

“God’s Covenant Faithfulness”  
1 Kings 8:14-21; 54-61  
(Preached at Trinity, November 15, 2020)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As we’ve seen, **Chapters 6-7** record Solomon’s great construction project as he built the Temple and the royal palace. With the completion of the Temple the great moment had arrived—bringing the Ark to its final resting place within the veil.
2. The scene was different from David’s first attempt when Uzza reached forth his hand to steady the Ark on the oxcart and was killed for his carelessness. Now the Ark is transported in the proper manner. The priests carry the Ark. Attention is given to the poles that remained on the Ark, poles that served the purpose of transporting the Ark upon the shoulders of the Levites.
3. The Ark held great significance for the people of Israel. It symbolized God in their midst as God’s covenant people.  
God was sometimes referred to the One dwelling between the cherubim.  
**Psalms 80:1 KJV** - "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest *between* the cherubims, shine forth."
4. The Ark was called the “Ark of the Covenant” because the Ark represented the presence of God as well as His covenant faithfulness. It contained the law of the covenant.  
**1 Kings 8:9 NAU** - "There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone which Moses put there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the sons of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt."
  - A. God was in a covenant relationship with Israel. They were His people and He was their God.
  - B. Obedience to the Law was at the heart of the covenant.  
**Exodus. 24:6-8 NAS** - "And Moses took half of the blood and put *it* in basins, and the *other* half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. <sup>7</sup> Then he took the book of the covenant and read *it* in the hearing of the people; and they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!" <sup>8</sup> So Moses took the blood and sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."  
**Exodus. 24:12 NAS** - "Now the LORD said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and remain there, and I will give you the stone tablets with the law and the commandment which I have written for their instruction."
  - C. Solomon uses the word “covenant” as synonymous with the tablets of stone.  
**1 Kings 8:21 NAU** - "There I have set a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD, which He made with our fathers when He brought them from the land of Egypt."

5. After the Ark was placed within the veil of the Holy of Holies a thick cloud filled the Temple. Upon this Solomon began to speak.

**1 Kings 8:12-13 NAU** - "The LORD has said that He would dwell in the thick cloud. <sup>13</sup> "I have surely built You a lofty house, A place for Your dwelling forever."

6. Solomon then turned towards the assembly and began to recount God's covenant faithfulness.

**1 Kings 8:15 NAU** - "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who spoke with His mouth to my father David and has fulfilled it with His hand, "

**1 Kings 8:20-21 NAU** - "Now the LORD has fulfilled His word which He spoke; for I have risen in place of my father David and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built the house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. <sup>21</sup> "There I have set a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD, which He made with our fathers when He brought them from the land of Egypt."

**1 Kings 8:56 NAU** - "Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised; not one word has failed of all His good promise, which He promised through Moses His servant."

7. What kind of God would bind Himself to His people by way of promise? The answer is amazing, especially in light of those with whom God makes covenant. The answer is a God is a faithful God.

**Lamentations 3:22-23 NAU** - "The LORD'S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. <sup>23</sup> *They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.*"

8. The Ark is testimony to God's covenant faithfulness. It is the Ark of the Covenant. It is the mercy seat. It is the place of propitiation. It is the throne of God, His dwelling place among His people. Within it is His covenant law.

**Exodus. 20:1-3 NAU** - "Then God spoke all these words, saying, <sup>2</sup> "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. <sup>3</sup> "You shall have no other gods before Me."

"I am your God. You are My people. I am your Deliverer. You shall worship Me alone."

**1 Kings 8:23 NAU** - "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,"

- I. The Ark represented both promise and duty.

A. The Ark contained God's Law

1. It contained two tablets of promise written by the finger of God
2. But they were also tablets of duty – duty to obey, duty to follow God alone
3. God told Joshua as they entered the Land of Promise

**Joshua 1:6-8 NAU** - "Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. <sup>7</sup> "Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. <sup>8</sup> "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success."

