

1-4-25 Message to Roeh Israel Abilene - *VaYigash* (and [Judah] drew near)
Torah Portion: Gen 44:18 – 47:27
Haftarah: Ezekiel 37:15-28
Suggested Acheron K'tuvim: John 7:37-39

Under the Law Part 25 – New Covenant Part 2 - What is in the Tanach?

Central question: Do you understand the progression of entering into the various levels of a covenant relationship with G-d?

Today we are in parasha *VaYigash*, which means “and drew near.” It takes its name from the first four words of the passage in English, and the first word in the original Hebrew.

Gen 44:18-22

18 Then Judah approached him, and said, "Oh my lord, may your servant please speak a word in my lord's ears, and do not be angry with your servant; for you are equal to Pharaoh.

19 My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a father or a brother?' 20 "And we said to my lord, 'We have an old father and a little child of his old age. Now his brother is dead, so he alone is left of his mother, and his father loves him.' 21

"Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, that I may set my eyes on him.'

18

וַיָּגֶשׁ	אֵלָיו	יְהוּדָה	וַיֹּאמֶר	בִּי	אֲדֹנָי	יְדַבֵּר-	לֹא		
Then came near	unto him,	Judah	and said,	Oh	my lord,	let speak	I pray thee,		
5066	413	3063	559	994	113	1696	4994		

עֲבָדְךָ	דְּבַר	בְּאָזְנִי	אֲדֹנָי	וְאֵל-	יָחַר	אַפְּךָ	בְּעִבְדְּךָ		
thy servant,	a word	in ears,	my lord's	and not	let burn	thine anger	against thy servant:		
5650	1697	241	113	408	2734	639	5650		

כִּי	כַּמֹּד	כְּפָרְעָה:							
for	thou	as Pharaoh.							
3588	3644	6547							
	9999								

19

אֲדֹנָי	שָׁאַל	אֶת-	עֲבָדָיו	לֵאמֹר	הִישֵׁ-	לָכֶם	אָב	אוֹ-	אָח:
My lord	asked		his servants,	saying,	Have	ye	a father,	or	a brother?
113	7592	853	5650	559	3426	3807a	1	176	251

20

וַנֹּאמֶר	אֵל-	אֲדֹנָי	יֵשׁ-	לָנוּ	אָב	זָקֵן	וְיֶלֶד		
And we said	unto	my lord,	have	We	a father,	an old man,	his		
559	413	113	3426	3807a	1	2205	9999		

זָקְנִים	קָטָן	וְאָחִיו	מֵת	וַיִּנָּחַר	הוּא	לְבַדּוֹ	לְאִמּוֹ		
old age,	a little one;	and his brother	is dead,	and is left	he	alone	of his mother,		
2208	6996	251	4191	3498	1931	905	517		

וְאָבִיו	אָהָב:								
and his father	loveth him.								
1	157								

We are in the sub-series dealing with covenants, and today we resume discussing the “New Covenant.”

You will recall from former lessons that there is actually only a single covenant relationship between men and G-d, but that this covenant relationship has a number of levels.

Anyone who turns his back on pagan practices, believes in his heart that G-d is the only G-d in heaven and earth,¹ clings to G-d with his heart, and does (to the best of his ability) what he understands G-d wishes for him to do with that pure heart – that person has entered into the Noahic covenant.

That person has then walked through the doorway of justification, and can have eternal life with G-d. That person's previous evil lifestyle is washed away, and he has become "a new creation." How much of the lifestyle of G-d's ways this person chooses to adopt, and live with a pure heart, will be the determining factor in his final reward.²

We discussed how each covenant relationship forms a type of ramp to the next level, and how each level of covenant grants that person greater benefits, but also requires greater fidelity to G-d's instructions for life – as found in Torah, and demonstrated by Yeshua.

We are now embarking on the examination of what has been called by the normative church the "New Covenant" which it believes is fully revealed in what they also have called (for many generations now) the "New Testament."

¹ Before the cross, accepting G-d and His ways included acceptance of the atonement sacrifice done by the High Priest on Yom Kippur each year. After the cross, that acceptance includes that same atonement, but in this instance it was accomplished by Yeshua's own blood, and is a better atonement than the previous one. Either way, that atonement was sufficient to grant the one entering the covenant relationship a "new start."

