**‘Covenants’**

***17And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. 18But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you.***Genesis 6:17-18

The first time the word “covenant” is used in the Bible is in Genesis 6:18. God said, ***18 “But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you.”*** Since it is the first time we see it, it is important for us to understand what a covenant is, because God makes “covenants” with people. What are covenants?

There are three types of covenants found in the Bible: The “Royal Grant,” The “Parity,” and The “Suzerain-Vassal” covenants.[[1]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2018/02/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn1)

* The **“Royal Grant”** covenant was an **unconditional** covenant which a king granted to someone. No conditions were placed upon the one who received a “Royal Grant” covenant. It was up to the king to uphold this covenant. An example of this type of covenant is found in Genesis 12. God makes a covenant with Abram. Abram simply receives it.
* The **“Parity”** covenant was a covenant between equals. This covenant bound the covenanting parties together in mutual friendship or at least in mutual respect for each other’s spheres and interests. Participants called each other “brothers.” David and Jonathan, son of King Saul, had such a covenant. (see 1 Samuel 18:1-4)
* The **“Suzerain-Vassal”** covenant was a **conditional** covenant, which regulated the relationship between a great king (the “suzerain”) and his subject kings (the “vassals”). The great king claimed absolute right or sovereignty. He demanded total loyalty, service, and pledged protection of the subject’s realm and dynasty. All this was on the condition that the vassal remained faithful and loyal to him all the while doing whatever his suzerain demanded. Participants in a “suzerain-vassal” covenant called each other “lord” and “servant” or “father” and “son.” The covenants God made with Abraham (Genesis 17) and Israel at Mt. Sinai (Exodus 19-24) are examples of this type of covenant.

The covenant God will make with Noah after the flood will be a **“Royal Grant”** covenant. God will also make **“Royal Grant”** covenants with Abraham, Phinehas (the zealous priest of Numbers 25), and David. The **“New** **Covenant”** God will make with the house of Israel (Jeremiah 31:31-34) and the house of Judah will be a **“Royal Grant”** covenant.

*Kathleen*

[[1]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2018/02/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftnref1) Barker, Kenneth, ed. *The NIV Study Bible, 10th Edition.* Zondervan. Grand Rapids. 1995. p. 19