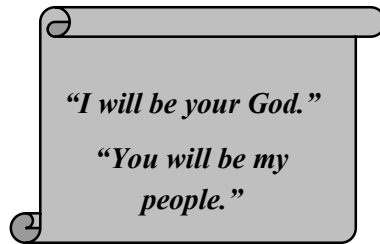


The Covenant God and His Covenant People



Notes and Comments by John Sullivan

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[**NOTE:** some of the ideas discussed in this study are found in the Overview of the Bible series called *God Reveals Himself to Us* (Volumes 1, 2, 3), under the heading: **An Agreement that Changed History.**]

The Covenant God and His Covenant People

Introduction

*I will walk among you and be your God,
and you will be my people.*

Leviticus 26:12

Let's begin with two questions:

- What would you think if the great God of the universe promised to be your God?
- How would you feel to be a part of a group of people who have promised to be God's people?

That's exactly what happens when someone is in a covenant relationship with God.

What is a covenant?

A covenant is an agreement, a promise. That promise is often sealed with a sign as a reminder of the agreement. For instance: a ring is the sign often used in marriage covenants; the rainbow was the sign of God's covenant promise to Noah; circumcision was the sign of the covenant given to Abraham; the blood of animal sacrifices was the sign of the covenant given through Moses; and the blood of Jesus is the sign of the covenant given through Him. Every time we take communion, we are reminded of our covenant relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

There are many covenants mentioned in the Bible between God and people, such as the covenants with Noah and Abraham mentioned above. But the one that this study focusses on is the general covenant between God and His people that was promised to Abraham in *Genesis 17:7 – 8* and revealed in detail to Moses as exemplified in the Scripture quoted at the top.

A study of this covenant is really a study of God's character and the character of His people as He sees them. He is the covenant God; we are the covenant people.

This study is divided into three main parts. You can obviously study it at any pace that fits you and your schedule. One suggestion is to take a week for each part and do the recommended spiritual exercise given at the end of each part, every day of that week. Other than that suggestion, study it at any pace that makes sense for you.

At the end of this study, there are also four Additional Studies on the covenant that can be done at any time and at your pace.

**Let's saturate this study
with prayer.**

*Lord, please help us to understand,
appreciate,
and apply
our covenant with you
in a deeper way than we have ever done before.*

May God bless you as you pour your heart, not only into this Bible study, but more importantly, into your covenant with Him.

John Sullivan
September 2025

Part 1: The Two Promises of God's Covenant with His People

Another name for covenant is testament. The Old Testament and the New Testament are not just writings. We typically refer to them as parts of the great book we call the Bible; but in reality, they are covenants. The Scriptures are the writings about these covenants, and they are all the unchanging Word of God that is so useful to us (2 Tim. 3:16 – 17).

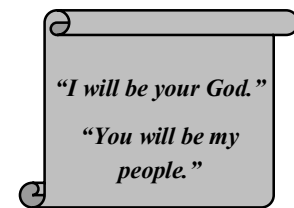
Scriptures don't change; it is the covenants that have changed. We are no longer under the Old Covenant given through Moses, but under the New Covenant of Christ. However, we are still inspired, encouraged, and instructed by the writings that we commonly call the Old Testament. But we recognize when we are reading them that there are parts that specifically deal with the covenant of that time, and we realize that we are under a new agreement.

For instance: we no longer offer the animal sacrifices that were required under the Old Covenant, but when we read Scriptures about those sacrifices, we do not think: "Those are not inspired by God, and we can just ignore them." Rather, we realize that they are inspired accounts of what the covenant was at that time, and we can see their fulfillment in Jesus.

Because of that, we recognize the value of studying both the Old and New Covenant (Testament) writings. For example:

- Knowing as much as we can about the Old Covenant sacrifices helps us appreciate more the New Covenant sacrifice – Jesus.
- Seeing Moses' attitude about Scripture being "*the Book of the Covenant*" (Exodus 24:7) helps us realize why we study Scriptures: it is the Book of our Covenant with God. (See the Additional Study #3 on page 14.)

The verse quoted on the previous page contains the phrase that is frequently used in Scripture for both the Old and the New Covenants to summarize God's agreement with us is: "*I will be your God; you will be my people.*" He promises to be our God and that we will be his beloved people. That agreement is not what changed between the "old" and the "new." That is still the covenant you have with God today. It is the sign that solemnly seals these promises that has changed – from the blood of animals in the Old Covenant to the blood of Jesus in the New Covenant. Same basic agreement – different signs.



