

Sacred Covenants

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Introduction

Sacred covenants must be respected; holy vows must be kept (Num. 30:1-2; Eccl. 5:4-7).

*Numbers 30:1-2 ... 1 Then Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the sons of Israel, saying, "This is the word which the Lord has commanded. 2 **"If a man makes a vow to the Lord, or takes an oath to bind himself with a binding obligation, he shall not violate his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.** (NASB95)*

*Ecclesiastes 5:4-7 ... 4 **When you make a vow to God, do not be late in paying it; for He takes no delight in fools. Pay what you vow!** 5 It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay. 6 Do not let your speech cause you to sin and do not say in the presence of the messenger of God that it was a mistake. Why should God be angry on account of your voice and destroy the work of your hands? 7 For in many dreams and in many words there is emptiness. Rather, fear God. (NASB95)*

Even in ordinary conversations and commitments, our word should be our bond (James 5:12; 2 Cor. 1:15-24).

*James 5:12 ... 12 **But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no, so that you may not fall under judgment.** (NASB95)*

2 Corinthians 1:15-24 ... 15 In this confidence I intended at first to come to you, so that you might twice receive a blessing; 16 that is, to pass your way into Macedonia, and again from Macedonia to come to you, and by you to be helped on my journey to Judea. 17 Therefore, I was not vacillating when I intended to do this, was I? Or what I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, so that with me there will be yes, yes and no, no at the same time? 18 But as God is faithful, our word to you is not yes and no. 19 For the Son of God, Christ Jesus, who was preached among you by us—by me and Silvanus and Timothy—was not yes and no, but is yes in Him. 20 For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes; therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us. 21 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, 22 who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge. 23 But I call God as witness to my soul, that to spare you I did not come again to Corinth. 24 Not that we lord it over your faith, but are workers with you for your joy; for in your faith you are standing firm. (NASB95)

In this lesson, let us consider: the covenant of marriage, the covenant of friendship, the covenant of the eyes, and the covenant of the Lord.

The Covenant of Marriage

God has instituted the covenant of marriage (Gen. 2:18-24; Matt. 19:3-9).

*Genesis 2:18-24 ... 18 Then the Lord God said, “**It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.**” 19 Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. 21 So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. 22 **The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.** 23 **The man said, “This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.”** 24 **For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.** (NASB95)*

*Matthew 19:3-9 ... 3 Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?” 4 And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, 5 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.’ 6 **“So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”** 7 They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to give her a certificate of divorce and send her away?” 8 He said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way. 9 “And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.” (NASB95)*

Sadly, many violate their marital vows (Prov. 2:16-19; Mal. 2:13-16).

*Proverbs 2:16-19 ... 16 **To deliver you from the strange woman, From the adulteress who flatters with her words; 17 That leaves the companion of her youth And forgets the covenant of her God; 18 For her house sinks down to death And her tracks lead to the dead; 19 None who go to her return again, Nor do they reach the paths of life.** (NASB95)*

*Malachi 2:13-16 ... 13 “This is another thing you do: you cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and with groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. 14 “Yet you say, ‘For what reason?’ **Because the Lord has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.** 15 “But not one has done so who has a remnant of the Spirit. And what did that one do while he was seeking a godly offspring? Take heed then to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth. 16 “For I hate divorce,” says the Lord, the*

God of Israel, “and him who covers his garment with wrong,” says the Lord of hosts. “So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.” (NASB95)

The Covenant of Friendship

The Bible extols the covenant of friendship (Prov. 27:10; cf. 17:17; 18:24), and provides compelling examples: Ruth and Naomi (Ruth 1:16-17; 4:13-15), David and Jonathan (1 Sam. 20:16-17, 30-34), and also Jesus (John 15:12-17).

*Proverbs 27:10 ... 10 **Do not forsake your own friend or your father’s friend, And do not go to your brother’s house in the day of your calamity; Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother far away.** (NASB95)*

*Proverbs 17:17 ... 17 **A friend loves at all times, And a brother is born for adversity.** (NASB95)*

*Proverbs 18:24 ... 24 **A man of too many friends comes to ruin, But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.** (NASB95)*

*Ruth 1:16-17 ... 16 **But Ruth said, “Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. 17 “Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus may the Lord do to me, and worse, if anything but death parts you and me.”** (NASB95)*

*Ruth 4:13-15 ... 13 **So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife, and he went in to her. And the Lord enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. 14 Then the women said to Naomi, “Blessed is the Lord who has not left you without a redeemer today, and may his name become famous in Israel. 15 “May he also be to you a restorer of life and a sustainer of your old age; **for your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him.**” (NASB95)***

