

## Leadership And The Covenants (Part Two)

John W. Ritenbaugh

Given 31-Oct-15; Sermon #1293

My subject for this sermon is a continuation of a theme that I have been on now for over a year, I began it at the Feast of Tabernacle in 2014. The basic theme has been regarding the unique characteristics of the church. There is no other institution like it on the earth. There is a logical reason for that, so without going into the details of those reasons, I will state as an overview, it is because it is being created in the image of Jesus Christ. He was unique, He was a one of a kind, and the church that is in His image is going to be of the same kind as well.

Also in that series I spent some time on the matter of our world view. This is important because the churches world view is different from other churches, and it is because of the things that are in the mind, in the character, and in the conduct of those who are members of that church. So it too is unique, nobody looks on things the way that people in the church do. We are trying to come to the place where we hardly look at anything the way the world does, but we are looking at it in the sense of a body of people that is this way.

We are the group of people that is very concerned about following God's laws. We do not believe that they are done away, Jesus made this very clear. I wonder how many churches there are that are unique the way the church of God is.

My 'handwriting' sermon at the beginning of this past Feast was actually a part of that series. Please turn to Matthew 24. This is where I began that handwriting sermon in that particular Feast. We will read verses 34-51, so that we get a clear picture of what Jesus is saying here, because it contains a powerful caution regarding us. There is a sense of urgency in what He says, that when we reach this time in history there is something that we must do.

**Matthew 24:36-51** "But of that day and hour no one knows, no, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. [We know what it says in Genesis 6, about the time just before the Flood.] For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark [they were moving on with life taking care of what they needed with no thought of where the entire generation of people were headed], and did not know until the flood came and took them away, so also

Leadership and the Covenants (Part Two) by John W. Ritenbaugh (<http://www.cgg.org>)

will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. [If we are in a mind set to watch, there are only two things that a person can watch: what is going on in the world, and his own condition as he lives through that period of time.] But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore, you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect Him. [He is telling us be on guard to what is happening in terms of news and also what is happening in terms of your own mind set.] Who then is a faithful and wise servant whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. [We are to look at Him as our Master and we are to be doing what He is talking about here as He is coming.] Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

My subject today is going to be a continuation of my previous one, which had to do with God's charge of the exceedingly poor quality of leadership that other portions of the Bible will show is taking place at this same time, just before being scattered in punishment and lost to this day.

Mark this down in your mind. An American philosopher by the name of Henry David Thoreau, who was not a godly man at all, but what he said here has a pretty good level of truth within it. Connect this with leadership. He said, "Every institution is but the lengthened shadow of one man." Guess who that one man is? The leader.

This truth applies whether the institution is a family, a corporation, or a nation. I am not claiming that what Thoreau said is an absolute. I am saying that it is a generality that is exceedingly accurate.

We will examine first of all a few scriptures concerning conditions just before Judah fell, then in the same way we are also going to see what is happening in Israelitish nations in

Leadership and the Covenants (Part Two) by John W. Ritenbaugh (<http://www.cgg.org>)

our time right now. Let us examine ourselves as to the level of our leadership as shown by our conduct within these circumstances. Turn to Isaiah 3. He is writing here on what was going on in Judah, it gives us an overview.

**Isaiah 3:8-9** For Jerusalem stumbled, and Judah is fallen, because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of His glory. The look on their countenance witnesses against them, and they declare their sin as Sodom; they do not hide it. Woe to their soul! For they have brought evil upon themselves.

**Isaiah 3:12** As for My people, children [in the sense of maturity] are their oppressors, and women rule over them, O My people! Those who lead you cause you to err, and destroy the way of your paths.

That is pretty clear that God is putting the bulk of the responsibility on the leadership of the nation.

**Ezekiel 34:2-10** “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God to the shepherds: “Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? You eat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. [We are talking about people and the leaders of those people.] So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. [Beast of the field is a term used on occasion by God, indicating the beast were Gentile nations.] My sheep wandered through all the mountains [nations], and on every hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them.” ‘Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: “As I live, says the Lord God, surely because My flock became prey, and My flock became food for every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock” [Look at the United States of America Are the leaders guarding the borders, protecting our economy?]—‘therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the Lord! Thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to

Leadership and the Covenants (Part Two) by John W. Ritenbaugh (<http://www.cgg.org>)

cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them.”