² See Matt 5:17-21.

We discussed how the terms “covenant” and “testament” are very distinct legal terms, which have no definitional overlap. But the normative church has used them interchangeably, and their current usage has largely obscured their true meanings in classical English.

We have seen how the terms “New Testament” and “Old Testament” were fictions created by Marcion, not long after the death of the Apostles. We exposed the heresy of Marcion, but reminded ourselves that the Catholic church enthusiastically retained the concepts of “Old God = strict, angry and vindictive” and “New God = loving, kind and forgiving.” The normative church insisted that all Bibles include pages of division labeled “Old Testament” and “New Testament” and even some normative churches abandoned teaching from the “Old.”³

Because of this, the division of the Bible into “New Testament” and “Old Testament” became solidified, and that doctrine was so prevalent that no one dares to publish a Bible today without those artificial divisions clearly marked. And thus, the fictions are continued, and even institutionalized, in the normative church today.

³ With the exception of the “ten commandments” (which they actually whittled-down to only 8) and the concept of tithing (using a strained interpretation of that passage to justify pressuring people into giving the church their money).

The goal of this subseries is to give clarity of usage, and of theology, for proper use of the term “New Covenant.” To do that, we need to see what the Scriptures have to say about this concept, and let those be our primary resource. We need to put aside the persistent theological construct of the normative church regarding the ‘New Covenant’ for a bit, and look to see what Scripture actually has to say.

The only place that the phrase “New Covenant” is found in the Tanach is in Jeremiah. In order to understand the context of this usage, we need to back up to the beginning of chapter 30.

Jer 30:1-5

30 The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying,
2 "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, 'Write all the words
which I have spoken to you in a book. 3 'For, behold, days
are coming,' declares the Lord, 'when I will restore the
fortunes of **My people Israel and Judah.**' The Lord says, 'I
will also bring them back to **the land that I gave to their
forefathers,** and they shall possess it.'"

4 Now these are the words which the Lord spoke concerning
Israel and concerning Judah, 5 "For thus says the Lord,

The first things that should jump out from the passage, are that this is a prophecy which is directed only to one people group (which was divided at that time) – Israel and Judah – and regarding only one certain place on the earth – the land of Israel.

The passage continues to describe a great tribulation for Israel, which in verse 7 G-d calls “the time of Jacob’s distress.” When is that time? A Christian website dedicated to answering such questions reports:⁴

The phrase the time of Jacob’s trouble comes from Jeremiah 30:7, which says, “Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it” (KJV). It is our view that the time of Jacob’s trouble corresponds to the seven-year tribulation of the end times.

Most Christian commentaries seem to align with this same idea. So, it seems that there is a broad consensus regarding this passage – that it speaks of a time in the future, which is attended by great agony and persecution of Jews.⁵ It seems that they place this particular part of “end

⁴ *Got Questions*. <https://www.gotquestions.org/Jacobs-trouble.html>

⁵ “Jacob” is another identifier of “Israel.”

times” human history between the “rapture of the church” and “second return of Jesus.”

Regardless of the precise timing, it does appear that the consensus of the scholars in the normative church are in agreement that this passage speaks of a time yet to come.

I wish to address what I see at the end of the passage, but to summarize what the rest of the passage tells us on the way to that destination.

It speaks of setting Israel free from the “captivity” of the nations into which Israel has been scattered as a punishment for turning away from G-d. G-d will regathering them once again into the Land. G-d will completely destroy all the nations that oppressed Israel, but the people of Israel shall not be completely destroyed. The leader of Israel shall be a Jew in that day, and not a foreigner. And the promise is that Israel will “find grace in the wilderness” into which they were scattered. G-d affirms “I will be the G-d of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.”

All the nations will see Israel gathered, and Israel in the Land will prosper and the Land shall produce abundantly again. The weeping of Israel shall

be turned to joy. G-d has pursued Israel in her apostasy, but in that day Israel will be pursuing G-d in a great reversal of that pattern.

In these passages, G-d has been speaking only of Israel, and her drifting away from G-d, then being punished by exile, then a remnant being regathered to the Land, and the Land now prospering in abundance, as will the Jewish people in the Land.

