when people abandon God (cf., 1 Cor. 10:1-12 and Rom. 15:4). **Sodom and Gomorrah.** See Genesis 14. **As it is now.** Israel was indeed uprooted from the land, first by the Assyrians and later by the Babylonians. After Israel returned to the land in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C., even though they continued to sin, idolatry was never the same problem as when Israel was taken captive. The punishment of exile largely ended Israel's flirtation with idols.
- **29:29. Secret things.** God is far too great for us to understand fully, but what He reveals to us is for our use.



*Mount Sodom, Israel—traditional site where Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt (the standing stone) above the cave where Lot hid (dmy)*

## The Next Generation

- Christ gives us a new covenant, and you enter it through faith in Him. Your baptism signified the oath you took in order to enter that covenant. Once you are baptized, you have made up your mind, once and for all, whom you will serve.
- Christianity is a \_\_\_\_\_ religion, not a \_\_\_\_\_ religion. If we train the next generation, they will flourish. If we do not, they will suffer. Understand this: the lives of your own descendants are at stake.
- We are facing more hostility towards the Christian faith than ever before in America, and the next generation is at risk. We face ....
  1. Propaganda and \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Intimidation and \_\_\_\_\_
  3. Discrimination
  4. Possible lawsuits, fines, coercion, and worse
- Here are the two critical decisions every American believer must make:
  1. I will stand up for Jesus even in an increasingly hostile culture, and I will \_\_\_\_\_.
  2. I will make disciple-making my mission, because making disciples of Jesus is the solution to \_\_\_\_\_.
- God will be faithful to the Word of His covenant with us. Will your children be faithful to the covenant? Will you?



*Maryam and Marziyeh, imprisoned a year in Iran for the sake of Christ, explain that they kept making disciples even in prison; the Christian faith is exploding across Iran because of such courageous women (NB, SCT event, 2017)*

### Comparing the Old Covenant to the New Covenant

#### Old Covenant

- Established after the Exodus at Mt. Sinai
- Established with Israel
- Mediated through Moses
- Sealed with the blood of animals
- Used circumcision as a sign of entrance
- Based on the letter of the Law
- Righteousness came by obeying all the Law
- Offered the blessings of land, a strong nation, and prosperity
- Administered through Aaron and the Levitical priesthood
- Was only a shadow of the new covenant still to come
- Was intended to make Israel a light to the nations

#### New Covenant

- Established on the cross
- Established with believers in Jesus
- Mediated through Jesus
- Sealed with the blood of Jesus
- Uses baptism as a sign of entrance
- Based on the Spirit of God
- Righteousness comes through faith in Christ
- Offers the blessings of forgiveness of sins and eternal life
- Administered through Jesus and the priesthood of all believers
- Is the reality to which the old covenant pointed
- Is intended to make the church a light to the nations

*Answers: personal, descendants, I do, taught, caught, misinformation, shaming, never back down, every problem we face*