**Ezekiel 2:1-5** And He said to me, “Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak to you.” Then the Spirit entered me when He spoke to me, and set me on my feet; and I heard Him who spoke to me. And He said to me, “Son of man, I am sending you to the children of Israel [This does not mean that Judah is not included, but the main one to receive this message is Israel.], to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against Me, they and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day. For they are impudent and stubborn children. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God.’ “As for them, whether they hear or whether they refuse—for they are a rebellious house—yet they will know that a prophet has been among them.”

Something to think about. When did Ezekiel live? He lived long after Israel had gone into captivity, they never got this message! It is going to be given, and it is a message for Israel.

**Ezekiel 3:3-5** And He said to me, “Son of man, feed your belly, and your stomach with this scroll that I give you.” So I ate it, and it was in my mouth like honey in sweetness. Then He said to me, “Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them. For you are not sent to a people of unfamiliar speech and of hard language, but to the house of Israel.”

What I want you to understand here is, the book of Ezekiel is primarily written to Israel. This does not mean that Judah is not included within it, but the circumstances at the time that they were inspired were such that it lends itself to understand that Isaiah is written about Judah, and the book of Ezekiel is written primarily about the Israelitish people.

We saw Isaiah describing the people in Judah, bad leadership problems. We saw in Ezekiel bad, terrible leadership problems. Is it any wonder that God scattered both of them for what they were producing in the nation that God set them up in? It is not something that we can be proud of.

Leadership and the Covenants (Part Two) by John W. Ritenbaugh (<http://www.cgg.org>)

What you should begin to grasp when we combine this with Matthew 24 and what Jesus says regarding the Israelitish people—that is Israelitish people who are in His church, have His Spirit—that we need to get ready for terrible times. We need to be working toward the end that God has in mind for us, that is to be faithful to Him as these times build up and we carry on the responsibilities that He has given to us.

We cannot wait around for a leader to rise up. God may do that, God may not. To this point He has not done it yet. I think one of the things He does want us to do is each and everyone of us picks up the ball and runs with it in our own life. This does not mean we go out on the street and start preaching. It means that we have to begin right where we are and make sure that our own personal leadership to God, and to ourselves, and family, is following the line that God has put down in His Book. Make extra efforts to obey Him, to submit to Him in the responsibilities that He has given to us.

We will go back to Isaiah 57. I want to touch on a few things here. They are pretty helpful. What they do in these chapters is show individual conduct problems in the nation of Judah at the time Isaiah was writing.

**Isaiah 57:11** “And of whom have you been afraid, or feared that you have lied and not remembered Me, nor taken it to your heart? Is it not because I have held My peace from of old that you do not fear Me?”

The people of that time did not fear God, they did not have anything but a general lack of respect for God, shown in the multitude of careless spiritual activities.

**Isaiah 58:5** Is it a fast I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, and to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?

What he is talking about there is the hypocrisy is very evident in their spiritual conduct. They say but they do not do. One chapter says, you do not fear Me, the next chapter says, there is hypocrisy.

**Isaiah 59:1-2** Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.

In a broader context we will find that the Israelitish people, primarily Jewish in this case, are crying out to God, they are doing it in prayer, but God is not responding. Why? Because they do not fear Him. In another chapter, because they are hypocrites, and in this chapter, because they are not repenting. These three chapters in a row are showing us a more detailed examination of what was going on in Judah just before Judah was scattered by God.

Though they were crying out to God in prayer, they were disappointed because it is obvious to them that He is not responding to their appeals, and why He is not responding is also clear because what they want is for the problems to be taken away so that they do not have to face living in them, but they themselves are doing nothing to change themselves.

We are in a situation that is growing daily ever more like what we are reading here in the book of Isaiah and also in Ezekiel—one in Israel and one in Judah. God wants us to fear Him, not be hypocrites, and we have to repent. If we repent, our leadership will increase in a magnificent amount. If they are not improving their own personal leadership problems by becoming better leaders in their areas of operation, we cannot wait around. We have to do something that fits in with Jesus' appeal there in Matthew 24, when Jesus said, "Make sure you prepare for My return."

In order for the circumstance that we are living in to really be changed it must be a thorough societal change. Some change can be imposed by authority, receiving truth from the top, and that is exactly what Jesus is going to do when He comes. Regardless of that, each and every person that hears the message still has to change himself. If that does not occur, why should Jesus come?

