

DICTIONARY
of the
NEW TESTAMENT Use
of the OLD TESTAMENT

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EDITED BY

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Conclusion

Corporate solidarity features in the NT through a web of interrelated images, all of which find their theological grounding in union with Christ. Believers collectively constitute the bride of Christ. They have died with him and have been raised with him for life within the realm of Christ's rule. Believers are individually members of the body of Christ, built together into him as the new temple in which God dwells by the Spirit. Christ is an eschatological inclusive person who draws his followers into a spiritual and corporate union with himself and all others in Christ. The corporate solidarity of the NT finds its source, means, and purpose in Christ himself.

Much NT teaching of corporate solidarity draws on OT imagery, which is transfigured into NT concepts. The original imagery is repurposed and given new significance in light of Christ. The nuptial dynamic between Yahweh and Israel is transfigured to Christ and the church. The transfer of God's people out of slavery in Egypt into the covenantal rule of Yahweh is transfigured to the spiritual transfer out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of the Son. The temple as the designated physical dwelling place of God's presence within Israel is transfigured to the collective of Jews and gentiles built together in Christ as the house of the Spirit. These OT images are therefore types that find typological transfiguration and fulfillment in Christ. It is interesting, however, to note how few of these images are employed with explicit scriptural citation (cf. Eph. 5:31). Rather than being used with citation, these OT images are employed and understood within a shared conceptual universe.

While both OT and NT images convey corporate solidarity, there is no evidence to support the outdated concept of corporate personality. Though Christ is an inclusive figure and believers become "one" in him, individual personal identity is not displaced by the whole. Christ remains distinctly who he is (the head of the body and the husband of the church) and likewise individual believers retain their individuality within the whole (as distinct members of the body of Christ with individualized gifts and roles reflecting the body's diversity within its unity).

See also Abraham and Abrahamic Tradition; Adam, First and Last; Messiah

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CONSTANTINE R. CAMPBELL

Cosmic Conflict See Divine Warrior; Satan

Covenant

"Covenant" (Heb. *bərīt*; Gk. *diathēkē*) is the Bible's term for "a chosen [as opposed to natural] relationship in which two parties make binding promises to each other," often with God as the witness (Schreiner, 13; cf. Hugenberger, 11). Thus, a covenant's core is a nonbiological, oath-bound relationship like those in clan alliances (Gen. 14:13), personal agreements (31:44), international treaties (Josh. 9:6; 1 Kings 15:19), national agreements (Jer. 34:8–10), and loyalty agreements (1 Sam. 20:14–17), including marriage (Mal. 2:14) (Gentry and Wellum, 162–63). Some scholars assert that "covenant" or "the covenantal kingdom" is the controlling center of the Christian canon (Eichrodt; Kline, *Kingdom*). Others have more modestly argued that the covenants' progression forms the backbone

of Scripture’s metanarrative (Gentry and Wellum, 31). Through covenants God relates to others, reverses sin’s ruinous effects, and introduces his saving reign into the world. Each historical covenant includes both common and saving grace elements that Jesus’s person and work culminate or realize. This study overviews the nature and interrelationships of the five main historical covenants between God and his creatures.

Adamic-Noahic Covenant

Adam’s headship in the covenant with creation. Because the word “covenant” (*bərīt*) first appears in Gen. 6:18 in relation to Noah, some question if God formally makes a covenant with creation through Adam (e.g., Williamson, *Sealed*, 52–58, 69–76). However, the substance of a covenant can exist without the term (2 Sam. 7; cf. Ps. 89:3). Furthermore, the Bible’s earliest chapters depict the results of God’s choosing to initiate a kinship-type bond with creation through Adam’s representative headship (see Gen. 5:1–3; Jer. 33:20, 25), and this is the essence of a covenant (Niehaus, 1:46–50; Belcher, 64–66). While creation was “very good” (Gen. 1:31), it was incomplete. Thus, this elected relationship includes both God’s pledge to provisionally sustain (1:29–30) and humanity’s conditional responsibility to bear his image as priest-kings who expand a God-dependent community and the garden sanctuary to the earth’s ends (1:28; 2:15–17). When Adam transgressed this covenant, God cursed the earth and condemned humanity to spiritual and physical death (3:17; cf. Isa. 24:4–6; 43:27; Hosea 6:7).

