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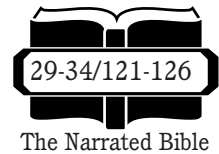
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God's Covenant with Israel



Step 1 Excite

The Bible continually refers to the Covenant and the divine blessings for observing the Covenant and penalties for breaking it. So it is very important for us to clearly understand the actual nature and content of the Covenant. The Hebrew word *berith*, Covenant, occurs over 280 times in the Old Testament. Covenants generally can include treaties, alliances, agreements, compacts, pledges, mutual agreements, promises, and undertakings on behalf of another; covenants in the Bible can be agreements between two individuals, between a king or leader and his people; or between God and individuals, or God and groups of individuals. Covenants can be conditional or unconditional. Conditional covenants are forfeited if one party violates or defaults on his part of the agreement. Unconditional covenants are arrangements in which the default of one party does not negate the ultimate fulfillment and blessing of the Covenant. ¹ The Bible gives three major Covenants between God and His people:

ABRAHAMIC COVENANT (unconditional)

And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an EVERLASTING covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, THE LAND wherein thou art a stranger; all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. (Genesis 17:7,8)

MOSAIC COVENANT (conditional)

And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments. (Exodus 34:28)

MESSIANIC COVENANT (Grace or the New Covenant)

For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. (Matthew 26:28)

Read about God's covenant with Abraham in the following verses: Genesis 15; 17:1-22; Micah 7:20; Luke 1:73; Romans 4:13; 15:8; Hebrews 6:13,14; Galatians 3:6-18,29; 4:22-31.

Underlined text refers to Internet link at <http://Homeschool-Books.com>

Step 2 Examine

God made an everlasting and unconditional Covenant with Israel. The covenant with the Jews was for them to keep the Law of Moses as a lifestyle of the godly to set them apart from the other nations. Gentiles were invited into the new Covenant that Jesus made with Israel (Romans 9:22-33) as full fellow heirs of all the promises of God. The Gentile church is grafted in (Romans 11:17), brought near (Ephesians 2:13), Abraham's offspring (by faith) (Romans 4:16), and partakers (Romans 15:27) with Israel. The church never replaced Israel. Ephesians 2:12,13 and 18,19, explains *You [Gentiles] were excluded from God's people, Israel, and you did not know the promises God had made to them. You lived in this world without God and without hope. But now you belong to Christ Jesus. Though you once were far away from God, now you have been brought near to him because of the blood of Christ. (18) Now all of us, both Jews and Gentiles, may come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us. So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family.*

Read Romans 11. What does the root represent? The different branches? What is the wild olive tree? What condition causes a branch to be cut off? Romans 11:18 says, *Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.*

The olive-tree, wild by nature (Romans 11:24), is the shoot or cutting of the good olive-tree which, left ungrafted, grows up to be a wild olive. In Romans 11:17, Paul refers to the practice of grafting shoots of the wild olive into a “good” olive that has become unfruitful. By such a process the sap of the good olive, by pervading the branch that is grafted in, makes it a good branch, bearing good olives. Thus the Gentiles, being a wild olive, but now grafted in, yield fruit, but only through the sap of the tree into which they have been grafted. ²

Genesis 12:3 says, *And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.* (God speaking to Abraham, father of the Jewish people.)

Circumcision is a sign of the covenant God made with Abraham. Circumcision — cutting the foreskin — was a continuing reminder that God had cut a covenant with Abraham and his descendants. God commanded it to be performed on all males on the eighth day to be the special badge of his chosen people, an abiding sign of their consecration to him. It was established as a national ordinance (Genesis 17:10,11). It is interesting to note that medical science only recently realized the benefits of the eighth-day procedure: Prothrombin promotes coagulation of the blood, and the babies’ natural supply of prothrombin on the eighth day is 110% of normal. When a baby is circumcised before the eighth day he is prone to excessive bleeding, and the doctor must first give the child an injection of vitamin K which helps produce prothrombin. In some circumcisions there is no bleeding when done on the eighth day.

Resources recommended in ♦several lessons, ★several units, ♥other HOW Units. ●—Key Resource (see beginning of unit or page 32).

Research God's Covenant with Israel. Use any resource (Bible-study aids such as commentaries, dictionaries, encyclopedias, or the Internet). We recommend the following:



[The Victor Journey through the Bible](#) 🔑♥

Read: "God's Covenant With Abraham" (21).



[Encyclopedia of the Bible](#) (Nelson's Illustrated) ♥

"Old Testament Overview" (204-205), "God's Law in Practice"(152-153).



[Introduction to Jewish History: From Abraham to the Sages](#) ♦

Read: Chapter 1 Jewish History Begins.



[The Narrated Bible](#) 🔑♥

Read: Israel's Covenant with God (121).



[Manners and Customs in the Bible](#) ★

Read: Look up all entries to circumcision and covenant in the index.



[Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith](#) 🔑★

Read: The Olive Root and Branches and Grafted into Israel.



[Yeshua: A Guide to the Real Jesus and the Original Church](#) 🔑♥

Read: "The Old and New" (49-66), "The New in the Old and the Old in the New" (67-86). See description in the Key Resources section beginning on page 32.



[Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions](#) 🔑★

Read: "Circumcision" (466).




[God's Plan for Israel: A Study of Romans 9-11](#) by Steven A. Kreloff


Description: This is a small, easy-to-read, much-needed book about a greatly misunderstood topic. It is an excellent, balanced explanation of God's mercy, grace, and faithfulness to the Jews and Gentiles. Kreloff, a saved Jew, shows how clearly the Scriptures distinguish between the church and Israel. Kreloff explains that God's sovereignty in election does not negate human responsibility in salvation. Packed with much more than the study of Romans 9-11, this book combats the false doctrines claiming that the church replaced Israel. Paul warns Gentiles who have come to faith not to boast or become arrogant against the olive root, which is the nation of Israel. Kreloff explains that we must combat Gentiles who consider themselves spiritually superior to Jews by focusing on God's grace. *God's Plan for Israel* is divided into three main sections: (1) How God Spared the Hebrew Nation in the Past; (2) The Reason He Continues to Preserve the Jewish People; (3) The Plan God Has to Restore Israel in the Future.

