

God's Covenants IV Warnings!

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Good morning once again! We're going to be continuing with God's Covenants. I was going to start with God's warnings, but I'm not because I'm going to pick up on something that Fred said. In part he stole some of my thunder, but that's okay because I've got lots of it left!

He was talking about Solomon and the Feast of Tabernacles and he read from the book of Ecclesiastes. What you did not know is that he was dutifully 'following the traditions of the elders,' and the scribes and the Jews. There are five books in the Old Testament—in the section known as the Writings—were read and studied on five specific days.

1. *Song of Solomon* or *Song of Songs* (at Passover time)
2. *Book of Ruth* (read and studied at Pentecost)
3. *Book of Lamentations* (studied and read on the 9th of Ab—which was the date both temples were destroyed)
4. *Book of Esther* (read and studied at Purim, celebrating the saving of the Jews in the days of Haman)
5. Book of Ecclesiastes (established some 2,000 years ago, studied and read during the Feast of Tabernacles)

What it goes to show you is that not every tradition of the Jews is wrong. But if you want to find out where they were wrong, read Matt. 23 and Mark 7 and you will find out where they were wrong.

Concerning Solomon—and there may be a glimmer of hope, because God made David a promise, which says that He would not punish Solomon in quite the way that He punished Saul. First of all, let's read an admonition

2-Chronicles 15:1—this is a warning: “And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded. And he went out to meet Asa... [king of Judah] ...and said to him, ‘Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD *is* with you while you are with Him. And if you seek Him, He will be found by you. **But if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.**” This is exactly what David told Solomon.

1-Chronicles 28:2—this is toward the end of David's life and he's giving instructions regarding the temple to Solomon and the people. “And David

the king stood up on his feet and said, ‘Hear me, my brethren and my people. I *had* in my heart to build a house of rest for the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God, and had made preparations for the building. But God said to me, “You shall not build a house for My name, because you *have been* a man of war and have shed blood”” (vs 2-3).

If you will read over David's career, David did not have to do all that he did. It is said that God was with him, that's true! In fact, there's a Scripture that says that ‘God was with David wherever David went.’ The converse is not said. The Bible does not say that David went wherever God went. That isn't said.

When Saul told David to bring back X-number of foreskins of the Philistines, instead of the 100, David brought back 200. That wasn't necessary, so God is telling him that ‘because you were a man of war, and even though you're a man after My own heart you shall not build a temple, because My temple is going to be a temple of peace.’ So, God would not let him do that.

Verse 4: “However, the LORD God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel forever. For He has chosen Judah to be the ruler, and of the house of Judah the house of my father. And among the sons of my father's house He was pleased to make me king over all Israel. And of all my sons (for the LORD has given me many sons), He has chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel” (vs 4-5).

This is what God says to Solomon, v 6: “...Solomon your son shall build My house and My courts, for I have chosen him *to be* My son, and I will be his Father.” Get the import of those words. God is saying, ‘*I, the Lord God, will have Solomon be My son and I will be his Father.*’

Verse 7: “And I will establish his kingdom forever **if** he continues resolute in keeping My commandments and My ordinances, as he is today.” When this was written, when God spoke those words, Solomon was dutifully following the laws of God. He was obeying God! He was obeying the voice of God *at that time!*

Verse 8: “And now in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, keep and seek for all the commandments of

the LORD your God, so that you may possess this good land and leave *it* for an inheritance for your children after you forever. And you, Solomon my son, **acknowledge the God of your father and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the imaginations of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you. But if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever**" (vs 8-9).

That is chilling! Did God cast him off forever? *Maybe yes, but maybe not!*

We're going to see a few things regarding this about God's warning with King Solomon. We are now going to take a look—and this can be chilling—at 1-Kings 11. Here is the story of Solomon's downfall.

1-Kings 11:1: "And King Solomon loved many foreign women, even the daughter of Pharaoh, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, Hittites; of the nations which the LORD had said to the children of Israel, 'You shall not go in to them, and they shall not go in to you; surely they will turn away your heart after their gods.' *But* Solomon clung to these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines. And his wives turned away his heart... [David warned him! God warned him!] ...for it came to pass when Solomon was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods. And his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God as *was* the heart of David his father, for Solomon went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites; and Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD and did not *go* fully after the LORD like his father David" (vs 1-7).

Verse 7: "Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab..."

Verse 8: "And likewise he did for all his foreign wives, and burned incense and sacrificed to their gods."

Not only did he build those temples, and images of those gods—so his wives could worship them—he went and offered the offerings and sacrificed to these gods.

Verse 9: "And the LORD *was* angry with Solomon because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel who had appeared to him twice and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; and he did not keep that which the LORD commanded. And the LORD said to Solomon, 'Since this has been done by you, and since **you have not kept My covenant**... [Solomon broke the covenants] ...and

My statutes which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant. But I will not do it in your days... [Why?] ...for David your father's sake..." (vs 9-12). God loved David! David was a man after His own heart; he was faithful!

