

TEACHING GOAL

Show that the Covenant of Grace has not been changed in kind but in extent, application or administration.

DOCTRINAL STANDARDS

- Q. Did God leave all men to perish in the estate of sin and misery?
- A. God, having out of His mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a redeemer.

S.C. 20; L.C. 30-35; W.C. of F. VII; Savoy 7; Young 43-45

SCRIPTURAL BASIS

Study Passage: Hebrews 8

Support Passages: Hebrews 9 - 11

BIBLE STORY

Numbers 21:4-9, John 3:14-16; The bronze serpent and the crucifixion of Christ.

MEMORY ASSIGNMENT

Galatians 3:26, 29

- 26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.
29 And if you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

APPLICATION

Seeing that God's covenant of grace applies to all the saints who have ever lived, we must, like all the others, believe in the Bible God to escape His wrath (Psalm 78:21-22).

SUMMARY

This last lesson on the Covenant of Grace, emphasizes its unity throughout all history as it pertains to all of God's people. It is very popular among evangelicals today to divide the Scriptures into seven periods or dispensations of time during which God tested His people in different ways which they completely failed in every case. The notes in the Scofield Bible present this view which does not square with biblical data. Although the notes have now been revised and are much less objectionable with regard to the means whereby the Old Testament saints were saved, yet Christians today are being told that they are no longer under the Law of God. They are told that they no longer need to observe the Ten Commandments in order to please God because those belonged to another period of history.

The apostle Paul writes concerning the Covenant in Hebrews chapter 8. Quoting Jeremiah 31: 32-34 he writes, "Behold the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will effect a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not like the covenant which I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; for they did not continue in My covenant, and I did not care for them, says the LORD. For this is the covenant That I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their minds, and I will write them upon their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall not teach every one his fellow-citizen, and every one his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more. When He said, 'A new covenant,' He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear."

The striking thing about this passage is the fact that it is a quote of Jeremiah, an Old Testament prophet. The covenant relationship of God to His people was also on this prophets mind just as it is on ours. Let us notice that God does not promise to do away with the law of Sinai but (verse 10) He promises to apply them differently. They are more intimately known now, and they are extended to the Gentiles "For all shall know Me." Please notice also that the substance of the Covenant remains as it was to Abraham "And I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

From year to year automobile manufacturers change their product making previous models obsolete, but the new models still have a motor and wheels. They are not different in kind but in extent or application. Similarly God's covenant is the same throughout history in meaning and content, "I will be a God to you and your descendants after you," but it makes the old covenant obsolete where it required us to sacrifice animals and be represented by a High Priest after Aaron. We still need a blood sacrifice and we still must have a High Priest. However, the newness of the new covenant is based on the Mediator of it. Christ the Messiah has now come and has fulfilled these covenant promises making obsolete the old, making all things new. Still the sacrifice but Christ is the sacrifice. Still the priest but Christ is the priest. The New Covenant is new by virtue of the blood of Christ for He says, "this cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My Blood" (Luke 22:20).

The covenant then is not new because now we are under grace rather than the Law. But the Covenant is new because its Mediator has come and fulfilled it. Applied now to Gentiles as well as Jews, it is applied more intimately to the heart by the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is not new in substance but in extent or application. It is unthinkable that Moses who spoke with God so directly and intimately (Exodus 33:18ff) to whom the Tabernacle was revealed, whose observance of the Passover demonstrated his faith (Hebrews 11:28), did not know and worship the coming Messiah, Jesus. Moses as well as all these Old Testament saints lived by faith, "But the righteous man shall live by faith." Obviously Paul writes of both the Old Testament church and the New Testament church for he quotes the Old Testament passage Habakkuk 2:4 in the New Testament passage Romans 1:16-17.