

Discuss the Eternal Covenant and show how all the major theological areas relate to it.

by paul nipperess.

Copyright © 2005

.

Date: 03 November 2005

Discuss the Eternal Covenant and show how all the major theological areas relate to it.

Introduction	.....	page 3
Eternal covenant	.....	page 3
God	.....	page 4
Christ	.....	page 6
Holy Spirit	.....	page 7
Man	.....	page 8
Sin	.....	page 9
Salvation	.....	page 9
Church	.....	page 10
Last Things	.....	page 11
Conclusion	.....	page 12
Bibliography	.....	page 12

Discuss the Eternal (New) Covenant and show how all the major theological areas relate to it.

Introduction:

Our understanding of God's Word and how we make practical use of His instructions, depends upon our overall understanding of His Eternal Covenant with us, both as individuals and as members of our the wider Church community.

Here, we will discuss some theological views, including God, Man, Sin, Christ, Salvation, Holy Spirit, Church and Last Things and how they relate to God's Eternal Covenant, with mankind.

God's Eternal Covenant with us:

Throughout the pages of the Old Testament, God made several covenants with the Jews for example, through Noah after the Flood, with Abraham as God's Chosen One, with Israel through Moses showing that the Jews were God's people. Gen 9:8-17, 17:21-27 and Deut 29:12 Later, the Davidic Covenant in 2 Samuel 7:11-16, promised that David's descendants would always rule over God's kingdom, on earth.

As the people failed to live as a reflection of God, by falling into sinful lives of idolatry and corruption, they failed in upholding their side of the covenant agreement, with God.

Genesis, Isaiah and Jeremiah give us some insight into Jesus, as both King of Man and the Keeper of the Covenant. Is 42:6 and Jer 31:31-34

In the New Testament, the love of God for ALL people becomes evident, with his Eternal Covenant for us, symbolised by his ultimate sacrifice on the Cross, in Atonement for our sins forever and the promise of Salvation for all, living in the light of Christ. Luke 2:26

As before, God made the new covenant unilaterally to the people, but this time His Grace is shown through Jesus Christ AND mankind has its own role in keeping the covenant. That is, we are to repent our sins and accept His Love and Grace by maintaining our Faith and upholding God's Law, striving to live as a reflection of Christ on Earth. To this end, it is our duty to live according to the Beatitudes, given to us by Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount. Matt 5:1-12

GOD and His role in the Eternal Covenant:

First Person in the Holy Trinity is God, Father of Jesus Christ. God is Spirit and "has been me forever God is me forever." He established a covenant with Adam, in the Perfect Community, before Adam's Fall into Sin, where those who were made in God's image would be blessed and be allowed to live, but those who disobeyed God's law would be cursed and die. I Corinthians 15:20-22.

God's covenant with Adam was binding on all mankind everywhere, at all times. As descendants from Adam, we are still bound to obey God's Law, as presented to us, in the Eternal Covenant by Jesus Christ. God is reflected in us through the Spirit and may be demonstrated by the strength of our "unseen traits" of goodness, love, mercy, faith, thankfulness, truthfulness and forgiveness. In addition to all those intangibles, God is sovereign ruler over all things seen and unseen. He is omnipresent and omniscient and unchanging in His Love for mankind, expressing His Grace in the sacrifice of His only Son Jesus Christ, to redeem the whole of human race.

God's Grace shows through the Eternal Covenant in the provision of mediation to sinners, as well as Salvation through Christ, if we obey God's will and demonstrate our faith in him by repenting and reflecting Christ, in our everyday lives. To help sinners maintain faith and obedience to God's Law, He gave us the Holy Spirit to work within us and lead us to Christ and Salvation. 2Peter 3: 9 and 15.

God remains constant throughout the ages, making it easier to maintain our faith in God, by obeying His Law, living as a reflection of Christ.

"O Lord, forever you remain the same !~! Your throne continues from generation to generation." Lamentations 5:19

Jesus Christ, Son of God made the Eternal Covenant:

Jesus Christ, Eternal Son of God, existed before all things.

His miraculous birth marked the beginning of the New Covenant and provided the link between the Old Testament and the New Testament, by way of fulfilling the prophecies provided by Old Testament figures, like Isaiah, Zechariah and Malachi.

While the actual birth of Jesus and its theological arguments are too voluminous to present here, we can look briefly at the various roles, that Jesus plays in the New Eternal Covenant.

Jesus, as Saviour:

Paraphrased, Matthew 1:21 tells us about Jesus mission, as Saviour.

“ and you shall name him Jesus (meaning Saviour), for he will save his people from their sins.”

ALL people would be included in the Salvation brought by Jesus, as noted in Luke 2:10, 30-32 “ a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to thy people of Israel.”

For the salvation of us all, Jesus was born, in the image of God, destined to live a blameless life, as a real-life example of what we should do, in aspiring to live in the light of Christ. His death by crucifixion was the ultimate sacrifice to atone for the sins of all mankind, forever.