"...*but* I will tear it out of the hand of your son. Only, I will not tear away all the kingdom, *but* I will give one tribe to your son for David My servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen." (vs 12-13). Here was the downfall of Solomon!

We're going to look at two Scriptures; one may balance out the other; one frightening, the other hopeful. Picture Solomon in this instruction, in this admonition, in this warning. In fact, think of anybody who rebels against God.

Deuteronomy 29:16—Moses speaking: "(For you know how we have lived in the land of Egypt and how we came through the nations which you passed. And you have seen their abominations and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which *were* among them), lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God to go serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that bears gall and wormwood, and it shall come to pass when he hears the words of this curse that he shall bless himself in his heart, saying, 'I shall have peace, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart,' to *the* sweeping away *of* the watered and the parched" (vs 16-19). It's all right; I'm okay; I can do this,

Verse 20: "Then **the LORD will not be willing to forgive him, but the anger of the LORD and His jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book... [the book of Deuteronomy] ...shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven.**"

That is absolutely chilling! One time, when I was a freshman at Ambassador College there was a student who came about as close as you could come to this condition. I never really knew him, I just knew about him. The story was told to me and others at a conference. This goes back to 1960-61, and this student said to the ministers who were counseling with him—and they were just shaking when he said it, because it had to do with sex, alcohol and attitude of rebellion—'You don't understand. I don't care! I want my wine, women and song now and I don't care what happens next.'

We talk about the *unpardonable sin*. That's a sin that's not repented of. That attitude is as close as I

have ever come to in seeing someone who could have possibly crossed that line. When you get to that point, you can't change. We're going to see where Paul said that you can't change.

Did Solomon come to that point? *I don't know!* But I do know that God made a promise to David that provides a little bit of hope, maybe a glimmer, but a little bit of hope.

2-Samuel 7 is a really inspiring chapter, because it shows you David's attitude. We'll see another promise that God made to David. This is where David is proposing to build a temple, and we will see what God says.

2-Samuel 7:1: "And it came to pass when the king [David] dwelt in his house, and when the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies, the king said to Nathan the prophet, 'See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the Ark of God dwells within curtains.' Then Nathan said to the king, 'Go, do all that *is* in your heart, for the LORD *is* with you' (vs 1-3). The rest of it simply how God said, 'Go ahead and do it.'

But notice v 12, God speaking to David: "And when your days *are* fulfilled, and you shall sleep with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you who shall come forth from your loins. And I will make his kingdom sure." He's talking about Solomon.

Verse 13: "He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him for a father... [we saw that in Chronicles] and he shall be to Me for a son. If he commits iniquity... [which he did] ...I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the sons of men. **But My mercy shall not leave him, as I took it from Saul whom I put away before you.** And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before you. Your throne *shall be* established forever" (vs 13-16). A promise that David's kingdom would be assured, but that His mercy would not leave Solomon as it did Saul.

There is a glimmer of hope here, but we just don't know. The jury is out. How far does Solomon go? *I don't know!* But God told David, "**But My mercy shall not leave him, as I took it from Saul...**" That tells me there's a glimmer of hope there. I'll leave that in the hands of the Son of God, Who said, 'All authority and judgment is given to Me.' He will make that judgment.

But we have a warning! Yes, we do, because we're in covenant with God, too. We're under the New Covenant. Let's see a warning from Peter and a warning from Paul. Then we'll go back to the Old Covenant and see examples there.

2-Peter 2 is talking about evil people who were disobedient. It talks about the individuals who have actually tasted of the goodness of God.

2-Peter 2:19: "While promising them freedom, they themselves are actually slaves of corruption because by whatever anyone is overcome, he is also held in bondage. **For if, after escaping the moral defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again become entangled in them, and are overcome, the final end is worse than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than, after knowing it, to turn back from the Holy commandment that was delivered to them.** But the *pronouncement found* in the true proverb has happened to them: *The dog has returned to eat his own vomit; and the sow that was washed has returned to her wallowing place in the filthy mire*" (vs 19-22).

That's a warning to us to not forget the covenant! But Paul takes it step further. He goes beyond what Peter said. Remember where we read about the blotting out of heaven if you breach the covenant? Paul is talking about those who have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ, who have become converted, accepted His covenant:

Hebrews 6:4: "For *it is* impossible for those *who were* once enlightened, and who personally obtained the heavenly gift, and became partakers of the Holy Spirit, and who have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they have fallen away... [rejected the covenant, for whatever reason] ...to renew them again unto repentance; *seeing that* they are crucifying the Son of God for themselves, and are publicly holding Him in contempt" (vs 4-6).

