

Deuteronomy 29:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the LORD thy God, and into his oath, which the LORD thy God maketh with thee this day:

Analysis

That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the LORD thy God, and into his oath, which the LORD thy God maketh with thee this day. The purpose that thou shouldest enter into covenant explains why the entire nation assembles. Covenant making requires conscious, willing participation - not forced compliance but voluntary commitment.

The phrase and into his oath indicates covenant involves mutual swearing. Israel swears loyalty to God; God swears faithfulness to Israel. The oath creates binding commitment transcending mere agreement - it invokes divine witness and sanction.

That the LORD...maketh with thee emphasizes divine initiative. Though Israel participates, God authors and initiates the covenant. He sets the terms; they accept or reject but cannot negotiate different conditions.

The phrase this day creates urgency and specificity. Covenant commitment occurs at definite moment, not vague future intention. Like wedding vows, covenant requires specific decision at specific time.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern covenants regularly included oath-swearing ceremonies where parties invoked deity to witness and enforce the agreement. Breaking oaths merited divine judgment.

Israel's covenant renewal at Moab paralleled the original Sinai covenant, with each generation needing to personally ratify commitment to God.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What does voluntary covenant participation teach about genuine commitment?
2. How does mutual oath-swearing create binding obligation?
3. Why is divine initiative crucial even though humans participate?
4. What does 'this day' urgency teach about decisive covenant commitment?
5. How does covenant oath-swearing parallel wedding vows?

Interlinear Text

לַעֲבֹדָךְ	בְּבֵרִית	יְהוָה הַ	אֱלֹהֶיךָ		
That thou shouldest enter	into covenant	which the LORD	thy God		
H5674	H1285	H3068	H430		
וּבְאֵלֹתָיו	אֲשֶׁר	יְהוָה הַ	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	כִּי תַ	עֲמֹךְ
and into his oath	H834	which the LORD	thy God	maketh	H5973
H423		H3068	H430	H3772	
הַיּוֹם:					
with thee this day					
H3117					

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