

The Faithful King: True to Himself

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God of Covenant

God is a **God of relationship**. God is a **God of Covenant**

Covenant is like a contract but only stronger. God is faithful to the covenants that he makes. He is **true to himself**.

1. What do you think it means that God is Faithful and true to himself?

Looking closer, we see at least two types of Covenants in the Bible:

- a) **Grant Covenant**- This is when a stronger party, like a king, decides to “grant” or give something to his subjects. It’s more like a gift! God’s covenant with Abraham was more like this. Abraham was actually in a “deep sleep” when God made this covenant! (READ Gen. 15:12-21)
- b) **Vassal Covenant**- This covenant is made between a stronger party like a king, and his subjects (vassals). He offers to do things for them as long as they are faithful and serve him. They have stipulations and requirements that they must do to receive the blessings of the covenant. The covenant with Moses was a vassal covenant. They would be blessed for being faithful, or cursed for rebelling. (READ Deut. 28)

Understanding these covenants is important to understanding why God acts a certain way. Even if the people turn away, he remains faithful. But this means he will eventually have to bring judgement and consequences for their rebellion.

2. Can think of other covenants that God made in the Bible? What type of covenant do you think they were? How do you know?

God is Patient

Sadly, God knew they would rebel against him from the beginning.

READ Deut. 29:24-25 & 31:16

There's another attribute of God we should look at: God is *patient*. Some translations say "long-suffering." God is not in a rush to bring judgement, but he gives time for repentance.

READ 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. "Love is patient..."

Since God is love, this passage is also describing God. God is patient!

3. Does God seem patient to you? How do you picture God?

Very Hard Questions

But wait! Many people see God as angry and full of wrath! How do we balance God's love and patience with his judgement!? These are hard questions that can get in the way of us drawing near to God.

4. What are some of the hard questions that you have about God?

5. How do you think about God being loving and patient, while also bringing judgement?

The answers have to do with covenant. God is holy, faithful, and just so he must keep up his end of the covenant. But he is also patient. We see that God wants his people to repent. He is "slow to anger" and sends his messengers to warn his people that they are on the wrong path. One of these messengers was a prophet named Jeremiah. Let's read about what Jeremiah said, and listen for God's heart...

READ Jeremiah 3:12-13, 19-20

6. What does this passage tell us about God's heart toward his people?

7. How does this remind us of Jesus?

Good News

The good news is that today God offers us the New Covenant. It is a grant covenant that God made between him and Jesus. So, it cannot be broken! We get to be part of it by being united with him.

Go DEEPER...

Read what Jeremiah says about the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34.