

Covenant - Beriyth (Hebrew Word Study)

DEFINITION OF HEBREW FOR COVENANT

Berit - Berith - Beriyth

Covenant (01285)(**berit/berith/beriyth**) means covenant, treaty, compact, agreement between two parties (first use in God's covenant with Noah - Ge 6:18, 9:9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17). As discussed more below **beriyth** describes a compact made by passing between pieces of flesh. Covenant is a solemn, binding arrangement between two parties and entails a variety of responsibilities, benefits and penalties depending on the specific covenant which is being studied. OT covenants were made between God and man (eg, God with Noah - Ge 6:18, with Abram - Ge 15:18) or between men (Abraham and Abimelech - Ge 21:27, Isaac and Abimelech - Ge 26:28, Jacob and Laban - Ge 31:44) (**For summary of covenants see - Covenant in the Bible**).

Covenant can be summarized as follows...

(1) Between two parties (sometimes equal, other times superior to inferior) -- (a) **nations** -- (peace) treaty, alliance of friendship (b) **individuals** -- a pledge or agreement with mutual obligations to each other (c) **monarch and subjects** (2Sa 3:21, 5:3, 1Chr 11:3) -- a constitution (d) **God and man** -- Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, New Covenants. **TWOT** adds that...

Apart from blood ties the covenant was the way people of the ancient world formed wider relationships with each other. The accounts of the relationship between David and Jonathan are the only unequivocal mention of a compact between two individuals in the Old Testament (1Sa 18:3; 20:8; 23:18). It is spoken of as "a covenant of the Lord" because the Lord witnessed the transaction and protected the legal order.

(2) Accompanied by (a) **signs** (also witnesses, memorials, shared meals) (b) **sacrifices**, (c) **solemn, binding oaths** -- sealing the relationship with promises of blessing for keeping the covenant and curses for breaking the covenant (d) Sometimes with written document on which the words of the covenant, its terms in the form of promises and stipulations were spelled out, witnessed to, signed and sealed. **Behm** (TDNT) notes that in ancient times

There is no firmer guarantee of legal security, peace or personal loyalty than the covenant (e.g., Amos 1:9).

(3) Is depicted in the idiomatic phrase "**make (cut) a covenant**" in which there is was a blood sacrifice as part of the covenant ritual.

Almost 100 years ago, **Andrew Murray** motivated by a waning understanding regarding the truth and power inherent in the Biblical truth of **covenant** wrote that...

One of the words of Scripture, which is almost going out of fashion, is the word **Covenant**. There was a time when it was the keynote of the theology and the Christian life of strong and holy men. We know how deep in Scotland it entered into the national life and thought. It made mighty men, to whom God, and His promise and power were wonderfully real. It will be found still to bring strength and purpose to those who will take the trouble to bring all their life (**Ed**: and their marriages) under control of the inspiring assurance that they are living in **covenant** with a God who has sworn faithfully to fulfill in them every promise He has given. ([Two Covenants - Index - Andrew Murray](#))

The majority of the the OT uses of **beriyth** are translated as **covenant** (275/285 uses) and the majority of these are translated into Greek using the word **diatheke** [**word study**], which was a common technical word used in the Greco-Roman law to describe the settlement of an inheritance (i.e., a "last will and testament") and used in the NT to describe the "*self-commitment, promises, and conditions by which* [God] *entered into relationship with man*" (Friberg).

Vine says this about the use of **diatheke** used in the Greek Septuagint to translate the Hebrew word **Beriyth** "The wholly gracious and effective character of God's "covenant" is confirmed in the Septuagint by the choice of *diatheke* to translate **berit/beriyth**. A *diatheke* is a will that distributes one's property after death according to the owner's wishes. It is completely unilateral.

Warren Wiersbe - The Hebrew word translated "covenant" has several meanings: (1) to eat with, which suggests fellowship and agreement; (2) to bind or fetter, which means commitment; and (3) to allot, which suggests sharing. When God makes a covenant, He enters into an agreement to commit Himself to give what He promises. It is purely an act of grace. (Be Obedient)

ISBE says that "In essence a **covenant** is an agreement, but an agreement of a solemn and binding force. The early Semitic idea of a covenant was doubtless that which prevailed among the Arabs. This was primarily blood-brotherhood, in which two men became brothers by drinking each other's blood. (**Ed**: Now that sounds serious to me!) (**Ed**: **See illustration in pagan culture**).

Covenant in 1828 Webster

- (1): (v. i.) To agree (with); to enter into a formal agreement; to bind one's self by contract; to make a stipulation.
- (2): (v. t.) To grant or promise by covenant.
- (3): (n.) A mutual agreement of two or more persons or parties, or one of the stipulations in such an agreement.
- (4): (n.) A form of action for the violation of a promise or contract under seal.
- (5): (n.) An undertaking, on sufficient consideration, in writing and under seal, to do or to refrain from some act or thing; a contract; a stipulation; also, the document or writing containing the terms of agreement.
- (6): (n.) A solemn compact between members of a church to maintain its faith, discipline, etc.
- (7): (n.) The promises of God as revealed in the Scriptures, conditioned on certain terms on the part of man, as obedience, repentance, faith, etc.
- (8): (n.) An agreement made by the Scottish Parliament in 1638, and by the English Parliament in 1643, to preserve the reformed religion in Scotland, and to extirpate popery and prelacy; - usually called the "Solemn League and Covenant."

Related Resources:

- [Covenant - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)
- [Covenant \(Law\) - 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica](#)
- [Covenant \(Agreement\) - 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica](#)
- [Covenants - Torrey's Topical Textbook - Bible Concordance](#)
- [Covenant - Vine's Expository Dictionary of NT Words](#)
- [Covenant - The Hawker's Poor Man's Concordance And Dictionary](#)
- [Covenant - Hastings' Dictionary of the New Testament](#)
- [Covenant - Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible](#)
- [Covenant of Salt - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)
- [Covenant - Holman Bible Dictionary](#) - lengthy article
- [Covenant - Fausset's Bible Dictionary](#)
- [Covenants - Kitto's Popular Cyclopedia of Biblial Literature](#)

BERIYTH AND MARRIAGE

Beriyth is used in the context of marriage...

(Context Pr 2:16 = The adulteress) That leaves the companion of her youth and forgets the **covenant** (**Heb = beriyth; Lxx = diatheke**) of her God (Proverbs 2:17)

Yet you say, 'For what reason?' Because the Lord has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by **covenant** (**Heb = beriyth; Lxx = diatheke**). (Mal 2:14)

Then I (God speaking figuratively to Israel, personified as a woman, specifically a woman He took as His wife - see other OT ref = Isa 54:5, Je 31:32; Ho 2:19) passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness (Note: Ancient custom that is tantamount to a "marriage proposal" - see Ru 3:9-note). I also swore (Literally "sevens" ~ like repeating a declaration 7x) to you and entered into a **covenant** (**Heb = beriyth; Lxx = diatheke**) with you so that you became Mine," declares the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 16:8)

- **Related Resource: Covenant: As It Relates to Marriage**

It has been well stated that there was no firmer guarantee of legal security, peace or personal loyalty than that found in the word covenant. In the ancient world the greatest tool for covenant making came to be the written document on which the words of the covenant, its terms in the form of promises and stipulations, were spelled out, witnessed to, signed and sealed. In fact such covenant documents abound in the ancient world.

The meaning of the Hebrew word for **covenant** is illustrated in Genesis 15, the first use of the Hebrew phrase "**cut** (Heb = karath) **covenant** (beriyth)" (often translated in English Bibles by the Hebrew idiom "**make [made] a covenant**").

So He (God) said to him (Abram), "Bring Me a three year old heifer, and a three year old female goat, and a three year old ram, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon." 10 Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, and laid each half opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds. 11 And the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away. 12 Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, terror and great darkness fell upon him.

And it came about when the sun had set, that it was very dark, and behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces. 18 On that day the LORD **made** (cut = karath) a **covenant** (beriyth) with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates (Ge 15:9-12, 17, 18)

Comment: This passage illustrates the meaning of an agreement or compact made by passing between the halves of cut flesh. In this case using highly figurative language, Moses records that it was Jehovah alone Who passed between the halves of flesh, indicating God cut an unconditional covenant with Abram. Note that the spillage of blood was part of the cutting of this covenant.

In another example of the meaning of **covenant** the Lord declares...

And I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not fulfilled the words of the covenant which they made before Me, **when they cut the calf in two and passed between its parts**- the officials of Judah, and the officials of Jerusalem, the court officers, and the priests, and all the people of the land, who passed between the parts of the calf--and I will give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their life. And their dead bodies shall be food for the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth. (Jer 34:19-20)

Comment: Jeremiah records a covenant between man and God but it was not an unconditional covenant like the Abrahamic and New Covenants. Therefore we see that the failure of the men to keep their covenant obligations brought severe consequences. From these passages we can see that **God is serious about covenant**, in this case taking the life of those who broke this covenant. We also see a description of one meaning of the Hebrew word, specifically the **passing or walking between pieces of cut flesh of an animal**. In contrast to Ge 15:18, where it was God Who passed through the pieces, in this covenant it was the men who passed through the pieces of cut flesh. Note also that that the cutting of covenant entailed the "spillage" of **blood**.

BERIYTH ETYMOLOGY

TWOT notes that

The etymology of the word is uncertain. It may be related to the Akkadian word *burru* which means "*to establish a legal situation by testimony with an oath*"; but some tie it to the Akkadian word *birtu* "*a fetter*" which is a derivative of the word meaning "between." Köhler claims the word was related to the root **b-r-h** which has to do with the food and eating involved in the covenant meal. The root is nowhere used as a verb in the OT nor is any other derivative of this root used, but the action involving covenant making employs the idiom "**to cut a covenant**" (Ge 15:18 = first use - see next entry below), that is making a bloody sacrifice as part of the covenant ritual. Köhler then would have the animal eaten in the covenant meal. ([Harris, R L, Archer, G L & Waltke, B K Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament. Moody Press](#))

ISBE agrees that "The etymological force of the Hebrew **berith** is not entirely certain. It is probable that the word is the same as the Assyrian **birtu**, which has the common meaning "*fetter*," but also means "covenant." The significance of the root from which this Assyrian word is derived is uncertain. It is probable that it is "to bind," but that is not definitely established. The meaning of *birtu* as covenant seems to come directly from the root, rather than as a derived meaning from fetter. If this root idea is to bind, the covenant is that which binds together the parties. This, at any rate, is in harmony with the general meaning of the word. In the Old Testament

the word has an ordinary use, when both parties are men (Abraham and Abimelech - Ge 21:27, Isaac and Abimelech - Ge 26:28, Jacob and Laban - Ge 31:44, see also 2Ki 11:4), and a distinctly religious use, between God and men. There can be no doubt that the religious use has come from the ordinary, in harmony with the general custom in such cases, and not the reverse. There are also two shades of meaning, somewhat distinct, of the Hebrew word: one in which it is properly a covenant, i.e. a solemn mutual agreement, the other in which it is more a command, i.e. instead of an obligation voluntarily assumed, it is an obligation imposed by a superior upon an inferior. This latter meaning, however, has clearly been derived from the other. It is easy to see that an agreement, including as the contracting parties those of unequal position, might readily include those agreements which tended to partake of the nature of a command; but the process could not readily be reversed."

Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary - A foundational concept of covenant is the notion of legal contract. Legal contracts are developed to establish and regulate a relationship where none previously existed. There are a wide variety of contexts for the establishment of covenants in Hebrew society, several of which are witnessed in the Hebrew Bible. Evidence from surrounding ancient Near Eastern societies help flesh out the significance of some of these treaties, in particular the theological implications of treaties in which one of the parties is Yahweh. The idiom for establishing a covenant is "to cut a covenant." The likely origin of this phrase resides within the ceremonial act of slaughtering and dismembering animals in the process of ratifying covenants. The implication of this act is a warning to the one who might break the covenant. He may receive a similar fate as the animal. Civil covenants are formed between individuals for a variety of reasons. These are often oral. Abraham and Abimelech establish a covenant concerning water rights (Gen. 21:27, 31). Laban and Jacob establish a boundary between the two of them (Gen. 31:44). Jonathan and David made a covenant, that the former would recognize the transfer of royal lineage to David, though Jonathan was, by right of succession, the next to become king (1 Sam. 23:18). Marriage is a type of covenant, used twice metaphorically of the relationship between Judah and Yahweh (Eze. 16:8; Mal. 2:14). Kings established a covenant with those ruled. The elders or the general populace would grant oral acceptance. The entire process is not recorded, but the final decision is recorded in a few cases. The rejection of covenant is the backdrop of schism which led to the division of the kingdom, as the northern leaders rejected the terms offered by the impetuous Rehoboam (1 Ki. 12:1ff). Accepted terms are recorded in the case of David at Hebron (2 Sam. 3:13ff) and Zedekiah (Jeremiah 34). Lastly, Ezra made a covenant with the people, with a notable stipulation that those with foreign wives must divorce them to remain in the community (Ezra 10:1ff). A number of international treaties are referred to in the Bible, but none are completely reproduced. Most are only alluded to. There are treaties established among equals, as Hiram of Tyre and Solomon (1 Ki. 5:12) and Edom and its allies (Oba. 1:7). Vassalage treaties appear, as the Gibeonites submit to the Israelites (Josh. 9:1ff; their covenantal responsibilities included protecting the Gibeonites, 1 Sam. 11:1), and Ben-Hadad sues for peace with Ahab (1 Ki. 20:34). Tyre is indicted for breaking its treaty with Israel (Amos 1:9). The insanity of violating the treaty with Babylon is declared by Ezekiel (17:15). Israel is repeatedly warned to not enter into treaties with the Canaanites (Deut. 7:2). Part of the rationale is the tolerance of the establishment of the pagan cult of the Canaanites (Exo. 34:15). There are a variety of treaties which exist in the ancient Near East. One in particular is theologically significant, the Hittite suzerainty treaty. This form of treaty was well known. The most significant covenant in the Hebrew Bible is the one which Yahweh made with the Israelites at Sinai (Exo. 20:1ff). It is from this event that the Israelites are established as the people who were uniquely tied to Yahweh. Israel is born, loses her identity, and then is resurrected according to the covenant made with Yahweh at Sinai. The parallel in format of the covenant at Sinai with the Hittite suzerainty treaty sheds light upon the theological relationship between Yahweh and Israel. Below are a series of commonalities in structure shared by the treaty form and the Sinai covenant. First, the treaty begins with the name of the covenant giver and a history of the relations of the parties. This is twofold in the case of treaties, in that the goodwill of the suzerain is established by its benevolent behavior toward the vassal in the past. The vassal is to realize at once that the superior party reciprocally deserves to be treated with loyalty (i.e., acceptance of the covenant stipulations) and that the motives of the superior are beyond suspicion. This section is evident in the covenant, which begins with the phrase "I am Yahweh, who led you out of Egypt..." (Exo. 20:2). As with international treaties, the past sets the tone for future relations. Second, stipulations are enumerated. These are often expressed in casuistic (case) form, "If... , then..." These were the requirements which the lesser party had to fulfill in order to preserve the treaty and the benevolence of the superior party. This section corresponds to the Law, expressed in the ensuing chapters of Exodus. These requirements have been misunderstood throughout history. They are more than just a series of rules and regulations. They provide a comparatively clear path to obtaining the good graces of Yahweh. One can contrast this to the impenetrability of other ancient Near Eastern religions, as believers are without a clue as to what their requirements are. Third, provision is made for depositing and reading the document. It is deposited in a temple for protection. The tablets of the covenant were deposited in the Ark of the Covenant, which eventually came to rest in the Jerusalem temple built by Solomon. Public reading is not expressly stated, beyond the admonition to teach them continually to one's children (Deut. 6:7). A renewal ceremony occurs prior to the death of Joshua after the possession of the land (Josh. 24:1ff). There is no provision of regular reading of the Law. Not all treaties possess each detail. Fourth, there was a section listing the witnesses to the treaty (as there were for any type of contract). These were comprehensive lists of the gods of the entities making the contract. Clearly, this is not easily done in the covenant between Yahweh and the Israelites. In the renewal ceremony of Joshua the people themselves are witnesses (24:22). It is as though the contract format was inherited, and something must be plugged in to this section. Fifth, there is a section of blessings and curses. These are based upon performance, upon the vassal adhering to the stipulations of the covenant. The

history of Israel is interpreted in this light from the moment of the reception of the covenant at Sinai (Exo. 15:22-17:7) until the end of human existence. Yahweh's intervention in the history of the people is understood in the context of their fidelity to the covenant stipulations. The prophets often plead Yahweh's case, employing the technical legal term *rib*, "case" (e.g., Jer. 2:4ff). This legal rhetoric stems from the lack of fidelity to the covenant on the part of the community. The guilt of the community means that Yahweh is freed from any covenantal obligation to bless the people. Further, he is able to inflict the force of the curses, since he is omnipotent. In international treaties, this section is enforced by the gods invoked as witnesses. For the Israelites, this divine system of reward and retribution was assured, as the wronged party was the same one who had the power to enforce the negative and positive sanctions of the treaty. Sixth, there was a ratification ceremony. The procedure is not completely clear, but likely did involve the ritual slaughtering of animals. The ratification process is evident in the renewal ceremony in Josh. 24:16ff. The people orally affirm their desire to accept the stipulations of the covenant, and thus agree to be subject to the penalties for violating the stipulations. It is not clear at what point that the curses are implemented. The prophetic accusation and declaration of covenantal infidelity is perhaps an echo of the legal charge prior to the imposition of the curses. It is not clear. This format was used until it fell out of usage sometime after 1200 B.C. That the covenant as it appears in Exodus so closely parallels this format, it can be considered evidence for the antiquity of the covenant. There are a number of other significant covenants throughout the Bible. The two prime ones antedating the Sinai covenant are the Noahic and the Abrahamic. A relationship between these latter covenants and Sinai is one of gradual revelation. The stipulations of the covenants increases proportionately with revelation. The process of revelation and responsibility increases throughout the biblical record. Elements of legal covenant formulae are present in the Noahic and Abrahamic covenants. For example, the presence of signs of the covenant (the rainbow for Noah, circumcision for Abraham) fulfill the role of witnesses. The universality of the Noahic covenant is abrogated by the narrow focus of the promise of the Abrahamic covenant, as a particular tribal grouping is selected by Yahweh as his people. Although, with the Sinai covenant this exclusiveness is reversed, as this people begins the process of fulfilling the Abrahamic promise that "all the nations of the world will be blessed by your seed" (Gen. 22:18). There is a process established for foreigners to enter the community. With the immanent collapse of the society, Jeremiah announces that a new covenant is coming, which will consist of the law being written on the hearts of the members of the community (31:31ff). Indeed, it was this internalization of the Law which was the prerequisite for entering the new covenant, expressed in the NT. ([The Complete Biblical Library 17 Volume Set- International Editor Thoralf Gilbrant](#))

HEBREW IDIOM "CUT A COVENANT"

Cut a covenant, Make a Covenant (*karath beriyyh*) - 77 times in the OT (including 2 implied by context) -

Genesis 15:18 On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates:

Genesis 21:27 And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them to Abimelech; and the two of them made a covenant.

Genesis 21:32 So they made a covenant at Beersheba; and Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, arose and returned to the land of the Philistines.

Genesis 26:28 And they said, "We see plainly that the LORD has been with you; so we said, 'Let there now be an oath between us, even between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you,

Genesis 31:44 "So now come, let us make a covenant, you and I, and let it be a witness between you and me."

Exodus 23:32 "You shall make no covenant with them or with their gods.

Exodus 24:8 So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."

Exodus 34:10 Then God said, "Behold, I am going to make a covenant. Before all your people I will perform miracles which have not been produced in all the earth, nor among any of the nations; and all the people among whom you live will see the working of the LORD, for it is a fearful thing that I am going to perform with you.

Exodus 34:12 "Watch yourself that you make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land into which you are going, lest it become a snare in your midst.

Exodus 34:15 lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and they play the harlot with their gods, and sacrifice to their gods, and someone invite you to eat of his sacrifice;

Exodus 34:27 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel."

Deuteronomy 5:2 "The LORD our God made a covenant with us at Horeb.

Deuteronomy 5:3 "The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, with all those of us alive here today.

Deuteronomy 7:2 and when the LORD your God shall deliver them before you, and you shall defeat them, then you shall utterly

destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them.

Deuteronomy 9:9 "When I went up to the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant which the LORD had made with you, then I remained on the mountain forty days and nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water.

Deuteronomy 29:1 These are the words of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the sons of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He had made with them at Horeb.

