

Study Aids
Discussion Questions and Suggested Reading
For “What’s the Message?” Lessons

Lesson 104

Comment:

As Dr. John P. Milton writes in his book, **God’s Covenant of Blessing**, published by Augustana Press, “The concept of covenant stems from the Hebrew word *berith*. The very fact that this word is found no less than 278 times in the Old Testament bears witness to its importance . . . The religious *berith* is in one sense unilateral; it is God alone who initiates the covenant always. It is intended to become a mutual agreement, and does so become, by the response of man to it; but in its origin the *berith* is unilateral: it is God’s covenant with man . . . the direction of the covenant is always from God to man.”

Questions:

So the idea of a divine covenant is defined as being initiated and offered by God. Does man have the power to reject it?

If a person accepts this gift from God, is that person then obligated to fulfill its terms and conditions?

In the case of this divine *berith*, if a person who has accepted it later fails to keep his half of the agreement, what happens to that person?

Can it really be true that God acts on our behalf, to keep our portion of the *berith* for us? If we are not held accountable for keeping it, why have a covenant at all? What does this tell us about God? About His love and mercy?

Suggested reading for further study:

For an easy-to-read book that presents more about the Blood Path and other customs of people at the time of Jesus, get **Echoes of His Presence**, by Ray Vander Laan, published by Focus on the Family.