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*the One Covenant series*  
**the Flaming Sword**

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a citizen of the Commonwealth (Ephesians 2:19)

"...at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and **a flaming sword** that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life" Genesis 3:24b

"He said to them, 'But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and likewise a knapsack. **And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one** ...And they said, 'Look, Lord, here are two swords.' And he said to them, 'It is enough.'" Luke 22:36-38

"For in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, I did not speak to your fathers or command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices. But this command I gave them: **'Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people.** And walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.'" Jeremiah 7:22-23



*...a flaming sword guarding the tree of Life*

The most profound and deeply brilliant of all that is found in the Hebrew perspective is the concept of "covenant" which means "a solemn, binding oath between two parties accompanied by **a sign**" (**click on highlighted words to view content**). The relationship implied by the Hebrew term **berit** (translated as the English "covenant") is the relationship between a lord and his servants for, in Hebrew, a **berit** is a promise that is made unilaterally by a lord to his servants that he will protect and provide for those servants. The promise is not required by any law nor forced on the lord by his servants - it is entirely voluntary. This word, **berit**, is formed out of the Hebrew root word, **barah** which means "a cutting". The Hebrew term used to express the action of making a covenant is **karat berit**, which literally means "to cut a covenant" (*Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, p.259). While there are many speculations as to the origin of this word, let us set aside all the assumptions that have been advanced associating it with what a covenant means in other cultures to simply look at what the words of scripture say about this Hebrew "covenant".

Words mean things. To properly understand what these words mean necessitates viewing them from the Hebrew perspective they were written in and not our current English culture. We must constantly be reminded that **ALL** the books of scripture were written by Hebrews out of a Hebrew mindset influenced by a Hebrew culture that produced a uniquely Hebrew perspective being conveyed primarily to a Hebrew audience which understood the nuances of the Hebrew language. The words of scripture tell us in **Revelation 19:10b** that "...the testimony of Yeshua **IS the spirit of prophecy.**" Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon defines the Hebrew word **nava'** (translated as the English word, "prophecy") as the "spoken oracles of YaHoVeH". So, **the Testimony** of the Life of Yeshua reveals how YaHoVeH's Words are to be construed. If something we **think** or have been taught as Truth is not found in the eye-witness accounts recorded about the Life and Words of *haMashiach ben David* (the Messiah of David's line) - then, at the very least, we should hold it suspect until we are **given understanding** from the Father concerning what those words might mean. The Life of Yeshua is the benchmark by which **everything** is measured - including other scripture.

The first time we find the word "covenant" is used in scripture is not with Moses or even with Abraham, but with YaHoVeH declaring He will **establish** His Covenant with **with Noah**. The Hebrew word translated "establish" in that verse is **qum** which means to take something already in existence and cause it *to stand, be firm, fixed and permanent*. How is that possible if we are to believe religious theology that says the covenant was not given until Sinai? **Hosea 6:7** tells us that **Adam, the first Hebrew**, was the first of YaHoVeH's family to be disobedient to His Covenant. That happened in the Garden even before Noah! The covenant spoken of was in the heart of YaHoVeH from the beginning in the Garden - to have a family that behaviorally proclaimed the Glory that is His to the rest of the nations already in existence from creation. This is how **Abraham** was able to keep YaHoVeH's covenant **430 years** before Sinai and how Moses could use YaHoVeH's covenant to settle issues among the people of the

wilderness **two chapters** before His Words were written on tablets of stone - because YaHoVeH's Words describe His Nature and they *knew* His Nature. The purpose of **Torah**, YaHoVeH's Words, is to show us how to become *partakers of His Divine Nature!*

**Yeshua answered them, "Isn't it written in your Torah, 'I have said, You people are Elohim' (gods)"? John 10:34**



**...the covenant disobeyed**

**82:6**, "...you are gods."

There was no death in the Garden because Adam and Eve were living in **Perpetuity** with the Source of Life. The serpent in the Garden told Eve that if they partook of the fruit they **would not die** as YaHoVeH had said. Did they physically die when they ate of it? No, **they did not** - so, the serpent *was not lying*. But the death YaHoVeH was speaking to was not simply physical. He is the Source of Life which is Light (**1John 1:5**). Life=Light and death=darkness. In the same way that it is a physical impossibility for **Light and darkness** to occupy the same space at the same time, so it is with Life and death, you will either have one or the other - there is no middle ground. YaHoVeH's Words contain His Light, the Nature of His Spirit. They chose to ignore His Words with their actionable disobedience to those Words and, as a result, chose darkness instead. Thus, a separation from the tree, the Source of Life, became necessary because anything apart from Life is considered **to be death** - even though it may still be breathing. From the Hebrew perspective, a *homo-sapien* is not human unless it **abides in the Spirit of Life**. This is what Yeshua addressed in **Matthew 8:22** when He said to let the "dead bury the dead". So, it is possible for a *homo-sapien* to **exist** apart from YaHoVeH - but, from the Hebrew perspective, that is not considered Life. Too many have been taught that **within scripture** they find the Source of Life and call the scriptures "the Word" when the scriptures themselves testify that **YaHoVeH is the Word**. These are the ones who try to use scripture to fashion themselves rather than allow Spirit to make them into **His Image**. Yeshua said He came to immerse in Spirit **and in fire** - the fire of YaHoVeH's Words. **Hosea 6:5-7** also tells us that His People are **hewn** or "cut out" by His Words and that His Judgments go forth as **Light**. **Hebrews 4:12** and **Ephesians 6:17** tell us that **the Sword of the Spirit** is **Torah** - the Words of YaHoVeH. Couple those passages with **Jeremiah 23:29** where we are told that His Word is like fire so that when we read Genesis 3:24b, "...at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life", we should understand that flaming sword to be the His Covenant Words which guard His **Kingdom of Life**.

