Theology of the Covenant

*The Covenant* as a key to Biblical Theology
The Covenant

- Testament = Covenant (Federation) = διαθήκη = ברית (berît)
- Vetus et Novum Testamentum (Vg) → European languages
- ברית from בָּרָה (1 Sam 17:8)
  - not בָּרָה (creation)
  - Goliath: “Choose (ברית) a man for yourselves…”
- eng. “I will see to it” = decide, define
- A principle and criterium in front of our eyes, rule
New Covenant

- “This cup is the new covenant in my blood” (1 Kor 11:25=Lk 22:20)
  - cf. Jr 31:31 berît hadâšâ (Heb 8:8)
  - “I will make… with the house of Israel and the house of Judah…”

- “this is my blood of the covenant” (Mt 26:28; Mk 14:24)
  - Cf. Exod 24:8 dam habberît blood of the covenant
  - “that has made with you upon all these words.”
  - On the Mount Sinai (Exod – Numb)

- “The old Covenant” (2 Cor 3:14) – with the veil

- „a new covenant” (Hebr 8:13) ⇔ „the first covenant“ (9:15)
Universal Covenant with Noah

- God is speaking in Gen 9:8-17 – how many times occurs ברכתם? 
  - 7x
- קום qûm (6,18 → 9:9.11.17)
- God is establishing: a trustworthy institution
  - Whose obligation? (בריתי) beʿrîṭî 6:18; 9:8.11.15)
- “my obligation”
  - The content of the obligation 9:11.15:
- There is no more universal devastation
Divine generosity

- Covenant with whom?  
  (cf. Gen 9:9.10.13)
- Noah and his descendants  
  (9:9.11.12.15)
- Every living creature (v10.12.15s)
- The earth (v13)
- All flesh כָּל בָּשָׂר (v15-17)
  - For how long?  
    כָּל אֲולָם (Gen 9:12.16)
  - For all future generations (v12)
- the everlasting covenant (v16 → Hebr 13,20)
  - A sign in Gen 9:13:
  - “I have set my bow in the clouds”
- → “My peace I give to you” (John 14:27)
The Covenant with Abraham (Post 15)

- When in Gen 15:1?
- “after these things...” cf. 14:13.22
- Human alliances have troubles (v13)
  - Eshcol i Aner, allies of Abram in war
  - God – his shield (15,1)
- יהוה is El El-yon God Most High, Maker of heaven and earth (14,22)
  - God his reward (15,1)
  - Because he didn’t take the loot (14,23)
  - Covenant in 15,18 after v2:
- “Lord” (v2) – Abrahams first prayer
The rite of Covenant

- Experience in Gen 15:1.4:
  - The word of the Lord came
  - A look toward heaven (v5)
  - Faith (v6)
- Rite in v10.17?
- Animals cut in two (v10.17)
- Threat or worship?
  cf. Jer 34:18-20
- “like the calf when they cut it in two and passed between its parts…”
Revelation and trust

- Experiences in Gen 15:12.13-16.17:
  - תרדמה deep sleep (v12)
  - Cf. Adam (2,21); contemplation in 15,5
  - = revelation (15:13-16):
    - Slavery in Egypt and the Exodus foretold
    - The sign of God’s presence in v17:
- Fire (torch, cf. Exod 3)
- The sacrifice received? (cf. 1 Kr 18)
  - How is the covenant made? (Post 15,18)
- le’mor “saying” = by means of word
- “To your descendants I give this land...”
  - the size of the land is significant
The confirmation and the sign (Gen 17)

- “Covenant” in 17:2.4… who is speaking?
  - in God’s speech
    - New names in 17.1.5:
      - אל שד י ’el shadday – God almighty (v1)
      - אברם ← אברם Abram → Abraham (v5)
        - Father of a multitude of nations (cf. Rim 4,17)
        - How long in 17:7.13.19 berît ‘olam?

- „everlasting covenant” (cf. Gen 9)
  - sign of the covenant (17:11)?

- Circumcision (v11) – for whom (v27)?

- Foreigners also (v27);
  - Cf. Exod 12:38: “a mixed crowd”
The obligation of the whole nation

- Formula in Exod 6:7a:
  - “to take” הָקַח laqah
  - my people, your God
- Straitforward offer in Exod 19:5:
  - Listen to the voice – “indeed obey”
- Keep “my obligation”
  - keep the garden (Gen 2:15)
  - Whose decision (Exod 24:3.7)?
- The choice of the people 2x
  - Obeying: action of the heart (24:7)
- Liturgy (24:5 cf. 3:18)
  - Blood of the covenant (24:8)
- The book of the covenant (24:7), reading at the altar
The king and the Covenant

- King Josiah u 2 Kings 23:2s; 2 Chron 34:30-32

  1. Reading of the *Book of the Covenant* to all the people
     - The Book found
       (2 Kings 22:8.10; 2 Chron 34:14)

  2. Making a Covenant (2 Kings 23:3):
     - The king (2 Chron 34:31)
     - And all present (2 Chron 34:32)

  3. All serve the Lord during king’s lifetime (2 Chron 34:33)
     - Feast? – when, what kind of celebration in 2 Chron 35:1.18?
     - Passover – according to the Law on 14th of 1. month (v1)
     - Such celebration first time since Samuel (v18)
The covenant in Jer 31:31–34

- A Text in the “Book of Consolation” (Jer 30s)
- ברית הדהש (31:31) berît hadašâ (31:31)
- “a new covenant”
  - Mark: נאם יהוה (4x v31-34) נאם יהוה (4x v31-34)
  - Word of the Lord
- Family space:
  - בית “House” of Israel (v31.33) ישות of Judah (v31)
  - brother: אח ʼah (v34) “each other”, רעה (v34) “one another”
- The people: עם ʿam (v34)
God’s favor

- New: God’s activity in Jer 31:33?
- He will write on their hearts the Instruction (Law = תורה)
  - Contents of the Covenant in v33s?
- 1. the Covenant formula (v33)
  - God accepts the people and belongs to them
- 2. “They shall all know” (v34)
  - Close knowledge: ידָע (v34)
- Ground for covenant: שלָח (v34)?
- “I will forgive their iniquity”
The covenant in Ezekiel

- What kind of Covenant in Ez 16:60; 37:26 (ברית עולם)
  - 1. everlasting C. (16:60; 37:26)
  - 2. C. of peace (34:25; 37:26)
- Formula: “my people, your God” 11:20; 14:11; 34:30; 36:28; 37:23.27
- New in 36:26b?
- “I will remove the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh”
- A “notebook” to be changed
- God fulfills a demand from 18:31:
  - “make yourselves a new heart”
- Third level in 36:26:
  - Sprinkling of water(36,25a)
  - Cleaning from idols (25b)
  - Heart and spirit (26)