

## 1285. berith

### Lexical Summary

berith: covenant, treaty, league

Original Word: בְּרִית

Part of Speech: Noun Feminine

Transliteration: briyth

Pronunciation: buh-REETH

Phonetic Spelling: (ber-eeth')

KJV: confederacy, (con-)feder(-ate), covenant, league

NASB: covenant, treaty, league, allied, covenants

Word Origin: [from [H1262 \(בָּרַח - eat\)](#) (in the sense of cutting (like [H1254 \(בָּרַח - Create\)](#))))]

1. a compact (because made by passing between pieces of flesh)

### Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

confederacy, confederate, covenant, league

From [barah](#) (in the sense of cutting (like [bara'](#))); a compact (because made by passing between pieces of flesh) -- confederacy, (con-)feder(-ate), covenant, league.

see HEBREW [barah](#)

see HEBREW [bara'](#)

### NAS Exhaustive Concordance

#### Word Origin

from an unused word

#### Definition

a covenant

#### NASB Translation

allied (1), allies\* (1), covenant (275), covenants (1), El-berith\* (1), league (2), treaty (4).

Brown-Driver-Briggs

<sup>285</sup>בְּרִית **noun feminine covenant** (𐤁𐤓𐤀𐤀 Aramaic ܩܘܕܫܐ, δαθήκη; *constitutio*) — ב' [Genesis 9:13](#) 199t.; suffix בְּרִיתִי [Genesis 6:18](#) 50t.; בְּרִיתְךָ [Deuteronomy 33:9](#); בְּרִיתְךָ [Psalm 44:18](#) 11t.; בְּרִיתְכֶם [Isaiah 28:18](#); בְּרִיתְךָ [Ezekiel 16:61](#); בְּרִיתוֹ [Exodus 2:24](#) 18t.; — *pact, compact, covenant*.

I. *between men*.

**1** *treaty, alliance, league*: Abraham and Amorites [Genesis 14:13](#); Edom and its allies Obadiah 7; with Philistines [Genesis 21:27,32](#) (E) [Genesis 26:28](#) (J); Jacob and Laban [Genesis 31:44](#) (J); Joshua and Gibeonites [Joshua 9:6,7,11,15,16](#) (J); Israel and Canaanites [Exodus 23:32](#); [Exodus 34:12,15](#) (JE) [Deuteronomy 7:2](#); [Judges 2:2](#); Ammonites and Jabesh [1 Samuel 11:1](#); Solomon and Hiram [1 Kings 5:26](#); Ahab and Benhadad [1 Kings 20:34](#); Syria and Israel [1 Kings 15:19](#) [2Chronicles 16:3](#); Nebuchadnezzar and Zedekiah [Ezekiel 17:13-19](#); nations against Israel [Psalm 83:6](#); nations with Egypt [Ezekiel 30:5](#); Ephraim and Assyria [Hosea 12:2](#); Judah and Israel [Ezekiel 16:61](#); Judah and Tyre [Amos 1:9](#); Assyria and Judah [Isaiah 33:8](#); נגיד ברית *a prince in league* (with him) [Daniel 11:22](#) (so He Ew; Hi Meinh Bev reference to high priest Onias III, & translate *prince of covenant*, compare AV RV); figurative, with death [Isaiah 28:15,18](#); with stones of the field [Job 5:23](#).

**2** *constitution, ordinance*, between monarch and subjects: David and Abner [2 Samuel 3:12,13,21](#); David and the elders of Israel [2 Samuel 5:3](#) = [1 Chronicles 11:3](#); Zedekiah and his people [Jeremiah 34:8-18](#); hostile prince and Israelites [Daniel 9:27](#).

**3** *agreement, pledge*: Jehoiada and captains [2 Kings 11:4](#) [2Chronicles 23:1](#); with oneself [Job 31:1](#); with Leviathan to be a servant [Job 40:28](#); between man and man [Hosea 10:4](#) compare בעל ברית [Judges 8:33](#); [Judges 9:4](#) = אל ברית [Judges 9:46](#).

**4** *alliance* of friendship between David and Jonathan [1 Samuel 18:3](#); [1 Samuel 20:8](#); [1 Samuel 23:18](#) compare [Psalm 55:21](#).