When the serpent offered to Eve the fruit of the **knowledge** of good and evil, it was the knowledge that there was a **difference** between what is good (the current provision of the Father) and what is evil (a **perceived** lack of good). The serpent told them that in the day that they partook of that knowledge they would become "as gods". **He was not lying**. YaHoVeH had provided **everything** they could possibly need in the Garden. Before they ate of that fruit, to them, **every circumstance** was good because **goodness** is in the Nature of YaHoVeH - where they were abiding. But, the moment they disregarded YaHoVeH's Words and partook of the fruit they were told not to eat, they became "as gods" with the ability to determine **for themselves** what was good provision and what was not. They became "gods" unto themselves by supplanting YaHoVeH's purpose with their own **self-determination** - a position that could not be tolerated as it was in conflict with the **first of His Words** to have no other god besides Him, thus necessitating a **separation** from the Source of Life. Yeshua spoke to this state of being in His reference to its mention in the quote from **Psalms**



**...the Word of Fire**

**Thus says YaHoVeH, "The people who **survived the sword** found grace in the wilderness..."**  
**Jeremiah 31:2**

The fact of life is that we all are in the wilderness. Apart from the sustaining Spirit of the Source of Life we find ourselves desperate, desolate and in need - but, not all are able to find grace in their wilderness. In fact, **most do not**. Grace is for those who survive the sword. Who are these people? They are the ones to whom YaHoVeH says, "**You shall be My people, and I will be your Elohim**". They are the people who have been cut with His Words. They are the ones who have bled. Surviving the sword means putting your life in the hands of YaHoVeH as the world slices away at you. It means cutting loose from the patterns that block your way into the wilderness. It means standing unafraid in the face of hardship, pain and death - established in His Words. It means that YaHoVeH is the absolute Lord of my life no matter what circumstances I may encounter. It means worshipping Him through the **keeping of His Words** - even if He doesn't save me from the furnace or restore me from disaster because He is worthy of my allegiance. Some seek to **flee the wilderness**. They seek remedies for self-protection. They turn from the call to embrace the patterns of a world in rebellion to YaHoVeH's Words. They say, "*I wish I could live by faith, but I have to be practical.*" They do not know that grace resides in inhospitable circumstances. Mercy comes unexpectedly, not by religious incantations or **magical name formulae**. Mercy is unmerited surprise. But you can't be surprised by something that you plan and control. You have to bleed in order to live mercifully within



...Exodus 24:8

His Presence.

**"Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword ."**  
**Matthew 10:34**

When we think of swords, we think of violence - either in aggression or in reciprocity. We think of violence because that is the nature of man. The Nature of the Father is **shalom**. To look at **Luke 22:36-38** on its surface, it would seem Yeshua is taking an opposing stance from that shalom in advocating a violent position. But when we look at that verse in the context of His displayed Life just a few lines further down in **Luke 22:49-51**, is seen a different set of values exemplified. Yeshua understood that the character of YaHoVeH as expressed in Torah and as evidenced in **Hebrews 4:12** is to be defended within against circumstances befalling us from without. The word picture for **shalom** in **Paleo-Hebrew** says that peace comes when we "**destroy the authority that establishes the chaos.**" YaHoVeH's Words must first destroy chaos in order to bring the peace of being whole and complete (Frank Seekins, *Hebrew Word Pictures*, p.95 - Seekins is the acknowledged founder of the modern study of Hebrew word pictures). Seekins' comment helps us connect the idea of consuming and destroying with the covenant sign YaHoVeH provides for His family. YaHoVeH's Words, of necessity, brings division because it destroys the authority that establishes the chaos in people's lives they have come to embrace - and love. The Sabbath is **the authorized sign** of YaHoVeH's covenant pledge to those who practice it. To live in a covenant relationship with YaHoVeH means to keep **His Words**. and the fourth of those Words is to remember to keep **Shabbat**.

We must be careful that we do not engage in eisegesis (reading into the text) rather than exegesis (reading out of the text) when looking at the words of scripture. So, while Yeshua is telling the disciples to pick up a sword, it is in the context of violence about to come upon Him and how they should place a guard on **how they react**. Remember the pearl of great price in **Matthew 13:46**? He is saying to acquire such a defensive measure over their heart whatever the cost. The use of the sword He is advocating is not for physical wielding, but as a guard to not allow external circumstances to overwhelm and compromise the Way of the Tree, the Kingdom of Life that now **resides within**. - that it not become tainted by the same sin that separated Adam and Eve from that Life. Theirs was the sin of self-determination. They became the determinant as to what was good and what was evil instead of embracing His Sufficiency as Good in all circumstance. Yeshua is saying to guard, to resist against that evil and not let it encroach upon their heart at all cost - to let the Words of YaHoVeH do the proper cutting or hewing upon their motivation. It is only those who pass through the Flaming Sword of the Words of YaHoVeH who will be eating at the Tree of the Source of Life, "...that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city" Revelation 22:14.

**"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city." Revelation 22:14**

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**the Flaming Sword, a discussion**