

Covenant of Love

Group Outlines from Schoenstatt

God offers a Covenant # 3

God offers a Covenant

The Bible gives a constant witness, that God wants to be as close as possible to his Chosen People. He offers again and again a Covenant: A mutual declaration and promise of love, trust and fidelity. The Covenant between God and humanity is the *purpose, structure, strength* and *measure* of the entire history of our salvation.

The last book of the Bible, the Book of Revelation describes the ultimate fulfillment of God's union of love with us, by using the symbol of the wedding celebration of the bride and groom. The bride and bridegroom unite to each other in a deep community of love that can never be broken. God yearns for this ultimate communion, just as the bridegroom longs for his bride. God longs for us.

Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready... then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!'" (Rev 19:6-9)

One of the seven angels... said to me, "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God... (Rev 21:9-11)

Everything that the Lord does for his people is determined by this single Covenant spirit – the power of passionate love. Love is its origin and love will be its final purpose. Love is its motivation and love is its strength and inspiration.

The power of love is already seen in the story of *Adam and Eve* in Paradise. God does everything for them to show them just how much they mean to him. God also invites *Noah* to build an ark and save his family and the animals from the flood. He promises to cast his rainbow in the clouds as a sign of the Covenant. God then makes a Covenant with *Abraham* and makes him three unique promises: He promises Abraham a land, flowing with milk and

honey; he promises him descendants as numerous as the sand on the sea shore; and he promises Abraham that the Saviour of the world will one day be born from his race.

The Chosen People escaped slavery and wandered through the desert, and God led *Moses* to the holy mountain and makes a Covenant. This Covenant was so crucial in the history of Israel, than even through many difficulties and disasters, the Covenant never ceased to inspire motivation, courage and the certainty that God was always with them.

Another example of Covenant love and life, is the exquisite queen and heroine *Esther*. She had the courage to save her people from certain death and made herself available for God's Plan no matter what the cost. She proclaims courageously: "*If I perish, I perish!*" (*Esther 4:16*)

The Bible relates the stories of so many people who strived to make the Covenant with God the cornerstone of their lives. God makes a Covenant with people to achieve a "ripple effect" in the lives of countless others. To live with God, was to live out the Covenant in everyday life. To love God was to grow in the Covenant with him. The many women and men in Scripture show through the experiences of their lives that the Covenant can become our purpose, strength and lifestyle also.

Questions for Reflection

1. What is your favourite Covenant story from the Old Testament and why does it speak to you now?
2. Think of God's three promises to Abraham. Could you imagine how these promises would work today in the life of the Church and in Schoenstatt?

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