

The Easter Story isn't over.

Recently I spent a day listening to a very clever man from a very clever university say lots of very clever things. Speaking as a not very clever man who didn't go to a very clever university (or any) who doesn't say very clever things, it was interesting to hear this person use his significant cleverness to arrive at a couple of simple statements. One of them I'll share with you now as best I can.

Blood is thicker than water. Yes, it is. However, the source of this saying (the clever man said) has more to it: a covenant made in blood is thicker than the water of the womb. (Arabic.) Which clearly stands our common understanding of that saying on its head, doesn't it?

I am someone whose oldest friend is my brother. Born exactly 1 year 4 days after me, obviously I was such a great baby, dad was keen to have the next one! (Not so sure mum entirely agreed...) However, it wasn't the shared upbringing - and fights - which brought us close; we do not share political, religious, philosophical opinions - even our erstwhile girlfriends and subsequent wives have been as different as cheese and chalk. What binds us is the same regimental membership, ergo, brothers of a blood covenant: people who will stand alongside one another in the same hardships, danger, duty and sacrifice.

How much more binding then is a covenant with God through the blood covenant of His true son? And how much closer are we, then, to God because of His son's promise that ANYONE who accepts his covenant of blood is reconciled with God?

That's the reason for the Easter drama: Jesus' body broken, his blood poured out, his covenant with God upheld in his resurrection. That's the reason for our on-going re-enactment and renewal of that covenant. What we put our faith in goes so much further than human inheritance. We have a new identity in covenant with Jesus. Everything that was wrong in our lives is cancelled. We start again. We have new life.

When we share bread in Jesus' name, we have that covenant with him. When we accept the cup of sacrifice in Jesus' name, we share the covenant of blood brothers and sisters. We stand alongside one

another in the same hardships, dangers, duty, sacrifice - and joy in the hope of the resurrected life.

Listen: I know it's quite a lot to take onboard in one go, so talk to me about it. If it's worked for someone like me - with my past! - I guarantee it will work for anyone.