

Our Jewish Roots

Study Guide

Lesson 3 - Covenant

Covenant is the most important concept of God's plan for mankind.

You may counter that redemption, the incarnation, or the resurrection is more important, but, as we will see in this lesson, each of those is covenant in action.

This week we hope to enable you to describe covenant in considerable detail, to enumerate the covenants God has made, and describe how each has been and is being fulfilled. Understanding covenant is crucial to understanding the Scriptures. If you don't understand covenant, the Scriptures will bless you, and you can have a partial understanding, but you will never be able to "see the big picture" of God and His relationship to this world.



Before you begin this week's study, may I suggest that you earnestly pray for an open heart, for an open mind, for inspiration, for understanding, and that you will be able to hear what God says to you as you seek to know Him more intimately. Ask Him to guide your spirit as you study.



As always, we recommend that you have at your fingertips the Scriptures, so that you can see for yourself what they say as you follow this study guide, readings, etc. The more Scripture you read during your studies, the more Biblically well founded you will become.



If at all possible, we strongly recommend that, in addition to the written "An Introduction to the Jewish Roots of Christianity," you accompany this study with oral teaching, "Covenant: Our Spiritual Security," a three-tape or CD set. Contact "Joined to Hashem" at 928.337.3131; PO Box 607, St Johns AZ 85936; or <http://www.joinedtohashem.org> for availability. Or, if study from the book and this study guide leads you to hunger and thirst for more, the tape or CD set may well help you dig a little deeper into God's message to us.



"In the beginning Elohim created the heavens and the earth." . . . "And Elohim created the man in His image, in the image of Elohim He created him – male and female He created them. And Elohim blessed them, and Elohim said to them, 'Bear fruit and increase, and fill the earth and subdue it, and **rule** (emphasis mine) over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over all creatures moving on the earth.'"¹

God asked that man rule over His creation, His kingdom. God obviously had a great future planned, beginning with the Garden of Eden. Realizing God's love for us, our mortal minds can't even imagine what God had in store for us, until sin entered the picture.

“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘ . . . do not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil . . . ‘ . . . ‘ . . . he ate’ . . . ‘ . . . cursed is the ground because of you, . . . dust you are, and to dust you return.’ . . . ‘and He drove the man out.’”²

(Satan led Eve to reason and eventually question God’s goodness and integrity. Once he had accomplished this, it was a small step for the master of deception to turn her against God’s authority, truthfulness and integrity. Then there remained no reason for her to submit to His authority. Self-will or rebellion was the next step; disobedience was inevitable.

Satan’s mode of operation differs little today. He still attacks God’s authority and integrity in our minds, in attempts to create an environment where we feel “free” to choose our will over God’s announced ways. Disobedience³ and the wrath of God are inevitable.)

Simply put, in an understatement, Adam and Eve messed up God’s plan that man should rule over His kingdom.



In case you believe God doesn’t change His mind, write in your own words what caused God to change His mind in each of the following. Research and see if God went back on His word, or changed His mind.

Genesis 6:6 _____

Exodus 32:14 _____

1 Samuel 15:35 _____

Jeremiah 26:19 _____

Amos 7:5 _____

Already by Genesis 3:15, God had developed and announced His new plan for man. “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed. He shall crush your head, and you shall crush His heel,” the first promise of the Messiah.

In spite of God’s majesty, His provisions, and His love for us, taking advantage of God’s gift of free will, mankind began giving more credence to the lies of the evil one. In just 10 generations⁴, the disobedient, selfish, rebellious attitude of the evil one had pervaded the spirit of mankind so much that God’s disappointment⁵ at the corruptness caused Him to almost obliterate mankind, his creation, from the earth.⁶ Following the destruction of the flood, God made a covenant with Noah that, among other considerations, He would not do it again.⁷

After another 10 generations,⁸ during which God became so provoked that he used language to scatter the “world” “over the face of the whole earth,”⁹ He initiated (with Abraham) a series of covenants that will restore to mankind his reign over the earth¹⁰ and that serve as the central core of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. Therefore I repeat, covenant is the most important concept of God’s plan for mankind.

Covenant¹¹ was conceived by God – not man – and was and is made a major part of His relationship with mankind. True, humans make contracts or treaties between men, groups or nations, but manmade agreements are less than perfectly kept. Not so with God, of course. His covenants cannot be broken, have never been broken, and will never be broken. How much stronger can I say that?



Read Psalms 89:28 and 34, and the verses surrounding them. Then list here the reasons God, as a father, might have for going back on his word, but refused to do so because of His covenant.

Covenants come in two flavors – conditional and unconditional – similar to the human contracts we are familiar with. Even God made both conditional and unconditional covenants. More about that later.

While human contracts usually include some time limit, God’s covenants are forever. That doesn’t mean, “until the church decides otherwise,” or “unless my situation indicates otherwise.” God’s covenants are forever and absolute. Period.