- B. But Israel was not faithful. Their history was marred by covenant unfaithfulness.
1. At Mount Sinai Israel pledged faithfulness to God  
**Exodus. 19:7-8 NAU** - "So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the LORD had commanded him. <sup>8</sup> All the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do!" And Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD."  
 It was a solemn vow, and oath of promise.  
**Exodus. 24:3 NAU** - "Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, "All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do!"
  2. Even before Moses could come down from the mountain Israel had forgotten their promise and fashioned for themselves a golden calf to worship.
  3. God looked at Israel's continued unfaithfulness to Him as the sin of adultery.  
 The NASB doesn't quite convey the force of the word.  
**Numbers 14:33 NAS** - "And your sons shall be shepherds for forty years in the wilderness, and they shall suffer *for* your unfaithfulness, until your corpses lie in the wilderness."  
**Numbers 14:33 KJV** - "And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness."  
 זָנוּת *zenuth* – harlotry, prostitution, fornication
  4. God had every right to write Israel a bill of divorce for their adultery and send them away. This is the heart of the Book of Hosea.  
**Hosea 1:2 NAU** - "When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea, "Go, take to yourself a wife of harlotry and *have* children of harlotry; for the land commits flagrant harlotry, forsaking the LORD."
- C. The truth is all of us without exception have been unfaithful to God. God demands absolute allegiance and faithfulness to Him—none have fulfilled this demand.
1. God would be just in condemning all, in casting all into the eternal fires of hell.
  2. God But God is faithful to His covenant promises.  
 With due respect and honor for the Marines there is only one to whom we can truly apply the words Semper Fi – Only God is Always Faithful.

II. This is our great hope and confidence. That even in the weakness of our unfaithfulness, God remains always faithful.

**2 Timothy 2:13 NAU** - "If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself."

**Deuteronomy 7:9 NAU** - "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;"

A. God remains faithful to His promises

1. Even in the face of Israel's unfaithfulness, God did not annul His covenant.

**1 Kings 8:56 NAU** - "Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised; not one word has failed of all His good promise, which He promised through Moses His servant."

2. The Davidic Covenant stands as the example of God's covenant faithfulness

**2 Samuel 7:16 NAU** - "Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever."

**1 Kings 8:20 NAU** - "Now the LORD has fulfilled His word which He spoke; for I have risen in place of my father David and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised"

B. In the New Covenant God keeps His people unconditionally

1. He will not lose a one. He takes pity upon our weakness and continually cleanses us from our sin through Jesus Christ.

2. We have a faithful advocate in Christ. We have the indwelling Spirit who is continuing to work in us the fruit of holiness.

3. God's people have the sweet comfort of His preserving grace and the blessed hope of enduring to the end. We have the assurance of God's Divine favor.

### Conclusion:

1. There is grace in the Gospel. God makes strict demands upon His people. But what if we cannot stand up to His demands? Israel did not heed God's warnings. They took the heathens to marry their sons and daughters. Eventually God would cast them out of the Promised Land.
2. What if we cannot stand up to God's demands? Will He cast us off? NO!  
**John 6:37** – "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."
3. The New Covenant cannot be broken because it is not based upon our obedience to the Law but upon Christ's obedience
  1. Jesus Christ is the Guarantor  
**Hebrews 7:22** – "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament."  
**1 Corinthians 1:30** – "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:"
  2. Jesus sealed the Covenant with His own blood  
**Matthew 26:28** – "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."  
**Mark 14:24** – "And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many."  
**1 Corinthians 11:25** – "After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me."
4. God has given us a new heart; a heart to obey Him, to love Him. He has pledged to keep us.  
**Jeremiah 32:40** – "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."
5. God's covenant with His church remains like a marriage relationship. Christ has pledged Himself to us as His bride. We have a marriage certificate sealed with the blood of Christ. Where do you place your love? Have you fallen in love with Christ returning His covenant love back to Him? The beauty of the Gospel is God continually turns our hearts to Him.  
**1 Kings 8:57-58 NAU** - "May the LORD our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; may He not leave us or forsake us, <sup>58</sup> that He may incline our hearts to Himself, to walk in all His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His ordinances, which He commanded our fathers."
6. Solomon prayed, "May He not leave us or forsake us."  
In the New Covenant it has become a reality.  
**Matthew 28:20 NAU** - "and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."