



# The First 40 Days

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**Seek God and Restore Everything**

A 40-Day Journey with Glenn Beck

STUDIES 36-40

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# THIRTY-SIX

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## COVENANTS IN MOTION

Over the last 35 days, we have learned about many, but not all of the Biblical covenants. Together, these covenants tell the story of God's relationship with His people.

Let's review what we've learned.

The word covenant sounds hyper-spiritual to most of us today. But, in Biblical times, covenants were common; and not only made between God and men.

The bloody ritual of cutting a covenant that God used to make the covenant with Abraham was regularly used to make covenants between two parties (see Day 5). David and Johnathon made their covenant of friendship before God, but not with God (see Day 17).

A covenant is simply a pact or treaty made between two parties. But, when one of those parties is the God of the universe, the stakes are significantly higher. We see those special types of covenants in the Bible.

God's covenants are eternal and unbreakable. They teach us that God is faithful—that he keeps his promises.

Before Joshua died, he summoned the people of Israel to say:

Now behold, today I am going the way of all the earth, and you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one word of all the good words which the Lord your God spoke concerning you has failed; they all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed.

**JOSHUA 23:14**

Not one of the promises had failed! None ever will.

Today, we are seeing God's promises coming true. Let's look at just one of those promises.

When God established the Mosaic Covenant (See Day 9) with Israel, He set conditions for this covenant—namely, if Israel obeyed Him (kept the covenant), they would be blessed greatly, and if they disobeyed Him (broke the covenant), they would be cursed. (Deuteronomy 28).

God warned Israel that the curses for disobedience would include exile from the Promised Land.

Moreover, the Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, which you or your fathers have not known.

**DEUTERONOMY 28:64**

While the history of the Jewish people testifies to the truth of God's word concerning the scattering, most of Israel's ancient prophets wrote about a time when God would regather His people to the land. This phenomenon of the return of the Jewish people to their homeland is called "Aliyah" in Hebrew. Aliyah means "to ascend" referring to both a physical and spiritual ascension to the land of Israel as defined in the Bible.

Listen to the ancient prophets:

This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'Write in a book all the words I have spoken to you. The days are coming,' declares the Lord, 'when I will bring my people Israel and Judah back from captivity and restore them to the land I gave their ancestors to possess,' says the Lord."

#### **JEREMIAH 30:1-3**

Also I will restore the captivity of My people Israel,  
And they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them;  
They will also plant vineyards and drink their wine,  
And make gardens and eat their fruit.  
"I will also plant them on their land,  
And they will not again be rooted out from their land  
Which I have given them,"  
Says the Lord your God.

#### **AMOS 9:14-15**

Thus says the Lord of hosts, 'Behold, I am going to save My people from the land of the east and from the land of the west; and I will bring them back and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God in truth and righteousness.'

#### **ZECHARIAH 8:7-8**

The regathering of the Jewish people began in earnest immediately after the rebirth of Israel in 1948. Survivors of the Holocaust populated the nation, many joining the War of Independence in 1948.

Jewish immigrants have at times streamed, and at other times poured, back into Israel, most of the time responding to push factors in their nations of residence such as poverty, increased anti-Semitism, and war.

In 2022, there were over 70,000 new immigrants who made Aliyah to Israel. It was the largest influx of immigrants in over twenty years. Most were coming from the volatile region of Russia and Ukraine, being "pushed" to a homeland where they could live safely.

As foretold by the ancient prophet Isaiah, most of the Aliyah effort is funded by non-Jews (called gentiles in our Bibles), mostly Christian Bible-believers.

Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.

#### **ISAIAH 49:22**

But why should immigration to Israel matter to us?

As you learned on Day 12, at the end of days, many men will rise up, performing signs and wonders and try to entice us away from the One, True God. As Matthew 24:12 says, “The love of many will grow cold.”

Whether this is the prophesied end of days or not, we live in an increasingly godless era. More and more people are asking the same question the serpent asked in the garden of Eden: “Did God really say that?” The validity of the promises of God are under fire, and the only shield is the truth of His faithfulness. We are abundantly blessed to live in a time when we can point to scripture, and then to current events, and say “Look! God is fulfilling His promise right now!”

The covenants of God have not been nullified. They are still in motion. But, to notice, you have to have “eyes to see,” and that comes from a deep knowledge of the word of God and the blessings of His spirit.

But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. For truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

**MATTHEW 13:16-17**

Look and see that God is faithful!

► **TOMORROW: Covenants and How To Break Them**

## In the Word

Many prophets discussed the return of the people of Israel to their Biblical homeland.

