

The Founding and Floundering of a Nation

Points to Consider

1. The Nation was Founded on a Covenant
2. Sin Led to Immediate Feedback
3. What about Today?

The Nation was Founded on a Covenant

Gen 12:1-3 *Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family and from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. 2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."* NKJV

The nation of Israel was founded on a _____ that God made to Abraham.

The Covenant Renewed

Ex 34:10-16 *And He said: "Behold, I make a covenant. Before all your people I will do marvels such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation; and all the people among whom you are shall see the work of the Lord. For it is an awesome thing that I will do with you. 11 Observe what I command you this day. Behold, I am driving out from before you the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. 12 Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it be a snare in your midst. 13 But you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images 14 (for you shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God), 15 lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they play the harlot with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, and one of them invites you and you eat of his sacrifice, 16 and you take of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters play the harlot with their gods and make your sons play the harlot with their gods.* NKJV

The beginning of the nation included a _____ between God and the people.

God agreed to drive out the inhabitants of the land, and the people agreed to observe the

_____ God gave them.

God told them not to make covenants with the people of the Land.

God also _____ them not to worship other gods

Ex 33:7-11 *Moses took his tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp, and called it the tabernacle of meeting. And it came to pass that everyone who sought the Lord went out to the tabernacle of meeting which was outside the camp. 8 So it was, whenever Moses went out to the tabernacle, that all the people rose, and each man stood at his tent door and watched Moses until he had gone into the tabernacle. 9 And it came to pass, when Moses entered the tabernacle, that the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses. 10 All the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the tabernacle door, and all the people rose and worshiped, each man in his tent door. 11 So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.* NKJV

The covenant was based on _____.

The Lord spoke to _____ the people through His prophet Moses.

Ex 39:32 *Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished. And the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord had commanded Moses; so they did.* NKJV

The people started out fulfilling their part of the covenant by doing _____ what God commanded.

The book of Leviticus details all the laws God gave His people. God is filling in the details of the covenant.

Sin Led to Immediate Feedback

Num 25:1-5 *Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. 2 They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. 3 So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel. 4 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Take all the leaders of the people and hang the offenders before the Lord, out in the sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may turn away from Israel." 5 So Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal of Peor."* NKJV

God instructed Moses to kill all those who _____ the gods of Moab.

The offenders were killed, but the nation survived.

Num 16:31-35 *Now it came to pass, as he finished speaking all these words, that the ground split apart under them, 32 and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the men with Korah, with all their goods. 33 So they and all those with them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly. 34 Then all Israel who were around them fled at their cry, for they said, "Lest the earth swallow us up also!" 35 And a fire came out from the Lord and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering incense.* NKJV

Korah and his band of _____ died, but the nation survived.

Immediately after this, the people complained that Moses killed these men. God

_____ out another 14,700 people, but the nation survived.

Num 21:4-9 *Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. 5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread." 6 So the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. ... 8 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live." 9 So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.* NKJV

_____ of those who spoke against God and His servant Moses died, but the nation survived.

Josh 7:4-5 *So about three thousand men went up there from the people, but they fled before the men of Ai. 5 And the men of Ai struck down about thirty-six men, for they chased them from before the gate as far as Shebarim, and struck them down on the descent; therefore the hearts of the people melted and became like water.... 10 So the Lord said to Joshua: "Get up! Why do you lie thus on your face? 11 Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. For they have even taken some of the accursed things, and have both stolen and deceived; and they have also put it among their own stuff. ... 24 Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the garment, the wedge of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and all that he had, and they brought them to the Valley of Achor. 25 And Joshua said, "Why have you troubled us? The Lord will trouble you this day." So all Israel stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones.*

Achan, his _____, and thirty-six people died, but the nation survived.

Judg 2:1-4 *Then the Angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said: "I led you up from Egypt and brought you to the land of which I swore to your fathers; and I said, 'I will never break My covenant with you. 2 And you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.' But you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this? 3 Therefore I also said, 'I will not drive them out before you; but they shall be thorns in your side, and their gods shall be a snare to you.'" 4 So it was, when the Angel of the Lord spoke these words to all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voices and wept. NKJV*

When the _____ broke the covenant, God was freed from keeping His part of the covenant.

Judg 2:10-15 *When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the Lord nor the work which He had done for Israel. 11 Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served the Baals; 12 and they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed other gods from among the gods of the people who were all around them, and they bowed down to them; and they provoked the Lord to anger. 13 They forsook the Lord and served Baal and the Ashtoreths. 14 And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel. So He delivered them into the hands of plunderers who despoiled them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. 15 Wherever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for calamity, as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn to them. And they were greatly distressed. NKJV*

The nation _____ when a generation arose who did not know the Lord nor the work which He had done for Israel.

Judg 17:6 *In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*

When each individual became the standard of right and wrong, Israel's pain followed.

Acts 5:9-11 *Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." 10 Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband. 11 So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things. NKJV*

The early church benefited from _____ consequences handed out by God.

What about Today?

Heb 12:14-17 *Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: 15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; 16 lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. 17 For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.* NKJV

The Hebrew writer warns us that we too can find "no place for _____."
We can find ourselves in a situation where we must suffer _____ for our bad decisions even though we beg God, with tears, that those consequences be turned away from us.

2 Peter 3:1-9 *Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), 2 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, 3 knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." 5 For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, 6 by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. 7 But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.* NKJV

We can recognize God's chastening now and _____, or we can face His wrath for eternity.

God's desire is for us to repent _____.

Practical Application

- Pray for our nation. I wrote a prayer and it's on the front page of the bulletin. You can write your own.
- Support people and organizations that bring people's thinking back to God.
- Look for God's immediate feedback.
- Train your own thinking by God's word. We are getting ready to study the Sermon on the Mount next quarter. Make every effort to be here. If you can't be here in person, watch online. You can even watch re-watch the recorded version online.