Deuteronomy 29:12 that you may enter into the covenant with the LORD your God, and into His oath which the LORD your God is making with you today,

Deuteronomy 29:14 "Now not with you alone am I making this covenant and this oath,

Deuteronomy 29:25 "Then men shall say, 'Because they forsook the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 31:16 And the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, you are about to lie down with your fathers; and this people will arise and play the harlot with the strange gods of the land, into the midst of which they are going, and will forsake Me and break My covenant which I have made with them.

Joshua 9:6 And they went to Joshua to the camp at Gilgal, and said to him and to the men of Israel, "We have come from a far country; now therefore, make a covenant with us."

Joshua 9:7 And the men of Israel said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you are living within our land; how then shall we make a covenant with you?"

Joshua 9:11 "So our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spoke to us, saying, 'Take provisions in your hand for the journey, and go to meet them and say to them, "We are your servants; now then, make a covenant with us."'

Joshua 9:16 And it came about at the end of three days after they had made a covenant with them, that they heard that they were neighbors and that they were living within their land.

Joshua 24:25 So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

Judges 2:2 and as for you, you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.' But you have not obeyed Me; what is this you have done?

1 Samuel 11:1 Now Nahash the Ammonite came up and besieged Jabesh-gilead; and all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, "Make a covenant with us and we will serve you."

1 Samuel 18:3 Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself.

1 Samuel 23:18 So the two of them made a covenant before the LORD; and David stayed at Horesh while Jonathan went to his house.

2 Samuel 3:12 Then Abner sent messengers to David in his place, saying, "Whose is the land? Make your covenant with me, and behold, my hand shall be with you to bring all Israel over to you."

2 Samuel 3:13 And he said, "Good! I will make a covenant with you, but I demand one thing of you, namely, you shall not see my face unless you first bring Michal, Saul's daughter, when you come to see me."

2 Samuel 3:21 And Abner said to David, "Let me arise and go, and gather all Israel to my lord the king that they may make a covenant with you, and that you may be king over all that your soul desires." So David sent Abner away, and he went in peace.

2 Samuel 5:3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them before the LORD at Hebron; then they anointed David king over Israel.

1 Kings 5:12 And the LORD gave wisdom to Solomon, just as He promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a covenant.

1 Kings 8:21 "And there I have set a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD, which He made with our fathers when He brought them from the land of Egypt."

1 Kings 20:34 And Ben-hadad said to him, "The cities which my father took from your father I will restore, and you shall make streets for yourself in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria." Ahab said, "And I will let you go with this covenant." So he made a covenant with him and let him go.

2 Kings 11:4 Now in the seventh year Jehoiada sent and brought the captains of hundreds of the Carites and of the guard, and brought them to him in the house of the LORD. Then he made a covenant with them and put them under oath in the house of the LORD, and showed them the king's son.

2 Kings 11:17 Then Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD and the king and the people, that they should be the LORD's people, also between the king and the people.

2 Kings 17:15 And they rejected His statutes and His covenant which He made with their fathers, and His warnings with which He warned them. And they followed vanity and became vain, and went after the nations which surrounded them, concerning which the LORD had commanded them not to do like them.

2 Kings 17:35 with whom the LORD made a covenant and commanded them, saying, "You shall not fear other gods, nor bow

down yourselves to them nor serve them nor sacrifice to them.

2 Kings 17:38 "And the covenant that I have made with you, you shall not forget, nor shall you fear other gods.

2 Kings 23:3 And the king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and all his soul, to carry out the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people entered into the covenant.

1 Chronicles 11:3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and David made a covenant with them in Hebron before the LORD; and they anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of the LORD through Samuel.

1 Chronicles 16:16 (**Implied**) [The covenant] which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac.

2 Chronicles 6:11 "And there I have set the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD, which He made with the sons of Israel."

2 Chronicles 21:7 Yet the LORD was not willing to destroy the house of David because of the covenant which He had made with David, and since He had promised to give a lamp to him and his sons forever.

2 Chronicles 23:3 Then all the assembly made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And Jehoiada said to them, "Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the LORD has spoken concerning the sons of David.

2 Chronicles 23:16 Then Jehoiada made a covenant between himself and all the people and the king, that they should be the LORD's people.

2 Chronicles 29:10 "Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that His burning anger may turn away from us.

2 Chronicles 34:31 Then the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the LORD to walk after the LORD, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant written in this book.

Ezra 10:3 "So now let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives and their children, according to the counsel of my lord and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law.

Nehemiah 9:8 "And Thou didst find his heart faithful before Thee, And didst make a covenant with him To give him the land of the Canaanite, Of the Hittite and the Amorite, Of the Perizzite, the Jebusite, and the Girgashite— To give it to his descendants. And Thou hast fulfilled Thy promise, For Thou art righteous.

Job 31:1 "I Have made a covenant with my eyes; How then could I gaze at a virgin?

Job 41:4 "Will he make a covenant with you? Will you take him for a servant forever?

Psalms 50:5 "Gather My godly ones to Me, Those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice."

Psalms 83:5 For they have conspired together with one mind; Against Thee do they make a covenant:

Psalms 89:3 "I have made a covenant with My chosen; I have sworn to David My servant,

Psalms 105:9 (**Implied**) [The covenant] which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac.

Isaiah 28:15 Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death, And with Sheol we have made a pact. The overwhelming scourge will not reach us when it passes by, For we have made falsehood our refuge and we have concealed ourselves with deception."

Isaiah 55:3 "Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, According to the faithful mercies shown to David.

Isaiah 61:8 For I, the LORD, love justice, I hate robbery in the burnt offering; And I will faithfully give them their recompense, And I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

Jeremiah 11:10 "They have turned back to the iniquities of their ancestors who refused to hear My words, and they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers."

Jeremiah 31:31 "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,

Jeremiah 31:32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.

Jeremiah 31:33 "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Jeremiah 32:40 "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; and I will put the fear of Me in their hearts so that they will not turn away from Me.

Jeremiah 34:8 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people who were in Jerusalem to proclaim release to them:

Jeremiah 34:13 "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'I made a covenant with your forefathers in the day that I brought them out of

the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, saying,

Jeremiah 34:15 "Although recently you had turned and done what is right in My sight, each man proclaiming release to his neighbor, and you had made a covenant before Me in the house which is called by My name.

Jeremiah 34:18 'And I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not fulfilled the words of the covenant which they made before Me, when they cut the calf in two and passed between its parts—

Ezekiel 17:13 'And he took one of the royal family and made a covenant with him, putting him under oath. He also took away the mighty of the land,

Ezekiel 34:25 "And I will make a covenant of peace with them and eliminate harmful beasts from the land, so that they may live securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.

Ezekiel 37:26 "And I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in their midst forever.

Hosea 2:18 "In that day I will also make a covenant for them With the beasts of the field, The birds of the sky, And the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land, And will make them lie down in safety.

Hosea 10:4 They speak mere words, With worthless oaths they make covenants; And judgment sprouts like poisonous weeds in the furrows of the field.

Hosea 12:1 Ephraim feeds on wind, And pursues the east wind continually; He multiplies lies and violence. Moreover, he makes a covenant with Assyria, And oil is carried to Egypt.

Zechariah 11:10 And I took my staff, Favor, and cut it in pieces, to break my covenant which I had made with all the peoples.

Ray Stedman once summarized the distinction between the **Old** and **New** Covenants...

New Covenant: Nothing coming from me, everything from God.

Old Covenant: Everything coming from me, nothing from God.

Comment: While Pastor Stedman's summary is totally true, one needs to fully understand what "**nothing from me**" really means. It does not absolve the covenant partner from **responsibility** and it certainly does not mean to imply just "**let go and let God**". An excellent example is seen in God's UNCONDITIONAL covenant with Noah. In other words, the covenant was a gift of God's grace, grace which would fulfill the covenant promises. And yet did Noah have any responsibility? Absolutely! He had to (1) build an ark over 120 years during which there was apparently no rain and (2) he had to enter the ark in order to receive the salvation God promised in the ark. Hebrews 11:7 summarizes the principle...

By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. (He 11:7)

Comment: Notice this verse begins and ends with faith. Note also that there is a "mini-definition" of faith ("things not yet seen" - cp He 11:1). Finally,

Covenant is strictly speaking not a **contract** as Marshall explains...

In modern times we define a host of relations by contracts. These are usually for goods or services and for hard cash. The **contract**, formal or informal, helps to specify failure in these relationships. The Lord did not establish a **contract** with Israel or with the church. He created a **covenant**. There is a difference.

Contracts are broken when one of the parties fails to keep his promise. If, let us say, a patient fails to keep an appointment with a doctor, the doctor is not obligated to call the house and inquire, "Where were you? Why didn't you show up for your appointment?" He simply goes on to his next patient and has his appointment secretary take note of the patient who failed to keep the appointment. The patient may find it harder the next time to see the doctor. He broke an informal contract. According to the Bible, however, the Lord asks: "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you!" (Isa. 49:15) The Bible indicates the covenant is more like the ties of a parent to her child than it is a doctor's appointment. If a child fails to show up for dinner, the parent's obligation, unlike the doctor's, isn't canceled. The parent finds out where the child is and makes sure he's cared for. One member's failure does not destroy the relationship. A covenant puts no conditions on faithfulness. It is the unconditional commitment to love and serve. (Jesus the Savior, IVP, 1990)

Related OT word:

Beriyt (01286) - name of a Canaanite god combined with El (god) in Jdg 9:6 for the name of the temple at Shechem (Jdg 0:46), El-Berith, "god of the covenant". Other Canaanite gods were named Baal-berith (Jdg 8:33; 9:4). How quickly the people of Israel "slipped" back into idolatry when Gideon died, choosing to worship the Baals (this word means "lord"), specifically Baal-Berith (El-Berith) instead of the true lord. Beloved, man is made to worship God and if he refuses the true God, he will default to a false god, a god of his own making which is really no god at all. Who or what are you worshipping? Elohim or money, possessions, power, prestige, people, etc?

J. Gresham Machen

The covenant is an expression of God's will, not man's, and man must listen to its terms, trust God that they are holy and just and good, and order his life accordingly.

SPURGEON QUOTES RELATED TO COVENANT

Spurgeon quotes related to **covenant**...

As we are under the covenant of grace, we are secured against departing from the living God by the sure declaration of the covenant.

Faith always sees the bow of covenant promise whenever sense sees the cloud of affliction

The covenant is a rocky foundation to build on for life or for death.