To contrast covenants and contracts, covenants¹² differ from contracts in that they carry unlimited responsibility. The two parties to covenant are God and mankind. On the other hand, a contract is based on limited liability, between men. A covenant cannot be broken if circumstances change; a contract is often voided by mutual consent, or bought out.



Read “Lesson 2, Covenant, Foundation for Relationship” in “An Introduction to the Jewish Roots of Christianity” with highlighter of some kind in hand. Biblical covenants consist of nine steps. As you read, highlight and number each of the nine in the margin.

Then write in your own words the process required by each step. Add any insights or spiritual truths you learn that relate to your walk, your commitment, your responsibility, or your faithfulness.



Step 1. (See also 1 Samuel 18:3, 4 and Isaiah 61:10) _____

Step 2. (See also 1 Samuel 18:3, 4) _____

Step 3. (See also Genesis 15:9 - 20, Jeremiah 34:18) _____

Step 4.¹³ (See also Ezekiel 17:18) _____

Step 5. (See also Genesis 17:5) _____

Step 6. _____

Step 7. (See also Exodus 24:7) _____

Step 8. (See also Genesis 26:30) _____

Step 9. (For signs other than a tree, see Genesis 9:13, 17:11, 31:44 - 49, Exodus 31:16, Deuteronomy 6:8) _____

God's major covenants¹⁴ with mankind include the following:



Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 12:1-3, 15, 17, 22)

Mosaic Covenant (Exodus 19-24, 31)

Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7)

New (or better, Renewed) Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31)

Peace Covenant (Isaiah 54:9, 10)

Let's take these one at a time, in the context of the above 9 steps, and see what scripture we can find to relate them into a global picture of Covenant in God's perspective.

The following is only a brief look at the Covenants of God. If your appetite begins to hunger for more, I pray that you will feed that hunger by eating more of His word, accompanied by sound study resources.



Abraham. Read Genesis 12:1-3, Genesis 15, Genesis 17, and Genesis 22 and fill in the blanks to describe God's covenant with Abraham. Cite chapter and verse where possible.

Termination date of the covenant: _____

Party(ies) with whom covenant was made: _____

Party(ies) with whom covenant exists today: _____

Conditional or unconditional? _____

If conditional, requirements of those parties: _____

Blessings promised to the parties: _____

Have those promises been completely fulfilled? _____

Sign of the covenant: _____


How does the Abrahamic covenant fit into God's plan for mankind? _____

Implications for our lives: _____

What Renewed Covenant (which we call the New Testament) scriptures refer to the Abrahamic covenant?¹⁵ _____

Now, to be a little provocative, did God mean what He said? _____ Yes _____ No

Really? Who do you know of in this world that act as if they disbelieve that God meant what He said? _____

 **Moses.** Read Exodus 3:1 - 4:16, Exodus 6:2 - 8, Exodus 20:1 - 24:8 and fill in the blanks to describe God's covenant with Moses and the nation of Israel. Cite chapter and verse where possible. As you read, distinguish between the parts of the covenant that amplify the basic promises of the Abrahamic Covenant, predicated on the faithfulness of God alone, and those incumbent upon the nation to follow the commands of God to obtain the promises.

 Termination date of the covenant: _____

Party(ies) with whom covenant was made: _____

Party(ies) with whom covenant exists today: _____

Unconditional promises: _____

Have those promises been completely fulfilled? _____

Conditional promises: _____

Requirements for those conditional promises: _____

Sign of the covenant: _____

How does the Mosaic covenant relate to the Abrahamic covenant? _____

Implications for our lives: _____

What Renewed Covenant (which we call the New Testament) scriptures refer to the Mosaic covenant?¹⁵ _____

Did God mean what He said? _____ Yes _____ No

Who do you know of in this world that act as if they disbelieve that God meant what He said?



David. Read 1 Samuel 16:1 - 13, 2 Samuel 7:4 - 29 and fill in the blanks to describe God's covenant with David and the nation of Israel. Cite chapter and verse where possible.



Termination date of the covenant: _____

Party(ies) with whom covenant was made: _____

Party(ies) with whom covenant exists today: _____

Conditional or unconditional? _____

If conditional, requirements of those parties: _____

Blessings promised to the parties: _____

Have those promises been completely fulfilled? _____

How does the Davidic covenant fit into God's plan for mankind? _____

How does the Davidic covenant relate to the Abrahamic covenant? _____

Implications for our lives: _____

What Renewed Covenant (which we call the New Testament) scriptures refer to the Davidic covenant?¹⁵ _____

Did God mean what He said? _____ Yes _____ No

Who do you know of in this world that act as if they disbelieve that God meant what He said?



New (Renewed) Covenant. Read Jeremiah 31:31 - 34, Deuteronomy 6, Hebrews 7, Matthew 5 and 22:34 - 40, and Romans 11 and fill in the blanks to describe God's covenant with Israel. Cite chapter and verse where possible.