Though Adam failed, his antitype—the last Adam, Jesus Christ—would succeed (Rom. 5:18) (Gentry and Wellum, 670–77; cf. Waters). Before announcing Adam’s punishment, God curses the serpent and promises that the woman’s male offspring would eventually destroy the evil one (Gen. 3:15–19). God then clothes his royal priests with animal-skin garments, likely because a substitutionary sacrifice was necessary to reestablish his relationship and partnership with them (3:20–21) (Kline, *Kingdom*, 145–53).

Covenant affirmation through Noah. After the flood, Yahweh fulfills his promise (Gen. 6:18) and establishes an “everlasting covenant” between himself and all living creatures on the earth, including Noah and his descendants. This singular covenant (*pace* Kline, *Kingdom*, 230–34; Van Pelt) included his promise to never again destroy all life with a flood (9:9–11, 16; cf. 8:22).

At least two features identify that God affirms with Noah his preexisting relationship with creation under Adam’s headship (thus, the Adamic-Noahic covenant [singular]), though with some developments. First, parallels suggest that God recreates the world with Noah as covenant head: (1) (re-)creation begins in watery chaos (1:2 // 7:17–24); (2) the Spirit/wind moves (1:2 // 8:1); (3) God’s image bearers steward creation (1:26–27 // 7:1–3; 9:2, 6); (4) animals are “according to their kinds”

(1:21, 24–25 // 7:2–3, 14); (5) God blesses/commands human fruitfulness (1:28 // 9:1, 7), (6) designates food (1:29–30; 2:16 // 9:3), and (7) restricts food (2:17 // 9:4); (8) both families include father, mother, and three sons (4:1–2, 25 // 6:10; 7:13). Second, God’s “establishing” (*hi-phil qūm*) rather than “cutting/making” (*krt*) the Noahic covenant (*hēqīm bərīt*; 6:18; 9:9) points to God’s *affirming* or *sustaining* his earlier covenant with creation rather than his *initiating* (e.g., Gen. 15:18; Exod. 24:8) or *renewing* an old one either after it has been broken (e.g., Exod. 34:10) or with a new party (e.g., Josh. 24:25; 2 Chron. 34:31) (Dumbrell, 15–23; Niehaus, 1:192, 198–99; 2:139–74; Gentry and Wellum, 187–95; *pace* Williamson, *Abraham*, 195–203). Scripture applies affirmation language within the Noahic (Gen. 6:18; 9:11, 17), patriarchal (17:7, 21; Deut. 8:18), Mosaic (Lev. 26:9), and new (Ezek. 16:60, 62) covenants.

Additionally, God’s affirmation with Noah develops the divine-creation relationship. Fear and a defense of human life now occur within humanity’s dominion (Gen. 9:2, 6). God sanctions animal life as food (9:3; cf. 1:29), and he also guarantees the new context’s perpetuity for redemption by specific promises and the covenant sign of the rainbow (9:12–17).

Abrahamic Covenant

After Shem, Ham, and Japheth’s families multiply and rebel against God by exalting themselves, Yahweh confuses their languages and disperses some seventy nations across the globe (Gen. 11:8–9; cf. chap. 10). From one of them, he then distinguishes Abram and his offspring through whom he purposes to reverse the global curse and reconcile the world to himself.

God fulfills the covenant in two stages. Yahweh commissions Abram to “go” to Canaan and there “be a blessing.” These two coordinated commands (12:1b, 2d) are each followed by one or more conditional promises (12:2abc, 3ab), and the second command-promise unit includes the ultimate promissory result, global blessing (12:3c) (on this structure, see table 1; cf. Gen. 17:1–2; Williamson, *Sealed*, 78–79; Dumbrell, 73–76; Gentry and Wellum, 266–70).

