

Hebrews 8:6

A Better Covenant

We often use words that we really don't fully understand. In matters of faith this is dangerous precedent. We need to understand just what we are saying and remember that words have meaning which are inherent to the word and cannot be simply redefined to please us at a whim. One such word is Covenant: A covenant is a binding agreement between two parties that calls God to witness and seal the arrangement. The root word for covenant is to bind or fetter. When we speak of the Divine or eternal covenant we speak of God's promise to Himself which binds Him with His own everlasting purpose. When man is brought into the covenant God binds Himself (for man cannot ever bind God) for that same reason. But the covenant God makes with man is the OUTFLOW or RESULT of the covenant He has made with Himself from all eternity.

I. COVENANT OF WORKS

A. Made conditional on man's obedience

1. Long lists of promises, both blessings and cursings based upon man's actions according to the covenant rules
- B. God remains faithful to His own part
- C. Man had the opportunity to escape wrath based upon divinely appointed obedience through the Law which God gave.
- D. God continued to warn, chastise, redeem and restore His people during the whole time of this covenant
- E. It was never intended to be the final covenant, nor did it inherently have any saving power, but was connected by God's mercy to the coming covenant of Grace.
 1. God promised the coming better covenant

Ezekiel 36.22-32

II. COVENANT OF GRACE

- A. Eternally rooted in the promises of God which He made to Himself - we just read that God did this not for our sake...
 1. man has nothing to do with its accomplishment or efficacy

- B. Eternally accomplished in the work of God in the salvation of man by the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus -
1. Man has no part in the accomplishment or continuance of this covenant
 2. Man's work do nothing to secure the covenant, there is no part which is dependent upon us
 3. Mans work, or lack thereof, can do nothing to break the covenant
 4. The faith that is required of us is to given to us by God and so is in no manner a work
- C. We cannot escape the covenant of grace once we have been sealed into it by the blood of Jesus
1. God will finally and completely secure every one of His chosen people

“This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.” (John 6:39, NKJV)

2. His covenant will stand forever regardless of any other factor
3. His promises are secure for they are rooted in His own person and will.

John 6.36-40

- D. Although God continues to warn and chastise, our redemption has been fully and finally accomplished through Christ's mediatorial work
1. In His death on the cross
 2. In the offering of His own blood on the mercy seat of God in the heavenly places
 3. Testified by God in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead

“Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.”

(Romans 4:23–25, NKJV)

4. Sealed in us by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit

“In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.” (Ephesians 1:13–14, NKJV)

5. By His own ongoing intercession for us at the throne of Grace

“Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.” (Hebrews 7:25)

“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,” (1 Timothy 2:5, NKJV)

E. There is no other covenant coming

1. This is the final revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ

“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,” (Hebrews 1:1–3, NKJV)

2. There could be nothing that ever surpasses or supersedes this covenant for nothing could ever surpass or supersede Christ
3. The fullness of God is contained in this great work of Grace

2Corinthians 3.17-4.6

III. COVENANT, BINDINGS AND PRESENCE

A. The witnessing agent or token must be agreed upon and taken as binding between both parties

1. Mark of circumcision

“This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised;” (Genesis 17:10)

2. Rock of mizpah (Heb - watch)

Genesis 31.45-49

3. Memorial heaps or altars throughout the OT

B. The offering of blood is the special binding of God's covenants with man for all covenants must deal with the basic issue of man's rebellion against and subsequent separation from God.

1. The price of rebellion is death

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)

2. Something always must die

3. There is no forgiveness of sin without blood

“And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.” (Hebrews 9:22, NKJV)

- C. OT blood offerings insufficient
 - 1. The blood of the old covenant was insufficient to last, requiring continual and endless offerings
 - 2. It was insufficient to fully cleanse. It could only be specifically efficacious; requiring specific offerings to be given for specific sins, events and requests
 - 3. It was insufficient to give what was finally sought. Peace and hope were never part of the system, with a constant and uneasy tension. The knowledge of sin and its hold could never be overcome.
- D. Covenants require presence. Both parties have to be present to seal the covenant
 - 1. God's presence passing between Abraham's offering at the promise of the land
Genesis 15.9-20
 - 2. God's presence as Jacob's ladder in His covenant with Jacob
Genesis 28.11-15
 - 3. As the angel wrestling with Jacob later on
Genesis 32.24-29

4. God's presence was a partial thing in the old covenant
5. God's covenant was limited to Israel in old covenant
6. The Gentile nations were excluded from the temple and thus from the covenant

E. The full and final reality of God's presence occurs in the incarnation of Jesus.

1. He has come for all nations
2. He has come to fully show us God
3. He has come to be the binding between us and God
4. He has come to pay our debt
5. He has come to satisfy the wrath of God
6. He has come to be the mediator between us and God.
 - a. Perfect
 - b. Final
 - c. Eternal