I always knew how this pertained to demons, to Satan and his legions. They were spirit beings. They were righteous at first. They really were. You can read how Lucifer was there at the Mt. of God; he was a light-bringer. But spirit beings are not like flesh and blood; they don't change. If a spirit being decides to go a certain way, it's set!

- Why can't God forgive the demons?
- Why wouldn't God forgive Satan?

Theoretically, He could, but they would have to repent. They would have to change. Spirit beings, once they set themselves to go a certain way, that's it, they can't come back! They've gone beyond the point of no return.

That's why with humans: we can change, we can repent, we can see where we're wrong.

However, even with humans it is possible—if you set your mind hard enough and long enough to go a certain way—Paul is warning that there comes a time where we can go beyond the point of no return. That we have so set our minds to go against God's way, to go against Him that we just can't come back. That's exactly what Paul is talking about, and it's a warning to us if we reject the Spirit of God.

Once again, with Solomon, let the Lord Himself, let the Being Who said, 'all judgment is given to Me' make that call. But let us take that warning to heart that we don't forsake the covenant.

That clears up or discusses Solomon and the book of Ecclesiastes. I wanted to bring that out because of what Fred mentioned.

We're going to go back and see some of God's warning to Israel. We're going back to His covenant in Deut. 4. In fact, we're going to see several warnings. I want you to see them, to read them, so that we all realize that God warned again and again and again! He did not simple do it once or twice.

Deuteronomy 4:23: "Take heed to yourselves, **lest you forget the covenant** of the LORD your God, which He made with you, and make you a graven image, a likeness of anything which the LORD your God has forbidden you, for the LORD your God *is* a consuming fire, a jealous... [synonym for being zealous] ...God. When you shall beget children and grandchildren... [v 26]: I call heaven and earth to witness against you..." (vs 23-26). ***Don't forsake the covenant!***

After they crossed the Jordan River, Joshua warns them. It's actually God warning them, but He uses Joshua to do it. This is toward the end of Joshua's life:

Joshua 23:11: "Therefore, take good heed to yourselves to love the LORD your God. Otherwise, if you go back in any way, and cleave to those left of these nations that remain among you, and shall marry them and go in to them and they to you" (vs 11-12). These are traps!

Verse 14: "And behold, today I *am* going the way of all the earth.... [he's about to die] ...And you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spoke concerning you. All have come to pass to you. Not one thing of it has failed. But just as all the good things concerning you which the LORD your God has spoken to you have been fulfilled, so shall the LORD bring upon you every evil thing until He has destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God has given you, **when you have transgressed the covenant of the**

LORD your God, which He commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them, then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and you shall perish quickly from off the good land which He has given to you" (vs 14-16).

I'll just mention a couple of other warnings. Read Jer. 11:1-10; 22:1-9; Deut. 29:22-27. I want you to compare the wording in two verses—Jer. 22:5 and Gen. 22:15-18.

Jeremiah 22:5—this is a severe warning; God is warning: "**But if you will not hear these words, I swear by Myself," says the LORD, "that this house shall become a desolation."**"

When you see words like that, in the form of the Hebrew—*I swear by Myself*—that is an absolute declarative statement that God will do it. No if, ands or buts! This was the negative.

Compare that with what God said to Abraham in Genesis 22:15—almost the same warning. This is the story of what we call in Hebrew *the binding*, where God told Abraham to sacrifice his son. God had to bind him first. This is the second time that God calls to him.

Genesis 22:15: "And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, 'By Myself have I sworn,' says the LORD, 'because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son; that in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply your seed like the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the seashore. And your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice'" (vs 15-18).

How many times have we read where God says, 'Obey My voice!' Abraham did it all! God is saying, 'By Myself I have sworn.' That means that this is what has become a Royal Covenant. There's a difference between an 'I vow' and a Royal Covenant. The 'I vow' is if you do this, I will do that. You've got to do this, and if you do, that's the Old Covenant: *keep My words, My commandments, obey My voice and I will bless you and cause you to ride high. Oh the blessing of the field, and of the womb I will give to you.*

But when Abraham and a couple of others God made a Royal Covenant because of actions. In the old feudal days this would be done by a vassal to a king or a lord because of a faithful servant. The king says, 'Because you have been loyal to me I give you this land, I make you—whatever title he wants—and you have it because of your service to me.'

Well, this is the same thing. God says, 'By Myself, I swear!' Those blessings are coming to the children of Abraham no matter what. It doesn't matter whether they obey or not obey. God says, because of what Abraham has done, 'I will do this.' A Royal Covenant.

And his seed. The nations of Israel did possess the gates of their enemies—WWII the British Empire. But remember, God said that He would give them the blessings. He didn't say that He would maintain those blessings if they didn't obey them. That's different.