Table 1. Structure of Gen. 12:1–3

	And Yahweh said to Abram,	1
	“Go from your land . . .	b
Stage 1:		
<i>Realized in the Mosaic Covenant</i>	so that I may make you into a great nation,	2
	and may bless you,	b
	and may make your name great.	c
	<u>Then be a blessing,</u>	d
Stage 2:		
<i>Realized in the New Covenant</i>	so that I may bless those who bless you,	3
	but him who dishonors you I will curse,	b
	with the result that in you all the families of the ground may be blessed.”	c

Both command-promise units identify how God would reverse the property and progeny punishments from Gen. 3:14–19 (Hamilton). They also foresee two major stages in salvation history (DeRouchie, *Understand*, 209–11). Stage one relates to Abraham fathering one nation in Canaan, which the Lord fulfills through the Mosaic covenant after Egypt afflicts Israel for four hundred years (15:13, 18; cf. Exod. 2:24; 6:4–5). Yahweh gives Israel Canaan for the twelve tribes during Joshua's days (Josh. 21:43–45; cf. Gen. 17:8), but it is not until David and Solomon reign that Israel's realm stretches from the border of Egypt to the Euphrates (2 Sam. 7:1; 1 Kings 4:20–21).

Stage two occurs when God's representative "blesses" the "clans/families/peoples" Yahweh had dispersed (Gen. 12:2d–3; cf. 10:32). Christ fulfills this stage by creating the new covenant community (Luke 1:54–55, 72–73). Genesis 17 contrasts Abraham fathering a single covenant nation in Canaan (17:7–8) with him fathering "many nations" (17:4–6; cf. 35:11), which fulfills the promise in 12:3 and 15:5 (cf. Rom. 4:16–17). Narrowing the promise of a singular "offspring" in Gen. 3:15, God will raise up the patriarch's biological "offspring" and multiply him like the stars (Gen. 15:3–5; cf. 22:17). He will be named through Isaac (21:12; cf. 17:19, 21), conquer his enemies' gate, and stand as the agent of blessing for all nations (22:17–18) (DeRouchie, "Counting"; "Lifting," 167–77). Although God anticipates that Abraham's descendants will inherit the singular "land" of "Canaan" and the larger suzerain state (15:18; 17:8), this singular offspring from Gen. 22:17–18 will inherit plural "lands" (26:3–4). Thus, God will overcome the world's curse, and Abraham will inherit "the world" (Rom. 4:13; cf. Ps. 2:8; Dan. 2:35; Matt. 5:5; Eph. 6:3).

The fulfillment of God's promises is both conditional and certain. The Abrahamic covenant testifies to the conditional nature *and* certain fulfillment of its promises. Conditionally, Abraham must "go" to the land and "be a blessing" there to overcome the curse and to bless the world (Gen. 12:1–3). For Yahweh to confirm the covenant, the patriarch must "walk before" God and "be blameless" (17:1–2). The covenant sign of circumcision reminds recipients of this priestly commission (cf. Exod. 19:5–6), portrays the curse of excision for violators, and distinguishes Abraham's offspring from all other peoples (see Kline, *Oath*; DeRouchie, "Circumcision," 182–89; Meade, "Meaning"). Alternatively, Yahweh stresses certain fulfillment through his self-imprecatory oath-sign and promise (Gen. 15:17–21; cf. Jer. 34:18; see Kline, *Oath*, 16–17, 41–42; Robertson, 7–15, 128–46; Hugenberger, 168–215; Gentry and Wellum, 286–94) and by swearing upon himself, following Abraham's faith-filled obedience wherein he nearly sacrificed Isaac (Gen. 22:16–18; cf. 26:3–5).

Hence, Yahweh's vow to fulfill both covenant stages ([1] great nation; [2] blessed world) responds to his

covenant "son's" obedience (cf. Rom. 5:18–19; 8:4; Gentry and Wellum, 775–82). Using the infinitive absolute + *yiqtol* construction in Gen. 18:18 followed by the conditional reason + purpose statements in 18:19 highlights the certain yet contingent nature of God's promises (cf. Blaising and Bock, *Progressive*, 132–34). Abraham's covenant-mediating obedience secures initial fulfillment (Gen. 22:18; 26:5), but his faith rests in the promised obedience of his singular, male "offspring" (15:5–6).

The Abrahamic covenant parallels ancient royal grants, which obligated every generation to loyalty but made irrevocable or perpetual promises ensuring the pledged land or kingship would remain in the family, even if disloyal individuals forfeited their right to covenant blessings (Beckman, 109; cf. Weinfeld, 189–90; Knoppers, 683–92). Consequently, Paul contrasts the Abrahamic covenant's promissory quality with the Mosaic law-administration (Gal. 3:17–18; cf. Rom. 4:13–14).

