Open Bible Stories

God’s New Covenant

## 0 Introduction

### 0.1 Key Idea

The story God’s New Covenant teaches us that Jesus brings in the blessings of a new way of being restored to relationship with God in the New Covenant.

### 0.2 Creedal Verse

“Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.” Hebrews 9:15

### 0.3 Metanarrative Summary

The eternal God created all things in six days. He made a good and perfect world. He made humans in his image to fill the earth and rule over creation. But humans rebelled against God and ruined God’s creation. God set to restore his world through his promise. God made a covenant with Abraham. He promised to bless all nations through Abraham. God kept his promises across the generations. God provided Abraham with a promised child, Isaac. God gave Isaac a wife and she bore twins, Jacob and Esau. God blessed Jacob and his sons, and the blessing continued to the next generation. God rescued Joseph, one of Jacob’s sons, and used him to rescue his family. God caused his people, the Israelites, to multiply in the land of Egypt; eventually, they became slaves. But, God raised up a deliverer, Moses, to deliver his people from their slavery. God judged the Egyptians with harsh plagues; in the final judgment, he passed over his people who covered their doorposts with the blood of a sacrificed lamb. Then, God delivered the Israelites by bringing them out of Egypt and crossing the Red Sea on dry land. God made a covenant with the Israelites and made them his people. God tested Israel in a series of wilderness wanderings and eventually brought his people into the promised land of Canaan. God raised up deliverers to lead Israel and rescue them from their enemies. God formed Israel into a kingdom. He made a covenant with King David and promised to send a king that would rule his people forever. Many of Israel’s kings were evil and the kingdom of Israel divided into two kingdoms. God sent prophets to warn his people of God’s judgment and call them to repent. When Israel did not repent, God sent his people into exile. After many years, he brought them back to the land. Throughout the Old Testament, God promised to send his Messiah to deliver his people form their sin. After many years, the prophet John was born. He would prepare people for the coming Messiah. At the perfect time, God sent his Son, Jesus, to be born of a virgin Mary. When John and Jesus grew up, John baptized Jesus as a sign that Jesus was God’s beloved Son. Jesus endured all manner of temptation without ever sinning. When he was thirty years old, he launched a public ministry of preaching, teaching, and healing. He taught his disciples about the life of compassion, sacrifice, and forgiveness. He performed many miracles: he fed a crowd of five thousand, he walked on water, he healed the sick, and he cast out demons. He proclaimed to people the nature of real faith, God’s kingdom, and the how fallen humans can be restored in relationship with God. Toward the end of his ministry, Jesus revealed his power and glory to his disciples and raised a dead man to life Jesus was betrayed by one of his disciples and put on trial before a Roman governor Jesus was sentenced to death and crucified on a cross Three days later, Jesus rose again from the dead. After meeting with many of his disciples, Jesus went back to heaven. The Holy Spirit empowered Jesus’ followers and formed them into his church Jesus’ disciples, like Peter and John, performed miracles and preached the good news about Jesus. New leaders like Stephen and Philip served the church and preached about Jesus Even Saul, a persecutor of Jesus’ followers, became a Christian and preached the gospel to many people Jesus is the promised Messiah and brings in blessings of a New Covenant.

## 1 Biblical Interpretation: Observing the Details of the Story

After reading the crafted biblical story, answer the following questions to familiarize yourself with the details of the story.

### 1.1 Observation Questions

#### 49-01

Who gave birth to God’s Son?

How did she became pregnant with Jesus?

Is Jesus both God and human?

How is Jesus both God and human?

#### 49-02

How did Jesus prove that he is God?

What were some of the miracles Jesus did?

#### 49-03

What kind of a teacher was Jesus?

Why should people listen to Jesus’ teaching?

What did Jesus teach about how we should love other people?

#### 49-04

What did Jesus teach about who we should love more than anything else?

#### 49-05

What is the most important thing for anyone?

Is there anything more important than being a part of God’s kingdom?

How can people belong to the kingdom of God?

#### 49-06

How will people respond to Jesus?