And finally, the passages speak of a spiritual shift, where Israel pursues G-d like a courtship of love, and G-d reacting favorably to that revival of love.

Jer 31:27-34

27 "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast. 28 "And it will come about that as I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to overthrow, to destroy, and to bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build and to plant," declares the Lord.

29 "In those days they will not say again,

'The fathers have eaten sour grapes,
And the children's teeth are set on edge.'⁶

30 "But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man
who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge. 31
**"Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I
will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and
with the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant which I
made with their fathers in the day I took them by the
hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant
which they broke, although I was a husband to them,**⁷
"declares the Lord.

Let's take a closer look at the specific language of this "new covenant"
in the Hebrew.

בֵּית	אֶת־	וְכָרַתִּי	יְהוָה	נֹאֵם־	בָּאִים	יָמִים	הִנֵּה ³¹
the house of	with	that I will make	the Lord,	saith	come,	the days	Behold,
<u>1004</u>	<u>854</u>	<u>3772</u>	<u>3068</u>	<u>5002</u>	<u>935</u>	<u>3117</u>	<u>2009</u>
		חֲדָשָׁה:	בְּרִית	יְהוּדָה	בֵּית	וְאֶת־	יִשְׂרָאֵל
		new	a covenant	Judah:	the house of	and with	Israel,
		<u>2319</u>	<u>1285</u>	<u>3063</u>	<u>1004</u>	<u>854</u>	<u>3478</u>

⁶ For a larger teaching on this, see Ezekiel chapter 18.

⁷ This metaphor was lived-out in the life of the prophet Hosea, who was commanded to marry a prostitute so as to illustrate the infidelity of Israel to her Husband (G-d).

The Hebrew word translated as “new” at the end of verse 31 is *chadasha*, from the root *chadash*.

OT:2318 **חָדָשׁ** **chadash** (khaw-dash'); a primitive root; to be new; causatively, to rebuild:

This word carries with it the concept of renewal of that which was previously lost or damaged. The meaning of this word can include the idea of “new,” but I believe it is better translated (in context) as “renewed.”⁸ It is the same word used to describe the “new moon” which is not at all “new” but rather the light is “renewed” to signify the beginning of the new month. The context of this passage seems to indicate that this covenant shall indeed be renewed, because it cannot be broken by G-d, but that renewal shall be so different from the condition that existed before its renewal, that it is as if the covenant is completely fashioned again – shiny and new.

As the passage continues, we discover some attributes of this renewed covenant.

33 "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the Lord,

⁸ Jewish commentaries are all in agreement that this term means “renewed” in this context.

We see two things here. The first is that this covenant renewal will only occur “after those days.” So, this covenant renewal will not happen before Jews are living safely in the Land, because of the total destruction of all the enemies around them, and after the Land is fully occupied and producing abundantly, like a garden. This condition has yet to occur.

Secondly, just as the many passages that are leading up to this promise have applied solely to the people Israel, this covenant renewal applies only to “the house of Israel.” No one from among the nations are included in this covenant as it existed when Moses brought the people to Mt. Horeb, and none from among the nations will be included in its renewal in the end times.

But remember that the mixed multitude⁹ that came out of Egypt in the exodus had been fully grafted-in to Israel by the time they stood before the Mountain to receive the Torah. These were the ones who came into the Hebrew homes on the last of the plagues (death of the firstborn) and were circumcised to become fully grafted-in to the Abrahamic Covenant, and thus obligated to keep Torah. These, together with the Hebrew people, were jointly referred to as “Israel” by G-d at the Mountain. This was because they had left their people of origin, and had completely

⁹ Exodus 12:38. Hebrews and non-Hebrews left Egypt at the same time.

joined with the Hebrew people in the highest level of covenant relationship available at that time.¹⁰

Let's see more in the next verses.