 **Ezekiel 37:21-25**

 **Jeremiah 32:37**

 **Isaiah 11:11-12**

 **Zephaniah 3:19-20**

 **Isaiah 27:12**

Challenge: Can you find another Biblical passage that references the exile and return of God's people?

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**Think About It:** Do you consider the return of God's people to the land of Israel significant in your own life? Is it significant from a Biblical perspective? Do you think it's significant to God?

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# THIRTY-SEVEN

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## COVENANTS AND HOW TO BREAK THEM

Covenants are eternal. Once you've committed yourself to a covenant, you can't break it—at least not without consequences. But how would you break a covenant?

To try to answer that question, we need to look at the story of Sampson.

Sampson was not under a covenant but a vow—the Nazarite vow. Biblically, covenants and vows are not the same; but they are similar. Studying Samson's vow can unlock our understanding of what it takes to break a covenant.

During Samson's time, Israel was being oppressed by the Philistines. Samson's Father was visited by an angel who told him that his barren wife would give birth to a son who would be a Nazarite from birth.

 **Judges 13:1-7**

By no choice of his own, Samson was born a Nazarite. This vow resembled a covenant because it was lifelong. Other vows had end-dates, but not Samson's.

According to the requirements of a Nazarite laid out in Numbers 6, a man under a Nazarite vow could not:

- Consume “intoxicating liquor,” wine, or anything derived from grapes.
- Touch a corpse
- Cut his hair

Today, Samson is still remembered for his uncut hair. But many don't realize that his hair was the sign that he was under a Nazarite vow.

Samson is also remembered for his supernatural strength which he used to win epic battles against the enemies of Israel.

Then came Delilah.

She was a beautiful, Philistine woman dedicated to Samson's demise. Through her womanly ways, she tricked Samson into revealing the secret source of his supernatural strength—the sign of his Nazarite vow—his hair.

### **Judges 16:1-21**

The moment his hair was cut, his supernatural strength left him. Why?

As you may remember from Day 4, covenants come with signs. The sign of the covenant with Noah was the rainbow; with Abraham it was circumcision. The sign of this vow was Samson's hair. It symbolized how he had been set apart for God.

In a typical, temporary Nazarite vow, the man who had taken the vow would ritually shave his head. The hair was considered so holy that it had to be burned up by fire.

The Nazarite will shave his consecrated head at the entrance to the tent of meeting, take the hair removed from his consecrated head and put it on the fire under the sacrifice of peace offerings.

#### **NUMBERS 6:18**

The head of a man under a Nazarite vow was described as “consecrated.” In Hebrew, the same word is used to describe the holy crown of the high priest. On that crown were the words “Holy unto the Lord.” The hair of a Nazarite symbolized that he, too, was “Holy unto the Lord.”

But Samson disrespected his holy distinction. He lay down in the lap of Delilah, and his hair was cut by a Philistine man.

But it wasn't this moment that his vow was broken—not really, anyway. The vow may have finally broken here, but it had been bending for some time

Imagine the series of small decisions that made the moment his hair was cut possible.

One does not innocently find himself in the literal lap of his enemy. It was a progression of small deviations that led to that moment. Like Esau selling his birthright for a cup of soup, Samson risked his holy vow on behalf of his fleshly desires.

Like a vow, a covenant is not broken all at once. The stage is set bit by bit. Then, finally, it all comes tumbling down.

In his novel *The Sun Also Rises*, Earnest Hemingway wrote:

*“How did you go bankrupt?”*

*“Two ways. Gradually, then suddenly.”*

The same is true of moral bankruptcy. We break faith with God bit by bit—sin by sin. Still, God forgives and welcomes us back. But there is a point—a very scary point—where God gives us over to our sin.

In the story of the Exodus, it says that first Pharaoh “hardened his heart,” until eventually God hardened it for him. Pharaoh was given over to his evil desires, not suddenly, but decision by decision.

Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and restraint and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

**ROMANS 1:18-2:8**

Do we think lightly of God's kindness? Are we breaking faith with God slowly, day by day? How much longer can we go on this way before we find ourselves in the metaphorical lap of Delilah?

▶ **TOMORROW: A Covenant, If You Can Keep It**

## In the Word

How close to the metaphorical lap of Delilah are we as a nation?

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We as a body of believers?

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You as an individual?

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What can we do about it?

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# THIRTY-EIGHT

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## A COVENANT, IF YOU CAN KEEP IT

On the last day of the United States Constitutional Convention, Elizabeth Willing Powel approached Benjamin Franklin and said, “Well, Doctor, what have we got, a republic or a monarchy?” Benjamin Franklin replied, “A republic, if you can keep it.”