**5** *alliance* of marriage [Proverbs 2:17](#); [Malachi 2:14](#). — In all cases כרת ברית is the technical phrase for making covenant except [Jeremiah 34:10](#) באו בברית; [Daniel 9:27](#) הגביר ברית ל. Various prepositions are used, most often ל [Exodus 23:32](#) +, but also עם [Genesis 26:28](#) +, את [Samuel 3:12](#) +, בין [Chronicles 16:3](#).

## II. *between God and man.*

**1** *alliance* of friendship (חברות) [Psalm 25:14](#).

**2** *covenant*, as a divine constitution or ordinance with signs or pledges (see אבות).

a. *with Noah* [Genesis 9:9-17](#) (P) [Isaiah 54:10](#); [Jeremiah 33:20,25](#); a divine promise that there would be no other deluge.

b. *with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob* [Genesis 15:18](#) (J) [Genesis 17:2-21](#) [Exodus 2:24](#); [Exodus 6:4,5](#); [Leviticus 26:42](#) (P) [2 Kings 13:23](#); [1 Chronicles 16:15](#) = [Psalm 105:8](#); [Psalm 105:10](#); [Nehemiah 9:8](#); [Jeremiah 34:18](#); a promise to multiply their seed, give them the land of Canaan, and make them a blessing to the nations.

c. *with Israel at Sinai* = Horeb, with a covenant sacrifice [Exodus 19:5](#); [Exodus 24:7,8](#) (E) [Exodus 34:10,27,28](#) (J) [Exodus 31:16](#); [Leviticus 2:13](#) (P) [Leviticus 24:8](#); [Leviticus 26:9,15,25,44,45](#) (H) [Deuteronomy 4:13](#); renewed in plains of Moab [Deuteronomy 28:69](#); with blessings and curses [Deuteronomy 29:20](#); frequently referred to in other books [2Chronicles 34:32](#); [Psalm 25:10](#); [Psalm 44:18](#); [Psalm 50:5](#); [Psalm 50:16](#); [Psalm 74:20](#); [Psalm 78:10](#); [Psalm 78:37](#); [Psalm 103:18](#); [Psalm 106:45](#); [Psalm 111:5](#); [Psalm 111:9](#); [Isaiah 56:4,6](#); [Jeremiah 1:2,3,6,8,10](#); [Jeremiah 14:21](#); [Jeremiah 22:9](#); [Jeremiah 31:32](#); [Ezekiel 16:8,59,60](#); [Ezekiel 44:7](#); [Daniel 9:4](#); [Daniel 11:28,30,32](#); [Hosea 6:7](#); [Hosea 8:1](#); [Zechariah 9:11](#); [Zechariah 11:10](#); a divine constitution given to Israel with promises on condition of obedience and penalties for disobedience, in the form of tables of the covenant [Deuteronomy 9:9,11,15](#), inscribed with the ten words, placed in ארון ברית the ark of the covenant [Numbers 10:33](#) 40t. (see

ארון; in [1 Samuel 4:3,4](#) (twice in verse); [1 Samuel 4:5](#) omits ברית after ארון<sup>m5</sup> We Dr); set forth in דברי הברית *words of the covenant* [Exodus 34:28](#) (J) [Deuteronomy 28:69](#); [Deuteronomy 29:8](#); [2 Kings 23:3](#) (= 2 Chronicles 34:31) [Jeremiah 11:2-8](#); written in ספר הברית *the book of the covenant* [Exodus 24:7](#) (E compare [Exodus 34:27](#) J) [2 Kings 23:2,21](#) (compare 2 Chronicles 34:30).

d. *with Phinehas* [Numbers 25:12](#),13 (P), a constitution, establishing an everlasting priesthood in his line; compare ברית הכהנים [Nehemiah 13:29](#) & ברית הלוי [Malachi 2:4,8](#).

e. *with Joshua and Israel* [Joshua 24:25](#) (E), an ordinance or constitutional agreement to serve Yahweh only.

f. *with David* [Psalm 89:4](#); [Psalm 89:29](#); [Psalm 89:34](#); [Psalm 89:39](#); [Psalm 132:12](#); [Jeremiah 33:21](#) (compare [2 Samuel 7](#) = [1 Chronicles 17](#)); a divine promise to the seed of David of an everlasting kingdom, the relation of sonship, and the superintendence of the temple (compare Psalms 2..)

g. *Jehoiada and the people* [2 Kings 11:17](#) [2Chronicles 23:3](#), a constitutional agreement to be the people of Yahweh.