What happens to the people that accept Jesus?

What do people do when they reject the message about Jesus?

#### 49-07

Does God care for sinners?

What does God want to do for sinners?

#### 49-08

What does God hate?

What happened because Adam and Eve sinned?

#### 49-09

Who does God love?

How did God show his love for people?

Who are the people God does not punish?

How long will believers in Jesus live?

#### 49-10

What do we deserve from God because of our sin?

What did God do to Jesus when he died on the cross?

How did God punish Jesus?

#### 49-11

Why was Jesus’ sacrifice able to take away the sins of every person in the world?

How much sin will God forgive?

#### 49-12

Will God save us if we do good things?

Can we do anything to make ourselves friends with God?

How can we become friends with God?

What happens if we believe this about Jesus?

#### 49-13

Who will God save?

Will God save those who do not believe in Jesus?

What kinds of people can become friends with God?

Does God love you?

How do people become friends with God?

#### 49-14

What is Jesus calling you to do?

What does Jesus want you to believe?

#### 49-15

What happens when you believe in Jesus?

#### 49-16

If you are a follower of Jesus, are you still an enemy of God?

#### 49-17

Who wants to obey Jesus’ teaching?

Are followers of Jesus still tempted to sin?

What should followers of Jesus do when they sin?

What does God promise to do if we confess our sins?

#### 49-18

What are some of the things that God tells followers of Jesus to do?

What will happen if followers of Jesus do these things?

### 1.2 Translation Questions

Use the following translation questions to understand specific details of the passage. Discuss how you might translate these specific elements of the story.

#### 49-01

**the Holy Spirit came to her and made her become pregnant** The Holy Spirit caused Mary to become pregnant with Jesus. Mary was a virgin, so you would not expect her to become pregnant. Instead, the Holy Spirit caused her to become pregnant. Nothing sexual happened. God the Holy Spirit caused a miracle to happen by making a virgin pregnant with a child. How would you express **the Holy Spirit came to her and made her become pregnant** to mean the Holy Spirit caused a miracle to happen by making the virgin Mary pregnant with Jesus?

  

#### 49-02

**raised dead people to life** One of the miracles Jesus did was to bring dead people back to life. How would you express **raised dead people to life** to mean Jesus caused dead people to become alive again?

  

**he turned five loaves of bread and two small fish into enough food to feed over 5,000 people** Jesus fed over 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two small fish. This was a miracle. Jesus caused this small portion of food to last to feed the large crowd of people. How would you express **he turned five loaves of bread and two small fish into enough food to feed over 5,000 people** to mean Jesus used only five loaves of bread and two small fish to feed a crowd that was more than 5,000 people?

  

#### 49-03

**Jesus was also a great teacher** Jesus taught people the truth. Everything that Jesus said was true. How would you express **Jesus was also a great teacher** to mean Jesus was a very important and an excellent teacher?

  

**to love other people the same way you love yourself** Jesus told people to care for others to the same degree (as much as) that they care for themselves. How would you express **to love other people the same way you love yourself** to mean to show genuine concern and care for others the same amount that people care for themselves?

  

#### 49-04

**love God more than you love anything else** Jesus taught his followers to **love** God more than all things. How would you express **love God more than you love anything else** to mean that we should love God most of all?

  

#### 49-05

**it is better to be in God’s kingdom than to have anything else in the world** Jesus compared being in God’s kingdom with having things in the world. Jesus taught that being a part of God’s kingdom is better than having anything else. How would you express **it is better to be in God’s kingdom than to have anything else in the world** to mean people should desire to be a part of God’s kingdom more than anything else because being a part of God’s kingdom is most?

  

#### 49-06

**other people will not** Jesus taught that God saves people who accept Jesus. However, God does not save people who do not accept Jesus. How would you express **other people will not** to mean **other people will not** accept Jesus and therefore will not be saved?

  

**God’s Word is like seed** The message of salvation is compared to a seed that is sown on the ground. The seed has the potential for life and growth, but only grows if it falls on good soil. How would you express **God’s Word is like seed** to mean the message of Jesus saving people from their sins is similar to seed that is scattered on the ground?