This is what we have to do now. He has come to live in us and He is giving us His truth, He has given us faith, giving the attitude we should have, and so we have to become putty in His hands so that He can mold and shape us into what He wants.

Why does mankind in general have what seems to be an inborn suspicion of and resentment against God's covenant? Why would I raise the issue of covenants at this time? They are important. The title I selected for this sermon is "Leadership and the Covenants."

The inborn suspicion that man has within him would even include resentment. They are evidence of the influence of human nature under Satan's influence. We are familiar with Romans 8:7, which states that human nature perceives God as an enemy. Very simply, human nature wants to be free to do as it pleases because of Satan's influence, as

Leadership and the Covenants (Part Two) by John W. Ritenbaugh (<http://www.cgg.org>)

clearly shown in his influence over it. Thus it follows the same path that Adam and Eve took in the Garden of Eden. This is a major reason why we must focus on the covenants for some overall guidance as to what we are to do in this time.

The covenants—most precisely of all things in the Bible—define our relationship with God, and our responsibility to God. They define how we must respond to God if we are to please Him. It is by submitting to Him that we come to know God. All of these things are tied together in our submitting to the covenants of God.

Though the covenants tend to be broad in statement, nonetheless eternal life, which is a quality of life, dwells within the parameters of the relationship with God and God commands that we seek Him and we are making efforts to seek Him through the covenants. They guide and give overviews that are very helpful to us. In a way they are somewhat like the book of Deuteronomy. I said to you a number of times in the sermons in Nashville, Deuteronomy is not a book that deals much in the way of details. It *is* the Old Covenant and it points us elsewhere in the Bible for the details that are necessary to fill in the blanks that appear within the generalities.

Of all the things in the Bible, what could possibly be more informing for us than the covenants? For example, His commandments are in the covenants, everybody knows the Ten Commandments are in the Old Covenant, but then again I do not really mean the Ten Commandments here, that is obvious to everybody. There are many, many commandments in the covenants. They are direct orders from God, this is our agreement and this is what I want you to do. That is what covenants say.

What could possibly be more informing to us than those things that are in the covenants? Laws that detail the terms of our relationship with Him and each other and with the world, they also are in the covenants and they are very helpful toward shaping your child's mind toward God and especially if you are living them and they are able to see those things. They give children a wonderful example to follow. You want to raise your kids right? Know what the covenants of God say and follow them.

It is within them that He guides us more precisely toward what we must do to please Him and to prepare for the Kingdom of God.

I am going to give you four principles to understand as guides to our attitudes regarding covenants that are helpful. There seems to be an inborn resentment toward the covenants of God that somehow or another they imprison us, they box us in. In one sense they do, but that is not their purpose. Their purpose is actually to free us by showing us exactly what God wants from us.

First attitude: we must begin by establishing in our minds that they are a wonderful gift from God. How many times do you wish God would tell you what to do? He has! We must begin by establishing in our mind that they are a wonderful gift from God because they are intended to keep us free through His guidance. They are intended to make our responsibilities to God clearer, so that we are not in a fog all of the time.

Second attitude: we must understand that each covenant is a legal agreement that establishes a defined relationship with the unseen Almighty God. The unseen aspect of this relationship is a major reason why faith is necessary, we interact with the invisible God through something we can see and understand. We cannot see Him but we can understand His Word. His covenants are words and they are not anywhere near as complex as we might think. He kept it simple for us. That is why it is broad, the technicalities are in other areas.

Third attitude: the covenants are not coldly rigid, legalistic, and impersonal. They are indeed legal and binding, but we are united within them by means of, and because of, the merciful kindness of the most loving Being who exists. He does it on purpose. He ties us to Him so that we have the comfort of knowing that this great Creator is the one who called us to be part of this relationship.

How many people do you think who have lived on this earth have actually made a covenant with God Himself? They are a gift, it is God who reaches out to us to make each and every covenant. There is no bargaining between parties, as in a business conference. Rather, His approach is that He greatly desires that we succeed within His purpose. In a sense He does not give us a chance to mess up the agreement. If we are in tune with our Creator we understand that He already knows what is best for His creation, its purpose, its plan, and our future, and the approach therefore from the beginning of each covenant that is given is for us to voluntarily cooperate and conform to His leadership.