h. *Hezekiah and the people* [2Chronicles 29:10](#), a constitutional agreement to reform the worship.

i. *Josiah and the people* [2 Kings 23:3](#), a constitutional agreement to obey the book of the covenant.

j. *Ezra and the people* [Ezra 10:3](#), a constitutional agreement to put away foreign wives and observe the Law.

k. *the prophetic covenant*, a divine promise through a series of prophets to establish a new constitution ברית חדשה [Jeremiah 31:31](#), with new institutions and precepts [Isaiah 42:6](#); [Isaiah 49:8](#); [Isaiah 55:3](#); [Isaiah 59:21](#); [Isaiah 61:8](#); [Jeremiah 31:31,33](#); [Jeremiah 32:40](#); [Jeremiah 50:5](#); [Ezekiel 16:60,62](#); [Ezekiel 20:37](#); [Ezekiel 34:25](#); [Ezekiel 37:26](#); [Hosea 2:20](#). In Isa<sup>2</sup> the Messianic servant is ברית עם [Isaiah 42:6](#); [Isaiah 49:8](#), compare מלאך הברית [Malachi 3:1](#).

### III. Phrases.

**1 covenant making:** כרת ברית [Genesis 15:18](#); [Exodus 34:10,27](#) (J) [Joshua 24:25](#) (E) [Deuteronomy 5:2,3](#); [Deuteronomy 28:69](#); [Deuteronomy 29:13](#); [Deuteronomy 29:24](#); [1 Kings 5:26](#); [2 Kings 11:17](#); [2 Kings 17:35,38](#); [2 Kings 23:3](#); [2Chronicles 21:7](#); [23:3,16](#); [29:10](#); [34:30](#); [Ezra 10:3](#); [Nehemiah 9:8](#); [Psalm 50:5](#); [Psalm 89:4](#); [Isaiah 55:3](#); [Isaiah 61:8](#); [Jeremiah 11:10](#); [Jeremiah 31:31,32,33](#); [Jeremiah 32:40](#); [Jeremiah 34:13](#); [Ezekiel 34:25](#); [Ezekiel 37:26](#); [Hosea 2:20](#); ברית הקים *establish a covenant* [Genesis 6:18](#); [Genesis 9:9,11,17](#); [Genesis 17:7,19,21](#); [Exodus 6:4](#) (P) [Ezekiel 16:60,62](#), but *confirm covenant* [Leviticus 26:9](#) (?;H) [Deuteronomy 8:18](#); נתן ברית [Genesis 17:2](#); [Numbers 25:12](#) (P); שם ברית [Samuel 23:5](#) (poetry); עבר בברית [Deuteronomy 29:11](#); בא [Chronicles 15:12](#); [Ezekiel 16:8](#); צוה ברית [Psalm 111:9](#); נשא ברית על פי [Psalm 50:16](#). (compare further on these Dr<sup>JPh xi. 1882, 210 ff.</sup>)

**2 covenant keeping:** on the part of man שמר ברית [Kings 11:11](#); [Nehemiah 1:5](#); [Nehemiah 9:32](#); [Psalm 78:10](#); [Psalm 103:18](#); [Psalm 132:12](#); [Daniel 9:4](#), נצר ברית [Deuteronomy 33:9](#); [Psalm 25:10](#), מחזיקים בברית [Isaiah 56:4,6](#); on the part of God זכר ברית [Genesis 9:15,16](#); [Exodus 2:24](#); [Exodus 6:5](#) (all P), [Leviticus 26:42](#) (3 t. in verse) (H; on suffix compare Di Ges<sup>s 128</sup>, 1 R b) [Leviticus 26:45](#) (H) [Psalm 105:8](#); [Psalm 106:45](#); [Psalm 111:5](#); [1 Chronicles 16:15](#); [Ezekiel 16:15,60](#). Thus we have נאמנת [Psalm 89:29](#); ברית עולם [Genesis 9:16](#); [Genesis 17:7,13,18,19](#); [Exodus 31:16](#); [Leviticus 24:8](#); [Numbers 18:19](#); [Numbers 25:13](#) (P) [2 Samuel 23:5](#) (poetry) [1 Chronicles 16:17](#) (= [Psalm 105:10](#)) [Isaiah 24:5](#); [Isaiah 55:3](#); [Isaiah 61:8](#); [Jeremiah 32:40](#); [Jeremiah 50:5](#); [Ezekiel 16:60](#); [Ezekiel 37:26](#); ברית מלח [Leviticus 2:13](#); [2Chronicles 13:5](#); [21:7](#) (a cov't. with sacrificial meal and salt; on cov't. with salt in Arabia compare We<sup>Skizzen iii. 124</sup>); ברית שלום [Numbers 25:12](#) (P) [Isaiah 54:10](#); [Ezekiel 34:25](#); [Ezekiel 37:26](#); הברית והחסד [Deuteronomy 7:9,12](#); [1 Kings 8:23](#) (= [2 Chronicles 6:14](#)) [Nehemiah 1:5](#); [Nehemiah 9:32](#); [Daniel 9:4](#); ברית קדש [Daniel 11:28,30](#); מסרת הברית [Ezekiel 20:37](#).

