

IN &
OUT®

Covenant

KNOWING GOD'S
COVENANT

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Overview

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

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

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

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

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

IMPORTANT NOTE!

Because of the nature of this topical study and because In & Out® is limited in study, you will find it helpful to listen to the lecture tapes on Covenant if you are going to fully benefit from this study. Contact Precept Ministries International for more information. Also, please do not use commentaries until you are directed to do so.

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

TAKING IT IN The word “covenant” is used approximately 300 times in the Word of God. In the Old Testament (Hebrew), the word translated covenant is almost always the word *b^erîyth* (pronounced ber-eeth). It is “a *compact* (. . . made by passing between *pieces* of flesh): confederacy, covenant, league.”²

The New Testament (Greek) word translated “covenant” is almost always the word *diathēkē*. It means “a *disposition*, i.e. (spec.) a *contract* (espec. a devisory *will*): — covenant, testament.”³

1. The word “covenant” is first used in Genesis 6:18. Read enough of the chapter to write out a brief explanation of who is making a covenant with whom and why.

2. The next use of the word “covenant” is found in Genesis 9. Read Genesis 9:8-17 and list all that you learn about covenant. Ask yourself the “5 Ws and an H”: who, what, when, where, why, and how. You won’t necessarily find answers to each one, but these are good investigative questions.

3. Now remembering the definition for *b^erîyth*, read Genesis 15:1-18.
a. Who made a covenant with whom?

² James Strong, “Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary” in *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Nashville, Tennessee: Holman Bible Publishers), p. 24, #1285.

³ James Strong, “Greek Dictionary of the New Testament” in *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Nashville, Tennessee: Holman Bible Publishers), p. 22, #1242.

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- b. What was done when they made this covenant?
- c. The transliteration for “made” in Genesis 15:18 is *kârath*, and it means to cut. Do you see any parallels in Genesis 15?
4. Now read Genesis 17:9-14. The sign of the Noahic Covenant was a rainbow. What’s the sign of the Abrahamic Covenant? How long is this covenant to last?
5. Here is a list of some other verses in Genesis that refer to covenant. You can look them up if you have time. Our purpose, Beloved, is simply to become familiar with the covenants made by various people in Genesis. If you do look up these passages, note the various things that were done when a covenant was made.

Genesis 21:22-34; 26:23-25; 28:10-22; 31:44-55.

6. Read Exodus 24:1-11 and Exodus 34:27-28. This is the account of the Mosaic Covenant or the Law. This is the covenant that existed until Jesus came and instituted the Covenant of Grace. Malachi 3:1-2 is a prophecy referring to Jesus Christ as the messenger of the New Covenant of Grace. Read this passage in Malachi also, and we will study it in greater detail later.

LIVING IT OUT

We have seen a number of Old Testament references to covenant; but then the question comes, What does covenant have to do with my life? Those covenants were made thousands of years ago!

Yes, they were . . . and yet some of them have a monumental impact upon our lives. We'll see how in the final weeks of our study. How excited you will be when you learn those truths. But for now, let's look at the covenant that transforms the character of men and changes their destiny forever.

1. Read Luke 22:17-20. The setting is the upper room and it is the night of Jesus' betrayal by Judas Iscariot. What kind of a covenant is being poured out? (Also record any other pertinent observations.)

2. Finally, Beloved, read Matthew 26:20-29 and note what this New Covenant grants you or anyone else who enters into it.

3. Memorize Psalm 25:10.

Well, Beloved, this first lesson has been longer than usual, but it was necessary in order to give you a foundation upon which to build.

How blessed you will be as you continue this study!