Remember the old Scotch wife, who thanked God for the porridge, and then thanked Him that she had a covenant right to the porridge, since He had said, "Verily, thou shalt be fed." Oh, it makes life very sweet to take everything from the hand of a covenant God, and to see in every mercy a new pledge of covenant faithfulness! It makes life happy ; and it also inspires a believer to do great things for his gracious God. Standing on covenant ground we feel consecrated to the noblest ends. (Barbed Arrows from the Quiver of C. H. Spurgeon)

(The "covenant blessing") Do not be satisfied with a little, weak, almost imperceptible, pulse of religion, of which you can hardly judge whether it is there or not; but ask to feel the divine energies working within you, the eternal omnipotence of God, struggling and striving mightily in your spirit until sin shall be conquered, and grace shall gloriously triumph. This is a **covenant** blessing. Seek ye for it. (**Listen to His sermon in Mp3 with a British accent** = [The Blood of the Covenant - Hebrews 13:20, 21](#) Rather read it? = [The Blood of the Covenant](#))

Sermons by Spurgeon Related to Covenant:

- [The Covenantant - Psalm 25:10](#)
- [The Covenant Pleaded - Psalm 74:20](#)
- [God's Remembrance of His Covenant - Psalm 106:44, 45](#)
- [Covenant Blessings - Psalm 111:5](#)
- [The Covenant - Psalm 111:5](#)
- [Christ in the Covenant - Isaiah 49:8](#)
- [Taking Hold of God's Covenant - Isaiah 56:4,6](#)
- [Twelve Covenant Mercies- Isaiah 55:3](#)
- [The Bond of The Covenant- Ezekiel 20:34-38](#)
- [Cleansing: A Covenant Blessing Ezekiel 36:25](#)
- [Covenant Blessings - Ezekiel 36:26, 27](#)
- [The Holy Spirit in the Covenant - Ezekiel 36:27](#)
- [The Covenant Promise of the Spirit - Ezekiel 36:27](#)
- [God in the Covenant - Jeremiah 31:33](#)
- [The Blood of Christ's Covenant- Zechariah 9:11](#)
- [The Messenger of the Covenant - Malachi 3:1](#)
- [The Wondrous Covenant- Hebrews 8:10](#)
- [The Blood of The Everlasting Covenant- Heb 13:20](#)
- [The Ark of His Covenant - Revelation 11:19](#)
- [The Ark of His Covenant - Revelation 11:19 Jer 3:16](#)

The "**Priestly Covenant**" initially with Phinehas of Nu 25:12-13, the "**Davidic Covenant**" of course with King David of 2Sa 7:8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and the **New Covenant** of Jer 31:31 are all specific related to **God's Covenant of Grace** (as opposed to the Covenant of Law). This **Covenant of Grace** reaches its climax and consummation in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ Who was (is) "**full of grace and truth**" (Jn 1:14), Who was sent by His Father to be the personification of the Covenant (Is 42:6) and the Messenger of that Covenant (Mal 3:1 - note first "messenger" = John the Baptizer, Jesus = the second "Messenger") Who fulfilled all the stipulations of the covenant of Law and bore the curse we all deserve for breaking it. John describes how Jesus supersedes the covenant of law making it "obsolete" (for all who have entered the Covenant of Grace, typified by the New Covenant in His blood)...

For of His (Jesus') fulness we have all received (specifically those who have received Him Jn 1:11, 12), and grace ("piled") upon grace (Abundant, sufficient grace). For the (Covenant of) Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ (The Covenant of Grace was effected in His blood sacrifice at Calvary and His resurrection was the Father's "exclamation point" testifying that the covenant which had been cut was acceptable and that it was everlasting). (Jn 1:16, 17)

The **Shaw Pocket Bible Handbook** writes that covenant is...

A solemn agreement, such as the pact between Jacob and Laban (Ge 31:44). God's love and grace are shown in the readiness to make covenants with people. When God promised Noah that he would not again destroy the world with a flood, He made a covenant with him (Ge 6:18; 9:9-17). A very important covenant existed between God and Israel (Ex 24:1-8), which is pictured in the book of Hebrews as the "**old covenant**." When the people repeatedly broke that covenant, God promised a **new covenant** based on forgiveness and the writing of His law on people's hearts (Jer 31:31-34). Jesus inaugurated this new covenant with His blood (Mk 14:24; 1Co 11:25).

Ray Stedman makes an interesting observation that...

it has been pointed out often that in Ge 2:4,5, 7, 8, 9 the Name of God appears in a different form than in Genesis 1. We have for the first time the great Name of God that appears in so much of the rest of the Bible, **Jehovah** (or in the Hebrew, Yahweh) **Elohim**, translated in our version, **LORD God**. There is a special reason for this change. In Chapter 1 we are dealing with the making of things, and God is presented to us under the name of **Elohim**, i.e., the Creator. But when man appears on the scene God appears also in a different character. He now appears under the title of **Jehovah**, which means essentially the **covenant-making God**, the **God Who keeps a promise**

It is particularly significant that when God first reveals Himself to this race of ours, it is as a God who intends to keep His promises.

J Dwight Pentecost writes...

In the NT we read of only two covenants—the New and the Old, the former brought in and established by Christ, and the latter in consequence ceasing to exist. The Old, i.e., the covenant of law, with all its outward institutions and ritualistic services, is regarded as the Old because its full and formal ratification took place before the other. In germ the New Covenant (or that of grace) existed from the first; and partial exhibitions of it have been given all through the world's history. It was involved in the promise of recovery at the Fall.

See Related Article:

- WHY SEEK AN IN DEPTH UNDERSTANDING OF COVENANT?

THE CONCEPT OF COVENANT CHANGED HISTORY!

Has covenant impacted history? Absolutely! Clearly the Bible testifies to this truth, but even specific historical events have been impacted by the powerful concept of covenant as shown in the following example from the history of Scotland.

C H Spurgeon writes about the great Scottish believers of yesteryear who understood the solemn and binding nature of **covenant** and as result were willing to lay down their lives to defend the truth (some even signing their covenants with their own **blood!**)...

The Covenanters— In my bedroom I have hung up the picture of an old Covenanter. He sits in a wild glen with his Bible open before him on a huge stone. He leans on his great broadsword, and his horse stands quietly at his side. Evidently he smelleth the

battle afar off, and is preparing for it by drinking in some mighty promise. As you look into the old man's face you can almost hear him saying to himself,

"For the crown of Christ and the Covenant,
I would gladly lay down my life this day."

They did lay down their lives, too, right gloriously, and Scotland owes to her **covenanting** fathers far more than she knows. It was a grand day that in which they spread the Solemn League and the Covenant upon the tombstones of the old kirkyard in Edinburgh, and all sorts of men came forward to set their names to it. Glorious was that roll of worthies. There were the lords of the Covenant and the common men of the Covenant; and **some pricked a vein and dipped the pen into their blood**, that they might write their names with the very fluid of their hearts.

All over England also there were men who entered into a like **solemn league and covenant**, and met together to worship God according to their light, and not according to human order-books. They were resolved upon this one thing—that Rome should not come back to place and power while they could lift a hand against her; neither should any other power in throne or Parliament prevent the free exercise of their consciences for **Christ's cause and covenant**.

These stern old men, with their stiff notions have gone. And what have we in their places? Indifference and frivolity. We have no Roundheads and Puritans; but then we have scientific dress-making, and we play lawn-tennis! We have no contentions for the faith (Jude 1:3); but then our amusements occupy all our time. This wonderful nineteenth century has become a child, and put away manly things. Self contained men, men in whom is the true grit, are now few and far between as compared with the old covenanting days. (**Barbed Arrows from the Quiver of C. H. Spurgeon**)

Related Resources: [Covenanter](#) ; [Solemn League and Covenant \(1643\)](#)

Berith/beriyth - 285x in 265v in OT - NAS renders it as - allied(1), allies*(1), covenant(275), covenants(1), El-berith*(1), league(2), treaty(4).

Ge 6:18 "But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark-- you and your sons and your wife, and your sons' wives with you.

Ge 9:9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 14:13; 15:18; 17:2, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 19, 21; 21:27, 32; 26:28; 31:44;

Ex 2:24; 6:4, 5; 19:5; 23:32; 24:7, 8; 31:16; 34:10, 12, 15, 27, 28;

Lev 2:13; 24:8; 26:9, 15, 25, 42, 44, 45;

Nu 10:33; 14:44; 18:19; 25:12, 13;

Deut 4:13, 23, 31; 5:2, 3; 7:2, 9, 12; 8:18; 9:9, 11, 15; 10:8; 17:2; 28:69; 29:8, 11, 13, 20, 24; 31:9, 16, 20, 25, 26; 33:9;

Josh 3:3, 6, 8, 11, 14, 17; 4:7, 9, 18; 6:6, 8; 7:11, 15; 8:33; 9:6, 7, 11, 15, 16; 23:16; 24:25;

Jdg 2:1, 2, 20; 20:27;

1Sa 4:3, 4, 5, 11:1; 18:3; 20:8; 23:18;

2Sa 3:12, 13, 21; 5:3; 15:24; 23:5;

1Ki 3:15; 5:26; 6:19; 8:1, 6, 21, 23; 11:11; 15:19; 19:10, 14; 20:34;

2Ki 11:4, 17; 13:23; 17:15, 35, 38; 18:12; 23:2, 3, 21;

1Chr 11:3; 15:25, 26, 28, 29; 16:6, 15, 17, 37; 17:1; 22:19; 28:2, 18;

2Chr 5:2, 7; 6:11, 14; 13:5; 15:12; 16:3; 21:7; 23:1, 3, 16; 29:10; 34:30, 31, 32;

Ezra 10:3;

Neh 1:5; 9:8, 32; 13:29;

Job 5:23; 31:1; 40:28;

Ps 25:10, 14; 44:18; 50:5, 16; 55:21; 74:20; 78:10, 37; 83:6; 89:4, 29, 35, 40; 103:18; 105:8, 10; 106:45; 111:5, 9; 132:12;

Pr 2:17;

Isa 24:5; 28:15, 18; 33:8; 42:6; 49:8; 54:10; 55:3; 56:4, 6; 59:21; 61:8;

Jer 2:22; 3:16; 11:2, 3, 6, 8, 10; 14:21; 22:9; 31:31, 32, 33; 32:40; 33:20, 21, 25; 34:8, 10, 13, 15, 18; 50:5;

Ezek 16:8, 59, 60, 61; 17:13, 14, 15, 18, 19; 20:37; 30:5; 34:25; 37:26; 44:7;

Da 9:4, 27; 11:22, 28, 30, 32;

Hos 2:20; 6:7; 8:1; 10:4; 12:2;

Amos 1:9;

Obad 1:7;

Zech 9:11; 11:10;

Mal 2:4, 5, 8, 10, 14; 3:1, 2

Below are a few of the uses of **beriyth** in the Old Testament...