NOTE: see the Additional Study #2 on page 13 for alternative readings of those two promises.

God reveals himself in his covenant with us. He shows his heart, his character, and his plan and desire for us. He didn't have to make a covenant with the people He created, and He didn't have to give us free will in that covenant. But He did.

Everything you read in the Bible about God's part of the covenant is really an expression of God's amazing character. It is His nature to be loving, giving, and attentive to His people. He is the covenant God. That's who He is.

Likewise, everything you read in the Bible about our part of the covenant is really an expression of the kind of people we are because of Him. We are His chosen and loved people who have been given the blessings of His nature and character as a part of our DNA and are trying to be the people who live a life that is consistent with what He has given us. We are the covenant people.

That revelation from God in his covenant is found in all parts of the Bible. In both the Old and New Testaments, these two promises are often repeated. (See the list of some of those Scriptures on page 11.) God promises to be our God, and let us be His people. We're even told in **Revelation 21:3** that this will be the description of our relationship in heaven. It is a promise from God to us, and it is an implied promise from us to God.

We will see more details about it in Part 2 of this study. For now, take some time to pray and meditate on what this covenant means to you personally and practically.

We often talk about heart and strategy. Think about both the inspirational (heart) and the practical (strategy) results of these two promises:

- When God is promising to be your God, what does that promise mean to you, personally and practically?

- He promises that you will be His people. What does that promise mean to you personally and practically? What are you also promising to Him?

He is our God; we are His people!

Suggested Spiritual Exercises for Part I:

Memorize *Leviticus 26:12*.

Start each day of this week with a prayer of faith in God's promise
and with a declaration of your promise.

("I truly believe that you are my God and that today I am one of your people.")

Throughout the day, remind yourself of what God has promised you and you have promised him,
and let that impact the way you view people and situations that day.

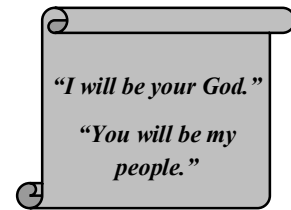
End each day with gratitude for that covenant and a review of how your awareness of your
covenant with God affected your day.

Focus on your covenant with Him in your communion time Sunday.

Part 2: The Rise and Fall of God's Covenant

God's Covenant Established

In Part I of this study, we saw the beginning of God's covenant with His people. It was characterized by the two promises shown on the right. It is an agreement that truly changed history. Whenever people of any nation or any time period have whole heartedly entered into this agreement with God, they have been blessed and have become a blessing to the world around them.



God's revelation through Moses in the books of **Exodus – Deuteronomy** detail the worship and practical aspects of what it looks like to be his covenant people, both as individuals and as the community. There you find what Jesus called the two greatest commandments: love God (from *Deuteronomy 6:5*) and love others (from *Leviticus 19:18*). Unfortunately, those books often have the reputation today of being boring and tedious readings. That is largely due to the attention given there to the priestly duties involving sacrifices of that time which no longer apply to worship in the New Covenant. But the principles found there of a combination of loyalty to God and quality, humane, just treatment of others are timeless. The next time you study these books, look at them from the perspective of the covenant God connecting with His covenant people. See the "Three If's," for instance, in *Leviticus 26*, the context of the memory verse for Part I.

You will notice that the covenant promise is always stated to God's people in the plural. It is not just a "me and God" only type of relationship. However, there is no community without individuals. So it is also very personal. In fact, sometimes on a practical level that is the only way we can apply and practice it. God's covenant blesses us with a healthy balance of fellowship with a covenant community and a personal relationship with Him. We need each other, and we do this together, but I can't make and apply this promise for you, and you can't make and apply it for me. To repeat the sentiment of what is stated above, though: whenever individuals or groups from any nation or any time period have whole heartedly followed this agreement with God, they have been blessed and have become a blessing to the world around them.

God's Covenant Broken

Unfortunately, the history of God's covenant is tainted with unfaithfulness on His people's part. Many of the Scriptures in the Old Testament that refer to the covenant deal with that unfaithfulness. For instance:

Jeremiah 7:21-26 In this paragraph you can feel God's pain as He describes their stubbornness and unfaithfulness to the covenant.