“If you can keep it,” have been the central words of the American experiment. As each generation is handed down a legacy of liberty, the republic is as fragile as the day of its inception while the next generation decides, “Will we keep it?”

The same is true of the covenants of God.

With these covenants, the question is not so much, “Will they stand?” but rather, “Will we stand with them?”

The covenants of God carry on with or without us. God’s will will be done “on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). But miraculously, we’ve been offered the opportunity to partner with God in building his Kingdom.



As you learned on Day 14, the Hebrew word for “keep” is “shamar.” It means “to guard and preserve.” It was the task originally assigned to Adam in the Garden of Eden. We have the same task today.

Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.’

### **EXODUS 19:5**

One way that the people of Israel were taught to keep the covenants of God was by teaching God’s Word to the next generation and discussing it everywhere they went.

### **Deuteronomy 11:13-25**

They were to keep God’s word close at hand at all times, not as a mental exercise, but so that the word would convict them and guide them down the “narrow path that leads to life” (Matthew 7:13). If they guarded God’s covenant, they would become a “kingdom of priests.”

In the Bible, priests act as the intercessors between God and man. They go to God on behalf of the people, and to the people on behalf of God. They stand in the gap between heaven and earth and do God’s work. On the one hand, this role was limited to the priestly line of the Levites. But on the other hand, God said all His people could serve as priests, if they kept his covenant.

The book of Revelation later references this same promise.

And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take the scroll and to break its seals; for You were slaughtered, and You purchased people for God with Your blood from every tribe, language, people, and nation. You have made them into a kingdom and priests to our God, and they will reign upon the earth.”

#### **REVELATION 5:9-10**

Who doesn’t want to reign upon the earth? Who doesn’t want the especially holy place reserved for priests of the Lord? The idea conjures up an image of palaces, power, and glory.

But that’s not the case at all.

The priests of Israel were not priests for themselves—they did not forward their own interests. The only reason they were given access to the Holy of Holies was for the sake of the community of God. It was the role of a servant, not a master; and it required special attention to holiness.

As you know from Day 9, the Hebrew word for “holy” is “kadosh.” Although the word “holy” evokes images of golden thrones and heavenly hosts; the word “kadosh” is simply “set-apart.” To be “holy” in a Biblical sense is to be set apart for God’s purposes. In Numbers 8:16, God described the Levitical priests as being given “wholly” to Him.

They were set apart “wholly” for the service of God. They were given no land in Israel because God himself was their inheritance.

At that time the Lord singled out the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to serve Him and to bless in His name, until this day. Therefore, Levi does not have a portion or inheritance with his brothers; the Lord is his inheritance, just as the Lord your God spoke to him.

#### **DEUTERONOMY 10:8-9**

For the privilege of being given special access to God’s presence, priests were asked to go above and beyond to set themselves apart.

As the saying goes, “With great power comes great responsibility.” But Jesus said it even better.

And that slave who knew his master’s will and did not get ready or act in accordance with his will, will receive many blows, but the one who did not know it, and committed acts deserving of a beating, will receive only a few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.

#### **LUKE 12:47-48**

To whom much is given, much is expected. The priests of Israel were given direct access to God and thus were expected to follow God unreservedly.

Do you believe you have been given that same access to God? Do you believe you have been given the rights of a priest?

If so, have you accepted the responsibilities of a priest?

Are you an intercessor to God, not on your own behalf, but on behalf of others?

Are you truly set-apart, not for your own purposes, but for God's?

Or in the words of Shakespeare, is your priesthood "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing?"

To become a priest is not about glory or power. It's about being a living sacrifice—set-apart and acceptable before God.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. What are you doing to present yourself as holy and acceptable before the Lord?

#### **ROMANS 12:1-2**

Knowing there is not enough good works, thoughts, or feelings in the world to close the gap between you and God, why do we even try? We do not submit ourselves to God in order to gain anything for ourselves. We submit to God because "to whom much is given, much is expected."

By God's mercy, haven't you been given everything? Why then would you hold anything back from God?

Why then would you avoid his commands?

Why would you neglect His people?

Why would you keep the Good News of the Kingdom of Heaven to yourself?

Why, if God has given you everything, would you not give him everything in return?

God is shaping His people into a Kingdom and into priests—but only if they will keep His covenant.

But from everlasting to everlasting  
the Lord's love is with those who fear him,  
and his righteousness with their children's children—  
with those who keep his covenant  
and remember to obey his precepts.

**PSALM 103:17-18**

What does it really mean to keep a covenant?

Do we keep it in our minds by remembering, discussing, and studying the covenants?