The single Abrahamic covenant. Based on Gen. 12:1–3, Paul Williamson (*Abraham*, 212–14; *Sealed*, 89–91) argues that Yahweh initiates two distinct covenants with Abraham: (1) Gen. 15's temporary, national, and unilateral covenant, and (2) Gen. 17's eternal, international, and bilateral covenant. However, both chapters include national (Gen. 15:18; 17:7–8) and international (15:5; 17:4–6) elements. Later Scripture recognizes only a single "covenant" with the patriarchs (e.g., Exod. 2:24), and the switch from "cutting" (*krt*, Gen. 15:18) to affirming a covenant (Hiphil *qûm*, 17:7, 19, 21) strongly suggests a single covenant administration that develops over two redemptive-historical stages (Niehaus 2:103–74; Gentry and Wellum, 312–18). Both the Mosaic and new covenants fulfill different aspects of the single Abrahamic covenant.

Mosaic Covenant

The Mosaic covenant fulfills stage one of the Abrahamic covenant. After Yahweh brings Israel to Mount Sinai, he charges them to keep his "covenant" (Exod. 19:5), which will fulfill the first stage of his promises to Abraham (2:24; 6:4; cf. Dumbrell, 113–14). Such is clear when Moses pleads for the people's pardon after the golden-calf rebellion (32:13), which results in Yahweh's restoring the covenant (34:27–28) and in Moses's covenant renewal sermons at Moab (Deut. 1:8; 6:10).

After synthesizing (Exod. 20:1–17) and detailing (20:22–23:19) the covenant obligations, Yahweh formalizes the relationship (24:1–11). Leviticus and Deuteronomy's book of the law further develop the covenant through their holiness instructions and sanctions (cf. Lev. 10:10; Deut. 29:20; 30:10). This covenant guides Israel's historical evaluation, regulates prophetic declarations, supplies the Wisdom literature's framework, and governs God's people until the new covenant supersedes it at Christ's coming (Josh. 1:7–8; Mal. 4:4; Luke 16:16; cf. Gal. 3:23–26; Heb. 8:6–13).

The Mosaic covenant's sign was the Sabbath (Exod. 31:13–17). Yahweh institutes it to supply rest (Deut. 5:14) and to develop holiness by testing obedience and nurturing trust (Exod. 16:4–5, 23–26). Furthermore, the weekly and yearly Sabbath cycles remind Israel that through them and their Messiah Yahweh would re-establish right order in his world (cf. Matt. 11:27–12:8) by generating the sovereign peace he once enjoyed with creation (Gen. 2:1–3). The Sabbath represents a future reality for which both Israel and the world should hope (DeRouchie, *Understand*, 449–53).

The Mosaic covenant brings death. While the Mosaic covenant displays similarities to both second-millennium law codes and suzerain-vassal treaties (Kitchen, 283–89), its conditionality and revocability most approximate the latter. Yahweh's gift of lasting life and blessing depends upon Israel perfectly obeying all God's commands (Lev. 18:5; Deut. 8:1). Thus, in the old covenant, righteousness was the *goal* and not the *ground* (Deut. 6:25; cf. Rom. 9:30–32). Where disobedience prevailed, curse and death reigned (Deut. 27:26).

While a remnant of true believers existed in Israel (e.g., Moses, Rahab, Ruth, David, Isaiah; cf. Rom. 11:7), the majority needed heart surgery, for they were unrighteous, stubborn, unbelieving, and rebellious (Deut. 9:6–7, 23–24; 10:16; 31:27). Due to their spiritual inability (29:4), Israel should have recognized that their only hope was God reconciling them by grace through faith in his provision of a substitutionary sacrifice, which would atone for them if they realized their guilt and confessed their sins (Lev. 5:5–6; Num. 5:6–7). Any blessing they were to enjoy would be solely because of God's justifying grace apart from works (Rom. 9:30–32; cf. Gen. 15:6).