*1 Samuel 20:16-17 ... 16 **So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, “May the Lord require it at the hands of David’s enemies.” 17 **Jonathan made David vow again because of his love for him, because he loved him as he loved his own life.** (NASB95)***

*1 Samuel 20:30-34 ... 30 **Then Saul’s anger burned against Jonathan and he said to him, “You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! Do I not know that you are choosing the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of your mother’s nakedness? 31 “For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Therefore now, send and bring him to me, for he must surely die.” 32 But Jonathan answered Saul his father and said to him, “Why should he be put to death? What has he done?” 33 Then Saul hurled his spear at him to strike him down; so Jonathan knew that his father had decided to put David to death. 34 Then Jonathan arose***

from the table in fierce anger, and did not eat food on the second day of the new moon, for he was grieved over David because his father had dishonored him. (NASB95)

John 15:12-17 ... 12 "This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. 13 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. 14 "You are My friends if you do what I command you. 15 "No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. 16 "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you. 17 "This I command you, that you love one another. (NASB95)

Unfortunately, many betray their close companions (Ps. 41:9; 55:12-21; 83:1-8; Matt. 26:20-25, 47-50; John 13:18).

Psalm 41:9 ... 9 Even my close friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me. (NASB95)

Psalm 55:12-21 ... 12 For it is not an enemy who reproaches me, Then I could bear it; Nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me, Then I could hide myself from him. 13 But it is you, a man my equal, My companion and my familiar friend; 14 We who had sweet fellowship together Walked in the house of God in the throng. 15 Let death come deceitfully upon them; Let them go down alive to Sheol, For evil is in their dwelling, in their midst. 16 As for me, I shall call upon God, And the Lord will save me. 17 Evening and morning and at noon, I will complain and murmur, And He will hear my voice. 18 He will redeem my soul in peace from the battle which is against me, For they are many who strive with me. 19 God will hear and answer them— Even the one who sits enthroned from of old—Selah. With whom there is no change, And who do not fear God. 20 He has put forth his hands against those who were at peace with him; He has violated his covenant. 21 His speech was smoother than butter, But his heart was war; His words were softer than oil, Yet they were drawn swords. (NASB95)

Psalm 83:1-8 ... 1 A Song, a Psalm of Asaph. O God, do not remain quiet; Do not be silent and, O God, do not be still. 2 For behold, Your enemies make an uproar, And those who hate You have exalted themselves. 3 They make shrewd plans against Your people, And conspire together against Your treasured ones. 4 They have said, "Come, and let us wipe them out as a nation, That the name of Israel be remembered no more." 5 For they have conspired together with one mind; Against You they make a covenant: 6 The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites, Moab and the Hagrites; 7 Gebal and Ammon and Amalek, Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre; 8 Assyria also has joined with them; They have become a help to the children of Lot. Selah. (NASB95)

Matthew 26:20-25 ... 20 Now when evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the twelve disciples. 21 As they were eating, He said, "Truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me." 22 Being deeply grieved, they each one began to say to Him, "Surely not I, Lord?" 23 And He answered, "He who dipped his hand with Me in the bowl is the one who will betray Me. 24 "The Son of Man is to go, just as it is written of Him; but woe

to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.” 25 And Judas, who was betraying Him, said, “Surely it is not I, Rabbi?” Jesus said to him, “You have said it yourself.” (NASB95)

Matthew 26:47-50 ... 47 While He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a large crowd with swords and clubs, who came from the chief priests and elders of the people. 48 Now he who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, “Whomever I kiss, He is the one; seize Him.” 49 Immediately Judas went to Jesus and said, “Hail, Rabbi!” and kissed Him. 50 And Jesus said to him, “Friend, do what you have come for.” Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him. (NASB95)

John 13:18 ... 18 “I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled, ‘He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me.’ (NASB95)

The Covenant of the Eyes

The faithful make a covenant with their eyes, not to look upon evil things (Job 31:1-12; Ps. 119:37-38; Prov. 4:25-27; Isa. 33:13-16; 1 John 2:15-17).

Job 31:1-12 ... 1 **“I have made a covenant with my eyes; How then could I gaze at a virgin?** 2 **“And what is the portion of God from above Or the heritage of the Almighty from on high?** 3 **“Is it not calamity to the unjust And disaster to those who work iniquity?** 4 **“Does He not see my ways And number all my steps?** 5 **“If I have walked with falsehood, And my foot has hastened after deceit,** 6 **Let Him weigh me with accurate scales, And let God know my integrity.** 7 **“If my step has turned from the way, Or my heart followed my eyes, Or if any spot has stuck to my hands,** 8 **Let me sow and another eat, And let my crops be uprooted.** 9 **“If my heart has been enticed by a woman, Or I have lurked at my neighbor’s doorway,** 10 **May my wife grind for another, And let others kneel down over her.** 11 **“For that would be a lustful crime; Moreover, it would be an iniquity punishable by judges.** 12 **“For it would be fire that consumes to Abaddon, And would uproot all my increase. (NASB95)**