Job 31:1 "I have made (Perfect tense ~ speaks of permanence) a covenant ("cut a covenant") with my eyes. How then could I gaze (Heb = consider carefully) at a virgin?

Comment: Considering the solemn, binding nature of **covenant**, Job's use in this context gives us some sense of how serious he was about "*guarding his glance*"! One wants to be careful applying this verse personally. What do I mean? The "danger" is placing yourself under the "law" and becoming legalistic about your looking. Beloved fellow believer, the only way we can keep this covenant is by continual, total dependence on God's Spirit and His always sufficient grace! Don't try to pull this off in your own strength saying something like "I'm never going to look at pornography on the internet again!" The intention may be good, the power (my own strength and determination) to fulfill the task is lacking.

Can you appreciate the picture which Job's cutting of a covenant conveys? He's not talking about a casual glance (cp Jos 7:21) or an accidental viewing of an attractive and/or sensual woman (that would be virtually impossible in America... but it is possible to make certain provisions -- **all under [depending upon] grace of course** -- and they include **not** going to PG-13 movies or even PG ratings these days -- they have all become too sensual, even as the "moral compass" of America and especially Hollywood gravitates toward greater and greater degrees of depravity. We can choose **not** to watch talk shows that bring up "lust" inflaming subjects. In short, Job is saying don't **stare** at her because if you do Jesus says you've already committed adultery in your heart Mt 5:28-note... you need to (figuratively, empowered by grace) pluck your eye out before you do this! That's how enslaving this sin can be... so it requires radical surgery and complete extirpation! Don't just *biopsy* it! *Cut it out* completely!). (cp Col 3:5-note, Ro 8:13-note)

Some other translations of Job 31:1:

I dictated a covenant (an agreement) to my eyes; how then could I look [lustfully] upon a girl? (Amplified)

I made a covenant with mine eyes; and how should I fix my regard upon a maid? (Darby)

"I made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I entertain thoughts against a virgin? (NET)

I made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I ogle at a girl? (Berkley Version)

I had made an agreement with my eyes not to linger on any virgin. (New Jerusalem Bible)

I have **made a covenant** with my [Isa 33:15; Mt 5:28-note] eyes; how then could I gaze at a virgin? (ESV) (cp similar thought by David! This must have been after Bathsheba! = **Ps 101:3-Spurgeon's note**)

George Hakewill on **Ps 101:3** writes "A bird may light upon a man's house; but he may choose whether she shall nestle or breed there, or not: and the devil or his instruments may represent a wicked object to a man's sight; but he may choose whether he will entertain or embrace it or not. For a man to set wicked things before his eyes is nothing else but to sin of set purpose (cp Ro 13:14-note), to set himself to sin, or to sell himself to sin, as Ahab did, 1Ki 21:1-29."

Psalm 25:10 All the paths of the LORD are lovingkindness (Hesed - God's loyal, steadfast, unfailing love) and truth to those who keep (guard, protect, observe) His **covenant** and His testimonies.

Comment: This refers to God's covenant of law (Mosaic) and relying on God's covenant of grace (Abrahamic, New) is the only way to keep it! Just try to keep it in your own strength! You will surely fail and fall. We must continually remember that what God desires for us to do, He empowers us to do.

Spurgeon comments that: This is a rule without exception. God is good to those that be good. Mercy and faithfulness shall abound towards those who through mercy are made faithful. Whatever outward appearances may threaten we should settle it steadfastly in our minds that while grace enables us to obey the Lord's will we need not fear that Providence will cause us any real loss. There shall be mercy in every unsavory morsel, and faithfulness in every bitter drop; let not our hearts be troubled, but let us rest by faith in the immutable covenant of Jehovah, which is ordered in all things and sure. Yet this is not a general truth to be trampled upon by swine, it is a pearl for a child's neck. Gracious souls, by faith resting upon the finished work of the Lord Jesus, keep the covenant of the Lord, and, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit, they walk in his testimonies; these will find all things working together for their good, but to the sinner there is no such promise. Keepers of the covenant shall be kept by the covenant; those who follow the Lord's commandments shall find the Lord's mercy following them.

Psalms 25:14 The secret of the LORD is for those who fear Him, And He will make them know His covenant.

Comment: The word **secret** is a good translation, but it does not fully convey the nuances of this Hebrew word (cowd/sod - 05475). See these other translations - Ps 25:14ESV, Ps 25:14NIV, Ps 25:14NLT. The primary meaning is "confidential speech" (cp Arabic sa'wada = "speak secretly"). It can also refer to a circle of trusted intimates who give their advice or to a group of intimates with whom one shares confidential matters Job 15:8. The various translations in the NAS also help give one a sense of the grandeur and privilege of this word - Pr 3:32 = **intimate** with the upright Ps 55:14 = **fellowship** Ps 111:1 = In the **company** of the upright Pr 15:22 = **consultation**, Amos 3:7 = His **secret counsel** Job 29:4 = **friendship** of God. The Hebrew word for **know** (yada' = 03045) speaks of an intimate, experiential knowing of God. Ultimately this becomes a reality in the covenants of grace (the Abrahamic Covenant and the New Covenant in His blood) by which we experience the forgiveness of sins and oneness with the Holy One of Israel.

Spurgeon comments: The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. Some read it **'the friendship:'** it signifies **familiar intercourse, confidential intimacy, and select fellowship**. This is a great secret. Carnal minds cannot guess what is intended by it, and even believers cannot explain it in words, for it must be felt to be known. The higher spiritual life is necessarily a path which the eagle's eye hath not known, and which the lion's whelp has not travelled; neither natural wisdom nor strength can force a door into this inner chamber.

Saints have the key of heaven's hieroglyphics; they can unriddle celestial enigmas. They are initiated into the fellowship of the skies; they have heard words which it is not possible for them to repeat to their fellows.

And He will shew them his covenant. Its antiquity, security, righteousness, fulness, graciousness and excellence, shall be revealed to their hearts and understandings, and above all, their own part in it shall be sealed to their souls by the witness of the Holy Spirit. The designs of love which the Lord has to His people in the covenant of grace, He has been pleased to show to believers in the Book of Inspiration, and by his Spirit He leads us into the mystery, even the hidden mystery of redemption. **He who does not know the meaning of this verse, will never learn it from a commentary; let him look to the cross, for the secret lies there.** ([Click for multiple additional thought by other writers](#))

Thomas Watson writes that: **Walking with God** is the best way to know the mind of God; friends who walk together impart their secrets one to another: "*The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him.*" Noah walked with God (Ge 6:9), and the Lord revealed a great secret to him, of destroying the old world, and having him in the ark. Abraham walked with God (**Ed:** cp Ge 17:1 - A command to walk. YLT has "walk habitually". Think of a "Coram Deo" lifestyle! **Does this describe me? Or do I at least aspire to such a life on a higher plane [cp Hab 3:19, Ps 18:33-note]?** Remember that *Revelation* always brings *responsibility!*), and God made him one of his privy council: "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" Ge 24:40 18:17. God doth sometimes sweetly unbosom himself to the soul in prayer, and in the holy supper, as Christ made Himself known to His disciples in the breaking of bread. Luke 24:35.

<kuv'-e-nant> (berith):
International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, 1915

(One of the better summary discussions of Covenant in the Old Testament)

GENERAL MEANING: AMONG MEN

1. EARLY IDEA:

We consider first a covenant in which both contracting parties are men. In essence a covenant is an agreement, but an agreement of a solemn and binding force. The early Semitic idea of a covenant was doubtless that which prevailed among the Arabs. This was primarily blood-brotherhood, in which two men became brothers by drinking each other's blood (**Ed Note: See illustration in pagan culture**). Ordinarily this meant that one was adopted into the clan of the other. Hence, this act involved the clan of one of the contracting parties, and also brought the other party into relation with the god of this clan, by bringing him into the community life of the clan, which included its god. In this early idea, then, "primarily the covenant is not a special engagement to this or that particular effect, but bond of troth and life-fellowship to all the effects for which kinsmen are permanently bound together" (Smith). In this early ceremonial the religious idea was necessarily present, because the god was kindred to the clan; and the god had a special interest in the covenant because he especially protects the kindred blood, of which the stranger thus becomes a part. This religious side always persisted, although the original idea was much modified. In later usage there were various substitutes for the drinking of each other's blood, namely, drinking together the sacrificial blood, sprinkling it upon the parties, eating together the sacrificial meal, etc.; but the same idea found expression in all, the community of life resulting from the covenant.

2. PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS:

The covenant in the Old Testament shows considerable modification from the early idea. Yet it will doubtless help in understanding the Old Testament covenant to keep in mind the early idea and form. Combining statements made in different accounts, the following seem to be the principal elements in a covenant between men. Some of the details, it is to be noted, are not explicitly stated in reference to these covenants, but may be inferred from those between God and men.

1. **A statement of the terms agreed upon** (Genesis 26:29; 31:50,52).. This was a modification of the earlier idea, which has been noted, in which a covenant was all-inclusive.
2. **An [oath](#) by each party to observe the terms, God being [witness](#) of the [oath](#)** (Ge 26:31; 31:48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53).. The [oath](#) was such a characteristic feature that sometimes the term "oath" is used as the equivalent of covenant (see Ezekiel 17:13).
3. **A curse invoked by each one upon himself in case disregard of the agreement.** In a sense this may be considered a part of the oath, adding emphasis to it. This curse is not explicitly stated in the case of human covenants, but may be inferred from the covenant with God (Dt 27:15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26).
4. **The formal ratification of the covenant by some solemn external act.**

The different ceremonies for this purpose, such as have already been mentioned, are to be regarded as the later equivalents of the early act of **drinking each other's blood**. In the Old Testament accounts it is not certain that such formal act is expressly mentioned in relation to covenants between men. It seems probable, however, that the **sacrificial meal** of Genesis 31:54 included Laban, in which case it was a **covenant sacrifice**. In any case, both **sacrificial meal** and **sprinkling of blood** upon the two parties, the [altar](#) representing Yahweh, are mentioned in Exodus 24:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, with allusions elsewhere, in **ratification of the covenant** at Sinai between Yahweh and Israel.

