



ASKING BETTER QUESTIONS -
GRAND THEMES 5 -
COVENANT IV

A thick black L-shaped frame surrounds the text. The top-left corner is a horizontal bar extending to the right, then a vertical bar extending downwards. The bottom-right corner is a horizontal bar extending to the left, then a vertical bar extending upwards.

WELCOME TO “GRAND THEMES”











Each week we will trace a major theme through the
whole Bible.



COVENANT



Theme gallery

					
TEMPLE	COVENANT	COVENANT	COVENANT	COVENANT	
	 				

4 Key Hebrew Bible Covenants



Noah – the whole world. Rainbow



Abraham – all nations blessed. Circumcision.



Moses – Israel.



David – Kingdom.



Covenant with Noah (Noahic)

- **Gen 9:9-17** Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: “I now **establish my covenant** with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. I establish my **covenant** with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be flood to destroy the earth. ”



Covenant with Abraham (Abrahamic)

- (Gen. 12:1-3) The LORD had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household ***to the land*** I will show you. “I ***will make you into a great nation***, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; ***and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.***



Covenant with Israel (Mosaic)

- God wants to form a **covenant partnership** with the people of Israel in a unique way. They are to be a distinct people to represent God to the world.
- God is inviting them to be “**a kingdom of priests and a holy nation**”.
- This is a real **test** for the people – will they pass it?
- Ten Commandments and other laws for the people of Israel to operate as a nation.
- Exodus and Deuteronomy

God's Covenant Promise

- I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. **Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.** (2 Sam 7:14-16)
- David as King-priest.



Fulfilling the promises

- See the patterns....
- The promised perfect royal priest is not found in the Hebrew Bible. It points forward.
- The fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham and David remain.
- The promise of bringing the blessings of Eden, and restoring humans to their lost calling remains in the future.
- What's this all pointing to?

– JESUS –



PROPHET



PRIEST



KING

The New Covenant (Jer 31:31-34)

- Jeremiah the prophet - (650-570 BC)
- Preaching against gross idolatry in Judah
- Israel (northern ten tribes) had already been dispersed by the Assyrians.
- Now Jeremiah warning of the Babylonians coming and the destruction of Jerusalem
- God had shown grace repeatedly for years.
- God's people and their faithfulness - **FAIL**.





The New Covenant

- Jeremiah 31:31–34
- “Look, the days are coming” —this is the Lord’s declaration—“when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. This one will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors on the day I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt—my covenant that they broke even though I am their master”,—the Lord’s declaration.



The New Covenant

- “Instead, this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days”—the Lord’s declaration. “I will put my teaching within them and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will one teach his neighbor or his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they will all know me, from the least to the greatest of them”—this is the Lord’s declaration. “For I will forgive their iniquity and never again remember their sin.

The New Covenant

- What do you notice about it from Jeremiah's prophecy?
- With the people of Israel and Judah.
- Not like the covenant with their ancestors.
- Law in minds and hearts.
- I will be their God, and they will be my people.
- No longer say "Know the Lord"

- What connections can you make with this prophecy?



Jesus

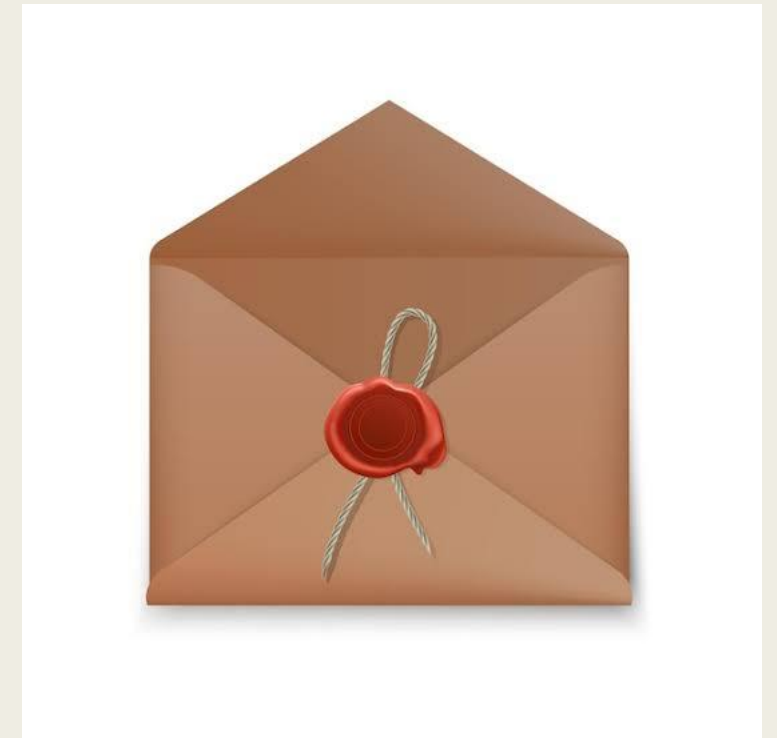
- Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. This is my **blood of the covenant**, which is poured out for many for the **forgiveness of sins**. I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.” [Mt 26:27-29]
- Blood of the covenant – where heard this before?
- Ex 24:8 Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, “This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.
- How do you think Jesus is feeling about that day?

Acts 3 – Peter’s sermon after healing a lame beggar

- Now, fellow Israelites, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. But this is how God **fulfilled** what he had foretold through **all the prophets**, saying that his Messiah would suffer. Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus. Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as **he promised long ago through his holy prophets**. For **Moses** said, ‘The Lord your God will **raise up for you a prophet like me** from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from their people.’
- Indeed, beginning with Samuel, **all the prophets** who have spoken have foretold these days. And you are **heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers**. He said to **Abraham**, ‘Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.’ When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways.”
- What is Luke (the author) wanting us to understand here about how Jesus fits into the picture?

Ministers of a new covenant

- 2 Cor 3:2-6
- You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.
- God. He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant —not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.
- Remind you of anything about **covenant**?
- **Jer 31** - I will put my teaching within them and write it on their hearts...



Melchizedek again!

- [Heb 7:20-22] And it was not without an oath! Others became priests without any oath, but he became a priest with an oath when God said to him: “The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: ‘You are a priest forever.’” Because of this oath, **Jesus has become the guarantor of a better covenant.**
- So how does a guarantor operate?
- In what way does Jesus operate as a guarantor?



Heb 8:6-12 = Jer 31:31-34

- But in fact the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, since the **new covenant is established on better promises**. For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. But God found fault **with the people** and said:
- *...“The days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord. This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.*
- What was the basic problem with the first covenant?
- Why would this question be taken up by the Hebrew writer?

Heb 9

- Now the first covenant had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary.
- Tabernacle, Holy of Holies, tablets of the covenant. Priest enters Holy of holies once a year.
- (Heb 9:9-10) This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper. They are only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings — external regulations applying **until the time of the new order**.
- How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance — now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.
- What is one of the main outcomes of the new covenant that the old covenant could not do?
- Reflect on this idea of “cleansing the conscience” of the worshipper.





Reflection

New covenant based on better promises...

- Reflect on what you have learnt about covenant?
- What do you connect with the most about the new covenant?
- Cleansing of conscience?

Next time...

**Captivity,
Exodus & Rescue**