  

#### 49-07

**to make them his children** God wants to forgive the sins of people and cause them to become a part of his family. When people believe in Jesus, God brings these believers into his family and makes them his children. How would you express **to make them his children** to mean God wants to make people a part of his family when they believe in Jesus?

  

#### 49-08

**Every person in the world sins and is far from God** All people disobey God’s commands and do evil things. Sinful people do not have a close or personal relationship with God as friends who have. In this way, sin makes people far from God. How would you express **Every person in the world sins and is far from God** to mean all people do evil things against God’s commands and this causes people to not be in friendship with God?

  

#### 49-09

**But God loved everyone in the world** Everyone is an enemy of God, so you would expect God to hate and destroy them. Instead, God loves everyone and gave his son for them. How would you express **But God loved everyone in the world** to mean all people are enemies of God and deserve to be punished but God treated them differently than expected by loving all people in the world?

  

**he gave his only Son** God loved people God allowed his only Son, Jesus, to be a sacrifice for sins. God sacrificed Jesus by allowing him to be crucified on the cross. How would you express **he gave his only Son** to mean God offered his only Son to the world as a sacrifice for sins?

  

**Instead, believers will live with him forever** God sacrificed Jesus so that he would not punish believers in Jesus. The opposite of punishing sinners is allowing them to live forever with God. Also, those who believe in God still sin, so you would expect them to be punished. Instead, they will live with God forever. How would you express **Instead, believers will live with him forever** to mean rather than God punishing people who believe in Jesus, God did the opposite by allowing them to live with God forever?

  

#### 49-10

**because you have sinned** People deserve to be punished for their sin. The reason God is right to punish people with death is that all people sin. How would you express **because you have sinned** to mean the reason it is right for God to punish you with death is you did evil things and did not follow God’s commands?

  

**but Jesus took the punishment for sin in our place** People who sin should be punished for the wrong/evil things they have done. You would expect God to be angry with you because of your sin. Instead, he punished Jesus. How would you express **but Jesus took the punishment for sin in our place** to mean God did the opposite of punishing us for our sin and punished Jesus instead of us?

  

#### 49-11

**take away** The sacrifice of Jesus causes God to look at our sin as if it never existed. If people believe in Jesus, God removes the penalty for their sin. How would you express **take away** to mean remove the punishment for sin?

  

**so God will forgive any sin** Jesus offered himself as a sacrifice to God. Jesus was punished **so** that people who believed in Jesus would not be punished. The result of this is God will forgive any kind of sin that people commit if they believe in Jesus. How would you express **so God will forgive any sin** to mean the result of Jesus sacrificing himself is God will forgive people of all kinds of sins if they believe in Jesus?

  

#### 49-12

**If you believe this** God does not forgive the sins of everyone. God forgives the sins of people who believe Jesus is God’s Son who died on the cross as a sacrifice for sin and rose again from the dead. How would you express **If you believe this** to mean God will forgive you of your sin on the condition that you believe that Jesus is the Son of God who died on the cross and rose again from the dead?

  

#### 49-13

**But he will not save those who do not believe in him** God saves everyone who believes. But people who do not believe are excluded from the everyone. Some people do not believe in Jesus and God will not save those people. How would you express **But he will not save those who do not believe in him** to mean God will only save those who believe in Jesus and accept him as their Master and he will not save those who do not believe in him?

  

**so he can be a friend to you** God loves people and wants them to believe in Jesus. The result of believing in Jesus is God can be a friend with those people who believe in Jesus. How would you express **so he can be a friend to you** to mean the result of believing in Jesus is people would no longer be enemies with God but they would have peace with God as friends have between each other?

  

#### 49-14

**Jesus is calling you to believe in him** Jesus is inviting people entrust their whole life to him. This is the only way God will save people from their sin. How would you express **Jesus is calling you to believe in him** to mean Jesus is telling people to trust in him to save them from their sin?