In the **covenant of God with Abraham** is another ceremony, quite certainly with the same purpose. This is a peculiar observance, namely, the cutting of animals into two parts and passing between the severed portions (Ge 15:9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18), a custom also referred to in Jeremiah 34:18. Here it is to be noted that it is a smoking furnace and a flaming torch, representing God, not Abraham, which passed between the pieces. Such an act, it would seem, should be shared by both parties, but in this case it is doubtless to be explained by the fact that the covenant is principally a promise by Yahweh. He is the one who binds Himself. Concerning the significance of this act there is difference of opinion. A common view is that it is in effect a formal expression of the curse, imprecating upon oneself the same, i.e. cutting in pieces, if one breaks the terms of the covenant. But, as W. R. Smith has pointed out (op. cit., 481), this does not explain the passing between the pieces, which is the characteristic feature of the ceremony. It seems rather to be a symbol that the two parties "were taken within the mystical life of the victim." (Compare the interpretation of He 9:15, 16, 17 in COVENANT, THE NEW TESTAMENT.) It would then be an inheritance from the early times, in which the victim was regarded as kindred with the tribe, and hence, also an equivalent of the drinking of each other's blood.

The **immutability of a covenant** is everywhere assumed, at least theoretically.

Other features beyond those mentioned cannot be considered as fundamental. This is the case with the **setting up of a stone**, (**Pillar**) or raising a heap of stones (**Heap** Hebrew = **gal**) (Ge 31:45,46). This is doubtless simply an ancient custom, which has no direct connection with the covenant, but comes from the ancient Semitic idea of the sacredness of single stones or heaps of stones.

Striking hands is a general expression of an agreement made (Ezra 10:19; Eze 17:18, etc.)

3. DIFFERENT VARIETIES:

In observing different varieties of agreements among men, we note that they may be either between individuals or between larger units, such as tribes and nations. In a great majority of cases, however, they are between the larger units. In some cases, also, when an individual acts it is in a representative capacity, as the head of a clan, or as a king.

When the **covenant is between tribes** it is thus a **treaty** or **alliance**. The following passages have this use of covenant: Genesis 14:13; 21:27,32; 26:28; 31:44; Exodus 23:32; 34:12,15; Deuteronomy 7:2; Joshua 9:6,7,11,15,16; Judges 2:2; 1Samuel 11:1; 1Kings 3:12; 15:19 parallel 2Chronicles 16:3; 1Kings 20:34; Psalms 83:5; Isaiah 33:8; Ezekiel 16:61; 17:13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19; 30:5; Daniel 11:22; Amos 1:9.

In other cases it is between **a king and his subjects**, when it is more a **command** or **ordinance**, as 2Samuel 3:12,13,11; 5:3 parallel 1Chronicles 11:3; Jeremiah 34:8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18; Daniel 9:27.

In other cases it is **between individuals**, or **between small groups**, where it is an **agreement** or **pledge** (2Kings 11:4 parallel 2Chronicles 23:1; Job 31:1; 41:4; Hosea 10:4).

Between **David and Jonathan** it is more specifically an **alliance of friendship** (1Sa 18:3; 20:8; 23:18), as also apparently in Ps 55:20 ("He has put forth his hands against those who were at peace with him; He has violated his covenant.") ([See illustration in pagan culture](#))

It means an alliance of marriage in Malachi 2:14, ("Yet you say, 'For what reason?' Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant."), but probably not in Proverbs 2:17 ("That leaves the companion of her youth, And forgets the covenant of her God"), where it is better to understand the meaning as being "her covenant with God."

Ed Note: Most commentaries favor Proverbs 2:17 to at least in part represent an allusion to the **covenant of marriage**.

E.g., the **Believer's Study Bible** writes...

"The "companion of her youth" primarily is her husband. Instead of submitting to her husband, she is self-ruled. However, she breaks not only her covenant of marriage but also her covenant with God Himself (e.g., Jer. 3:4), including the seventh commandment (Ex. 20:14)

Warren Wiersbe writes that the woman described here in Proverbs 2

"She has no respect for God, because she breaks His law (Ex. 20:14); she has no respect for her husband because she violates the promises she made to him when she married him. She no longer has a guide or a friend in the Lord or in her husband, because she has taken the path of sin. Anyone who listens to her words and follows her path is heading for the cemetery." [Wiersbe, W. W. Be skillful. An Old Testament study. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books]

Finally the respected expositor **John MacArthur** writes that

"In a wide sense this could be the covenant of Sinai (Ex 20:14), but specifically looks to the marriage covenant of Gen. 2:24, with its commitment to fidelity." [MacArthur, J. J. The MacArthur Study Bible. Nashville: Word Pub])

4. PHRASEOLOGY USED:

In all cases of covenants between men, except Jeremiah 34:10 (see context Je 34:8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 - pay special attention to the ritual in Jer 34:18!) and Daniel 9:27-**note**, the technical phrase for making a covenant is **Karath** berith, in which **Karath** meant originally "to cut." Everything indicates that this verb is used with reference to the formal ceremony of ratification above mentioned, of cutting animals in pieces.

BETWEEN GOD AND MEN.

1. ESSENTIAL IDEA:

As already noted, the idea of covenants between God and men doubtless arose from the idea of covenants between men. Hence, the general thought is similar. It cannot in this case, however, be an agreement between contracting parties who stand on an equality, but God, the superior, always takes the initiative. To some extent, however, varying in different cases, is regarded as a mutual agreement; God with His commands makes certain promises, and men agree to keep the commands, or, at any rate, the promises are conditioned on human obedience. In general, the covenant of God with men is a Divine ordinance, with signs and pledges on God's part, and with promises for human obedience and penalties for disobedience, which ordinance is accepted by men. In one passage (Ps 25:14-[note](#), Ps 25:15-[note](#)), it is used in a more general way of an alliance of friendship between God and man.

2. COVENANTS RECORDED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT:

A covenant of this general kind is said in the Old Testament to have been made by God with **Noah** (Genesis 9:9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and elsewhere). In this the promise is that there shall be **no more deluge**.

A covenant is made with **Abraham**, the thought of which includes his **descendants**. In this the promise of God is to multiply the descendants of Abraham, to give them the land of Canaan, and to make them a blessing to the nations. This is narrated in Genesis 15:18; 17:2-21, etc.

A covenant is made with the **nation Israel** at Sinai (Horeb) (Ex 19:5; 24:7,8; 34:10,27,28, etc.), ratified by **a covenant sacrifice** and **sprinkling of blood** (Exodus 24:4, 5, 6, 7, 8). This constituted the nation the **peculiar people** of God, and was accompanied by **promises for obedience** and **penalties for disobedience**. This covenant was renewed on the plains of Moab (Deut 29:1 "These are the words of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the sons of Israel in the land of Moab, **besides** [Hebrew word "bad" = core idea is to be separate & isolated, besides, in addition to, apart from a state of something being in addition to what already exists] the covenant which He had made with them at Horeb (the covenant of law, the "ten commandments".")

Ed Note on Deuteronomy 29:1: Some consider this declarations to be an "amendment" to the covenant at Sinai while others feel it represents allusion to a different covenant.

John MacArthur reasons that...

The majority of interpreters view the covenant stated here as a reference to the covenant made at Sinai. According to this view, the covenant that God made with Israel at Sinai (Horeb) was renewed in Moab. However, this verse clearly states that the covenant of which Moses now speaks was "**besides,**" or "**in addition to,**" the previous covenant. This was another covenant distinct from the one made at Sinai. This other covenant is viewed by some interpreters as the **Palestinian Covenant**, (see Ryrie and McGee below) which gave Israel the title to the land. However, the emphasis of these two chapters is not on the Land, but on the **change of Israel's heart** (see the contrast between Deut 29:4 and Deut 30:6). It was exactly this **change of heart** which the later prophets would term "**The New Covenant**" (see Jer. 31:31, 32, 32, 34; Ezek. 36:26, 27). In response to Israel's certain failure under the provisions of the Sinaitic Covenant (Deut 29:23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28), Moses anticipated the New Covenant under which Israel would be obedient to the Lord and finally reap His blessings (Deut 30:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10). ([MacArthur, J.: The MacArthur Study Bible Nashville: Word](#)) (Bolding added)

Charles Ryrie has this comment...

Moses now details the agreement under which the people would enter the land of Palestine. This Palestinian covenant was in addition to the Mosaic covenant given at Sinai (Horeb). ([The Ryrie Study Bible: New American Standard Translation: 1995. Moody Publishers](#))

J Vernon McGee writes that...

The covenant which God is going to make with them here relates to the land, and it is called the Palestinian covenant. God makes this covenant with them just before they enter the land. ([McGee, J. V. Thru the Bible commentary. Vol. 1, Page 9-600. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

In these national covenants the individual had a place, but only as a member of the nation. The individual might forfeit his rights under the covenant, however, by deliberate rebellion against Yahweh, sinning "with a high hand" (Numbers 15:30), and then he was regarded as no longer a member of the nation, he was "cut off from among his people," i.e. put to death. This is the teaching of the Priestly Code (P), and is also implied elsewhere; in the mercy of God, however, the punishment was not always inflicted.

- A covenant with the tribe of Levi, by which that became the priestly tribe, is alluded to in Deut 33:9; Jer 33:21; Mal 2:4.
- The covenant with Phinehas (Numbers 25:12,13) established an [Everlasting](#) priesthood in his line.
- The covenant with Joshua and Israel (Joshua 24:15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27) was an agreement on their part to serve Yahweh only.
- The covenant with David (2Sa 7 parallel 1Chr 17; see also Ps 89:3,18,34,39; 132:12; Jeremiah 33:21) contained a promise that his descendants should have an [everlasting](#) kingdom, and should stand to God in the relation of sonship.
- The covenant with Jehoiada and the people (2Ki 11:17 parallel 2 Chr 23:3) was an agreement on their part to be the people of Yahweh.
- The covenant with Hezekiah and the people (2Chr 29:10) consisted essentially of an agreement on their part to reform the worship.
- The covenant with Josiah and the people (2Ki 23:3), of an agreement on their part to obey the Book of the Law.
- The covenant with Ezra and the people (Ezra 10:3) was an agreement on their part to put away foreign wives and obey the law.
- The prophets also speak of a new covenant, most explicitly in Jeremiah, but with references elsewhere, which is connected with the Messianic time (see Isaiah 42:6; 49:8; 55:3; 59:21; 61:8; Jer 31:31,33; 32:40; 50:5; Ezekiel 16:60,62; 20:37; 34:25; 37:26; Hosea 2:18).