"I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."¹¹

תּוֹרָתִי	אֶת־	נָתַתִּי	יְהוָה	נֹאֵם־	הֵם	הַיָּמִים	אַחֲרַי	יִשְׂרָאֵל
my law		I will put	the Lord,	saith	those	days,	After	Israel;
8451	853	5414	3068	5002	1992	3117	310	3478
לֵאלֹהִים	לָהֶם	וְהָיִיתִי	אֶכְתְּבֶנָּה	לִבָּם	וְעַל־	בְּקִרְבָּם		
God,	their	and will be	write it	their hearts;	and in	in their inward parts,		
430	3807a	1961	3789	3820	5921	7130		
					לְעַם:	לִי	יִהְיֶה־	וְהָמָּה
					people.	my	shall be	and they
					5971	3807a	1961	1992

The Hebrew word translated as “law” in this passage is *Torah*.

[OT:8451](#) תּוֹרָה **towrah** (to-raw'); or **torah** (to-raw'); from [OT:3384](#); a precept or statute, especially the Decalogue or Pentateuch:

¹⁰ The Mosaic covenant level would be revealed at the Mountain.

¹¹ This is the central statement of the covenant relationship with G-d.

It is commonly translated as “law” but more specifically means “instructions.” There can be no doubt that this word specifically refers to the “Five books of Moses,” or Genesis through Deuteronomy.

Since this entire section of prophecy speaks only about circumstances attending the people Israel, and the Land, and since the entirety of these circumstances have not yet been fulfilled – then it cannot be correctly said that “the law has been done away with” for Israel, including those fully grafted-in to Israel.

This begs the question: Can one be a believer in G-d, and be in covenant relationship with Him, but still declare that the Torah is done away with? The answer is “yes” because the covenant relationship which involves the obligations of Torah is from the Abrahamic Covenant upward, and not those in the lower levels of covenant relationship.¹²

This passage also tells us how intimately the Torah will be incorporated into Israel at that time. The Hebrew word translated in the passage as “inward parts” is from the root *kereb*.

OT:7130 קֶרֶב **qereb** (keh'-reb); from OT:7126; properly, the nearest part, i.e. the center, whether literal, figurative or adverbial (especially with preposition):

¹² Mat 5:17-21 illustrates this clearly.

This word carries with it the concept of deepest, most central part. It signifies that the Torah won't merely be spoken, but it will be as much a part of that person as life itself. Since the passage uses the phrase "in their hearts" that concept is clearly meant.

The Hebrew word translated as "write it" is from the root *katav*.

OT:3789 כָּתַב **kathab** (kaw-thab'); a primitive root; to grave, by implication, to write (describe, inscribe, prescribe, subscribe):

This word carries with it the idea of more than mere writing as with a pen and paper. It implies a carving-into, signifying permanence. There is an equivalent English idiom when referring to something that is unchangeable and permanent – "carved in stone."

From this passage we see that the Torah will be such a part of that person's heart (which is fully turned toward G-d) that it will be as much a part of this person as life itself.

The next verses make that idea of total-incorporation of Torah clearer still.

34 "And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of

them," declares the Lord, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

This is an important statement, because the pattern of people (both in the normative synagogue and in the normative church) has been that those of the “upper levels” of leadership in religion are the ones who have had the opportunity to study Scripture and to “know G-d” best. Then they have taught those in the “lower levels” of society about G-d. In the days which are prophesied in this passage, nobody will have any advantage over another in knowing G-d, regardless of their station in life. Everyone will have Torah written on their hearts, and will be living out G-d’s instructions in a far more proper manner than before.

And because they have repented before G-d of all their abominations, have once again turned to G-d with a humble and contrite heart, and have incorporated Torah into their lives to such a degree that they are once again holy before G-d, their sin is no longer remembered.

The Sages have supposed that due to this repentance of Israel, and their continuing adherence to Torah in their lives, that they have reached an entirely different level – a higher level – of covenant relationship with G-d. And this level is one that cannot be broken by them again – because of the depth to which Torah is carved into the flesh of their hearts.

The Sages have related this passage to the condition that will exist during the time that Messiah rules on earth.¹³ So, in this particular interpretation, they find agreement with the scholars of the normative church.

During this rule of Messiah, the degree of holiness of the entire world will be changed. Isaiah speaks of the coming of Messiah, and how things will change after He takes His throne.