Fourth attitude: the covenants are given by the sovereign and faithful God. He will not fail to keep His responsibilities or promises given in the covenants.

In the covenants, if we believe in God then we come face to face with His requirements for our success in life within His purpose. The covenants absolutely must be part of our world view. If you understand what a world view is, we perceive the operations of our life, what is going on in the world, through the lens of the covenants—agreements that God has made with us—that shapes everything in our life.

Notice I said covenants, plural, not just the old and the new covenants, it is all of them.

Leadership and the Covenants (Part Two) by John W. Ritenbaugh (<http://www.cgg.org>)

Depending on the way they are counted, there are either six or eight. God does not number them, it is just the way men break them up. They can find at least six, and some of them break a couple of them into two. In addition, some covenants are imposed on all of mankind, neither just for Israel nor for the church. There are covenants that God has imposed on those who are not converted and He expects them to keep them, whether they know it or not. As we begin to go through those covenants you will see it has to be this way.

The specific covenant that the church is under with Jesus Christ is not technically the New Covenant as is prophesied in Jeremiah 31.

**Jeremiah 31:31-34** “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they all shall know the Lord, for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

If you were reading along there with me you saw that this prophesy specifically states that the New Covenant is going to be made *after those days* (meaning after Christ returns), with the nation of Israel. The emphasis here in Jeremiah is on the nation. Compare this with other scriptures that you are familiar with, first of all turn to Luke 14.

**Luke 14:25-27** Now great multitudes went with Him, and He turned and said to them, “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”

First thing that I want you to notice is that the covenant that we made with Jesus Christ is just that, it is a covenant with Jesus Christ, it is very personal. Nothing like that was said in Jeremiah 31.

Please turn to Hebrews 8. I want you to understand our covenant is made with one Person. We are to be loyal to Him, we are the ones He called specifically to be loyal to Him and to make an agreement with Him. He is our Savior, He is our God, He is our King. The covenant is made with Him.

**Hebrews 8:7-13** For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with them [Meaning people, not covenants. If he were referring to the covenant then he would have used a singular noun.], He says, “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah [The difference between the old and new covenants is one of promises. The same laws, same general people, but the promises are much more superior in the New Covenant than the old. Nowhere in the Old Covenant does God promise to forgive sins, He does not promise His Spirit.]—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none of his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” In that He says, “A new covenant,” He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

This covenant that we have made with Jesus Christ is a specific covenant that is a forerunner of that covenant that He is going to make with the nations of Israel and Judah. It is being made only with the church—the Israel of God—at this time and is made personally and individually with Jesus Christ. It is being made with God. He is God, He is our Savior, He is our High Priest, He is the one that we metaphorically marry. It is in no way a lesser covenant. It has every attribute of the covenant that Jeremiah named except that it is not being made with the nation, it is being made with the Israel of God, the church.

What is it that breaks a covenant with God? The most common covenant adults know of is the marriage covenant. Please turn to Malachi 2 so we can see the attitude of God

Leadership and the Covenants (Part Two) by John W. Ritenbaugh (<http://www.cgg.org>) regarding the breaking of a marriage.

**Malachi 2:16** “For the Lord God of Israel says that He hates divorce, for it covers one's garment with violence,” says the Lord of hosts. “Therefore take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.” [He is speaking to the men, and warning them to not deal treacherously with the wife of their youth by divorcing her.]

That is step one. From here we are going to go to Matthew 19.

**Matthew 19:1-10** Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these sayings, that He departed from Galilee and came to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them there. The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?” And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall become one flesh’? So then they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.” They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce and to put her away?” He said to them, “Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.” His disciples said to Him, “If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry.”

We will do a review. Why turn to these two scriptures? Because they show most clearly what it is that breaks a covenant with God. It is the same sin that is being discussed here in Matthew 19. Recall it in this manner: Ezekiel 16 shows God symbolically married Israel. Add to that Revelation 19, which shows the church marrying Jesus Christ. Thus in the Old Testament in Ezekiel 16, we have God entering into a marriage with Israel, through the Old Covenant, and then in the New Covenant we already know from Jeremiah 31, as well as Revelation 19, that the church metaphorically marries Jesus. Thus the Old Covenant becomes a marriage, and the joining of the union in the New Covenant also is a marriage.

