

## THE NEW COVENANT

The *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* defines the word “covenant”:

In the Old Testament has an ordinary use, when both parties are men, and a distinctly religious use, between God and men. There can be no doubt that the religious use has come from the ordinary, in harmony with the general custom in such cases, and not the reverse. There are also two shades of meaning, somewhat distinct, of the Hebrew word: one in which it is properly a covenant, i.e. a solemn mutual agreement, the other in which it is more a command, i.e. instead of an obligation voluntarily assumed, it is an obligation imposed by a superior upon an inferior. This latter meaning, however, has clearly been derived from the other. It is easy to see that an agreement, including as the contracting parties those of unequal position, might readily include those agreements which tended to partake of the nature of a command; but the process could not readily be reversed.

There are many covenants recorded in the Bible. God made a covenant with Noah, his seed and all the animals, which was that he would never destroy the world by a flood again. The rainbow in the cloud is the token of this covenant. It is not the covenant, but it symbolizes the covenant that God made with the earth. “I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth” (Gen. 9:13). The word covenant here does not mean an agreement between two parties; otherwise, show us how the perpetual generations of Noah (which would include us) and the animals agreed to such.

God made a covenant of circumcision with Abraham and his male descendents, all males born in his house and all males bought with money of his descendants. In that covenant the land promise was repeated (Gen. 17:7-8). Circumcision was both the covenant and the token of the covenant: “This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your

foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. (Gen. 17:10-11). Though Abraham and his descendents did have to comply with the covenant, it was more of a command than mutual agreement between two parties. One who was not circumcised would have been guilty of having broken the covenant and would have been cut off from his people (Gen. 17: 14).

The writer of Hebrews compares two covenants: The first covenant and the second covenant:

But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. (Hebrews 8:6-13)

Under the first covenant when an Israelite was born he was automatically in the covenant and then had to be taught. Under the second covenant, one must be taught first, and then he enters into a covenant relationship by the new birth (John 3:3-5). Jesus said, “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last

day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.” (John 6:44-45).

There is a tendency on the part of some to rush a candidate through the steps of salvation to get him “baptized” without first having taught him thoroughly and having given him time to count the cost. People’s knowledge of the Bible is so lacking today. Thus, there is a need for teachers and preachers to be patient in teaching others the gospel (2 Tim. 2:24-26; 4:2). The farmer, having planted the seed, must exhibit patience, allowing the sunshine, rain and nutrients of the soil to cause that seed to germinate and spring forth. Sometimes those who quickly obey, quickly fall away.

All men were not amenable to the first covenant, but only those to whom it was given, Israel (Deut. 5:1-3; Rom. 3:1-2). However, all men are amenable to the second covenant, whether they are in it or not (Matt. 28:18-20; Rev. 12:5). One enters into a covenant relationship with God today when he becomes married to Christ in baptism (Rom. 7:4; 6:5; Matt. 28:18-20). At times, fleshly Israel did not continue in God’s covenant, and he regarded them not; likewise, a child of God today can cease to continue in his covenant; and God regards him not. This shows that it is possible for a child of God to fall away from the Lord. When he does so, he ceases to be in a covenant relationship with God; he needs to repent and be restored to his first love (Gal. 6:1; Rev. 2:4-5).

The New Covenant is a better covenant than the Old Covenant. The first covenant was limited, but the second is universal. The first covenant was ratified by the blood of animals, but the second was ratified by the blood of Christ. The first had promises, but the second was established upon better promises.

Are you in covenant relations with God today? If not, why not?

**Ben F. Vick, Jr. from *The Informer***

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## ANNIVERSARY

Steve and Robin Brown, 08-27.

## ILL

**Sunday:** Chris Edwards (AM); Jeff Nemechek; Millie Robertson (PM). Luvenia Jenkins had surgery last Wednesday and is recovering at St. Luke's hospital in Lee's Summit.

**Those battling cancer:** Jamal Abyad, David Cole, and Ledgia Campbell. Please remember these in your prayers, as well as: Millie Robertson, Allen Scott, and Ralph and Helen Franklin.

## HOME BOUND

Bob Adams resides at Room D-4 of the Johnson County Nursing Center in Olathe. Marion Stone is at home. Please remember these in your prayers and visitation.

## OUT OF TOWN

Louise Dodson was with her mother in Missouri. Debra Gragg was visiting with relatives in Augusta, Kansas last weekend. Julia Thrasher was visiting with her mother in Marietta, Oklahoma last week.

## GUEST SPEAKER

We welcome Chuck and Jodie Northrop today. Chuck will teach and preach in our AM services and present some information about the Bible Institute of Missouri.

## POT LUCK DINNER

Our monthly Pot Luck Dinner will be held next Sunday, September 2 following our AM worship. Plan to come and enjoy the good food and company.

## MID-WEST LECTURES

The 25th Annual Mid-West Lectures will be held September 16-20 at 39th Street in Independence, MO. See the flyer in the foyer for details.

## ATTENDANCE

Sunday AM, 52; Sunday PM, 35; Wednesday PM, 34.

## Those To Serve

August 26, 2007

**BUILDING AND COMMUNION..... Brown**

### MORNING WORSHIP

**ANNOUNCEMENTS..... Joel Nelson**  
**SONG LEADER..... George Thomas**  
**OPENING PRAYER ..... Jared Nelson**  
**PRESIDE..... Trent Thrasher**  
**ASSIST..... John Cody Carter**  
**ASSIST..... John James**  
**CLOSING PRAYER..... Jeff Nemechek**

### EVENING WORSHIP

**OPENING PRAYER ..... Steve Brown**  
**CLOSING PRAYER..... Joel Nelson**  
**LORD'S SUPPER..... Trent Thrasher**

### WEDNESDAY 29th

**SONG LEADER..... 5<sup>th</sup> Weds. Singing**  
**INVITATION ..... Joel Nelson**

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### Sunday

Bible Study ..... 9:30 AM  
Morning Worship ..... 10:30 AM  
Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM

### Wednesday

Ladies Bible Study ..... 10:00 AM  
Bible Study ..... 7:00 PM

**Preacher: Ted J. Thrasher**

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