

The Church & Doctrines

The Lord's Supper as a Suzerain Covenant

In The Old and New Testament - Part 3

Introduction

The last article finished with a comparison between the Old and New covenants and an observation must be here accepted. Whatever the revealed purposes of God are, they give the unwavering confidence regarding the fulfillment. The unbeliever, like the Egyptian firstborn, had the assured confidence that if no blood was on the lintel and side posts of the door he would be dead in the morning. Likewise, the firstborn of the house where blood was put on the lintel and side posts had the assurance that he would be alive in the morning. The new covenant provides the offer of salvation (1 Tim. 2:4); the way of salvation (2 Tim. 3:15); the eternal blessedness of salvation and the eternal damnation on those who reject it (Jn. 3:16).

The New Covenant

One of the most precious promises of the New Covenant is that I can never be removed out of it because it is unconditional, that is all depending on Divine persons. That does not give me the right to live as I want for it is twice over called "laws". God said, I will "write them in their hearts" (Heb. 8:10) and "I will put my laws into their mind" (Heb. 10:16). God said, "All the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen" (2 Cor. 1:20) which means, they can never be changed and when they are unconditional promises they cannot be nullified. The "laws" written in our hearts and minds are not dead pieces of clinical data. They are living principles. God never puts anything dead in us. These "laws" are made "real" to us due to our bodies being the dwelling place of God. Just as every iota of the tabernacle, from the intricacy woven curtains, the magnificently carved crowns round the altar and table to the little "pins" that helped support the court curtains, they were all there for the glory of the indwelling God. Our bodies are the habitation of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:17; Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 3:16); of Christ and God (Jn. 14:23; Col. 1:27). Thus, since we were redeemed, every member of our bodies are for the glory of the indwelling Divine Persons. It is by the indwelling Holy Spirit lives are changed, sin is turned from and the likeness of the Lord is seen in us. This does not happen passively. Our work is to give the Holy Spirit free access to mold and modify our characters. Note that the flesh in us is never renewed, modified or refined. The flesh, old sinful nature, is still the same irrespective of how long one has been saved.

How does God describe the New covenant?

It is described as:

- a) An "everlasting covenant" (Isa. 61:8; Jer. 32:37-41; Ezek. 16:60-63; Heb. 13:20).
- b) A "perpetual covenant" (Jer. 50:5).
- c) A "covenant of peace" (Ezek. 34:24-25; Isa. 54:8-10).

Can the new/second covenant ever fail and all it's issuing truths collapse?

Thank God it can never fail because:

- a) It all depends on God's satisfaction with the work of the Lord at Calvary.
 - ii) Christ is the Mediator (Heb. 8:6 9:15; 12:24).
 - iii) Christ is its Surety (Heb. 7:22).

Is the New covenant relevant in this dispensation?

The first observation is that in both those which are commonly known as "church" and "Jewish" epistles, reference is made to the present preaching and present relevance of it. One has only to read 2 Corinthians three to realize that to those of this dispensation the New covenant was clearly presented. Furthermore, the disciples who ultimately became the nucleus of the "church", the Lord gave the command to remember Him.

The Church & Doctrines
The Lord's Supper as a Suzerain Covenant
In The Old and New Testament - Part 3

- a) It was in this age after Pentecost the disciples met, albeit unaware that the new gathering would be a doctrinal gathering, not based on the law but on “the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42).
- b) When the disciples met together to break bread on the first day of the week, it would have included the drinking of the cup of the new covenant (Acts 20:7)
- c) There can be no doubt that the first epistle to the Corinthians was written to saints of this age and to them the Holy Spirit endorsed the remembering of the Lord in breaking of bread and drinking the cup which “is the new testament/covenant in my blood” (1 Cor. 11:25).
- d) The epistle to the Hebrews was written to those who had heard the gospel from those who had heard the Lord, therefore, that was this dispensation. In presenting the New covenant to them there are three major scriptures as to the passing away of the old and the present relevance of the new (Heb. 8:13). Also (Heb. 8:10; 10:16)
- e) The writer of the Hebrews repeats the New Covenant either in whole or in part (Heb. 8:10; 10:16) and changes a word. In Hebrews 8:10 Paul uses the word “us” but in chapter 10:16 the word “them”, that is Israel.