Psalms 119:37-38 ... 37 **Turn away my eyes from looking at vanity, And revive me in Your ways.** 38 **Establish Your word to Your servant, As that which produces reverence for You. (NASB95)**

Proverbs 4:25-27 ... 25 **Let your eyes look directly ahead And let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you.** 26 **Watch the path of your feet And all your ways will be established.** 27 **Do not turn to the right nor to the left; Turn your foot from evil. (NASB95)**

Isaiah 33:13-16 ... 13 **“You who are far away, hear what I have done; And you who are near, acknowledge My might.”** 14 **Sinners in Zion are terrified; Trembling has seized the godless. “Who among us can live with the consuming fire? Who among us can live with continual burning?”** 15 **He who walks righteously and speaks with sincerity, He who rejects unjust gain And shakes his hands so that they hold no bribe; He who stops**

his ears from hearing about bloodshed And shuts his eyes from looking upon evil; 16 He will dwell on the heights, His refuge will be the impregnable rock; His bread will be given him, His water will be sure. (NASB95)

1 John 2:15-17 ... 15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. 17 The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever. (NASB95)

Regrettably , many prove faithless in this regard (Prov. 27:20; Matt. 6:22-23), coveting women (Prov. 6:24-35; Matt. 5:27-30; 2 Pet. 2:14), wine (Prov. 20:1; 23:29-35), etc.

Proverbs 27:20 ... 20 Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied, Nor are the eyes of man ever satisfied. (NASB95)

Matthew 6:22-23 ... 22 “The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. 23 “But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! (NASB95)

Proverbs 6:24-35 ... 24 To keep you from the evil woman, From the smooth tongue of the adulteress. 25 Do not desire her beauty in your heart, Nor let her capture you with her eyelids. 26 For on account of a harlot one is reduced to a loaf of bread, And an adulteress hunts for the precious life. 27 Can a man take fire in his bosom And his clothes not be burned? 28 Or can a man walk on hot coals And his feet not be scorched? 29 So is the one who goes in to his neighbor’s wife; Whoever touches her will not go unpunished. 30 Men do not despise a thief if he steals To satisfy himself when he is hungry; 31 But when he is found, he must repay sevenfold; He must give all the substance of his house. 32 The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense; He who would destroy himself does it. 33 Wounds and disgrace he will find, And his reproach will not be blotted out. 34 For jealousy enrages a man, And he will not spare in the day of vengeance. 35 He will not accept any ransom, Nor will he be satisfied though you give many gifts. (NASB95)

Matthew 5:27-30 ... 27 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery’; 28 but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 “If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. 30 “If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell. (NASB95)

2 Peter 2:14 ... 14 having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children; (NASB95)

Proverbs 20:1 ... 1 Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, And whoever is intoxicated by it is not wise. (NASB95)

*Proverbs 23:29-35 ... 29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? 30 Those who linger long over wine, Those who go to taste mixed wine. 31 **Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it goes down smoothly; 32 At the last it bites like a serpent And stings like a viper.** 33 Your eyes will see strange things And your mind will utter perverse things. 34 And you will be like one who lies down in the middle of the sea, Or like one who lies down on the top of a mast. 35 “They struck me, but I did not become ill; They beat me, but I did not know it. When shall I awake? I will seek another drink.” (NASB95)*

The Covenant of the Lord

God has instituted various covenants with his people: Noah (Gen. 6:8-9, 18, 22), Abraham (Gen. 17:4-5, 9), Israel (Exod. 19:1-6; 34:27-28), and Christians (Heb. 8:6-13; 12:22-24)

Genesis 6:8-9 ... 8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. 9 These are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God. (NASB95)

Genesis 6:18 ... 18 “But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife, and your sons’ wives with you. (NASB95)

Genesis 6:22 ... 22 Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did. (NASB95)

Genesis 17:4-5 ... 4 “As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you will be the father of a multitude of nations. 5 “No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I will make you the father of a multitude of nations. (NASB95)

Genesis 17:9 ... 9 God said further to Abraham, “Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. (NASB95)

Exodus 19:1-6 ... 1 In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. 2 When they set out from Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in the wilderness; and there Israel camped in front of the mountain. 3 Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel: 4 ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself. 5 ‘Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; 6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.” (NASB95)

Exodus 34:27-28 ... 27 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel." 28 So he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread or drink water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments. (NASB95)