Do we keep it in our hearts, but only our hearts?

Do we keep it in our behavior but only as a matter of routine?

No: to keep a covenant requires your heart, soul, and strength  
(Mark 12:30).

You must think and teach about the covenant, guard the covenant in  
your heart, and live it out here on earth.

We cannot accept the rights of God's covenants without also  
accepting the responsibilities we have to God and to each other.

If we want to be priests, we have to start acting like priests.

▶ **TOMORROW: Cost Of A Covenant**



# THIRTY-NINE

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## COVENANTS IN MOTION

Now you know how to break a covenant and how to keep it. Today, the question is: are you really ready to be in covenant with God?

Let's start here: covenants are deeply serious—they cost. Once made, they cannot be simply un-made.

### **Ecclesiastes 5:2-7 (1-6, in some translations)**

Although covenants and vows are unique, they are similar in their seriousness. As it says in Ecclesiastes, once a vow is made, it must be carried out. For you, it becomes law.

When you make a vow to The Lord your God, you are not to delay in fulfilling it, for The Lord your God will certainly demand it of you, and your failure to do so will be your sin. If you choose not to make a vow at all, that will not be a sin for you; but if a vow passes your lips, you must take care to perform it according to what you voluntarily vowed to The Lord your God, what you promised in words spoken aloud.

### **DEUTERONOMY 23:21-23**



The weight of vows made to God is demonstrated in the tragic story of Jephthah and his daughter. Jephthah, a brave and capable soldier, was asked to lead Israel in battle against the Ammonites who were oppressing them. On the way to battle, he made a vow to God.

### **Judges 11:29-40**

A vow, once it's made, becomes law. Even if the vow is foolish. Even if you didn't really mean it. Vows to God are not to be taken lightly. Never vow to God what you are not willing to discharge.

You may remember from our study of the Beatitudes that Jesus cautioned the crowd against vows.

Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.' But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne; or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

### **MATTHEW 5:33-37**

The Psalms teach that even vows made in distress must be carried out.

I shall pay You my vows, which my lips uttered and my mouth spoke when I was in distress.

**PSALM 66:13-14**

There is no exemption for a temporary loss of judgment brought on by anger, zeal, desperation, fear. No matter the circumstance, no matter our intention, we are responsible for the promises we make to God. We voluntarily take on the commitment, but then it becomes law for us.

The same is true of covenants. As a group, the people of Israel were born into the Abrahamic covenant, but many have chosen to join voluntarily. The covenants of God layer on top of each other, spiraling up and up—closer and closer towards heaven. This is why Paul said that those who joined the new covenant became the Seed of Abraham.

In reference to the law of Moses—the Mosaic covenant—Paul said,

Apart from the law, sin is dead.

**ROMANS 7:8**

Sin becomes sin for you when you accept God's definition of it. If you choose to ignore God, sin remains dead. It has no meaning for you. But, when you voluntarily join yourself to him through his covenants, sin lives again. It's a real force that you must resist. You must live righteously despite your inclination to sin.

Before you joined the covenant, God’s commands were not law for you. His way was not yours. But, like a vow, once you make a promise to God—a promise made voluntarily—His commands, His way becomes compulsory. It becomes law for you. The consequences of breaking your vow—God’s covenants—come to life in a way that they could never have outside of the covenant.

Think carefully before you vow to God. Think carefully before declaring that you are joined to Him and His covenants.

Using a parable, God describes the Kingdom of Heaven as a “treasure hidden in a field” (Matthew 13:44).

In fairytales, the treasure is often guarded by a huge fire-breathing dragon. To get to the treasure, the hero must risk it all. If he stays home, he certainly does not risk the consequences of a fiery dragon death; but he will almost certainly never see the treasure.

The same is true of the quest for God. The treasure isn’t coming to you on a silver platter. You have to go find it. Undertaking the journey will cost you. It will require your mind, body, soul, spirit—your most inner self. But that is the only way to get to the treasure.

Is that a journey you want to go on?

► **TOMORROW: The Center**

# Consider the Risks

What would it cost to commit yourself to God's covenants as defined in the Bible?

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What would it cost to not commit yourself to God's covenants as defined in the Bible?

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Which costs are weightier?

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## Search Yourself

Have you made vows to God that you have not fulfilled?

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Have you made vows to your fellow man that you have not fulfilled?

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# FORTY

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## THE CENTER

Before the time of Nicholas Copernicus, the Earth was the center of the universe. It wasn't really. But we believed it was. We organized our lives around the "fact" that the planets were revolving around us...even though they weren't. Those pesky planets kept going in the wrong directions. But we had science to cover that. We made models to support the theory—because the theory was fact. The Earth was the center, and even if it meant we had to create almost unbelievable models of spheres within spheres and misplaced centers, we were determined to prove it.