Did Paul preach the New covenant to the Gentiles?

This is of prime importance for not only was Paul a preacher of the gospel (Rom. 1:15; 15:20; 1 Cor. 9:16) but he preached the gospel and the new covenant to Gentiles, calling himself a minister of the uncircumcision (that is the Gentiles). This was the sphere of labour which had been committed to him by God (Gal. 2:7) and to mainly Gentiles. To the Corinthians he wrote that God had made not only he but also his fellow apostles “able ministers of the New Testament” (2 Cor. 3:6). The gospel Paul preached was Christ crucified, buried, rose and is glorified (1 Cor. 15:3-4; Eph. 1:19-22) and by His mighty work there is proclaimed to all humanity the good news of forgiveness of sins and redemption (Col. 1:14); peace with God (Rom. 5:1); justification (Rom. 4:25); reconciliation (Heb. 2:17); and liberation (Gal. 5:1). However, Paul's preaching did not stop at salvation from Hell. His gospel meant a change in life for two reasons, that which it had done with him and the power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the individual. It was because of this Paul wrote, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Cor. 5:17). This is the second part of the great commission. The Lord also said, “make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19-20). There is a work to be done after conversion, establish the saints and help them grow. When the New Covenant says, “I will be their God” (2 Cor. 6:16); it means they would know by experiences of life, spiritual and mundane, what it was to live with God and as God views them as His children, they would live in the blessedness of God as Father. The new covenant is an infinite bestowal of grace which is to be enjoyed now and will reach its fulness in the future.

It is evident Paul and his fellow evangelists preached the truths of the new covenant to the Gentiles as the following table shows. Furthermore, since they were able ministers of the new testament, it meant that all the Gentile areas heard the truths of the new covenant.

City	Reference	City	Reference
Damascus	Acts 9:22, 27	Philippi	Acts 16:12; 20:6
Jerusalem	Acts 9:26	Thessalonica	Acts 17:1
Antioch in Syria	Acts 13:1	Berea	Acts 17:10
Seleucia	Acts 13:4	Athens	Acts 17:15

The Church & Doctrines
The Lord's Supper as a Suzerain Covenant
In The Old and New Testament - Part 3

City	Reference	City	Reference
Salamis (Cyprus)	Acts 13:5	Corinth	Acts 18:1
Cyprus	Acts 13:4	Ephesus	Acts 18:19
Paphos (Cyprus)	Acts 13:6	Tyre	Acts 21:3-4
Perga in Paphylia	Acts 13:13; 14:25	Ptolemais	Acts 21:7
Antioch in Pisidia	Acts 13:14	Antipatris	Acts 23:31
Iconium	Acts 13:51	Melita	Acts 28:1
Derbe	Acts 14:6; 20; 16:1	Syracuse (Sicily)	Acts 28:12
Lystra	Acts 14:6	Appii forum	Acts 28:15
Attalia	Acts 14:25	Three Taverns	Acts 28:15
Perga	Acts 14:25	Rome	Acts 28:16
Phrygia Galatia	Acts 16:6	Heirapilis	Col. 4:13
Caesarea	Acts 18:22	Laodicea	Col. 2:1
Troas	Acts 16:8; 20:6		

Concluding truth

When I look at this I thank God that the gospel went out to us Gentiles, not only in the cities of Ephesus, Corinth, Philippi, and Thessalonica, but also to Canada, Ireland, Spain, Holland and across the broad acres of earth. It was to us Gentiles in this dispensation Paul preached the truths of the New covenant.

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

Rowan Jennings, Abbotsford, British Columbia