 [The Seed of Abraham](#) by Robert Somerville

Description: Robert Somerville answers the question, Just what is the biblical distinction between the Jewish people, Israel, and the Christian church? This writing presents a complicated subject in very understandable terms and reconciles the seeming contradictions of Scripture in this area. This is a very significant publication on the subject of How We View the Jew for the purpose of bringing unity to the body of Christ. [Available online.](#)

 [The God Contracts](#) by Robert Somerville

Description: An excellent summary of the seven main covenants that God has initiated with mankind. These Covenants include: (1) God's Eternal Covenant with Himself, (2) Adam's Covenant of Dominion, (3) Noah's Covenant of Preservation, (4) Moses' Covenant of the Law, (5) Abraham's Covenant of Real Estate, (6) David's Covenant of Government, and (7) Jesus' Covenant of Redemption. These earth-oriented Covenants are foundational for believers to understand their God-given inheritance.

 [The Miracle of the Scarlet Thread](#) by Richard Booker

Description: This is one of the most profound books of the blood of Messiah ever written! Booker explains how the First and Second Testaments are woven together by the scarlet thread of the blood Covenant to tell one complete story throughout the Bible. Subjects explained are the blood Covenant ritual, the Covenant with Abraham, in the tabernacle, in the sacrifices, in the High Priest and Passover. This is a worldwide, best-selling classic. (December 1988) Destiny Image; ISBN: 0914903268.

 [Replacement Theology, Its Origin, History and Theology](#) by Derek White

Description: So called Replacement Theology is still deeply entrenched in the church in various forms, with disastrous consequences for the relationship of the church with Israel. Few are aware of the roots and development of this teaching. This booklet will be of help to Christian leaders and teachers, bringing understanding and countering many of the present-day negative attitudes toward Israel. (1997) Teddington, Middlesex, U.K.: Christian Friends of Israel. Reading level: Adult.

Internet Sources

 [Abraham's Seed](#)


Description: An article on the sensitive and misunderstood issues of Jews and Gentiles.

 [Did God Break His Covenant With the Jews?](#)

Description: Excellent article about the Covenant from *Bridges for Peace* by Clarence H. Wagner, Jr.

 [What is A Covenant?](#)


Description: This is a detailed article explaining Bible Covenants between God and man, by Lambert Dolphin.

 [The Holy Root of the Olive Tree](#)

Description: An article explaining that the Church and Israel are both supported by the root of the tree—the Messiah. By Jim Gerrish: Director, Galilee Study Center.

 [The Everlasting Covenant](#)

Description: An overview of the Covenant and the blessings associated with it.

 [God's Covenant with Abraham](#)

Description: An article by David Brewer explaining the provisions and promises.



 [The Apple of His Eye, A Message for Israel](#)

Description: A list of Bible verses of promises for Israel.

 [Israel and the Church: the Differences](#)

Description: Article by Dr. Thomas McCall, the Senior Theologian of Zola Levitt Ministries.

Step 3 Expand

  Activity 1: Write Summaries

Write a summary of each of the everlasting Covenants in the Old Testament:

1. The Covenant with Noah (Gen. 9:16)
2. The Covenant with Abraham (Gen. 17:7,13,19)
3. The Covenant God made with David (2 Sam. 23:5)
4. The New Covenant (Is. 55:3; 61:8; Jer. 32:40; 50:5; Ezek. 16:60; 37:26)



Activity 2: Learn Hebrew Words

Look up each of the words below in a Hebrew lexicon. Add each word, and its phonetic spelling and meaning to your Hebrew notebook. See [The Old Testament Hebrew Lexicon](#). The Hebrew word for covenant is *berit* (phonetic - ber-eeth') derived from a root which means "to cut" and hence a covenant is a "cutting." It appears more than 250 times in the Old Testament. The Hebrew word for circumcision is *muwlah* (phonetic - moo-law'), it comes from the word *muwl* which means "to be cut off."



Activity 3: Answer Questions

1. Isaiah 1:11 says *To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.* Why were the Old Testament sacrifices of animals only temporary? (Heb. 10:4)
2. What does the Bible say about religious ceremonies when our hearts are not toward God? (Matt. 15:8)
3. Why was the blood necessary in order for redemption to occur? (Heb. 9:22)
4. How was the blood of Jesus Christ different from the blood of the animal sacrifices? (1 Pet. 3:18; Heb. 9:12-14)
5. How does the redemption through Christ affect our ability to overcome Satan? (Rev. 5:9)



Activity 3: Write a Summary

Read Genesis 15:10 and Leviticus 17:11. Write about your perspective on the blood covenant. Explain: Why is the blood necessary for restoring a right relationship between God and man? Why is it foolish to attempt to approach God through our merits instead of the blood Covenant? (Heb. 9:22)

Step 4 Excel

Share what you have learned about the Covenants between God and His people with a friend or family member. Correct all written work to demonstrate correct punctuation and spelling, and effective use of grammar. Add corrected written work or any illustrations to your portfolio. Add new words you learned in this lesson into your Vocabulary Notebook (see page 22).

Footnotes

1. Dolphin, Lambert. (1993) What is a Covenant? <<http://www.ldolphin.org/Covn.html>> (Accessed September, 2000).
2. Easton, Matthew George. Entry for Olive-tree. *Easton's Bible Dictionary*.