Until Copernicus.

Copernicus looked up and had a revolutionary thought: "What if our idea of the center of the universe is all wrong. What if we aren't actually the center?"

It was heresy. It was blasphemy. It was banned by the church. But it was true.

It was a paradigm shift that shook the world.

But the shaking wasn't pleasant. It wasn't an easy message for Copernicus to deliver. He didn't decide that the Earth was the center; he just noticed it, and for that he was hated. Galileo wrote to Kepler saying he was a "partisan of the Copernican view" but was afraid to say so publicly for fear of being "ridiculed and condemned by countless people," like Copernicus was.

We humans can go to great lengths to preserve our paradigms—ignoring anomalies, facts, even our own experiences—all because learning something new hurts.

In the time of Copernicus, it hurt to consider that our entire conception of the universe and our literal place in it was wrong. It was too much for some people. But some people were brave. Some people changed their minds. And we are the beneficiaries of that bravery.

Today, I have a similar message.

As 21st century Americans, we have to wrestle with an uncomfortable fact: The Bible wasn't written about us.

For us, yes, for all of us. But not about us.

The stories of the Bible center around land on the other side of the world with people who lived, thought, and worshiped very differently than we do now. Their sense of what is "obvious" is no longer obvious to us. They looked at life through a different paradigm.



As we read the Bible, we have to remember: we are not the center of the universe. The Bible does not revolve around our modern understandings and experiences. The center of the Bible is the land and people of Israel. Not that other peoples and nation's don't play critical roles—they do. But the story follows one family becoming a nation—the seed of Abraham.

Does that mean the Bible has no relevance to Americans today?

No.

The Bible wasn't written about us, but if we choose to follow God, then it was written for us.

It's a seemingly minimal distinction, but it changes everything.

If the Bible were written about us today, then we should be able to open it, flip to a verse, and apply what we read directly to the world around us. It would say, "And when you drive your car..." or, "Thou shalt not fight on Twitter." But it doesn't. The Bible talks about donkeys, wells, and tribes, about long-ago empires, kings, and shepherds. Thus, we know it wasn't written about us.

But, embedded within the context of the time it was written are truths that are eternal, if we are willing to seek them out. If the Bible wasn't written about you, then you must become a historian, anthropologist, linguist, and archeologist. You must become a student of the past. You must understand the past in its own context. Then, the eternal truths reveal themselves to you.

But if you read the Bible as if it's written about you, as if it all revolves around you, many of those truths will remain a mystery to you.

When we follow the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we join ourselves to an ancient story. We become the bridge from the past to the present. We stand on the shoulders of giants.

Abraham, Moses, David, Ruth—these people become our ancestors. Their story becomes our story.

There is a tendency to judge God through the lens of our own lives, asking, “If God is real, then why did this happen to me?” Or “What does God have to offer me today?”

But the better question is, what do you have to offer God? What do you have to offer His Kingdom?

It's time to realize, like Copernicus did, that we are not the center of the universe. Our priorities, judgments, goals, nations, are all secondary. The earth doesn't revolve around us or even our nation.

But this is not cause for despair. Because although God does not revolve around us, if we are willing, we may revolve around God.

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

**MATTHEW 6:33**

Don't seek the Bible looking for your purpose; seek the Bible look for God's purpose. Then make that your purpose.

For too long, God has become an accessory to modern life. We bring him up to support our points then leave him again when His word conflicts with our modern world. We take the grace and leave the obedience. We bear bad fruit but expect to remain connected to the root.

It is only by miraculous grace that God forgives us, accepts, and welcomes us into His Kingdom.

That is what God brings to His side of His covenants. What are we bringing to our side?

## **Pray and Fast**

Now that we have reached the end of our First 40 Days, set aside a day for prayer and fasting.

A fast typically involves not eating for a full day or a specified time of your choosing (Some choose to not drink as well). Denying ourselves food or water is a reminder of the fragility of our lives. As we come head-to-head with the weakness of our flesh, we remember that we need God. Fasting and prayer is for humbling yourself before God. Even if you are unable to fast, take the time to humble yourself before the Lord.

For Biblical examples of prayer and fasting:

📖 **Daniel 9:1-19**

📖 **Joel 2:12**

📖 **Matthew 6:5-18**

📖 **Isaiah 58:1-12**

Thank you for joining on this 40-Day journey. As you go forward, remember, this is only the First 40 days. The days moving forward from here, are up to you.

Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus. Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.

**ACTS 3:19-21**