

THE THIRD COVENANT

Exodus 19:1-25

Calvary Church of Pacific Palisades

July 17, 2011 ♦ Sunday Morning Worship

STORY ... Robert Fulghum ... Love in a paper bag.

God's treasures us ... His people. And He gives us His treasure ... great and precious promises. Yet sometimes we treat lightly; toss in the trash. Though they may come plainly wrapped, each one is precious to him and every day he entrusts these treasures to us. God's treasures come to us through the promises he has made. COVENANTS. Our focus today.

Please Open to Exodus 19: Page 53. -- Third Covenant; reminds ...

We belong to God, ... We've been set free ... We've been set apart. Encouraging, inspiring.

Covenant? A binding agreement made between two parties. Terms for relationship ...

Covenants come in two forms. Unconditional and Conditional.

Unconditional (God guarantees without any participation on our part). Depends on God alone, not us.

Conditional (God guarantees the blessing, but response and obedience is required).

The covenants God makes are everlasting until fulfilled or enlarged. 5 covenants in the Old Testament.

1st Covenant; Promise ... **Unconditional.** Noah ... rainbow.

Genesis 9:11 (NIV84) ¹¹ I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth. Whenever I see a rainbow ... GOD.

2nd Covenant; Abraham ... **Unconditional.** ... circumcision.

Genesis 15:17,18a ¹⁷ When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. ¹⁸ On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram...

Lasting covenant. Made to Israel, guaranteed land, seed blessing. Everlasting covenant. Yet to be fulfilled

3rd Covenant; Moses ... tablets of stone. Find it in Exodus 19. **Conditional. IF.** Terms for relationship.

If you want to walk with me YOU WILL experience the blessing ...

4th Covenant; David ... Who, Messiah, Jesus. 5th New, Ezek 36:27, Jere 31 WHEN, pouring out Spirit.

The Third Covenant ... **Read Exodus 19:1-9**

3 months after Exodus they arrived at the mountain. Horeb/Sinai ...

Same as the burning bush (Exodus 3), A holy place; take off your shoes. HOLY Ground.

This was in fulfillment of the promise God made to Moses in **Exodus 3:12 "You will worship on this mountain"**. Moses had come full-circle. Back to where he started, to meet God again. Bush, pillar fire.

It would be here that the people would hear the voice of God for the first time. Amphitheater.

Stadium event ... Rose Bowl or Coliseum? First rock concert, Red Rocks or the Gorge.

Great acoustics and great sight lines, the star being God himself and the rock being the two tablets of stone. Israel is the audience camping in a grand arena (ancient Woodstock).

Camped there for 11 months. From Exodus 19:1 through Leviticus and Deuteronomy to Numbers 10:10.

The next 59 chapters of Scripture would take place at Sinai and occupy less than a year.

It is here God tells them how He feel about them ... remind them of who they are ... what saved them for.

In God's 1st official encounter with redeemed people; **here is how He characterizes them ...**

#1 Treasured possession ... notice you, answer you, rescue you, provide you and bless.

Ill. If ever had a child you CAN relate. Such wonder and awe, baby changes everything. **STACY**

They belonged to God, they were His PRIZED POSSESSION. God chose them ... valued them above all.

Apple of his eye ... DEUTERONOMY 32:10-14

#2 Kingdom of priests ... Aaronic priesthood was yet to be established. God promised to bless the world through them (Abraham). Land, seed blessing ... bless them and make them a blessing. Mediators.

They were set free to make a difference ... ROYAL PRIESTHOOD. God chose them ... to serve God and be a blessing to the world ... THEY WOULD BRING GOD TO PEOPLE, AND BRING PEOPLE TO GOD.

#3 Holy nation ... *qadosh goyee*. Not offensive then; GOY. But now, today an oddity. An Oxymoron. Any non-Jew was a Goy. Uncultured, pagan and heathen. A holy heathen. Chose them ... not because of anything they had done. Chose them to be different so they could make a difference.

Hints at the blessing they were to be to the whole world ... the nations, the Gentiles.

They were set apart to be different. OXYMORON. God chose them ... to be different ... so they could make a difference.

Transition: v. 4 They were reminded they were His, freely by grace. Had done nothing to earn this.

CHOSEN BY GOD, They had been SET APART so they could live a life of worship = obedience and service. Peter uses the same language ... remarkable to me. Not replacement.

Please turn 1 Peter 2:9. Page 858. **Read 1 Peter 2:9,10**

We belong to God, we are His PRIZED POSSESSION. We have received mercy and grace.

Ill. Nothing we could do to make Him love us less, nothing we could do to make Him love us more.

Knowing how much He loves us makes all the difference. Transforms us.

ill. Brian when Sally walked down the aisle. Church ... the Bride of Christ.

We've been set free to make a difference, we are His BRIDGE BUILDERS.

The Latin word for *priest* is *pontifex*, which means "bridge builder."