3. PHRASEOLOGY USED:

Various phrases are used of the making of a covenant between God and men. The verb ordinarily used of making covenants between men, *karath*, is often used here as well. The following verbs are also used: *heqim*, "to establish" or "confirm"; *nathan*, "to give"; *sim*, "to place"; *tsiwwah*, "to command"; *`abhar*, "to pass over," followed by *be*, "into"; *bo*, "to enter," followed by *be*; and the phrase *nasa' berith `al pi*, "to take up a covenant upon the mouth of someone."

4. HISTORY OF COVENANT IDEA:

The history of the covenant idea in Israel, as between God and man, is not altogether easy to trace. This applies especially to the great covenants between God and Israel, namely, the one with Abraham, and the one made at Sinai. The earliest references to this relation of Israel to Yahweh under the term "covenant" are in Hosea 6:7; Hosea 8:1. The interpretation of the former passage is doubtful in details, but the reference to such a covenant seems clear. The latter is considered by many a later addition, but largely because of this mention of the covenant. No other references to such a covenant are made in the prophets before Jeremiah. Jeremiah and Ezekiel speak of it, and it is implied in Second-Isaiah. It is a curious fact, however, that most of the later prophets do not use the term, which suggests that the omission in the earlier prophets is not very significant concerning a knowledge of the idea in early times.

In this connection it should be noted that there is some variation among the Hexateuchal codes in their treatment of the covenants. Only one point, however, needs special mention. The Priestly Code (P) gives no explicit account of the covenant at Sinai, and puts large emphasis upon the covenant with Abraham. There are, however, apparent allusions to the Sinaitic covenant (Leviticus 2:13; 24:8; 26:9,15,25,44,45). The facts indicate, therefore, principally a difference of emphasis.

In the light partly of the facts already noted, however, it is held by many that the covenant idea between God and man is comparatively late. This view is that there were no covenants with Abraham and at Sinai, but that in Israel's early conceptions of the relation to Yahweh He was their tribal God, bound by natural ties, not ethical as the covenant implies. This is a larger question than at first appears. Really the whole problem of the relation of Israel to Yahweh throughout Old Testament history is involved, in particular the question at what time a comprehensive conception of the ethical character of God was developed. The subject will therefore naturally receive a fuller treatment in other articles. It is perhaps sufficient here to express the conviction that there was a very considerable conception of the ethical character of Yahweh in the early history of Israel, and that consequently there is no sufficient reason for doubting the fact of the covenants with Abraham and at Sinai. The statement of W. Robertson Smith expresses the essence of the matter (op. cit., 319): "That Yahweh's relation is not natural but ethical is the doctrine of the prophets, and is emphasized, in dependence on their teaching, in the Book of Deuteronomy. But the passages cited show that the idea had its foundation in pre prophetic times; and indeed the prophets, though they give it fresh and powerful application, plainly do not regard the conception as an innovation."

A little further consideration should be given to the new covenant of the prophets. The general teaching is that the covenant was broken by the sins of the people which led to the exile. Hence, during the exile the people had been cast off, the covenant was no longer in force. This is stated, using other terminology, in Hosea 3:3, 4ff; Hosea 1:9; 2:2. The prophets speak, however, in anticipation, of the making of a covenant again after the return from the exile. For the most part, in the passages already cited, this covenant is spoken of as if it were the old one renewed. Special emphasis is put, however, upon its being an [everlasting](#) covenant, as the old one did not prove to be, implying that it will not be broken as was that one. Jeremiah's teaching, however, has a little

different emphasis. He speaks of the old covenant as passed away (Jer 31:32). Accordingly he speaks of a new covenant (Jer 31:31, 33). This new covenant in its provisions, however, is much like the old. But there is a new emphasis upon individuality in approach to God. In the old covenant, as already noted, it was the nation as a whole that entered into the relation; here it is the individual, and the law is to be written upon the individual heart.

In the later usage the specific covenant idea is sometimes less prominent, so that the term is used practically of the religion as a whole; see Is 56:4, Ps 103:18-[note](#)

See also article from Bakers Dictionary of Biblical Theology - [Covenant](#)

THE BLOOD COVENANT

By H Clay Trumbull

1893

[THE BLOOD COVENANT A PRIMITIVE RITE AND ITS BEARINGS ON SCRIPTURE](#)

- [PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION](#)
- [PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.](#)
- [CRITICAL ESTIMATES OF "THE BLOOD COVENANT"](#) ([Read How Others Reviewed this book](#))

[LECTURE I. THE PRIMITIVE RITE ITSELF.](#)

- [SOURCES OF BIBLE STUDY.](#)
- [AN ANCIENT SEMITIC RITE](#)
- [THE PRIMITIVE RITE IN AFRICA](#)
- [TRACES OF THE RITE IN EUROPE](#)
- [WORLD-WIDE SWEEP OF THE RITE](#)
- [LIGHT FROM THE CLASSICS](#)
- [THE BOND OF THE COVENANT](#)
- [BOND OF THE WEDDING-RING](#)
- [THE RITE AND ITS TOKEN IN EGYPT](#)
- [OTHER GLEAMS OF THE RITE.](#)

[LECTURE II. SUGGESTIONS AND PERVERSIONS OF THE RITE](#)

- [SACREDNESS OF BLOOD AND OF THE HEART](#)
- [VIVIFYING POWER OF BLOOD](#)
- [A NEW NATURE THROUGH NEW BLOOD](#)
- [LIFE FROM ANY BLOOD, AND BY A TOUCH](#)
- [INSPIRATION THROUGH BLOOD](#)
- [INTER-COMMUNION THROUGH BLOOD](#)
- [SYMBOLIC SUBSTITUTES FOR BLOOD](#)
- [BLOOD-COVENANT INVOLVINGS](#)

[LECTURE III. INDICATIONS OF THE RITE IN THE BIBLE](#)

- [LIMITATIONS OF INQUIRY](#)
- [PRIMITIVE TEACHINGS OF BLOOD](#)
- [THE BLOOD COVENANT IN CIRCUMCISION](#)
- [THE BLOOD COVENANT TESTED](#)
- [THE BLOOD COVENANT AND ITS TOKENS IN THE PASSOVER](#)
- [THE BLOOD COVENANT AT SINAI](#)
- [THE BLOOD COVENANT IN THE MOSAIC RITUAL](#)
- [THE PRIMITIVE RITE ILLUSTRATED](#)
- [THE BLOOD COVENANT IN THE GOSPELS](#)

- [THE BLOOD COVENANT APPLIED](#)

[APPENDIX](#)

- [IMPORTANCE OF THIS RITE STRANGELY UNDERVALUED](#)
- [LIFE IN THE BLOOD, IN THE HEART, IN THE LIVER](#)
- [TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS](#)
- [THE BLOOD-RITE IN BURMA](#)
- [BLOOD-STAINED TREE OF THE COVENANT](#)
- [BLOOD-DRINKING](#)
- [COVENANT CUTTING](#)
- [BLOOD-BATHING](#)
- [BLOOD-RANSOMING](#)
- [THE COVENANT-REMINDER](#)
- [HINTS OF BLOOD-UNION](#)

[SUPPLEMENT TO SECOND EDITION](#)

- [VITAL UNION BY SUBSTITUTE BLOOD](#)
- [BLOOD MAKES UNITY : EATING SHOWS UNION](#)
- [ETHNIC REACHINGS AFTER UNION WITH THE DIVINE](#)
- [THE VOICE OF OUTPOURED BLOOD](#)
- [GLEANINGS FROM THE GENERAL FIELD](#)
- [TOPICAL INDEX](#)
- [SCRIPTURAL INDEX](#)

Clary Trumbull in his book [The Blood Covenant](#) has a section subtitled "The Bond of Covenant" in which he describes the custom of covenant in pagan lands. Clearly "**remnants**" of **covenant** are found in many pagan cultures. Such **remnants of covenant** should not be surprising, as similar remnants of truth regarding the Genesis Flood can be found in most pagan cultures.

Trumbull writes that...

Another recent traveler in the Malay Archipelago, who, also, is a trained and careful observer, tells of this rite, as he found it in Timor, and other islands of that region, among a people who represent the Malays, the Papuan, and the Polynesian races. His description is : "The ceremony of **blood-brotherhood**... or the **swearing of eternal friendship**, is of an interesting nature, and is celebrated often by fearful orgies [excesses of the communion idea], especially when **friendship** is being made between families, or tribes, or kingdoms. The ceremony is the same in substance whether between two individuals, or [between] large companies. The contracting parties slash their arms, and collect the blood into a bamboo, into which kanipa (coarse gin) or laru (palm wine) is poured. Having provided themselves with a small fig-tree (halik) they adjourn to some retired spot, taking with them the **sword** and **spear** from the Lull chamber [the sacred room] of their own houses if between private individuals, or from the Urna-Luli of their suku [the sacred building of their village] if between large companies. Planting there the fig-tree, flanked by the sacred sword and spear, they hang on it a bamboo-receptacle, into which—after pledging each other in a portion of the mixed blood and gin—the remainder [of that mixture] is poured. Then each **swears**,

"If I be false, and be not a true friend, may my blood issue from my mouth, ears, nose, as it does from this bamboo!"

The bottom of the receptacle being pricked at the same moment, to allow the blood and gin to escape. **The [blood-stained] tree** (Ed Note: does this picture not bring to mind another "blood stained Tree" at which the Almighty God personally opened the way for an eternal covenant of friendship through the shedding of His own precious blood?!) remains and grows as a **witness** of their contract." (Trumbull, H. Clay: The Blood Covenant. Impact Christian Books) (Bolding added)

As you study covenant, you will begin to understand that "**friendship**" as in this story was frequently a covenant term in the Biblical world (**See discussion of friend**). Note the parallels with the Biblical covenants discussed above - a blood stained tree serving as a witness, an [oath](#) sworn between the covenant partners, the use of blood to ratify the covenant and the association of the sword and spear with the covenant ritual. For the probable significance of this last component, study the section entitled **Covenant: The**

COVENANT NAVE'S TOPIC

Sacred, Josh. 9:18, 19, 20, 21; Gal. 3:15.

Binding, Josh. 9:18, 19, 20; Jer. 34:8-21; Ezek. 17:14-18; Gal. 3:15.

Binding, not only on those who make them, but on those who are represented, Deut. 29:14, 15.

Blood of, Ex. 24:8.

Book of, Ex. 24:7.

The Mosaic law called a covenant, Ex. 34:28.

Of Men with Men

Breach of, punished, 2Sa 21:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; Jer. 34:8-22; Eze 17:13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.