**3 covenant violation:** עבר ברית [Deuteronomy 17:2](#); [Joshua 7:11,15](#); [Joshua 23:16](#) (D) [Judges 2:20](#); [2 Kings 18:12](#); [Hosea 6:7](#); [Hosea 8:1](#); הפר ברית [Genesis 17:14](#); [Leviticus 26:15,44](#) (H) [Deuteronomy 31:16,20](#) (J) [Judges 2:1](#); [Isaiah 24:5](#) (twice in verse); [Jeremiah 11:10](#); [Jeremiah 14:21](#); [Jeremiah 31:32](#); [Jeremiah](#)

[33:20,21](#); [Ezekiel 16:59](#); [Ezekiel 17:18,19](#); [Ezekiel 44:7](#); [Zechariah 11:10](#); עזב  
[Kings 19:10,14](#); [Jeremiah 22:9](#); [Daniel 11:30](#); 2 [Kings 17:15](#);  
נאר ברית [Psalm 89:39](#); חלל ברית [Psalm 89:34](#); [Malachi 2:10](#); שִׁקַּר בְּבְרִית  
[Psalm 44:18](#); שִׁכַּח בְּרִית [Deuteronomy 4:23,31](#); [Jeremiah 50:5](#).

ברש see below בְּרוּשׁ, בְּרוּת

ברה. see below בְּרוּת

באר see below בְּרוּתָה, בְּרִיתִי

ברז (*? compare Aramaic כרז bore, pierce, or Arabic بَرَزَ, appear*).

Topical Lexicon

### **Nature and Essence of בְּרִית (Covenant)**

At its core בְּרִית describes a solemn, binding relationship established by oath, sealed with a sign, and administered by God as the highest party. It is both relational and legal: a bond of fellowship that carries the weight of juridical commitment. Whether between God and humanity or among humans, a בְּרִית creates an enduring framework of loyalty, blessing, and accountability.

### **Covenant Components**

1. Oath-making words (e.g., [Genesis 26:28](#)).
2. Sacrificial or symbolic act, frequently blood ([Exodus 24:5–8](#)).
3. A written record or “book of the covenant” ([Exodus 24:7](#)).
4. A sign to memorialize and perpetuate the relationship ([Genesis 9:12-17](#); [17:11](#)).
5. Blessings for faithfulness and curses for violation ([Deuteronomy 28](#)).
6. A covenant meal or shared bread and salt, embodying fellowship ([Genesis 31:54](#)).

### **Divine Covenants in Redemptive History**

- Noahic Covenant: [Genesis 9:9-17](#). An unconditional pledge never again to destroy all flesh by flood, secured by the rainbow. It universalizes common grace and steady seasons ([Genesis 8:22](#)).
- Abrahamic Covenant: [Genesis 12:1-3](#); 15:7-21; 17:1-14. It guarantees land, seed, and worldwide blessing, grounded in divine promise alone: “Abram believed the LORD, and it was credited to him as righteousness” ([Genesis 15:6](#)). Circumcision serves as the covenant sign.
- Mosaic (Sinai) Covenant: [Exodus 19–24](#). Israel is constituted “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” ([Exodus 19:6](#)). The Decalogue and ordinances define covenant obedience. Blood sprinkled on both altar and people forges relational union: “Behold the blood of the covenant” ([Exodus 24:8](#)).
- Priestly Covenant: [Numbers 25:12-13](#); [Nehemiah 13:29](#). Phinehas’ zeal secures “a covenant of perpetual priesthood” grounded in atonement.
- Davidic Covenant: [2 Samuel 7:8-16](#); [Psalm 89:3-4](#). The eternal kingship promise advances the seed theme to its Messianic climax.
- New Covenant: [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#); [Ezekiel 36:25-28](#). Internal law-writing, Spirit renewal, and full forgiveness converge. [Hebrews 8](#) interprets its ratification through Jesus’ atoning blood ([Matthew 26:28](#)).