Hosea 1:9 God had to utter the sad words that they were not his people, and he was not their God.

There were centuries of this unfaithfulness characterized by idolatry, immorality, and injustices. Many of God's words through his prophets (such as Jeremiah and Hosea mentioned above) show his heartache about their actions. It's almost unbelievable to read about how they treated God and treated others. Over and over again, the Bible says that God is compassionate, merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in love (*Exodus 34:6*, for instance). So, God's disappointment with his people was not brought about by momentary and temporary breaches of the covenant by an otherwise faithful people. He is not that easily angered. But this was literally centuries of broken promises. They even often brought idols right into the temple of God. That idolatry led to rampant immorality and inhumane treatment of other people – just the opposites of what God's vision is for people who are called by his name. When you read about it in the history and prophecy sections of the Old Testament, it's hard to believe that this was God's covenant people behaving that way.

So, God had to reluctantly say that the covenant was broken. Not because of unfaithfulness on his part. He always kept his promises, but because of unfaithfulness on their part. The good news is that this led to the promises of the New Covenant that we will see below.

First, though, let's notice some positive moments of the covenant relationship in the Old Testament history. It was not all bad. There were moments of absolute brilliant and inspiring faithfulness that live on today as exciting examples that we want to imitate.

God's Covenant Revived (Temporarily)

Around 621 BC, there was one example (among others) of a notable and effective revival in the covenant. **2 Kings 22 – 23** tells the story of young King Josiah who led that revival. The *Book of the Covenant* was accidentally discovered in the temple after years of being ignored by the priests and kings. When Josiah read it, he started cleaning house. The revival was amazing, but it also shows you how far they had fallen from the covenant. Josiah even had to remove idols from God's holy temple – idols that his own father and grandfather had established in their reigns as kings. He then had a public ceremony of renewing the covenant with God and His people.

NOTE: 300 years earlier, God predicted to King Jeroboam that a man named Josiah was going to remove the idols that Jeroboam was establishing. See **1 Kings 13:1 – 3** for this amazing prediction.

One of the prophets who prophesied during Josiah's time was Zephaniah. The first two chapters of his short book show the powerful preaching he did in the years before King Josiah's reform. Chapter 3 of his book shows God's rejoicing with them after the reform as seen in the following verse.

*The LORD your God is with you,
he is mighty to save.
He will take great delight in you,
he will quiet you with his love,
he will rejoice over you with singing.*
Zephaniah 3:17

Don't miss the impact of what that verse reveals about the covenant God. Do you hear God rejoicing and singing over you?

How does it feel to be in a covenant with a God like that? _____

ALSO NOTE: There were other notable covenant revival efforts such the revivals of King Asa (*2 Chronicles 14 – 15*), the prophet Elijah (*1 Kings 18*), and King Hezekiah (*2 Kings 18:4 – 6*). It's interesting (and sad) that a huge amount of the work that these reformers did involved reversing the idolatrous trends they inherited from their previous generations and removing idol worship from the temple. So, the period of the Kings was not all bad, when it comes to the covenant. All of these reforms, however, were temporary. The final result of their centuries of unfaithfulness to the covenant was the destruction of the Northern Kingdom by Assyria around 721 BC, and the Babylonian exile of the Southern Kingdom around 586 BC. On a positive note, after the return from exile, Ezra and Nehemiah successfully gave devoted and noble attention to encouraging God's people to return to their covenant with Him (see *Nehemiah 9*, for instance).

God's New Covenant Promised

As stated above, the reforms of the kings, such as Josiah, unfortunately did not last. The next generations quickly fell back into breaking the covenant. This is not just history; it is the sad account of the worst thing imaginable in history: the covenant between God and His people was broken. The covenant that changed the world when implemented also changed the world when it was broken. The prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zachariah were among the prophets during that time. Because that covenant was broken, they often spoke of God's promise of a New Covenant with His people. For instance:

Jeremiah 31:31 – 33 God declares that the new covenant would be written on our hearts.

Ezekiel 34:11 – 31 God refers to himself here as the shepherd of his people and declares again his desire for the new covenant.

Zechariah 8:7 – 8 Once again, God himself describes his desire to be their God and have them be his people. He really is the covenant God.

