

Studies & Discussions on Covenant Theology

Session One

Introduction on Covenant Theology

A. What is covenant theology (CT)?

1. Not a Biblical phrase
2. Not something new or just reformed
3. Not something cleverly invented and added to Scripture

In the Scriptures, God always reveals Himself to His people as a God in covenant. Therefore the lens of covenant is necessary to understand accurately all that God has revealed about Himself. (S. Myers)

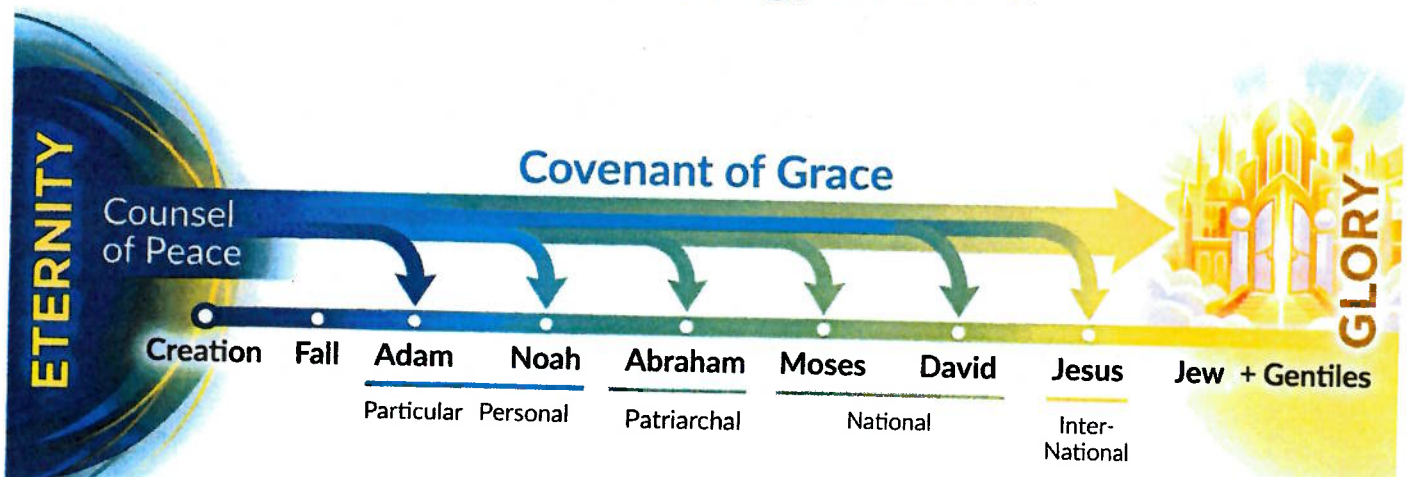
a. For example: The 'Immanuel principle' line of truth

- Gen. 17:7 – Ex. 6:7 – 2 Sam. 7:14 – Ezek. 36:28/Jer. 31:33
- Matt. 1:23 – 2 Cor. 6:16/1 Peter 2:10 – Rev. 21:3

4. Definition of CT:

The study of how God from eternity covenanted within Himself to redeem His people through a covenantal relationship with them in Jesus Christ.

Covenant Theology Overview



- a. CT is framework of *understanding the unity and progression* of God's redemptive work
- b. CT can be likened to the *study of the bone structure* of salvation
 - the entire bone-structure is revealed in *all Scripture together*
 - yet the bone-structure is gradually revealed from Gen to Rev.

B. What is the alternative view to CT: *dispensationalism*

1. Fathered by John Nelson Darby and popularized by the Schofield Bible
2. Dispensationalist *divides history in distinct periods – dispensations*
 - i. **Innocence:** The period before the Fall of Man.
 - ii. **Conscience:** The time from the Fall to the Flood.
 - iii. **Human Government:** The period after the Flood to Abraham's call.
 - iv. **Promise:** The time from Abraham to Moses.
 - v. **Law:** The period of the Mosaic Law.
 - vi. **Grace:** The **current** age of the Church.
 - vii. **Kingdom:** Millennial Kingdom of X on earth
3. Dispensationalists see the history of God's Church as *discontinuity* while CT sees God's dealings as *a continuity of carrying out His same and one redemptive plan*

C. Why study covenant theology?

1. CT helps you to read, understand, relate the main message of the Bible
2. CT helps to explain communion and fellowship with God
3. CT explains and defines the Person and the work of Jesus Christ
4. CT provides firmest and surest foundation of assurance of salvation

- WCF, Ch 3, art 5: *Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, hath chosen, in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of His mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith, or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving Him thereunto: and all to the praise of His glorious grace.*
5. CT helps to understand the NT covenant signs: Baptism & Lord's Supper
 - a. both confirm God's covenant promises to strengthen faith
 - b. CT helps us to understand why we baptize our infants
 - c. CT should guide as we raise 'God's holy seed' (1 Cor. 7:14)
 6. CT helps us to understand the importance of Israel (Rom. 11; Is. 54:5ff)
 7. CT helps us to understand Jesus' assessment of the future judgment as revealed in Matt. 11:20-24 (Amos 3:2)

Discussion Time:

If you are online and have a question, text me while we are here and I will try to answer your questions or note it down.

1. What questions do you have regarding the covenant theology you would like to see covered in the follow-up sessions?
2. Any questions or additions related to this introduction?

For Further Study (which will be covered in our next topic) ...

1. Collect the Scriptures that refer to God's *Counsel of Peace*.
2. Describe on basis of your finding the *content of the Counsel of Peace*. For example, consider
 - a. What did each Person of the Trinity agree to?
 - b. Was the covenant of works part of the Counsel of Peace?
 - c. How is the incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ, related to the Counsel of Peace?
3. What is the relationship between the Counsel of Peace and the Covenant of Grace?
4. Trace the word 'covenant' in the Bible, both in the OT and NT. Jot down what you learn from this word tracing and study. If you want to extent this study, google the meaning of 'covenant' in Hebrew and Greek.
5. What is the relationship between the Covenant of Grace and the Covenant of Works?