Isa 11:1-10

11 Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse,¹⁴ And a branch from his roots will bear fruit. 2 And the Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. 3 And He will delight in the fear of the Lord, And He will not judge by what His eyes see, Nor make a decision by what His ears hear; 4 But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the

¹³ Mishneh Torah, Repentance 9:2. This is referred to in this writing as “the Messianic age.”

¹⁴ The Jewish people, from before the time of Yeshua, have understood this sprout from the root of Jesse to be Messiah. It appears in a prayer found in the Siddur (p. 109 Ashkenaz) which incorporates the name Yeshua three separate times. Those opposed to Yeshua after the destruction of the Temple wished to remove this prayer from the Siddur, but the people loved it and their tenacity caused it to remain until today.

earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. 5 Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, And faithfulness the belt about His waist.¹⁵ 6 And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, And the leopard will lie down with the kid, And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little boy will lead them. 7 Also the cow and the bear will graze; Their young will lie down together; And the lion will eat straw like the ox. 8 And the nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den. 9 They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, **For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord As the waters cover the sea.** 10 Then it will come about in that day That the nations will resort to the root of Jesse, Who will stand as a signal for the peoples; And His resting place will be glorious.

The restoration of Israel is also spoken of by Ezekiel, as a parallel prophecy to that found in Jeremiah.

Ezek 36:22-36

¹⁵ Here ends the prophecy of His coming, and the next verse begins the prophecy of the beauty of His kingdom.

22 "Therefore, say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord God,' It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. 23 "And I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord," declares the Lord God, "when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight. 24 "For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands, and bring you into your own land. 25 **"Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26 "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 "And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. 28 "And you will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God. 29 "Moreover, I will save you from all your uncleanness; and I will call for the grain and multiply it, and I will not bring a famine on you. 30 "And I will multiply the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field, that**

you may not receive again the disgrace of famine among the nations. 31 "Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good, and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and your abominations. 32 "I am not doing this for your sake," declares the Lord God, "let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel!"

33 'Thus says the Lord God, "**On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities,** I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places will be rebuilt. 34 "And the desolate land will be cultivated instead of being a desolation in the sight of everyone who passed by. 35 "And they will say, 'This desolate land has become like the garden of Eden; and the waste, desolate, and ruined cities are fortified and inhabited.' 36 "Then the nations that are left round about you will know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruined places and planted that which was desolate; I, the Lord, have spoken and will do it."

Jeremiah also spoke clearly equating the concept of “living water” with the provider of that water, who is G-d.

Jer 17:13-14

13 O Lord, the hope of Israel, All who forsake You will be put to shame. Those who turn away on earth will be written down, Because they have forsaken **the fountain of living water, even the Lord.** 14 Heal me, O Lord, and I will be healed; Save me and I will be saved, For You are my praise.

The normative church seems to have disregarded the context of the Jeremiah passages, but has collapsed those verses into only a few. These verses have been used consistently in my presence to justify their idea of the “New Covenant” with which they personally identify. Here are those verses:

"Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with [the church, which has replaced Israel] ~~the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,~~ ... declares the Lord, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Thus, the “New Covenant” for the normative church is the forgiveness of sins, and that they not be remembered by G-d any more. If this passage operates in that fashion, then this particular “New Covenant” won’t come until far into our future.

Let’s look further at the “living water” piece. I believe that as Yeshua stood in the Temple during the ceremony of the Water Drawing at the festival of Succot, He was referring to the long-established idea that the “living water” which flows from G-d is found in the words of Torah, the life of the “living Torah example” Yeshua, and the ministry of the Spirit who guides us in a proper life. I believe He was prophesying that His followers would soon spill-out of their “innermost parts” a witness of a proper life in Torah, which would also cleanse all those who would drink from that water.

John 7:37-39

37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who

believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Did this passage have a fulfillment in Acts chapter 2? I think a partial one, but I believe that the far greater fulfillment will occur as predicted by Jeremiah in the main passage we have studied – at the time yet to come when Yeshua returns and establishes His throne in Jerusalem.

In that time the holiness of all peoples' observance of G-d's instructions shall be so intense and widespread, that all cooking pots in Jerusalem and Judah, even the bells on the horses, will have an inscription, "Holy to the L-rd."¹⁶

¹⁶ Zechariah 14:20