

Kenyon, E. W.

The Blood Covenant

8. Jehovah Cuts the Covenant with Abraham

This chapter explains how God entered into covenant with Abraham and why that covenant is the foundation of Judaism and Christianity. It describes the ceremony that sealed the bond, the change of Abraham's and Sarah's names, and how the covenant created Israel as a Covenant People with mutual, unbreakable obligations between them and God.

Key takeaways

- Before cutting the covenant, God renamed Abram to Abraham ("father of many nations") and Sarai to Sarah, lifting them into a royal family.
- Abraham "believed" God, meaning he gave himself up wholly and without reservation; God counted this to him as righteousness.
- The covenant was cut through a slain animal and circumcision, so Abraham's blood mingled with the substitute's; it bound God and Abraham to protect and sustain each other to the limit.

- Circumcision at eight days was the seal and entrance into the covenant, making the child an heir to everything in it, including the duty of Israelites to care for orphans and widows.
- The covenant, not the Law, came first; the Law (Ten Commandments, priesthood, sacrifices, atonement) was given later as the Law OF the Covenant, existing to serve it.

Passages worth keeping

“The Covenant did not belong to the Ten Commandments as modernists put it, but the Covenant was the reason for the Law.”

States the chapter's core claim about the order and priority of covenant over law.

How it connects

The blood ceremony that sealed Abraham's covenant points forward to atonement and, ultimately, to the shedding of blood that seals the new covenant in Christ.

Scripture referenced

- **Genesis 17:1-5** -- God appears as El Shaddai, renames Abraham, establishes the covenant
- **Genesis 15:6** -- Abraham believed God; counted to him as righteousness
- **Genesis 17:13** -- The covenant marked in the flesh as everlasting

- **Genesis 22:16-18** -- God's promise and oath behind the covenant
- **Leviticus 16-17** -- Study of blood and the meaning of atonement