

PRECEPT
UPON
PRECEPT®

Covenant

KNOWING GOD'S
COVENANT

PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT
COVENANT
KNOWING GOD'S COVENANT

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HELPFUL STUDY TOOLS

ARTHUR, KAY; ARTHUR, DAVID; DE LACY, PETE

How to Study Your Bible

Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1994/2010

The New Inductive Study Bible—New American Standard Bible

Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2000

Word Study Tools

RECOMMENDED COMMENTARIES

MURRAY, ANDREW

The Two Covenants

Fort Washington, Pennsylvania: Christian Literature Crusade, 1974

TRUMBULL, H. CLAY

The Blood Covenant

Kirkwood, Missouri: Impact Books, 1975

RECOMMENDED SOFTWARE

Logos Bible Software

Powerful search engines and up to 4,000 electronic Bible study resources (commentaries, lexicons, Bible dictionaries etc.) make it fast and easy to do simple and complex searches of multiple sources, then pull materials together for orderly presentation—excellent for word and topical studies based on English or original Hebrew and Greek. Available at www.logos.com.

LESSON ONE

Overview

THIS LESSON
INCORPORATES

Word Studies

Covenant is like the missing piece of the jigsaw puzzle that completes the picture of our so-great-a-salvation.

Andrew Murray, the man of God who spoke so profoundly to those living in the late 1800s, wrote:

Blessed is the man who truly knows God as his Covenant God; who knows what the Covenant promises him; what unwavering confidence of expectation it secures, that all its [covenant's] terms will be fulfilled to him; what a claim and hold it gives him on the Covenant-keeping God Himself. To many a man, who has never thought much of the Covenant, a true and living faith in it would mean the transformation of his whole life. *The full knowledge of what God wants to do for him; the assurance that it will be done by an Almighty Power; the being drawn to God Himself in personal surrender, and dependence, and waiting to have it done; all this would make the Covenant the very gate of heaven. May the Holy Spirit give us some vision of its glory*¹

The goal of our lesson this week is to familiarize ourselves with the various references to covenant in Scripture, particularly those in Genesis, the book of beginnings.

Next week we will gain an ever-increasing clarity of our subject as we see in picture illustrations what it means to us to be in covenant with the Almighty God. Then from those picture illustrations, we will turn to a study of three major covenants and their relationship to our salvation: the Abrahamic Covenant, the Old Covenant, and the New Covenant. So persevere, Beloved, it just gets better and better.

¹ Andrew Murray, *The Two Covenants* (Fort Washington, Pennsylvania: Christian Literature Crusade, 1974), p. 2. Used by permission.

DAY
ONE

Today we are going to look at the first mention of the word *covenant* in the Bible.

Covenant is used approximately 298 times in the Word of God. The Old Testament (Hebrew) word for covenant is transliterated² *berîyth* and is pronounced ber-eeth'. It is "a *compact* (. . . made by passing between *pieces* of flesh)."³

The (Greek) New Testament word translated "covenant" is transliterated *diathēkē*. It means "a *disposition*, i.e. (spec.) a *contract* (espec. a devisory *will*)."⁴

1. Since covenant is first seen in Genesis 6:18, it is necessary to read the entire sixth chapter of Genesis. This will help you understand the context of the first mention of covenant. When you finish reading, answer the following questions:
 - a. Who established the covenant with whom?
 - b. Is there any reason given for making this covenant?
 - c. From the context, why do you think the covenant was made?
2. Genesis 9 contains the next mention of covenant. However, before you read it, read Genesis 8 and list **the main events** covered in this chapter.

²A transliteration is the English alphabet equivalent letters to a biblical language alphabet. In this book, we will always print the English transliteration of all Greek and Hebrew words.

³James Strong, "Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary" in *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Nashville, Tennessee: Holman Bible Publishers), p. 24, #1285.

⁴James Strong, "Greek Dictionary of the New Testament" in *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Nashville, Tennessee: Holman Bible Publishers), p. 22, #1242.

3. Now read Genesis 9 and answer the following questions:
 - a. With whom did God establish the covenant?
 - b. What conditions and/or promises were made in this covenant?
 - c. How long was this covenant to be in existence?
 - d. What was given as a sign of the covenant? (Note how many times the phrase “sign of the covenant” is used.)
 - e. Is the mention of covenant in Genesis 6 related to the mention of covenant in Genesis 9?

DAY TWO

The next mention of covenant is in Genesis 15:18. We will study this in depth later in our course. However, right now the immediate goal is simply to familiarize you with the way *covenant* is used in the Word of God. Read Genesis 15 and then answer the following questions:

1. Who made a covenant with whom?
2. How was this covenant made? List the things that were done and by whom.

5. How does the definition of covenant compare with what occurs in Genesis 15?

DAY THREE

At the end of this lesson, you will find an Observation Worksheet of Genesis 17.

An Observation Worksheet is simply a portion of the Bible that is printed with a wide margin and spaced so you can easily mark the words of the text and record your notes and insights.

However, because of the nature of the study of covenant and because you will always want to have these awesome truths marked in your Bible, we suggest that you do your observations in your *New Inductive Study Bible (NISB)*.

If you don't have an *NISB*, we suggest that you get one. It's an awesome study Bible filled with many unique features. You'll have everything you need right in this one Bible.

1. Using your Bible or the Observation Worksheet, mark each use of *covenant* in a distinctive way so you can easily spot it whenever it occurs in the Word of God.

