

One passage that illustrates the 'already/not yet' sense of the kingdom of God: "You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth" (Rev 5:10).

2F. The so-called "mystery form" of the kingdom (cf. the parables of Matthew 13 and Mark 4) indicates an inauguration of it prior to the full actualization of it (i.e., a *realizing* eschatology).

See Matthew 13:10-43.

3F. Consider the following summaries:

1G. Note first Hoyt's concentric-circles diagram as a review.

2G. Also listen to Ladd's five areas of comparison and contrast from *Presence of the Future*:

1H. "The Church is not the Kingdom" [i.e., there is no replacement of the Kingdom by the Church].

2H. "The Kingdom creates the Church" [i.e., it is bigger].

3H. "The Church witnesses to the Kingdom" [cf. the significance of Acts 20:25; 28:31].

4H. "The Church is the instrument of the Kingdom."

5H. "The Church is the custodian of the Kingdom."

3E. Specifically, concerning the Church and the future mediatorial (i.e., Messianic) Kingdom with its special ethnic focus on Israel, consider Spencer's integration of the biblical data:

“Israel and the Church are distinguished *semantically*. That is, ‘Israel’ and the ‘Church’ are never interchangeable terms. They never signify or ‘pick out’ the same group of people. ‘Israel’ never loses its very obvious Old Testament ethnic sense. ‘Church’ is always international and multi-ethnic. Here is at least a portion of the *sine qua non* of dispensationalism. It rejects any ‘New Israel’ or ‘True Israel’ definition for the Church, thus insuring a Jewish (though not *merely* Jewish) fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. The recipients of the Abrahamic promises and their sequels in the Old Testament *expand* after Pentecost, but they do not *switch*; there is no *replacement* of ethnic Israel. Likewise, there can be no return to the previous, exclusively ethnic, nature of the people of God. Thus, [progressive] dispensationalism ... distinguishes two peoples of God semantically in the terms ‘Israel’ and ‘Church.’ It affirms one people of God, however, redemptively and eschatologically. Even as there is continuity as well as expansion between the family of Abraham and the nation of Israel, so there is continuity as well as expansion between the nation of Israel and the Body of Christ, the Church.”

3C. The covenants of God (i.e., the biblical, not the so-called theological, covenants)

ID. Ancient Near Eastern context

IE. Basic covenant form:

IF. Preamble

2F. History of relationship of the parties

3F. Declaration of future relationship

4F. Details of new relationship

5F. Invocation of respective gods

6F. Pronouncement of blessings and cursings

2E. Basic covenant types:

IF. Suzerain–Vassal (more [although not exclusively] obligatory)

2F. Royal grant (more [although not exclusively] promissory)

Note: Other terms have been used to describe these two basic types; e.g.:

“administrative vs. promissory,” “conditional vs. unconditional,” etc.

Remember: For most covenants, both extra-biblical and biblical, some hints of conditionality may be found in the so-called unconditional covenants, and vice versa.

3E. Common covenant attendants; e.g.:

1F. Ratification ceremonies

2F. Covenant meals

3F. Marriage confirmations

4F. Stela (public monuments), tokens, signs, etc.

2D. Biblical data

1E. The terms:

1F. *B<sup>e</sup>rit* in the Old Testament

1G. Possible ANE connotations

1H. “to eat, dine”

2H. “between,” “among”

3H. to “choose,” “determine,” “fix,” etc.

4H. a “clasp” or “fetter”

2G. The ‘making’ or ‘establishment’ of a covenant:

1H. usually the verb “to cut”

2H. also: “to place, put”; “to lift up”; “to enter”; “to establish, confirm”; “to stand”; “to keep, maintain”; etc.

3G. The orientation of the covenant:

1H. Horizontal: man to man; nation to nation; etc.

2H. Vertical: God with an individual or nation

2F. *Diathēkē* in the New Testament

1G. Different from classical literature where a *diathēkē* referred to one's last will and testament, and a *sunthēkē* referred to a covenant or treaty.

2G. Mostly, as influenced by LXX, *diathēkē* in the New Testament means "covenant" like Old Testament *b<sup>e</sup>rit*; however, a few times in Hebrews the element of the last will and "testament" is added (cf. 9:16–17).

2E. The theology (cf. and contra. Lightner's charts for an introduction)

1F. The granddaddy of all biblical covenants: the Abrahamic Covenant.

1G. Cf. Genesis 12:1–3; 13:15; 15:18; 17:1–8, 19; etc.

2G. Also, cf. McComiskey's summary of its features from *The Covenants of Promise*:

"In its totality, then, the Abrahamic promise includes the promise of an offspring, the promise of blessing for Abraham, the promise that Abraham's name would be great, the promise of blessing for those who favor Abraham and disfavor for those who do not, the promise that Abraham's descendants would occupy the land of Canaan, the promise of divine blessing for Gentiles, the promise that the LORD would be the God of those who comprise Abraham's offspring, and the promise that kings would be descended from Abraham."

2F. Other biblical covenants flowing out of it; e.g.:

1G. 2 Samuel 7 with 23:5 with Psalm 89:3 and Jeremiah 33:20–22

2G. Jeremiah 31:31–34; etc.

3F. Special features; e.g.:

1G. the "seed" imagery:

IH. A survey:

1I. Biologically (i.e., genealogically) viewed; e.g.:

IJ. Genesis 12:7; 13:15–16; 15:5; 17:2, 5–10, 13, 16, 19–20; 18:18; 21:12; 22:17–18; 26:3–4, 24; 28:13–14; 32:12; 35:11–12; 46:3; 48:4, 16

2J. The Messianic genealogies of Matthew 1 and Luke 3

3J. Acts 3:25–26

4J. Galatians 3:8, 15–16

2I. Spiritually viewed; cf. Genesis 12:3 with e.g.:

1J. Matthew 28:19

2J. Romans 4:13–18

3J. Galatians 3:7–9

2H. A synthesis; cf. McComisky (*The Covenants of Promise*):

“As the promise of the offspring unfolds throughout both testaments, its complexity becomes apparent. Two patterns emerge. First, there is an expansion observable in the concept, for the ancient promise says that Abraham’s immediate descendants are to become as numerous as the stars. The New Testament continues this expansion by including in that multitude all the people of faith. One man becomes the father of uncounted multitudes who follow his example of faithful obedience. The other pattern is a narrowing of the concept. Within this dramatic expansion of the offspring, one figure begins to emerge. He is the offspring of David, the ‘seed’ par excellence.”