This New Covenant will be a subject of the next part. But you can see that the two promises are the same: *I will be your God; you will be my people.*

- How do you feel when you read about the downfall of the covenant in the Old Testament?

- What convictions do you get from that about your covenant with God?

He is our God; we are His people!

Suggested Spiritual Exercises for Part 2:

Memorize *Zephaniah 3:17*.

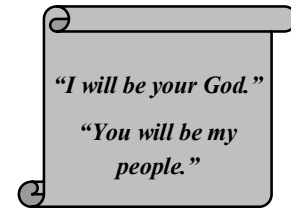
Start each day this week with a prayer of faith that the covenant God is singing over you. Throughout the day, remind yourself of what God has promised you and you have promised him, and let that impact the way you view people and situations that day.

End each day with gratitude for that covenant and a review of how your awareness of your covenant with God affected your day.

Focus on your covenant with Him in your communion time Sunday.

Part 3: The New Covenant

In Parts 1 and 2 of this study, we saw the beginning of God's covenant with His people. The simple, but profound, promises in that covenant are stated on the right. Unfortunately, we also saw the downfall of that covenant, as generation after generation failed to keep their end of the promise. So, we also saw the promises from God about a new covenant that was coming. That is what we will read about now in the portion of the Bible we call the New Testament.



At the last supper, when Jesus was eating the Passover lamb with his disciples, he gave them these words (Luke 22:20):

*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."*

Jesus was clearly focused on the new covenant that God has promised earlier through the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel. The book of *Hebrews*, especially in chapters 8 – 10, has the most detailed writings in the New Testament about that new covenant. It's not the easiest or most practical reading, but it is brilliant in its logic and insight and inspiration.

Read those three chapters in *Hebrews* before reading the rest of this paper. What follows is a detailed study of those three chapters, so have them open and before you as you read this.

The New Covenant is a Better Covenant

You see that the reference to the new covenant from *Jeremiah 31:31 – 34* is quoted twice in these three chapters of *Hebrews*. The conclusion is that the new covenant is better than the old. Why is it better? Two of the reasons given are:

I. It is based on better promises (8:6).

The words of the promise are actually the same: *"I will be your God; you will be my people."* So that is not what is better. Why are the promises of the new covenant better than the promises of the old? These verses detail two important improvements:

- Our promise is better, simply because it is kept. Not different in words, but better in heart (8:10). For example, you can read in *Exodus 19:8* and *24:3* that the people told Moses *"We will do everything the LORD has said."* About a month later, though, they made the golden calf and called it their god. Before we criticize them too much, we have to admit that we have often done the same. But the beauty of God's new covenant is that he has put His Spirit in our hearts and continually brings us back to our covenant with Him. The Holy Spirit daily reminds us that we are covenant people.
- God's promise of forgiving our sins and not remembering them any more is also actually better than the old covenant's plan of dealing with sin (9:9 – 10 and 10:1 – 4). The old covenant animal sacrifices were able to sanctify the people and make them clean outwardly (9:13), but they could not clear the consciences of the worshippers (9:9 and 10:2) or make them perfect (10:1) or keep them from feeling guilty about their sins (10:2). They were actually an annual reminder of their sin (10:3). Jesus on the other hand, the sacrifice of the new covenant, is able to do all of that – He makes us holy (10:10), perfect (10:14), and forgiven, the type of forgiveness that remembers our sins no more (8:12; 10:17)!

Are you inspired by the excellence of the new covenant? Yes, a reading like *Hebrews 8 – 10* can be a little challenging. But look at the results. I mean, how great is it to read that the blood of Christ can *"cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!"* (9:14)

And how great is it to read that God not only forgives us of our sins, but He also remembers them no more (8:12 and 10:17)!

Who doesn't want that?

Hebrews 9:14 also brings up the second reason given in these three chapters of why the new covenant is better than the old one. That involves the blood of Christ, which is what Jesus emphasized in the Scripture given earlier from *Luke 22* at the last supper.

[NOTE: if this part of the study gets a little heavy, take a break and come back to it. It is not an easy study, but it is worth every effort and will pay off in a greater appreciation of the covenant you have with God.]