Ratified: By giving the hand, Ezra 10:19; Lam 5:6; Eze 17:18; loosing the sandal, Ru 4:7, 8, 9, 10, 11; written and sealed, Neh. 9:38; Jer. 32:10, 11, 12; by giving presents, Gen. 21:27, 28, 29, 30; 1Sa 18:3, 4; by making a feast, Ge 26:30; by a monument, Ge 31:45, 46, 49-53; by salting, Lev. 2:13; Nu. 18:19; 2Chr. 13:5; by offering a sacrifice, Gen. 15:9-17; Jer. 34:18, 19

Instances of:

Abraham and Abimelech, Gen. 21:22-32.

Abimelech and Isaac, Gen. 26:26-31.

Jacob and Laban, Ge. 31:44-54.

Jonathan and David, 1 Sam. 18:3, 4; 20:16, 42; 2Sa 21:7.

Jews with each other, to serve God, 2Chr. 15:12, 13, 14, 15; Neh. 10:28, 29, 30, 31, 32.

King Zedekiah and his subjects, Jer. 34:8.

Ahab with Ben Hadad, 1Ki 20:34.

Subjects with sovereign, 2Chr. 23:1, 2, 3, 16.

Of God with Men

Confirmed with an [oath](#), Ge 22:16; 26:3; 50:24; Ps 89:35; 105:9; Luke 1:73; He 6:13, 17, 18.

Binding, Lev. 26; Jer. 11:2, 3; Gal. 3:15.

[Everlasting](#), Gen. 8:20-22; 9:1-17; Ps 105:8, 10; Isa. 54:10; 61:8.

God faithful to, Lev. 26:44, 45; Deut. 4:31; 7:8, 9; Jdg. 2:1; 1Kin. 8:23; Ps 105:8-11; 106:45; 111:5; Mic. 7:20.

Repudiated by God on account of Jews' idolatry, Je 44:26, 27; Heb. 8:9.

Broken by the Jews, Je 22:9; Eze 16:59; He 8:9.

Punishments for breaking of, Lev. 26:25-46.

Instances of

Of the sabbath, Ex. 31:16.

Of the Ten Commandments, Ex. 34:28; Deut. 5:2, 3; 9:9.

With Adam, Ge 2:16, 17; Noah, Gen. 8:16; 9:8-17; Abraham, Ge 12:1, 2, 3, 15; 17:1-22; Ex 6:4, 5, 6, 7, 8; Ps 105:8, 9, 10, 11; Ro

9:7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13

With Isaac, Ge 17:19; Jacob, Gen. 28:13-15.

With the Israelites to deliver them from Egypt, Ex. 6:4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

With Phinehas, Nu 25:12, 13.

With Israel, at Horeb, Deut. 5:2, 3; in Moab, Deut. 29:1-15.

Of the Levites, Neh. 13:29; Mal. 2:4, 5.

With David, 2Sa 7:12-16; 1 Chr. 17:11-14; 2 Chr. 6:16.

With David and his house, 2Sa 23:5; Ps. 89:20-37; Je. 33:21.

With his people, Isa. 55:3; 59:21.

To be confirmed, Da 9:27.

The Second Covenant

Jer. 31:31, 32, 33, 34; He 8:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13; He 12:18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24; He 13:20

Of Mankind with God

Jacob, Gen. 28:20, 21, 22.

Joshua, Josh. 24:25, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28. Absalom, 2Sa 15:7, 8.

Jehoiada and Joash, 2Ki 11:17.

Josiah, 2Ki. 23:3.

Asa, 2Chr. 15:12, 13, 14, 15.

Nehemiah, Neh. 9:38; 10.

Israelites, Jer. 50:5.

Torrey's Topic - Covenants

Agreements between two parties

Genesis 26:28; Daniel 11:6

DESIGNED FOR

Establishing friendship -1 Samuel 18:3

Procuring assistance in war -1 Kings 15:18,19

Mutual protection -Genesis 26:28,29; 31:50-52

Establishing peace -Joshua 9:15,16

Promoting commerce -1 Kings 5:6-11

Selling land -Genesis 23:14-16

CONDITIONS OF

Clearly specified -1 Samuel 11:1,2

Conformed by oath -Genesis 21:23,31; 26:31

Witnessed -Genesis 23:17,18; Ruth 4:9-11

Written and sealed -Nehemiah 9:38; 10:1

God often called to witness -Genesis 31:50,53

When confirmed, unalterable -Galatians 3:15

Made by passing between the pieces of the divided sacrifices -Genesis 15:9-17; Jeremiah 34:18,19

Salt a sign of perpetuity in -Numbers 18:19; 2 Chronicles 13:5 -

Ratified by joining hands -Proverbs 11:21; Ezekiel 17:18

Followed by a feast -Genesis 26:30; 31:54

Presents given as tokens -Genesis 21:27-30; 1 Samuel 18:3,4

Pillars raised in token of -Genesis 31:45,46

Names given to places where made -Genesis 21:31; 31:47-49

THE JEWS

Forbidden to make, with the nations of Canaan -Exodus 23:32; Deuteronomy 7:2

Frequently made with other nations -1 Kings 5:12; 2 Kings 17:4

Condemned for making, with idolatrous nations -Isaiah 30:2-5; Hosea 12:1

Regarded, as sacred -Joshua 9:16-19; Psalms 15:4

Violated by the wicked -Romans 1:31; 2 Timothy 3:3

ILLUSTRATIVE

Of the contract of marriage -Malachi 2:14

Of God's promises to man -Genesis 9:9-11; Ephesians 2:12

Of the united determination of a people to serve God -2 Kings 11:17; 2 Chronicles 15:12; Nehemiah 10:29

Of good resolutions -Job 31:1

(With death and hell,) of carnal security -Isaiah 28:15,18

(With stones and beasts, of the earth,) of peace and Prosperity -Job 5:23; Hosea 2:18

Torrey's Topic - The Abrahamic Covenant

Christ, the substance of -Isaiah 42:6; 49:8

Christ, the Mediator of -Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24

Christ, the Messenger of -Malachi 3:1

MADE WITH

Abraham -Genesis 15:7-18; 17:2-14; Luke 1:72-75; Acts 3:25; Galatians 3:16

Isaac -Genesis 17:19,21; 26:3,4

Jacob -Genesis 28:13,14; 1 Chronicles 16:16,17

Israel -Exodus 6:4; Acts 3:25

David -2 Samuel 23:5; Psalms 89:3,4

Renewed under the gospel -Jeremiah 31:31-33; Romans 11:27; Hebrews 8:8-10,13

Fulfilled in Christ -Luke 1:68-79

Confirmed in Christ -Galatians 3:17

Ratified by the blood of Christ -Hebrews 9:11-14,16-23

Is a covenant of peace -Isaiah 54:9,10; Ezekiel 34:25; 37:26

Is unalterable -Psalms 89:34; Isaiah 54:10; 59:21; Galatians 3:17

Is everlasting -Psalms 111:9; Isaiah 55:3; 61:8; Ezekiel 16:60-63; Hebrews 13:20

All saints interested in -Psalms 25:14; 89:29-37; Hebrews 8:10

The wicked have no interest in -Ephesians 2:12

Blessings connected with -Isaiah 56:4-7; Hebrews 8:10-12

God is faithful to -Deuteronomy 7:9; 1 Kings 8:23; Nehemiah 1:5; Daniel 9:4

God is ever mindful of -Psalms 105:8; 111:5; Luke 1:72

Be mindful of -1 Chronicles 16:15

Caution against forgetting -Deuteronomy 4:23

Plead, in prayer -Psalms 74:20; Jeremiah 14:21

Punishment for despising -Hebrews 10:29,30

Dr. S Lewis Johnson

Studies Related to Coveant

- [Titus 1:1-4; Ro 9:1-15 Covenants - Everlasting & Historical](#)
- [Genesis 2:8-17 The Edenic Covenant](#)
- [Genesis 6:18, 9:8-17 The Noahic Covenant](#)
- [Isaiah 42 The Servant of Jehovah - Covenant of the People & Light of the Gentiles](#)
- [The Covenants of Scripture Bible.org](#)

Abrahamic Covenant (Related: [Twelve Tests of Abraham](#))

- [Genesis 12:1-3, 15:7-21 The Abrahamic Covenant - Pt 1](#)
- [Romans 11:1-10 The Abrahamic Covenant - Pt 2](#)
- [Romans 11:11-27 The Abrahamic Covenant - Pt 3](#)
- [Genesis 9:1-17 The Universal Covenant](#)
- [Genesis 12:1-3 Abrahamic: Fundamental Covenant](#)
- [Genesis 15:7-21 Ratification of Abrahamic Covenant](#)
- [Genesis 17:9-27 Sign of the Abrahamic Covenant](#)
- [Genesis 17:1-8 The Sealing of the Covenant](#)

Mosaic Covenant

- [Exodus 19:1-8, 24:1-8 The Mosaic Covenant](#)

Palestinian Covenant

- [Deuteronomy 29, 30 The Palestinian Covenant](#)

Davidic Covenant

- [2 Samuel 7:1-11 The Davidic Covenant - Pt 1](#)
- [2 Samuel 7:12-17 The Davidic Covenant - Pt 2](#)

New Covenant

- [Jeremiah 31:31-34 New Covenant and Prophecy - Pt 1](#)
- [Matthew 26:26-29 New Covenant and Prophecy - Pt 2](#)
- [Hebrews 8:1-13 New Covenant and Prophecy - Pt 3](#)
- [Romans 11 New Covenant and Prophecy - Pt 4](#)
- [Hebrews and the New Covenant](#)
- [Mediation of the New Covenant](#)
- [Revelation 19:11-16 The Covenants Consummated](#)

Resources from Master's Seminary

- [Introduction to the Biblical Covenants - Noachic and Priestly - Irvin A. Busenitz](#)
- [The New Covenant - Larry Pettegrew](#)
- [The Mosaic Covenant - William D. Barrick](#)
- [The Davidic Covenant - Michael A. Grisanti](#)
- [The Abrahamic Covenant - Keith H Essex](#)
- [Introduction to New Covenant Theology - Dennis M. Swanson](#)
- [The New Covenant and New Covenant Theology - Larry Pettegrew](#)
- [New Covenant Theology Compared with Covenantalism - Michael J. Vlach](#)
- [New Covenant Theology and the OT Covenants - William Barrick](#)
- [Bibliography of Works on the Biblical Covenants - Dennis M. Swanson](#)
- [Bibliography of Works on New Covenant Theology - Dennis M. Swanson](#)
- [New Covenant Theology and Futuristic Premillennialism - by Richard Mayhue](#)