Reread Jeremiah 31:31-32. At the time of this writing, had God yet made a new covenant with His people? _____

Is the new covenant like the old covenant? _____

What is the old covenant? (Hint: It is the one given during the Exodus from Egypt.) _____

What was wrong with the old covenant that needed fixing – the offer or the fact that one party (guess which one) had not kept their side of the agreement? (Verse 32) _____

What does verse 33 suggest is changed in the new covenant? The Torah Commandments or how they are obeyed? _____

How is obedience to the commandments changed? _____

How is this different from Deuteronomy 6:4-6? _____

How are Jeremiah 31:31-34, Deuteronomy 6:4-6 and Matthew 22:36-37 related? _____

Termination date of the covenant: _____

Party(ies) with whom covenant was made: _____

Party(ies) with whom covenant exists today: _____

Conditional or unconditional? _____

If conditional, requirements of those parties: _____

Blessings promised to the parties: _____

Have those promises been completely fulfilled? (Jeremiah 31:34) _____

How does the New covenant fit into God's plan for mankind? _____


How does the New covenant relate to the Abrahamic covenant? _____

Does any part of the New covenant tell us to stop obeying the Torah commandments? If so, which ones are we not to obey? Scripture and verse? _____

Implications for our lives: _____

Did God mean what He said? _____ Yes _____ No

Who do you know of in this world that act as if they disbelieve that God meant what He said?

 **Peace Covenant.** Read Isaiah 54:9-10, Ezekiel 34:25-31, Ezekiel 37:18-28. Many people don't realize there is yet another covenant to come after the New Covenant. One more judgment on the earth, one more covenant. What is this final covenant? The world will go through a traumatic, cataclysmic change and at the end of that time God will make a Covenant of Peace. All the world and all mankind will finally be at complete peace with God and with each other during the reign of Messiah on this earth.



After prayerfully studying the scriptures, answer the following about the Peace Covenant:

Termination date of the covenant: _____

Party(ies) with whom covenant was made: _____

Party(ies) with whom covenant exists today: _____

Conditional or unconditional? _____

If conditional, requirements of those parties: _____

Blessings promised to the parties: _____

Have those promises been completely fulfilled? _____

How does the Peace Covenant fit into God's plan for mankind? _____

Implications for our lives: _____

Did God mean what He said? _____ Yes _____ No

Who do you know of in this world that act as if they disbelieve that God meant what He said?

END NOTES

1 Genesis 1:1, 27, 28 TS

2 Genesis 2:17, 3:6, 17, 19, 24

3 Disobedience communicates to God and to those around us that we know more than God knows. Modified from John Bevere, "The Devil's Door."

4 Adam>Seth>Enos>Cainan>Mahalaleel>Jared>Enoch>Methusaleh>Lamech>Noah (Genesis 5)

5 Genesis 6:6

6 Genesis 6:13

7 Genesis 9:8 - 17

8 Noah>Shem>Arphaxad>Salah>Eber>Peleg (i.e. Division – Tower of Babel)>Reu>Serug>Nahor>Terah>Abraham

9 Genesis 11:9

10 Revelation 20:4 - 6

11 ברית ב'reet in Hebrew.

12 For purposes of this study, we will distinguish between God's covenants with mankind and marriage covenants, as spiritually significant as they may be.

13 "Blood is thicker than water."

“This phrase has completely lost its original, *covenant-related*, meaning. Today, it is interpreted as meaning that *blood-related* family members are to be considered as more important than anyone else. However, the original meaning is, ‘The blood of the covenant is thicker than the water of the womb,’ or, ‘My relationship with those to whom I am joined in *covenant* is to be considered of more value than the relationship with a brother with whom I may have shared the womb.’”

"...there is a *friend* that sticks closer than a brother." (Proverbs 18:24)

“The term *friend* has also lost its original meaning. More than an acquaintance, or one that I have some amount of affection for, it is actually a term to be used to refer to one with whom I am joined, in covenant.”

From http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/beit_avanim_chaiot/covenant-Terms.htm

14 Other promises, considered covenants by some (including Dake), include the promise God made in Genesis 9:9 - 17 to Noah, “. . . your seed after you . . . every living creature that *is* with you, the fowl, the cattle, and . . . every beast of the earth . . . all flesh . . .”. Others include Solaric (Genesis 1:14-18; 8:22), Edenic (Genesis 1:26-3:24), Adamic (Genesis 3:14 - 19), Cainic (Genesis 4:11 - 15), Hagaric (Genesis 16:7 - 14), Sarahic (Genesis 17:15 - 19), Healing (Exodus 15:26, 23:25), Levitic (Numbers 25:10 - 14), Palestinian (Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 11:8 - 32), and Salt (Leviticus 2:13, Numbers 18:19).

15 An index of “484 passages from the Tanakh cited a total of 695 times in the Complete Jewish Bible’s B’rit Hadashah” may help in this study. A complete concordance, Bible software, or a good reference Bible will also help.

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