Nevertheless, Moses sees that Israel's stubbornness will lead them to rebel in the land and experience God's just exilic wrath (Deut. 4:25–28; 31:16–17). The lengthy covenant curse lists (Lev. 26:14–39; Deut. 28:15–68) forecast what is to come, and Israel's history unfolds just as Moses had predicted.

Because the Mosaic covenant era included a sustained hardness resulting in the people's destruction (Rom. 11:7–8), Paul rightly noted that “the law is not of faith” (Gal. 3:12 ESV) (see DeRouchie, “Leviticus”). The Mosaic covenant bore a ministry of condemnation (2 Cor. 3:9) and demonstrated both Israel's and the world's need for the promised deliverer (Rom. 3:19–22; 5:20; DeRouchie, “Condemnation”).

The Mosaic covenant anticipates the new covenant. After exile, Yahweh would remember his covenant promises to the patriarchs (Lev. 26:42) and exodus generation (26:45), restore his people, transform the remnant's hearts, curse their enemies, and secure their life (Deut. 4:30–31; 30:1–14). Through Yahweh's promised Savior's new exodus, blessing, and global dominion (Num. 24:5–9, 17–19), other nations would gather to and rejoice in Yahweh (Deut. 32:43; 33:19), and this would ignite jealousy to draw Israelites back to God (32:21). In

this age, the remnant would heed Moses's commandments (30:8) because a covenant-mediating prophet like Moses would supersede Moses's role (cf. 1 Tim. 2:5), clarify the divine word (Deut. 18:15, 18), and ensure its internalization within God's people (30:11–14; cf. Isa. 59:21). (On the eschatological nature of Deut. 30:11–14, see Coxhead; Smothers.)

Davidic Covenant

During the Mosaic covenant era after Israel settled the promised land, Yahweh advanced his promise of a coming royal Savior by pledging to David an eternal kingdom (2 Sam. 7:8–16; 1 Chron. 17:7–14). While the narrative accounts do not call the event a “covenant,” other Scriptures do (2 Sam. 23:5; Ps. 89:3).

The nature of the Davidic covenant. God's covenant with David reveals that Scripture's promised Savior will come from David's royal line. In describing his prior (2 Sam. 7:8–9a) and subsequent (7:9b–11a) accomplishments for David, Yahweh echoes the Abrahamic covenant. Yahweh then vows that after David's death, he would build David a “house/dynasty” (7:11b–16). David's biological descendant (“offspring”) would build a “house” for God's name, enjoy a lasting kingdom, and be Yahweh's royal son (7:12–15). David's house, kingdom, and throne would remain steadfast and established forever (7:16). In response, David recognizes that such promises bear hope and guidance for the world (7:19; Kaiser; Gentry and Wellum, 456–59). Thus, David's final words before death unpack his hope for this deliverer to work justice, overcome the curse, and establish a new creation (23:3–7).

Accounting for the royal son's potential for sin (7:14) and Solomon's belief that his temple fulfills God's promise that David's son would build Yahweh's “house” (1 Kings 8:18–20), Solomon initially and typologically fulfills God's promise of a royal son. Nevertheless, as with royal grants, Yahweh promised that the royal son's throne would last forever (2 Sam. 7:13, 16), insofar as the king obeyed (1 Kings 2:4). Thus, only a monarch with perfect obedience and an eternal reign would fulfill God's Davidic promises—facts manifest in the new covenant through Christ Jesus (Isa. 11:4–5; Acts 2:29–36; Gentry and Wellum, 459–80).

Other scriptural reflections on the Davidic covenant. The writing prophets identify the Savior of the Pentateuch and Former Prophets with David's seed and note that through him God will work a new exodus and new creation and reconcile many from Israel and other nations to himself (Isa. 9:7; Jer. 23:5–8; Amos 9:11–15; cf. Acts 15:16–18). The royal psalms also anticipate this Davidide, who will be Yahweh's “begotten son” (Ps. 2:7; cf. Acts 13:33), receive Yahweh's everlasting blessing (Ps. 21:6), fulfill the Davidic covenant promises (89:28–37), and inherit both the nations (2:8–9; cf. Rev. 5:9–10) and the Melchizedekian priesthood (Ps. 110:1–4; cf. Heb. 5:6).