2. It is sealed with better blood (9:13 – 14).

As stated in the introduction of this study, covenants are usually sealed with a significant sign. In the old covenant it was the blood of the animals; in the new covenant it is the blood of Christ. We may not totally understand today why that is the case or completely understand what is said in *Hebrews 9:22* about the need for everything to be cleansed by blood. (Or that may just be me (J.S.) that finds that a little hard to understand.) But we clearly see what is said about how Jesus' sacrifice for our sins is so much better than the animal sacrifices.

Again, even as these verses point out, the old system of sacrifices had its brilliance – the Day of Atonement as described in *Leviticus 16*, for example. Reading that chapter shows what a truly amazing and impactful event that the Day of Atonement was. But Jesus as our atoning sacrifice (*1 John 2:1 – 2*) is even better, for the reasons you see in these verses in *Hebrews*. Still, it is true, or at least it is my opinion (J.S.), as was stated in Part I of this study that knowing as much as we can about the old covenant sacrifices helps us appreciate even more the new covenant sacrifice – Jesus.

Hebrews 9:20 quotes what Moses said about blood in *Exodus 24:8*. Moses built an altar at the foot of Mount Sinai during the time God was giving him the 10 commandments and sacrificed bulls on that altar. He took the blood of those animals and sprinkled it on the altar and on the people. That's right – on the people! (How would you have liked to have been in that assembly?) Then he said to God's covenant people:

"This is the blood of the covenant."

You can see that Jesus' words at the last supper in *Luke 22* are a quote of Moses' words – well, almost a quote, because Jesus added the word "new." It's not difficult to imagine that Jesus was deliberately emphasizing that comparison and contrast between the new and the old covenants. It's also not difficult to imagine that his hearers at the last supper and the subsequent readers of that passage gave careful thought to that comparison and contrast.

These chapters in *Hebrews*, especially 9:11 – 28, describe in detail how much better the blood of Christ is than the blood of animals. So, the next time you sing about or talk about being saved by the blood of Christ or being washed in his blood or Jesus' blood being the "*blood of the lamb*," you can make sure that it is not just mindless or habitual religious talk. It is the reason why we can say today: *He is our God; we are His people!*

As you have time, you might want to read again *Hebrew 8 – 10*. What else stands out to you from those verses about the new covenant?

Besides these deep thoughts about the covenant from *Hebrews*, it's also encouraging (and somewhat simpler to understand) what the book of *Revelation* describes about how the two covenant promises will describe our relationship with God in heaven (21:3 and 21:7). One of the encouraging things about that (at least for me) is to think that we will be absolutely perfect and flawless in the commitment of our part of that promise. Interestingly, God will be the same. Or to put it another way, God is just as faithful to us now as He will be in heaven. But there, we will be much more loyal than we are now. Hopefully, that gives you an exciting, and perhaps new, perspective of heaven. There are certainly many details about heaven that we do not know about yet. But this one fact should make it clear to us how great it will be: *He will be our God, and we will be His people*. As covenant people, we will be eternally and perfectly united with our covenant God, without any flaws or failings on our part. Sounds great to me!

The last supper and Jesus' words there are the foundation of our communion during worship. Communion is certainly a vital part of our worship to God. But it can too easily become a routine that is taken for granted or given too little attention on the part of the individual worshipper or the church community as a whole.

- What can you do to make sure your communion time is a special time for you personally?

- Of course, there is so much more to your covenant with God than what happens once a week in communion. After doing this study, what convictions do you have to make sure that your covenant with God is on the level that He wants it to be for you?

It is because of Jesus and his blood that we can say today:

He is our God; we are His people!

Suggested Spiritual Exercises for Part 3:

Memorize *Luke 22:20*.

Start each day this week praying with faith that Jesus' blood
is the assurance of your covenant with God.

Throughout the day, remind yourself of what God has promised you and you have promised him,
and let that impact the way you view people and situations that day.

End each day with gratitude for that covenant and a review of how your awareness of your covenant
with God affected your day.

Focus on your covenant with Him in your communion time Sunday.

The Covenant God and His Covenant People

Conclusion

Let's consider again the two questions asked in the introduction:

- What would you think if the great God of the universe promised to be your God?
- How would you feel to be a part of a group of people who have promised to be God's people?

Both of these are exactly what has happened if you are a child of God. Or if you are not yet a child of God, that is what is about to happen when you do make that decision.