### **Human-to-Human Covenants**

- Political treaties: Abraham and Abimelech ([Genesis 21:27-32](#)); Joshua with Gibeon ([Joshua 9](#)).
- Marriage: [Malachi 2:14](#) calls marriage “your companion and wife by covenant,” portraying marital fidelity as covenant faithfulness.
- Friendship: Jonathan and David ([1 Samuel 18:3-4](#); 20:16-17).
- Commerce and Vassalage: Hiram and Solomon ([1 Kings 5:12](#)).

### **Ritual Expressions**

The idiom “cut a covenant” (karat berit) reflects the slaughter of animals. The dramatic self-maledictory rite in [Genesis 15:9-18](#), where a smoking firepot and flaming torch pass between the pieces, communicates God’s unilateral

assumption of covenant curses upon Himself. The annual Day of Atonement ([Leviticus 16](#)) renews the Mosaic covenant relationship through sprinkled blood ([Leviticus 16:15-19](#)).

### **Covenant Loyalty and Apostasy**

Ḥesed (“steadfast love”) is covenantal love ([Deuteronomy 7:9](#)). Violation provokes divine lawsuit (rib). Prophets indict Israel for “breaking the covenant” ([Hosea 6:7](#); [Jeremiah 11:10](#)). Yet covenant mercy ([Isaiah 54:10](#)) guarantees a faithful remnant.

### **Covenant in Psalms and Wisdom Literature**

Psalms celebrates covenant faithfulness: “He has remembered His covenant forever” ([Psalm 105:8](#)). Wisdom warns: “He who despises his oath and breaks a pledge will not escape” ([Proverbs 11:21](#) implied; cf. [Proverbs 2:17](#) on the adulteress).

### **Eschatological Fulfillment**

Isaiah foresees a “covenant for the people” ([Isaiah 42:6](#); 49:8) embodied in the Servant. Ezekiel anticipates an “everlasting covenant of peace” ([Ezekiel 37:26](#)). [Zechariah 9:11](#) grounds Israel’s future liberation “because of the blood of My covenant with you.” All culminate in the cup Christ proclaims: “This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” ([Matthew 26:28](#)).

### **Ministry and Pastoral Implications**

1. Preaching: Tracing the covenant storyline clarifies Scripture’s unity and Christ’s centrality.
2. Sacraments: Baptism and the Lord’s Supper function as covenant signs and seals, echoing circumcision and Passover.
3. Marriage counseling: Upholding covenant language anchors marital vows in divine pattern.
4. Church membership: Covenantal commitment informs polity and mutual accountability.

5. Missions: The Abrahamic promise propels global evangelism, “and all the families of the earth will be blessed” ([Genesis 12:3](#)).

### **Key Theological Themes**

- Sovereignty and Grace: God initiates and sustains His covenants.
- Law and Gospel: Covenant stipulations reveal sin; covenant promises provide redemption.
- Continuity and Fulfillment: The New Covenant consummates, not cancels, earlier covenants, preserving divine faithfulness ([Romans 11:29](#)).
- Mediation: Priests, kings, and prophets foreshadow the ultimate Mediator, Jesus Christ ([1 Timothy 2:5](#); [Hebrews 9:15](#)).

### **Representative Old Testament Occurrences**

[Genesis 6:18](#); 17:2; [Exodus 2:24](#); 34:10; [Leviticus 26:42](#); [Deuteronomy 4:13](#); 29:1; [Joshua 23:16](#); [2 Kings 17:15](#); [Psalm 50:5](#); [Isaiah 24:5](#); [Jeremiah 34:18](#); [Ezekiel 16:62](#); [Daniel 9:4](#); [Malachi 2:5](#).

### **Conclusion**

בְּרִית unites the entire canon, revealing God’s unwavering resolve to dwell with His people through sworn promise, sacrificial blood, and transforming grace, reaching ultimate realization in the eternal covenant secured by Jesus Christ.