  

#### 49-15

**Satan no longer rules you in his kingdom of darkness** Darkness is used here to refer to sin and everything that is evil. The Bible often compares evil to darkness, and goodness to light. Satan uses his power to do evil things against people. Satan no longer has power or control over those people who believe in Jesus. How would you express **Satan no longer rules you in his kingdom of darkness** to mean Satan does not have power to control people in ways that are evil like the darkness?

  

**God is now ruling over you in his kingdom of light** Light here refers to God’s holiness and goodness. The Bible often compares evil to darkness, and goodness to light. God uses his power over people in ways that are good and righteous. People who believe in Jesus are under God’s power. How would you express **God is now ruling over you in his kingdom of light** to mean God rules over people who believe in Jesus in a way that is righteous and good like the light?

  

#### 49-16

**If you are a follower of Jesus** God does not forgive the sins of all people. God forgives the sins of people who have believed in Jesus and become followers of him. If you are a Christ follower, then God has forgiven your sins and you are his close friend. How would you express **If you are a follower of Jesus** to mean God has already forgiven the sins of those people who have become followers of Jesus?

  

**God considers you to be a close friend** All people are sinful and enemies of God. When people believe in Jesus this relationship changes. God regards people who believe in Jesus as friends. How would you express **God considers you to be a close friend** to mean God thinks of people who believe in Jesus as loving friends who are peace with one another?

  

#### 49-17

**If you are a friend of God and a servant of Jesus the Master** People do not naturally want to obey Jesus. However, people who believe in Jesus have become a friend of God and a servant of Jesus. The result of this change is they will want to obey Jesus. How would you express **If you are a friend of God and a servant of Jesus the Master** to mean people who have become a friend of God and servant of Jesus will desire to do the things that Jesus commands?

  

**if you confess your sins** God does not forgive the sins of all people. He only forgives the sins of people who acknowledge to God that they have done evil things against God’s commands and who ask God to forgive them of their sins. How would you express **if you confess your sins** to mean God promises to forgive the sins of people who admit to God what they have done wrong?

  

#### 49-18

**You must also tell other people what he has done for you** God wants people who believe in Jesus to tell other people how God has saved them. This means telling other people who Jesus is and how he is a sacrifice for sins. How would you express **You must also tell other people what he has done for you** to mean God commands believers in Jesus to tell other people how Jesus saved them from their sins and how he can save them from their sins as well?

  

## 2 Theological Dialogue: Discussing the Meaning of the Story

Take time to explore the meaning of this story together as a community. Use the following discussions as a way to grasp what truth the story teaches.

### 2.1 Discourse Questions

##### How did Jesus bring about the New Covenant and make it possible for people to be saved from their sin? (49-01, 49-02, 49-03, 49-04, 49-05, 49-06, 49-07, 49-08, 49-09, 49-10, 49-11)

##### How do people experience God’s salvation and become followers of Jesus? (49-12, 49-13, 49-14)

##### What good things happen to people who believe in Jesus? (49-15, 49-16, 49-17, 49-18)

### 2.2 Theological Questions

Answer the following theology questions as a community. Discuss what truths this story teaches.

1. How did Jesus bring about the New Covenant (i.e., a new way of relating to God)? What does this story tell about all that Jesus did to make it possible to be at peace with God?
2. What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus? How does this story teach us about what it means to experience God’s salvation and follow Jesus?
3. What are the benefits that come with God’s salvation? How does this story teach us about the good things that followers of Jesus enjoy?

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## 3 Personal Reflection: Following the Teaching of the Story

Take a moment to allow this story to evaluate your own life and to consider how God would have you respond. After this reflection, use the quality checking questions to check your translation draft among the translation team.

### 3.1 Journal Reflection

Prayerfully think about the following personal reflection questions. Write/Record your answers and/or discuss them as a group.

1. What have you learned about who Jesus is and how he has come to save people?
2. Before believing in Jesus, how were you an enemy with God?
3. How did God bring you to become a follower of Jesus? How is God calling you to follow Jesus as your Savior and Master?
4. What are some of the benefits of salvation that cause you to celebrate with joy?

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