Barclays says, "*The priest is the man who builds a bridge for others to come to God; and the Christian has the duty and the privilege of bringing others to the Savior whom he himself has found and loves.*"

We are set free to be a bridge, to bring God to people and people to God.

Priesthood of all believers, ... we all have equal access to God and we don't need a human intermediary.

An aberration of this doctrine is to think that we don't need anyone at all in our lives. Maybe you've heard the song,

"Me and Jesus Have Our Own Thing Going." It says, "We don't need anybody to tell us what it's all about." In

other words, I don't need a preacher. I don't need a church. I don't need a Bible Study, I don't need a small

group. I don't need anyone else. It's all between me and Jesus. Jesus was always welcoming others in.

We belong to Jesus ... to build bridges and bring Jesus to others, BRING OTHERS TO JESUS.

We've been set apart to be different, we are HIS HOLY NATION.

We are supposed to be different ... noticeably unique. That means we are not going to fit.

Being a holy nation doesn't mean being moralistic or legalistic, what a turn-off.

Jesus was gracious, merciful and holy. He was an oxymoron. Friend of sinners, yet undefiled.

1 Peter 2:11 (NIV84) ¹¹ Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. v. 12 Live such good lives ...

God is training us to transcend the present world even though we still occupy its space.

WE BELONG TO HIM, HIS TREASURED POSSESSION.

WE ARE SET FREE SO WE CAN INTRODUCE JESUS TO PEOPLE AND PEOPLE TO JESUS.

WE ARE SET APART TO BE DIFFERENT SO WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Conclusion:

We do not come to Sinai, but to Calvary. Son gave His life on CROSS. Raised to life POUR OUT SPIRIT.

UNCONDITIONAL COVENANT OF GRACE that demands a response. RECEIVE HIM, BE FILLED ...

Question? Because you belong how different are you? What difference are you making?

Writer Robert Fulgham tells the story of when his daughter was a little girl and gave him a paper bag to take with him to work. When he asked what was in the bag, she answered, "Just some stuff. Take it with you."

When he sat down for lunch at his desk the next day, he pulled out the paper bag and poured out its contents: two ribbons, three stones, a plastic dinosaur, a pencil stub, a tiny seashell, used lipstick, two chocolate Kisses, and thirteen pennies. He chuckled, finished his lunch, and swept everything off into the wastebasket.

When he arrived at home that evening, his daughter asked him where the bag was. "I left it at the office," he replied. "Why?" "Well," she said, "those are my things in the sack, Daddy. The things I really like. I thought you might like to play with them, but now I want them back."

When she saw him hesitate, tears welled up in her eyes. "You didn't lose the bag, did you Daddy?" He said he didn't and that he would bring it home tomorrow. After she went to bed, he raced back to the office.

Fulgham writes: Molly had given me her treasures ... all that a seven-year-old held dear. Love in a paper sack. And I missed it. Not just missed it. I had thrown it away. Nothing in there I needed. It wasn't the first or last time I felt like my "Daddy Permit" was about to run out. I went back to my office, dumped all the wastebaskets out onto my desk. The janitor came in and asked, "Did you lose something?" "Yeah. My mind! It's probably in there."

When Fulgham found the bag, he uncrumpled it, and filled it again with his daughter's items: two ribbons, three stones, a plastic dinosaur, a pencil stub, a tiny seashell, used lipstick, two chocolate Kisses, and thirteen pennies. He took the bag home, sat down with Molly, and had her tell him the story of every treasure in the bag.

Then he writes: To my surprise, Molly gave me the bag once again several days later. Same ratty bag. Same stuff inside. I felt forgiven. Over several months, the bag went with me from time to time. It was never clear to me why I did or did not get it on a certain day. I began to think of it as the "Daddy Prize," and I tried to be good the night before so I could be given it on the next morning. In time, Molly turned her attention to other things, lost interest in the game, grew up. Me ... I was left holding the bag. She gave it to me one morning and never asked for it back. It sits in my office still, left over from when a child said, "Here. This is the best I've got. Take it. It's yours." I missed it the first time, but it's my bag now.

God's treasures ordinary people. Though they may come plainly wrapped, each one has a story. Each one is precious to him and every day he entrusts these treasures to us.

Deuteronomy 32:10–14 (NIV84)

- ¹⁰ In a desert land he found him,
 in a barren and howling waste.
 He shielded him and cared for him;
 he guarded him as the apple of his eye,
¹¹ like an eagle that stirs up its nest
 and hovers over its young,
 that spreads its wings to catch them
 and carries them on its pinions.
¹² The LORD alone led him;
 no foreign god was with him.
¹³ He made him ride on the heights of the land
 and fed him with the fruit of the fields.
 He nourished him with honey from the rock,
 and with oil from the flinty crag,
¹⁴ with curds and milk from herd and flock
 and with fattened lambs and goats,
 with choice rams of Bashan
 and the finest kernels of wheat.
 You drank the foaming blood of the grape.