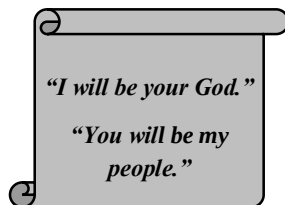
It is common at some graduation ceremonies from schools to hear that the degree is being conferred to the graduates with "*all the rights and privileges pertaining thereto.*" That would also be appropriate for the covenant that God has given to us. It's an understatement to say that there are many privileges and blessings that come to those who are in a covenant relationship with God. As David said,

*Blessed are the people of whom this is true;
blessed are the people whose God is the LORD.*

Psalms 144:15

We would add to that, that there are also many responsibilities to those who are in that covenant relationship. We wear His name, and we want to live a life that reflects that name.

Privileges and Responsibilities



Yes, there are **blessings** beyond comprehension to people in a covenant relationship with God. Mainly because of the presence of the unfailing love and incredible power of God faithfully applied to His covenant people. He is the covenant God. But also because of the positive results of the peace, security, and purpose that come from the decisions that individuals and groups have made to accept the **responsibility** of being His people. We are the covenant people.

If you have not yet made that promise to God and felt the assurance of His promise to you, there is no better time to do it than now.

If you have made that decision, hopefully this study has made your covenant with God more personal and practical than ever before.

**He is your God.
You are His people.**

Covenant blessings to covenant people!

John Sullivan

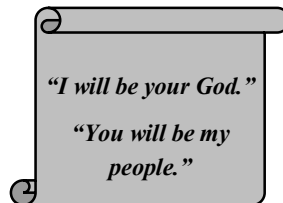
The Covenant God and His Covenant People

Additional Studies

There is so much more in the Bible about the covenant than what is discussed in this short study (even though it was not all that short). These four additional studies are set up to provide more opportunity to discover what the Bible says about the covenant. They can be done at any time and at any pace.

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Additional Study #1: Covenant Scriptures

As we have seen, the phrase used in both the Old and New Testaments to summarize our covenant agreement with God is: *"I will be your God; you will be my people."* (Or, sometimes the order of those two promises are reversed.) God promises to be the God of our life, and let us be His people. Here is a list of Scriptures with that phrase. You will notice that everyone of them is a quote from the covenant God himself. Read each one in its context and comment on what it teaches you about the covenant.

[AUTHOR'S NOTE: this is the most important part of this study, because these are the covenant God's own words, without any of my commentary. Please take the time, a day or more, and absorb everyone of these Scriptures. I believe that they will encourage you as much as they have me. (J.S.)]

Exodus 6:7

Leviticus 26:12

Jeremiah 7:23

Jeremiah 11:4

Jeremiah 30:22

Jeremiah 31:1

Jeremiah 31:33

Jeremiah 32:38

Ezekiel 11:20

Ezekiel 14:11

Ezekiel 36:28

Ezekiel 37:23

Ezekiel 37:27

Hosea 2:23

Zechariah 8:8

Zechariah 13:9

2 Corinthians 6:16

Hebrews. 8:10

Revelation 21:3

Revelation 21:7

In addition to these Scriptures with both promises, there are multitudes of Scriptures where God himself proclaims the first promise, usually with the phrase "*I am the LORD, your God.*" The context of these Scriptures emphasize the authority God has as the LORD of this covenant and also the assurance His covenant people should have from having Him as their God. Excuse me for my paraphrase (J.S.), but it's like God is saying to us: "*I am the God in this relationship. You can trust that I know what I'm saying. And you don't have to be afraid or alone, because I am with you.*" That assurance is designed to take away our anxieties and loneliness. See for instance: *Isaiah 41:10; Psalm 50:7; Exodus 20:2; Hosea 12:9; Joel 2:27; Leviticus 22:33* (and many others).

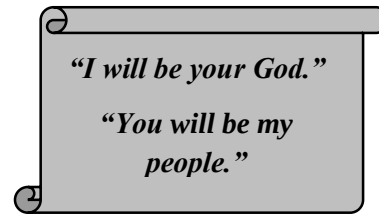
God doesn't have to say anything over and over again for it to be true. But what do you get personally from the sheer number of times that this covenant promised is mentioned in Scripture?

After studying all of this, what are your overall convictions about the covenant God and about you being one of His covenant people?

