

## Covenant Theology Outline

### Reading

O. Palmer Robertson – *Covenants (C) 1, Christ of the Covenants (COTC 1,2)*

## **Part 1: Introduction to Covenant Theology**

### **Week 1 - Introductory Concepts**

#### **1. Importance- Why study the Covenants**

Jesus saw his death as a Covenant. (Luke 22:20, 1 Cor.11)  
This covenant was linked to all the old Covenants. Word 'covenant' used total of 313x, 24x in Gen. Covenants are the basis of the way the Bible is written. (New Testament, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Hebrews 8:7-13)

#### **2. Biblical Words for the Covenant**

##### **A. Hebrew OT**

*Berith* - - cut or bind (Gen 1: 1,2) to cut a covenant (Gen 15, Gen 17)

##### **B. Septuagint LXX- OT**

*Diatheke* to replace *Berith*

*Diatheke* - Disposition or testament of a will (Hebrews 9:16-18).

*Suntheke* not used because *Suntheke* implied equality between parties so substituted *Diatheke*.

Latin *Testamentum*. COTC 1-13.

##### **C. NT Greek**

Reworked *Diatheke* according to biblical concept of *Berith*, not Testament.

Mainly means covenant, can be testament (C.F., Hebrews 9:16-18)

#### **3. What is a Covenant?**

##### **A. Elements - O Palmer Robertson**

1. **Man to Man Covenants** (C.F, Gen 28:31-34)

2. **God to Man Covenants**

A bond in blood Sovereignly Administered

**Bond** – a verbalized bond or promise from God, might be accompanied by signs (rainbow, circumcision, Sabbath, baptism); relational, it commits persons to each other

**Sov. Administered**

Gods offers it and makes the terms; it is not negotiated.

**In Blood**

**In a bond, you can break it but there is a price** (mortgage, apt. or vehicle lease on apartment). The terms in a Covenant are life or death (the death of a chicken). Gen 15 - Gen 17.

Testament and Covenants contrasted (COTC 11-13).

## **B. Biblical Pictures of Covenants**

### **1. Marriage Bond.**

The Covenant is described in terms of a marriage bond, with both legal & emotional elements.

- a. Law/Covenant (your marriage vows) and
- b. **Love** (Song of Songs, OT, Isa. 54:5, Jer. 31:32, Ezek. 16:1-14,32,35). Adultery in OT (Ephesians 5:25, Romans 7:1-6). Picture of marriage feast in scripture, committed but not consummated (Mary and Joseph).

### **2. The Importance of a Proper Definition of Covenants**

The definition we have is crucial to how we understand the outworking of Covenants.

- a. Covenantal Theology - Relational & Legal - Abraham (Gen 17)
- b. Baptist Covenant -Relational, NT
- c. Auburn Avenue Theology. Inter Trinitarian and Relational.

## **4. Three leading Covenants**

1. The Covenant of Works. 2. Covenant of Redemption. 3. The Covenant of Grace.

**The Covenant of Redemption:**

1. The Covenants are related, only one covenant of mercy to sinners.

For analysis we divide them up.

2. Plan was decreed in the divine mind of God with each of the Trinity performing His own individual actions (Eph 1:4, 3:11)

- A. The Promises and Commission of Christ (Ps 2:7-9, Ps 40:7-9, John 6:38-40), Representative headship (Rom 5:12-21)

Reward (Phil 2:9-11, John 6,9,24)

B. Surety of the Covenant: (Heb 7:22)

One is responsible for the Legal obligation of another. Christ takes man's place to pay for man's breaking of the Covenant. Christ merits blessings by His works. (Rom 5: 12-21)

## **Weeks 2- 3 - An Overview of Covenant Theology**

Building a Picture of Covenants in Old and New Testament

**Reading:** COTC 3,4 (This is the most difficult reading) C. 12,13

### **1. Adam- Christ**

#### **A. Adam**

The Covenant of Works  
Representative, Disobedient, Death

#### **B. Christ**

Covenant of Grace to Sinners  
Representative, His Obedience, Merit and Death

### **2. The Beginning of the Covenant of Grace**

#### **A. Progressive Revelation**

Not all revealed at once  
A. progressive within the OT  
B. Progressive from OT

#### **B. Unity of the Covenant**

All point to Christ, all men are saved only in Jesus Christ, by faith, to a new life and obedience. Diagram: Jesus Christ the ground of salvation in both testaments.

#### **C. The Diversity of the Covenant.**

Each Covenant has a different stress--faith, works, representative kingship.

#### **D. The Specific Covenants**

##### **1. The Promise to Adam and Eve**

Proto- Evangel (Gen 3:15)

##### **2. The Line of Israel.**

**a. Abraham-Positive Stresses:** friend of God, lives by faith, seed, not much stress on the law

**Importance:** All men, Jew & Gentile, are to live by faith

**b. Mosaic: Nation of Israel-Negative Stress:** Key idea is the law and failure under the law

Definition: the Law of Moses -- on stone, outside man, Israel's founding. The law is a blessing to Israel, a special revelation of God, and points to Christ. But it is also a curse upon Israel, matching the curse of Adam. Israel is linked to sin, flesh and death. Israel is under Moses, under the Law, and held captive. (Romans 5:20, Gal 3:19ff) As such the law is given to show men their sin and failure. Israel's role was to show the world that man cannot be saved by his own works; his works only lead to failure and death. **Importance:** A Microcosm of the whole world, Israel is a nation that highlights the true nature of fallen man.

**c. David:** Link to Abraham, Seed (Matthew 1) Link to Moses, King and the Law. (1 Kings 11:7-13)

The key issue here is that Israel is to be ruled by a king and representative; the king would be the Son of God and have the Spirit. (2 Sam 7:14,15). The actions of the representative king control the history of Israel (1 Kings 11:7-13).

**Importance:** Points to Christ who is the successful king representative. We need a successful representative to receive blessings.

**d. The Failure of Israel:** The covenantal curses of Deut 27-30 and Lev 26 and 1 & 2 Kings applied. This leads to the Babylonian captivity and to Israel being thrown out the land/garden. The Babylonian captivity continues until the coming of Christ, which is seen as an end to Babylonian captivity and the second exodus.

**Importance:** Jesus' coming is the true exodus, the true end to captivity for the Jew and also for the world.

### ***3. The New Covenant in Christ.***

#### **A. The fullness of time (Gal 4:4)**

#### **B. Linking the New covenant with the preceding ones**

1. Promised seed, fulfilled seed
2. Need to keep the law and the law kept, movement to sonship
3. Promised representative King, Christ, Messiah (Rom 1:3,4; Rom 15:12; Gal 3:28,29)