You might color it with red (because of the blood) and then put a yellow box around it. You can come up with your own way of marking, and once you do, consider using it all the way through your Bible.

2. Following the same procedure you used for *covenant*, but using a different color or symbol for each, mark every use of the following words:
 - a. *descendants*
 - b. *sign*
 - c. *everlasting*
 - d. *circumcised, circumcised in the flesh of your/his foreskin*

-
3. Read Genesis 26:26-31, and answer the questions that follow:
 - a. Who made a covenant with whom and why?

 - b. What did they do when they made the covenant? Include insights from verses 30 and 31.

 4. By now you have seen that the covenant God made with Abraham was also made with Abraham's descendants (or seed). You saw the covenant confirmed to Isaac, Abraham's son, in Genesis 26:23-25. Read Genesis 28:10-22. You will see God confirming this same covenant to Jacob, Isaac's son. As you read Genesis 28:10-22, compare it to Genesis 26:23-25 and write down any similarities in the promises God made to Abraham and to Isaac.

 5. Genesis 31:44 is the last use of "covenant" in Genesis. The covenant is made between Jacob (Isaac's son) and Laban (Jacob's uncle). Read Genesis 31:43-55 and then, as usual, answer the questions that follow:
 - a. What things were done when this covenant was made? Read each verse and write down what was done. Do not worry about understanding the significance of each act; that will come later as we study the custom of covenant.

1) Genesis 31:45-48

2) Genesis 31:53

3) Genesis 31:54

b. Read Genesis 31:49. This verse gives you the meaning of “Mizpah,” a common covenant word. Write out what it means.

c. What was the purpose of the pillar or heap of stones?

DAY FIVE

Well, Beloved, this is our final day for this first week of study. Remember, this has simply been a week of exposure to various covenants made between men and between God and men. It gets more exciting and life-changing as we build precept upon precept! As a note of encouragement, the other weeks will not be as heavy in homework. Aren't you glad?!!

Today we want to study several other occurrences of covenant in the Bible.

1. In Exodus 24:1-11 and Exodus 34:27-28, we see God making the Covenant of the Law with the nation of Israel under the leadership of Moses at the time; therefore, God established the Law through Moses.

In later lessons we will study the Law, or the Old Covenant as it is referred to, in greater depth. But today we'll read Exodus 24:1-11 and Exodus 34:27-28 and answer the questions that follow.

- a. What did Moses build?
 - b. What did Moses do with the blood from the sacrificed animals?
 - c. How is covenant used in Exodus 24:7-8? In other words, it is called the _____ of the covenant.
 - d. In verse 11, what did the nobles of Israel do after they beheld God? (This will be significant later as we go into the custom of covenant.)
2. Now that we have seen the institution of the Old Covenant (the Law), we want to see the institution of the New Covenant, the Covenant of Grace.
 - a. Jesus is in the upper room with His disciples. He is about to be betrayed and crucified. Read Matthew 26:20-29.
 - b. What are the disciples to do with the bread and wine?
 - c. What did the bread and wine symbolize?
 3. Luke 22:17-20 is a parallel passage to Matthew 26. Read these verses and then write out what kind of a covenant this is according to Luke 22:20.

4. Isaiah 42:5-9 is a prophecy regarding Jesus the Messiah (Christ). “Messiah” is the Old Testament word for “Christ.” It means “the promised one.” Read this passage, looking for *covenant*. What do you learn about it from Isaiah 42:6? (For an excellent cross-reference, see Isaiah 49:5-9.)

5. Now read Malachi 3:1-2. This is a prophecy regarding Jesus the Christ and John the Baptist. How is Jesus referred to in this passage?

6. It is important to see how the different covenants have similar elements. List the common elements of each covenant.

We will close with a promise of blessing to those who keep God’s covenant:

*All the paths of the LORD are lovingkindness and truth
To those who keep His covenant and His testimonies.*

*The secret of the LORD is for those who fear Him,
And He will make them know His covenant.*

(Psalm 25:10, 14)

GENESIS 17

NOW when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him,

“I am God Almighty;

Walk before Me, and be blameless.

2 “I will establish My covenant between Me and you,
And I will multiply you exceedingly.”

3 Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying,

4 “As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you,
And you will be the father of a multitude of nations.

5 “No longer shall your name be called Abram,
But your name shall be Abraham;
For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.

6 “I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you.

7 “I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.

8 “I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”

9 God said further to Abraham, “Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.

10 “This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised.

11 “And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you.

12 “And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a *servant* who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants.

13 “A *servant* who is born in your house or who is bought with your money shall surely be circumcised; thus shall My covenant be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

- 14 “But an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.”
- 15 Then God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah *shall be* her name.
- 16 “I will bless her, and indeed I will give you a son by her. Then I will bless her, and she shall be *a mother of* nations; kings of peoples will come from her.”
- 17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear *a child?*”
- 18 And Abraham said to God, “Oh that Ishmael might live before You!”
- 19 But God said, “No, but Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.
- 20 “As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I will bless him, and will make him fruitful and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.
- 21 “But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this season next year.”
- 22 When He finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham.
- 23 Then Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all *the servants* who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham’s household, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the very same day, as God had said to him.
- 24 Now Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.
- 25 And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.
- 26 In the very same day Abraham was circumcised, and Ishmael his son.
- 27 All the men of his household, who were born in the house or bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.