*Teach me to do your will,
for you are my God.*

Psalm 143:10a

Additional Study #2: Alternative Readings of the Two Promises



There are two ways (at least) of reading these two promises.

- One way of looking at these two promises is to see what God is promising us and what we are promising to Him. Actually, only two of the Scriptures on the previous two pages has that idea clearly portrayed, (*Hosea 2:23* and *Zechariah 13:9*). There, we are described as saying to God, "You are our God." And God is saying to us, "You are my people." However, it's not difficult at all to conclude from Scripture that we want to promise to God that we will be His people, just as He is promising us to be our God. Look at *2 Kings 11:17* and *23:3* for two great examples of God's people re-committing themselves to the covenant.
- Another way of viewing them, though, is that God is making both promises to us. That is clearly the emphasis in all of the other Scriptures mentioning both promises. God is saying, in essence, "I am yours, and you are mine."

God says (paraphrased, of course): *"I will be God to you. I promise that all of my being will be directed towards you. And I promise that you will be my chosen people – my treasured possession."* God is making both promises.

Again, though, it is not difficult to conclude that we also want to make both promises to God. We also are saying, "I am yours, and you are mine."

We say (also paraphrased): *"You are God. We promise that we will obey you and praise you for who you are. No other 'gods' will compete with your position of our honor, our recognition of authority, our devotion, or our loyalty. And we promise that we will live our lives worthy of being called God's people."*

That's similar to a wedding. The husband does declare, "I promise to be your husband." But he also promises that "You will be my wife – the only person in the world that I view that way." Likewise, for the wife. They each say, "I am yours, and you are mine."

Either way you look at these two promises, or perhaps some Scriptures emphasize one way, and some the other, the covenant promises are amazing and life-changing for us.

As we have seen, most of the Scriptures that have God quoting these two promises emphasize Him making both promises. That does not diminish, though, the importance or the expectation of our commitment to Him. (See *2 Kings 23:3*, for example.) But, perhaps it does emphasize the kind of commitment and desire He has for us. After all, He is the covenant God.

- How does it impact you to think that God is not only committed to being your God (both for you individually and for His people as a whole), but that He is also committed to you being His people?

- What convictions do you have to be His people and to make sure that He is your true God?

Additional Study #3: The Book of the Covenant

Read in context these four times that the *Book of the Covenant* is mentioned. Write what stands out to you in each passage and how the *Book of the Covenant* seemed to impact people at that time.

Exodus 24:7

2 Kings 23:2

2 Kings 23:21

2 Chronicles 34:30

What a great way to view the Bible!

It contains the written evidence of God's provision of this covenant, the expectations and the privileges of those of us in a covenant relationship with God. It's how we know God as the covenant God and ourselves as the covenant people.

It's like a married couple having a book about their marriage. Not just a book about marriage, but a book about **their** marriage, written by God himself.

The Bible is about **the** covenant, in general. But, hopefully we view it as being about **our** covenant personally and specifically. No one has to coerce us to read it or enjoy it. It is a delight to read about the One who has promised to be our God and see what He says about us as His people.

How does that impact your view of the Bible?

The more you know the covenant God,
the more you love His covenant book.

Additional Study #4: The Covenant of Love

Read in context these times that the *Covenant of Love* is mentioned. **NOTE:** it can also be translated "mercy" or "loving kindness." Write what stands out to you in each passage and how the *Covenant of Love* (or mercy or loving kindness) seemed to impact people at that time.

Deuteronomy 7:9 _____

Deuteronomy 7:12 _____

1 Kings 8:23 _____

2 Chronicles 6:14 _____

Nehemiah 1:5 _____

Daniel 9:4 _____

What a great way to view our covenant!

It's not a stale arrangement between two parties that are obligated to do business with each other because of a legal contract between them.

It's all about love.

- His love for us.
- Our love for Him.

That doesn't mean that it is a loose, ineffective agreement that can be easily broken. In fact, it's a strong bond that will last for eternity.

You might also be encouraged to read *Isaiah 54:10*, *Ezekiel 34:25*, and *Ezekiel 37:26* where it is referred to as a covenant of peace.

How does that impact your view of the covenant?

What do you love about your covenant with God?

The more you know the covenant God,
the more you love Him and your covenant with Him.