This is where Matthew 19 begins to come into the picture, along with Malachi. It is the human marriage covenant that shows the tightness and closeness of the union that is created when one enters into a covenant with God. It becomes a dedicating of one's life to another. Rather than becoming one flesh, as in a human marriage, with God we become one spirit with our God, as Jesus teaches us very plainly and clearly in John 17. That is what we are looking at here in Matthew 19. It is an overview of this marriage principle and applying it to the highest of all human relationships and that is becoming one with God.

Very important to our relationship is that what destroys one covenant with God is the same basic sin that breaks a marriage covenant between a man and a woman. In human marriage Jesus points to adultery. What is adultery? It is disloyalty, it is unfaithfulness to one's spouse with whom one has made a covenant. Adultery can destroy a marriage. In a covenant with the spiritual God, idolatry destroys the union, because idolatry is spiritual adultery.

**Jeremiah 3:6-11** The Lord said also to me in the days of Josiah the king: "Have you seen what backsliding Israel has done? She has gone up on every high mountain and under every green tree, and there played the harlot. [Israel had made the covenant with God, but now she was committing idolatry.] And I said, after she has done all these things, 'Return to Me.' But she did not return. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it. Then I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but went and played the harlot also. [We are *not* talking about physical adultery, we are talking about spiritual idolatry. Israel and Judah were involved in paganism which broke the covenant.] So it came to pass, through her casual harlotry, that she defiled the land and committed adultery with stones and trees. [They used stones and trees in their religious ceremonies.] And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah has not turned to Me with her whole heart, but in pretense," says the Lord. Then the Lord said to me, "Backsliding Israel has shown herself more righteous than treacherous Judah."

Are any covenants of God done away because men disobeyed them? The Old Covenant is not done away. It is still working and still supposed to be obeyed. Can you tell me something that is in the Old Covenant that you are supposed to obey? The Ten Commandments! It is still in effect.

Leadership and the Covenants (Part Two) by John W. Ritenbaugh (<http://www.cgg.org>)

Are any covenants of God done away because men disobeyed them? In committing the first sin, whose sin was the greater, Adam's or Eve's? God makes it very clear that it was Adam's. Eve was deceived, a sin of weakness and understanding and of will, but Adam committed outright idolatry by giving his loyalty to his wife rather than to God.

We will find that there was an actual covenant there in the Garden of Eden. Did that do away with the covenant that God made with Adam and Eve? Not at all. It is plain in Genesis 3:17, God said to Adam, "You gave your loyalty to your wife." We must understand that no covenant in the Bible is done away with unless God clearly says so. The covenant that God made with Abraham and his descendants, is it done away? Not in the least.

The Old Covenant, according to the apostle Paul in Hebrew 8, is *becoming* obsolete, it is not done away either. If it was done away I do not believe that Jesus would have ever uttered what it says in Matthew 5.

**Matthew 5:17-18** "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or tittle will by any means pass from the law till all is fulfilled."

How can you live by every Word of God if some covenants are assumed to have been done away? They are still preserved in the Book by the God who gave them thousands of years ago and they are still available to us. Why did God not just erase them from the Book so that we would not have to bother? It is *not* all gone. With God this legal tie is important because the covenants tie the unseen God with His children. They tie the supernatural God in heaven, our spiritual invisible Creator, to the created material man on earth within a binding legal agreement.

The sovereign spiritual God has determined that His purpose is to be worked out through faith in Him. His faith is given to us and resides in material human beings, and like human babies in the womb, we will never see our spiritual Father until we are transformed. God is going to remain invisible but we are bound to Him in covenants, agreements that He has made. In I Corinthians 15, we will see God when we are transformed, a change will take place. We must believe and make good use of His covenants until that time.

Next time I will begin with this thought that we must believe and make good use of His covenants and we are going to examine how far reaching God's sovereignty over all is

Leadership and the Covenants (Part Two) by John W. Ritenbaugh (<http://www.cgg.org>)

stated in His Word. Some of God's covenants apply to the world, to the unconverted, and they are supposed to keep them whether they know them or not. He holds them responsible for keeping them. He does not hold them responsible for the New Covenant, or for the covenant that is made with Jesus Christ, but there are covenants that He holds them responsible for. And you know very well in Romans 1, He says of unconverted people they are without excuse.