Hebrews 8:6-13 ... 6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. 8 For finding fault with them, He says, "Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, When I will effect a new covenant With the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; 9 Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers On the day when I took them by the hand To lead them out of the land of Egypt; For they did not continue in My covenant, And I did not care for them, says the Lord. 10 "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 into their minds, And I will write them on their hearts. And I will be their God, And they shall be My people. 11 "And they shall not teach everyone his fellow citizen, And everyone his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' For all will know Me, From the least to the greatest of them. 12 "For I will be merciful to their iniquities, And I will remember their sins no more." 13 When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear. (NASB95)

Hebrews 12:22-24 ... 22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel. (NASB95)

Alas, many reject these sacred covenants (2 Kings 17:15-18; Ps. 78:10, 37; Heb. 10:26-31).

*2 Kings 17:15-18 ... 15 **They rejected His statutes and His covenant** which He made with their fathers and His warnings with which He warned them. And they followed vanity and became vain, and went after the nations which surrounded them, concerning which the Lord had commanded them not to do like them. 16 They forsook all the commandments of the Lord their God and made for themselves molten images, even two calves, and made an Asherah and worshiped all the host of heaven and served Baal. 17 Then they made their sons and their daughters pass through the fire, and practiced divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking Him. 18 So the Lord was very angry with Israel and removed them from His sight; none was left except the tribe of Judah. (NASB95)*

*Psalm 78:10 ... 10 **They did not keep the covenant of God** And refused to walk in His law; (NASB95)*

*Psalm 78:37 ... 37 For their heart was not steadfast toward Him, **Nor were they faithful in His covenant.** (NASB95)*

*Hebrews 10:26-31 ... 26 For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 **How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?** 30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge His people." 31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (NASB95)*

Conclusion

God keeps his covenants with man (1 Kings 8:22-24; Ps. 25:10-11); will man keep his covenant with God (Deut. 7:9-11; Ps. 103:15-18)?

*1 Kings 8:22-24 ... 22 Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven. 23 He said, "**O Lord, the God of Israel, there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart,** 24 who have kept with Your servant, my father David, that which You have promised him; indeed, You have spoken with Your mouth and have fulfilled it with Your hand as it is this day. (NASB95)*

*Psalm 25:10-11 ... 10 **All the paths of the Lord are lovingkindness and truth To those who keep His covenant and His testimonies.** 11 For Your name's sake, O Lord, Pardon my iniquity, for it is great. (NASB95)*

*Deuteronomy 7:9-11 ... 9 "Know therefore that **the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments;** 10 but repays those who hate Him to their faces, to destroy them; He will not delay with him who hates Him, He will repay him to his face. 11 "Therefore, you shall keep the commandment and the statutes and the judgments which I am commanding you today, to do them. (NASB95)*

*Psalm 103:15-18 ... 15 As for man, his days are like grass; As a flower of the field, so he flourishes. 16 When the wind has passed over it, it is no more, And its place acknowledges it no longer. 17 **But the lovingkindness of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children,** 18 **To those who keep His covenant And remember His precepts to do them.** (NASB95)*

Will you keep the covenant of life (Mal. 2:5; Heb. 8:6), or foolishly attempt a covenant with death (Isaiah 28:14-22)?

Malachi 2:5 ... 5 “My covenant with him was one of life and peace, and I gave them to him as an object of reverence; so he revered Me and stood in awe of My name. (NASB95)

*Hebrews 8:6 ... 6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as **He is also the mediator of a better covenant**, which has been enacted on better promises. (NASB95)*

*Isaiah 28:14-22 ... 14 Therefore, hear the word of the Lord, O scoffers, Who rule this people who are in Jerusalem, 15 Because you have said, “**We have made a covenant with death, And with Sheol we have made a pact. The overwhelming scourge will not reach us when it passes by, For we have made falsehood our refuge and we have concealed ourselves with deception.**” 16 Therefore thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, A costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes in it will not be disturbed. 17 “I will make justice the measuring line And righteousness the level; Then hail will sweep away the refuge of lies And the waters will overflow the secret place. 18 “**Your covenant with death will be canceled, And your pact with Sheol will not stand; When the overwhelming scourge passes through, Then you become its trampling place.** 19 “As often as it passes through, it will seize you; For morning after morning it will pass through, anytime during the day or night, And it will be sheer terror to understand what it means.” 20 The bed is too short on which to stretch out, And the blanket is too small to wrap oneself in. 21 For the Lord will rise up as at Mount Perazim, He will be stirred up as in the valley of Gibeon, To do His task, His unusual task, And to work His work, His extraordinary work. 22 And now do not carry on as scoffers, Or your fetters will be made stronger; For I have heard from the Lord God of hosts Of decisive destruction on all the earth. (NASB95)*