



**Biblical theology 2**  
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# Theology of the Covenant



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

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# The Covenant

- Testament = Covenant (Federation)  
= διαθήκη = ברית (*b<sup>e</sup>rît*)
- Vetus et Novum *Testamentum* (Vg)  
→ European languages
- ברית from ברה *bārâ* (1 Sam 17:8)
  - not ברא (creation)
  - Goliath: “*Choose* (ברה) a man for yourselves...”
- eng. “I will *see* to it”  
= decide, define
- A principle and criterium in front of our eyes, rule
  - 1. Regulation – 2. Obligation – 3. Covenant (Alliance)



# New Covenant



The Last Supper, Pascal-Adolphe-Jean Dagnan-Bouveret, Private collection

- “This cup is the *new covenant* in my blood”  
(1 Kor 11:25=Lk 22:20)
    - cf. Jr 31:31: ברית הדשה *b<sup>e</sup>rît hadašâ* (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 דם הברית *dam habb<sup>e</sup>rît* blood of the covenant
    - “that יהוה 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)
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# Universal Covenant with Noah

- God is speaking in Gen 9:8-17
  - how many times occurs ברית?
- 7x
- קום *qûm* (6,18 → 9:9.11.17)
- God is establishing: a trustworthy institution
  - Whose obligation? (בריתי *berîti* 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 כל בשר (*kol bāśār* v15-17)
    - ❑ For how long? עולם (*‘ôlam*) 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)
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# 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





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# 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 *tardemâ 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)
- לאמר *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 שדי *’el shadday* – God almighty (v1)
- אברם ← אברהם Abram → Abraham (v5)
  - ❑ Father of a multitude of nations (cf. Rim 4,17)
  - ❑ How long in 17:7.13.19 ברית עולם *b<sup>er</sup>ît ‘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”

Israeli biblical  
museum: Abraham



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# The obligation of the whole nation

- ❑ Formula in Exod 6:7a:
- “to take” לקח *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)
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# The covenant in Jer 31:31–34

- A Text in the “Book of Consolation” (Jer 30s)
- ברית הדשה *b<sup>e</sup>rît hadašâ* (31:31)
- “a new covenant”
  - Mark: נאם יהוה (4x v31-34)
  - Word of the Lord
- Family space:
  - בית *bêt* “House” of Israel (v31.33) of Judah (v31)
  - brother: אח *’ah* (v34) “each other”,
  - neighbour רע *rêa’* (v34) “one another”
  - The people: עם *’am* (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: ידע *yada'* (v34)
- Ground for covenant: סלה *salah* (v34)?
- “*I will forgive their iniquity*”



# *The covenant in Ezekiel*



- ❑ What kind of Covenant in Ez 16:60; 37:26 (ברית עולם); 34:25; 37:26
  - 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)
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