New Covenant

The new covenant in Christ between God and his church realizes the hopes of Scripture's previous divine-human covenants. The new covenant solves the global problem of sin and death that the Adamic-Noahic covenant creates. It also fulfills the universal blessings promised to the patriarchs, overcomes the Mosaic administration's condemnation and realizes its restoration blessings, and embodies the Davidic kingdom hopes.

The OT terminology associated with the new covenant. Among the various labels the OT uses for the end-time relationship between Yahweh and those reconciled in Christ are "covenant" (Ezek. 16:62; Dan. 9:27; Zech. 9:11), "new covenant" (Jer. 31:31), "everlasting covenant" (Isa. 55:3; Jer. 32:40), and "covenant of peace" (Ezek. 34:25). Yahweh also tags the messianic servant himself a "covenant" (Isa. 42:6; 49:8; cf. 55:3; Dan. 9:27). The relationship is commonly associated with several other features:

- new exodus (Isa. 11:10–12, 15–16; Zech. 10:8–12; cf. Mark 1:1–3);
- new "David" (Jer. 23:5–6; 30:9; 33:15; Amos 9:11; cf. Luke 1:32–33; Rev. 5:5; 22:16);
- restoring past fortunes (Zeph. 3:20; *to a remnant of Israel/Judah*: Hosea 6:11; Joel 3:1; Amos 9:14; Zeph. 2:7; *to a remnant of other nations*: Jer. 48:47; Ezek. 16:53);
- new "heart" (Jer. 24:7; 32:39; cf. Deut. 30:6; Rom. 2:29);
- outpouring of God's Spirit (*on the messianic servant*: Isa. 42:1; 61:1; cf. Matt. 12:18–20; Luke 4:18–19; *on the people*: Isa. 32:15; Ezek. 36:27; Joel 2:28–29; cf. Acts 2:16–18);
- new "Jerusalem" (Isa. 2:2–4; 4:2–6; Jer. 3:16–17; cf. Gal. 4:25–26), which appears coterminous with a new creation (Isa. 43:19; 48:6; 65:17; 66:22; cf. Rev. 21:1–2).

From one perspective, the new covenant affirms Yahweh's original patriarchal covenant promises (*hēqīm bərīt*; Ezek. 16:60, 62 with Lev. 26:42). But contrasting with the temporary Mosaic covenant, Christ mediates a new, freshly initiated covenant (*kārat bərīt*; Jer. 31:31; 32:40). (For alternative approaches to Ezek. 16:59–63, see Niehaus 2:165–69; Gentry and Wellum, 585–88.) This covenant's newness brings righteousness and contrasts with the old Mosaic covenant that "brought death" and "condemnation" (Jer. 31:32; 2 Cor. 3:6–7, 9, 14). Hebrews' author notes that because of Christ the new covenant supersedes the Mosaic covenant, which is now becoming "obsolete and outdated" and "will soon disappear" (Heb. 8:6–8, 13).

The OT's depiction of the new covenant community. The prophets portray the new covenant in national

terms (Jer. 31:36; Mic. 4:7; cf. 1 Pet. 2:9). Nevertheless, they also testify that the restored community includes a remnant from Israel/Judah (Isa. 10:20–22; Zeph. 2:7, 9) and—fulfilling the Abrahamic promises—many from other nations (Amos 9:12). Because of the righteous servant-person's substitutionary sacrifice and victorious resurrection (Isa. 53:10–11; Zech. 12:10; 13:1), Yahweh incorporates the latter peoples into his single people (Isa. 19:24–25; Jer. 12:16) so they enjoy new birth certificates identified with the new Jerusalem (Ps. 87) (DeRouchie, "Counting"). Thus, God counts as Abraham's offspring the single "Israel of God" (Gal. 3:29; 6:16) whom Yahweh's servant-person "Israel" justifies (Isa. 45:25; 49:3; 53:11). These peoples are Christ's church and God's new "holy nation" (1 Pet. 2:9) identified with the heavenly "Jerusalem" (Gal. 4:25–26; Heb. 12:22).

The NT sets forth how the new covenant is realized. Jesus's ministry inaugurates the new covenant and God's end-time reign that the OT anticipates (Matt. 26:28–29). Christ is Abraham's singular, male "offspring" (Gal. 3:16). Through him believers from every nation become God's children and inherit every promise (3:8, 14, 28–29) (Collins; DeRouchie and Meyer; DeRouchie, "Counting").