We talk about how modern Israel got the blessings. Modern Israel—the British and Americans—really did acknowledge God. In many ways they did. But unfortunately, they turned. I want to see if you recognize these words and can figure out the man who uttered them, wrote them. He was an American, perhaps one of the most famous Americans who ever lived. If I tell you that he saw the country through one its greatest trials when it was torn apart, you'll probably guess who it is:

And whereas it is the duty of nations as well as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions, in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord....

How many times have we read in Scripture, 'Blessed is that nation whose God is the Lord.'

...We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand, which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts...

Shades of Jer. 17:9

...that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own....

Ever hear of Yankee ingenuity. The great American work ethic! Work hard and you will produce all of this. That was a part of it. But the underlying foundation goes much deeper.

Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us!

—President: Abraham Lincoln
(pb.org/secdocs/lincoln1.html)

Those words were about as true as any I have ever read. I can't argue with any of them, not a single one! When were they uttered? When were they spoken? When were they read? *Oct. 3, 1863! Abraham Lincoln's Thanksgiving Proclamation!*

Now we can understand one of the reasons God did bless this country. He was typical of many, many great Americans from the 1770s until the modern era, even as late as 1944, during WWII, Franklin D. Roosevelt, regardless of what you think of him—and I had my difficulties with Mr. Roosevelt's economic policies—but one cannot dispute that he was a man who believed in God; he was a patriot, and he had a prayer that he read on D-Day. He distributed thousands of copies all across the country and he opened it up with "Almighty God!" He prayed for the success of D-Day.

It was so dicey that General Dwight Eisenhower had two letters in his pocket that he was going to read after D-Day:

1. announcing success
2. announcing failure

and his responsibility for that failure. Well, as Benjamin Franklin would say, and did say, "Our prayer was heard!" That prayer was heard.

If you ever have a chance to read the book *The Longest Day* by Cornelius Ryan or if you see the movie about D-Day, almost taken word for word from that book, you will see events that occurred that should not have occurred. If any one of four or five events had not gone the allies' way—all of them had to go the allies' way for that victory to take place; they all did, every one of them! God heard that prayer!

In terms of the British, in the days of Queen Elizabeth—daughter of Henry VIII, a spoiled brat among other things, but he was historic. He broke with Rome and did do some good things. One of his daughters—Elizabeth I—was queen in the days of the Spanish Armada, and after that battle who got the credit for that victory; to whom did Queen Elizabeth give the credit? She had written a diagram and you see this big face blowing and ships being scattered, and she said, "**God blew and they were scattered!**" She gave the victory to God!

You think today, in the 21st century, which British Prime Ministers can you think of that would give God the credit? *I can't think of any!*

Have you ever read the British National Anthem? The entire British National Anthem is a prayer to God—it really is! The first stanza many people know (to tune is to *My Country Tis of Thee*):

God save our gracious Queen
Long live our noble Queen
God save the Queen!
Send her victorious
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us
God save the Queen!

the second stanza will blow you away:

O lord God arise
Scatter our enemies,
And make them fall!
Confound their knavish tricks,
Confuse their politics,
On you our hopes we fix,
God save the Queen!

<http://www.lyricsondemand.com/miscellaneouslyrics/nationalanthemslrics/britannationalanthemlyrics.html>

That was the approach of the British people going back centuries. God heard that prayer. Since the days of Franklin Roosevelt, or Winston Churchill who gave God credit, in the last 30-40 years I can think of just two leaders—one in Britain and one in America—that approached that.

- Britain—Margaret Thatcher
- American—Ronald Reagan

I can't think of any other. I'm not talking politics, not talking one party or another, but can you think of a Bill Clinton, Barack Obama, a Cameron in Britain acting like this? Thinking like this? *No!*

God gave the blessings and now He's taken them away. Look at the laws being passed in Washington—anti-God, anti-Bible—it is incredible. That's why these blessings are going to be taken away.

As a nation we have forgotten the covenant! This has been a warning about:

- **Don't break the covenant!**
- **Don't forsake God!**
- **Don't let the root of bitterness get in**

If it gets in it will lead to *forsaking the covenant!*
Let's not let that happen!

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2 Chronicles 15:1-2
- 2) 1 Chronicles 28:2-9
- 3) 1 Kings 11:1-13
- 4) Deuteronomy 29:16-20
- 5) 2 Samuel 7:1-3, 12-16
- 6) 2 Peter 2:19-22
- 7) Hebrews 6:4-6
- 8) Deuteronomy 4:23-26
- 9) Joshua 23:11-12, 14-16
- 10) Jeremiah 22:5
- 11) Genesis 22:15-18

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 23
- Mark 7
- Jeremiah 11:1-10; 22:1-9
- Deuteronomy 29:22-27
- Jeremiah 17:9

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