

### 1. Foundations of the Bible -

- Redemption – God’s plan to redeem the world.
- Covenant – God’s method of mediating His relationship with humanity.

### 2. Bible as a Covenant Document -

- The Bible is divided into two covenants:
  - Old (former) Covenant(s) – Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David
  - New Covenant – Jesus.

### 3. Covenant or Testament?

- *berit* - the Hebrew word for covenant is (ברית) and denotes a sense of “between” as in a relationship.
- *diathēkē* - the Greek word for covenant is (διαθήκη) can also be translated as “testament,” which – through older English translations like the KJV – is where we get our English names for the two sections of the Bible.
- NT writers clearly have the Hebraic concept of covenant rather than the Greek concept of testament in mind. But, in classical Greek writing, *diathēkē* can mean “testament” as in “a last will and testament” – or the disposition of property after death.
- We derive our English name for the Bible sections from older translations like the KJV, which used “testament” instead of covenant.

### 4. God Communicates through Cultural Metaphors:

- God communicates through cultural concepts and metaphors that the Israelites would have known.
- Redemption and Covenant were customs throughout the ancient world that provided a “concreteness” to outline the relationship between God and Israel.

“The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another.”<sup>1</sup>

- We understand God through Cultural Metaphors: Father, Husband, or King.

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<sup>1</sup> Lakoff, George and Johnson, Mark, 1980. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago, Ill: University of Chicago Press, (p. 5).

5. **Redemption** – comes out of a Patriarchal culture.

The act of a patriarch putting his own resources on the line to ransom a family member who had been driven to the margins of society by poverty, who had been seized by an enemy against whom he had no defense, who found themselves enslaved by the consequences of a faithless life. Redemption restored them to their rightful place in the kinship circle.<sup>2</sup>

- **God’s Plan of Redemption** is to redeem humanity and the cosmos into the metaphorical “rightful place in the kinship circle.”
  - The Bible doesn’t define redemption; instead, we see redemption in action through the biblical narrative (see the narrative of Exodus, Ruth, or Hosea).

6. **Covenant** – covenant making was widespread throughout the ancient Near East.

“an agreement enacted between two parties in which one or both make promises under oath to perform or refrain from certain actions stipulated in advance.”<sup>3</sup>

- Covenants create and define relationships (like a marriage covenant).
- Israel is the only nation in a “covenant relationship” with their national God.
- We enter a “covenant relationship” with God through the New Covenant, which was mediated by Jesus and ratified by His blood.

7. **Conceptualizing God through Torah, Commandments, and Offering (Sacrifice):**

English	Hebrew	Hebrew Concept
Law	<i>Torah</i>	To teach, to guide, to instruct
Commandment	<i>Mitzvah</i>	It shares a root that means “bond” or “connect.”
Offering	<i>Korban</i>	Root means to “approach” or “come near.”

- The “law” is an instruction manual; a “commandment” is a connection point; an offering – is how you approach or come near God.
- We approach/come near God through the blood of Jesus as our offering.
- We connect to God through keeping His commands (Matt. 7:21).

8. **Ancient Concept of Redemption – illustration:**

- Fathers House – “*Beth Ab*”

<sup>2</sup> Richter, Sandra L. 2008. *The Epic of Eden: a Christian Entry into the Old Testament*. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, (p. 45).

<sup>3</sup> Mendenhall, George E. and Heroin, Gary A. 1992. “Covenant” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Edited by David Noel Freedman. First edition. New York: Doubleday (pp. 1179-1202).