Many faithful evangelicals, especially in paedobaptist circles, claim that Christ has only partially inaugurated the new covenant, thus allowing both regenerate and nonregenerate covenant membership (e.g., Pratt, 172; Dumbrell, 269–72; Swain, 566–69). The use of perfect verbs in Heb. 8:6, 13, however, suggests that Christ has fully initiated (though not brought to completion) the new covenant, which means not just some but all of its members are already experiencing the internal transformation that God promised (Heb. 8:8–12; Jer. 31:31–34). Furthermore, we know that "[Christ] has made perfect [*teteleiōken*] forever those who are being made holy" (Heb. 10:14)—that is, those who are part of the new covenant, in whose hearts Yahweh has already put his law and whose sins he remembers "no more" (10:16–17; cf. Jer. 31:33–34). Such teaching reaffirms that only those who actually "share in Christ," the new covenant priestly mediator, "hold [their] original conviction firmly to the very end" (Heb. 3:14), for sustained sinning results in punishment (10:26–27). One does not over-realize the new covenant by stressing that membership comes only by faith in Christ's priestly-salvific work (Wellum).

Within the Abrahamic covenant, physical circumcision depicts an excising curse, marks one for God's service, and typologically foreshadows a heart circumcision that would enact the required devotion (Kline, *Oath*; DeRouchie, "Circumcision"; Meade, "Meaning," "Flesh"). Until Christ's coming, for most Israelites the sign announced only their coming punishment rather than actual loyalty. However, in his death, Jesus underwent the excising curse to which the physical circumcision pointed (Col. 2:11; cf. 1:22; Gal. 3:13; Kline, *Oath*) and secured the new covenant's sign of promised heart circumcision for those believing in him, thus

identifying the new people of God as true “Jews” (Rom. 2:28–29; Phil. 3:3; Meade, “Flesh”). Baptizing believers in the triune God’s name externally testifies to this inward reality (Matt. 28:19). Rather than replacing circumcision in the flesh, water baptism symbolizes primarily the believer’s union with Christ in his death and resulting resurrection (Rom. 6:3–4; Col. 2:11–12) and secondarily the believer’s cleansing from sin (Heb. 10:22; 1 Pet. 3:21). Because heart circumcision as the antitype is now realized among all new covenant members, physical circumcision as a type is no longer necessary (1 Cor. 7:19; Gal. 5:6).

Along with the onetime rite of water baptism, gathered members of Christ’s church regularly partake of the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 11:17–20, 22) in order to remember Christ (11:25) and receive spiritual nourishment (10:16–17; cf. John 6:53–57, 63). We eat bread signifying his body given for his people, and we drink the Lord’s cup signifying the new covenant in his blood (1 Cor. 11:23–26; cf. Luke 22:20).

Summary

The Bible’s story line progresses through the historical covenants between God and his people. Jesus fulfills each covenant in different ways. The Adamic-Noahic covenant with creation establishes the crisis and context of global curse and common grace out of which the other covenants clarify God’s solution and saving grace. The Abrahamic covenant forecasts the hope of Christ and new creation through its conditional-yet-certain kingdom promises of land(s), seed, blessing, and divine presence. The remaining covenants clarify how God fulfilled these promises in two progressive stages. In the Mosaic covenant (stage 1) Abraham’s offspring as a single nation experience blessing but then curse, which results in their exile from the promised land. The Davidic covenant recalls the promises of a royal deliverer and declares the specific line through whom he will rise. Then the new covenant (stage 2) realizes these hopes in an already/not-yet way through the person and perfect obedience of Christ Jesus, whose kingdom work overcomes the curse with universal blessing, makes Abraham the father of many nations to the ends of the earth, and reconciles all things to God through the new creation.

For fair overviews of various theological systems’ understandings of how the historical covenants progress, integrate, and climax in Christ, see Merkle. For dispensationalism, see Blaising and Bock, *Israel; Progressive*; Saucy; Vlach. For new-covenant theology and progressive covenantalism, see Wells and Zaspel; Wellum and Parker; Gentry and Wellum. For covenant theology, see Kline, *Kingdom*; Horton; and Waters, Reid, and Muether.

