

COVENANT II

I. The Extent of the Divine Covenants

A. No Period from Noah to Christ is outside of God's Covenantal dealings.

1. Exile Promises refer to Christ.¹

B. The Extent of Covenants Prior to Noah.

1. The term 'Covenant' first appears in connection with Noah.²

2. Analogy: The term "Covenant" isn't used initially in regards to the Davidic Covenant.³

3. All the necessary ingredients for a "Covenant" are present prior to Noah.

4. Two-Passages Confirm there is a "Covenant".

a) Jer. 33:20, 21, 25, 26⁴

(1) Cp. Jer. 31:35ff.-equivalent expression⁵

b) Hosea 6:7⁶

(1) Transgress the Covenant like Adam.

(2) God's original Creation a Covenantal Relationship.

(3) There are the essential Covenantal elements present.

II. The Unity of the Divine Covenants.

A. How do the Covenants inter-relate?

¹ "When **Christians** explain this passage and the like, *they leave out* the liberations of the people from the Babylonish exile, as though these prophecies did not belong at all to the time; in this they are mistaken. And **the Jews**, who reject Christ, *stop in that earthly deliverance*. But the Prophets, as I have said, begin with the return of the people, but they set Christ also in the middle, that the faithful might know that the return was but a *slight taste of the full grace*, which was alone to be expected from Christ; for it was then, indeed, that *God really planted his people*." -(**Commentaries on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah and the Lamentations**, John Calvin, Grand Rapids, MI, 1950, 4:220ff.) [Emphasis added]

² **Gen. 6:18**- "But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you."

³ **II Sam. 7; I Chr. 17**

⁴ **Jer. 33:20, 21, 25, 26**- "Thus says the Lord: If you can break my **covenant** with the day and my **covenant** with the night, so that day and night will not come at their appointed time, 21 then also my covenant with David my servant may be broken, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and my covenant with the Levitical priests my ministers... 25 Thus says the Lord: If I have not established my **covenant** with day and night and the fixed order of heaven and earth, 26 then I will reject the offspring of Jacob and David my servant and will not choose one of his offspring to rule over the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will restore their fortunes and will have mercy on them."

⁵ **Jer. 31:35ff**- "35 Thus says the Lord, who gives the sun for light by day and **the fixed order** of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar— the Lord of hosts is his name: 36 "If **this fixed order** departs from before me, declares the Lord, then shall the offspring of Israel cease from being a nation before me forever."

⁶ **Hosea 6:7**- "But like Adam they transgressed **the covenant**; there they dealt faithlessly with me."

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1. Structural Unity

a) Unity of the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic Covenants.

(1) A Unity of Historical Experience.

(a) The Points of Covenantal Inauguration Demonstrate Unity.

i) A Covenantal Commitment, a Formalizing Ceremony, Covenantal Legislation, a Period of Historical Anticipation, Covenantal Fulfillment.

ii) Three-Step Covenantal Ties (AKA Triangulating)

(1) Ex. Joshua represents a fulfillment of the promise to Abraham as well as the promise to Moses.⁷

(2) Ex. David represents grounding in the promise made to Abraham, Moses' legislation, forward to the Exile and on to the New Covenant.⁸

(2) A Unity in Genealogical Administration.

(a) Generation Principle⁹

i) Dt. 5:2, 3¹⁰ states emphatically that ALL of us were in our fathers committing ourselves to the Covenant.

ii) Scriptures such as Ps. 105:8-10; Dt. 7:9 and Acts 3:25 indicate that in every generation the line of God's covenant people will be maintained & that this characteristic reaches into the New Covenant.

iii) Is. 59:21 & Gal. 3:13f. Demonstrate that the giving of the Holy Spirit is the fulfillment of the blessing of Abraham and that Christ came to ensure it came to the Gentiles.

(b) Grafting Principle

i) Gen. 17:12, 13; Rom. 11:17, 19 & Gal. 3:29 show God's intent to give this blessing unrestricted by ethnic concerns. We become Israel in the fullest sense.

(c) Pruning Principle

i) From the opposite perspective, God demonstrates His Sovereignty in Salvation (Rom. 9:13; cf. Mal. 1:2,3; Gen. 25:23) in threatening those who would be presumptuous against His grace (Rom. 9:6 etc.), but He takes great pains to show that His plan is consistent with the natural order and not a violation of it!

(3) The History of Life Under the Covenants Demonstrates Unity.

b) Unity Incorporating the New Covenant.

⁷ cf. Gen. 15:18; Ex. 23:31; Jos. 1:3. & New Covenant - Heb. 4

⁸ cf. I Chr. 16:15-18; Dt. 12:5,11,14,18 etc.; II Kings 17:13ff.; Acts 15:16

⁹ Seed Concept (Covenantal Succession)- Gen. 15:18; Ex. 20:5,6; Dt. 7:9; II Sam. 7:12.

¹⁰ Dt. 5:2,3- "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. 3 Not with our fathers did the Lord make this covenant, but with us, who are all of us here alive today." [the greater majority of those present **were not even born yet**, when the Mosaic Covenant was originally given.]

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(1) The classic New Covenant prophecy in Jer. 31:31f. relates this ultimate form of God's Covenant as an organic unity with the rest. Along with Jer. 32:39-41 there is an intertwining with the Mosaic AND the Abrahamic Covenant to show that it is not an abrupt departure but a continuation of the other Covenants. There is a Single Expectation for the People of God!

c) Unity Extending to the Covenants Made with Noah and Adam.

(1) Noahic Covenant provides the 'preservative structure' by which God realizes His plan to redeem His people. (Ge. 8:22)

(2) The Adamic Covenant shows that in the same way that the curse is pronounced on Sin, God demonstrates His commitment to redeem a people to Himself (see Gen. 3:15 cf. Rom. 16:20¹¹, which has abiding significance, today.

(a) While man no longer shares in Adam's innocence, we still share his image of God and responsibility to the Creator (ex. To multiply, subdue the earth and offer our work to the glory of the Creator).

(b) The Covenantal relation established by creation permeates the whole history of God's forming a people for Himself.

2. Thematic Unity (Next Week)

¹¹ **Rom. 16:20**- "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."