See also Abraham and Abrahamic Tradition; Adam, First and Last; Ethics; Jews and Gentiles; Kingdom and King; Law

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Creation

The NT, along with early Judaism at large, presupposes that God is “the Maker of heaven and earth” (Ps. 146:6; see, e.g., Mark 10:6; Acts 17:24–31; 1 Cor. 8:6; Heb. 11:3; Rev. 4:11). Thus, even when an explicit OT citation is not in view, the creation theology of the OT profoundly shapes NT theology. The OT, of course, has creation at its very foundation: “In the beginning God made the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). While the narration of primal events did not always employ the seven-day schema of Genesis (see, e.g., Ps. 104), God’s act of calling things into being is presupposed throughout the remainder of the OT. Thus, in the flood narrative, for instance, the rain from above coupled with inundation from below represents a reversal of the separation of the waters in Gen. 1. The flood is a kind of de-creation, followed by a new creation in which dry land appears (8:14), and Noah and his family are commanded like Adam and Eve to “be fruitful and multiply” (8:17). In the same way, the seminal event of the exodus involves the wind/Spirit of God blowing over the waters so that dry land appears as the gateway to new life for Israel.

Synoptic Gospels

Jesus’s ministry as depicted in the Synoptics reflects an OT/Jewish affirmation of God’s ongoing concern for the world he has created. God’s providential care for the world is particularly evident in texts like Matt. 6:25–34.

The creation accounts in Genesis play an important role in Jesus’s marriage ethic. When some Pharisees ask Jesus if a man may divorce his wife for any reason, he replies, “Haven’t you read . . . that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh?’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate” (Matt. 19:4–6). The advent of the kingdom of God does not mean the renunciation of the created order but rather

a return to God’s initial plan for marriage as articulated in Genesis.

The follow-up discussion has important implications for Jesus’s view of the Law in relation to creation. When the Pharisees protest that Moses permitted divorce, Jesus says, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning” (Matt. 19:8). This anticipates Paul’s more detailed analysis of the Law as an interim measure subject to revision upon the advent of the Messiah. God’s intent revealed in the creation, rather than the Sinai covenant, sets the standard for human conduct with respect to marriage (cf. France, 713–14).

As R. S. Barbour has aptly summarized, Jesus “not only brings the marvelous newness and freshness of God’s coming Kingdom (already mysteriously present); he also brings the original, primal, rightness of things, which any man who is really human can recognize, into focus once more. In Him the old and the new become one without confusion and without separation; and that is the secret of the Kingdom” (31–32).

Jesus’s control over the created order is an important theme in the Synoptics, and the so-called nature miracles are saturated with OT imagery. The feeding of the five thousand (Matt. 14:13–21; Mark 6:30–44; Luke 9:10–17; John 6:1–15) has overtones of the exodus account (a point made explicit in John’s account [John 6:1–15]). The curious miracle of walking on the water (Matt. 14:22–33; Mark 6:45–52; John 6:16–21; curious in that it does not directly meet a human need, as is the case in almost all the other mighty works) finds its significance by way of allusion to Job 9, a passage centered on the power and inscrutability of God as revealed in his creative acts. When we read that Jesus came to the disciples “walking upon the sea” (Matt. 14:25 ESV), this is an almost verbatim note from Job 9:8 LXX; even more interesting is the detail in Mark 6:48 that Jesus “meant to pass by them” (ESV); the verb here, *parelthein*, is the same one used in Job 9:11 LXX: “If [God] should *pass me by* I would not know it” (AT; cf. also YHWH “passing by” Moses in Exod. 33:18–19). Thus, characteristics ascribed to God in Job are here predicated of Jesus—a powerful example of the often subtle high Christology to be found in the Synoptics (cf. Edwards, 197–99). A similar point, equally dependent on a recognition of the OT, is made in the other sea miracle: the stilling of the storm. When the disciples cry out, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?” (Matt. 8:27 AT; Mark 4:41; Luke 8:25), the thoughtful reader is meant to answer this by recourse to texts like Ps. 107:28–29: “Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress. He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed.” Again, Jesus is said to do what only YHWH can do.

The creation ordinance of the *Sabbath* also plays a critical role in the Synoptics (and John will in typical