His Sacrifice was completed, with His resurrection from the dead, so that no further sacrifice for sin will ever be needed, meaning our own redemption and the forgiveness of our sins have already been assured forever, if we obey God's Word and live in Christ's light.

As the Second Person in the Holy Trinity, Jesus fulfils many other roles in maintaining the Eternal (New) Covenant, including that of Jesus as Lord, enthroned forever as King of all men, providing Justification and Sanctification of our redemption, through the Word of God Almighty. Romans 4:7 and 8, Psalm 32:1

Other roles that Jesus has in the New Covenant are those of the Messiah, as well as the Son of God, who will eventually return to Earth, gathering his faithful and bringing judgement to those, who do not obey God's Word. Matthew 24:27 – 25:47

Holy Spirit and its role in the New Covenant:

Third Person in the Trinity, the Holy Spirit is at one, with God the Father and Jesus Christ, the Son and sent by Them to dwell with faithful mankind, forever. John 14:16-17

Spirit ruler of all our intangible and unseen traits, He reveals TRUTH, HOPE, FORGIVENESS, FAITH, LOVE, RIGHTEOUSNESS, CHARITY, KINDNESS & TRUST to help us to aspire and work towards God's goal.

In doing so, the Spirit helps us to direct those traits above, towards the repentance of our Sin and the strengthening our faith in Jesus Christ. By empowering us with these intangible spiritual gifts of God's Love, Spirit's primary mission is achieved by bringing souls and glory to Jesus.

MAN – relating to the Eternal Covenant:

In relation to the Covenant, our role as humankind, is to acknowledge ourselves as sinners and lean on God for our redemption and guidance, through the power of the Holy Spirit, within us. John 14:16-17

With God's positive gifts of TRUTH, HOPE, FORGIVENESS, FAITH, LOVE, RIGHTEOUSNESS, CHARITY, TRUST and KINDNESS, we can aspire to work towards GODLINESS, reflecting the light of Jesus' life.

In doing so, we will avoid the disharmony associated with the negative traits, that we may also choose to exhibit. Traits such as, HATRED, ANGER, DOUBT, HOSTILITY and other ego-related responses. Through CONFESSION, PRAYER, MEDITATION, THANKSGIVING, WORSHIP and PRAISE, we are able to overcome the negative traits and maintain our FAITH in our Salvation, through Jesus Christ, by the Grace of God and the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit, within us all.

Sin and the New Covenant:

Since the Fall of Adam, the Devil ruled the world, until the death of Christ, when much of the Devil's powers were destroyed. With the birth of the Christian Church, the Devil still continues to create havoc, by promoting the shame and blame of broken individuals and community groups, especially the Church. Romans 3:10-18

Sin is elevated through FEAR, SELFISHNESS and DOUBTS, created in our lives, to weaken our faith and relationship, with Jesus Christ.

By providing mediation and redemption for all sinners, in the Eternal Covenant, Jesus Christ shows the way, for broken individuals and communities, to be restored into the loving and trusting atmosphere of God's Church. 1 Peter 3:18

Salvation and the New Covenant: John 4:42

Salvation can ONLY be found through walking in the path of Christ, as it is by his GRACE ALONE, that we can be awarded Salvation, working through our faith in God. As a gift of God, we CANNOT EARN Salvation, because Salvation is only received by placing our TRUST and FAITH in Jesus Christ and genuinely repenting our sins.

Through the New Covenant and the Spirit, we are re-created or transformed into holier beings, forgiven of our sins and assisted to obey God's Law through sanctification, blessing us with the freedom to live our lives, in the service of God.

Church and the New Covenant: John 13:34 and 35

Our Church has a covenantal role of maintaining a loving community, with all true Christians throughout the world, including those in local, national and international sectors . Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, where the main mission is to worship and serve God and bring new believers into Christ's flock.

Through the Holy Spirit, the Church promotes the Love of Christ, by relaying and relating the gospel by word and deed, to local and national congregations, gathering together for worship and prayer.

Edification of Church members is achieved through teaching and Church fellowship, thus preserving the ongoing communal nature of its work.

BY returning LOVE for HATE, TRUTH for LIES, HOPE for DESPAIR, FORGIVENESS for HOSTILITY, FAITH for DOUBT and KINDNESS for ANGER, the Church can aspire to unite the community, with a walk by all members in a RIGHTEOUS path, reflecting Jesus' own life.

Another role for the Church is to promote an eschatological view of Christ's Covenant, for both prospective Church members and those already walking in the Light of Christ. That is, it should be promoting the benefits of a close relationship with God, while also making believers aware of the path ahead, according to God's Word giving us some insight into the future and the Last Things.

Last Things:

Our ultimate goal in fulfilling the New Covenant with Christ is to have us saved and living as Perfect Beings, in a close community relationship with God on earth and later, in heaven. Before that happens, we must prepare for the future events, called the Last Things or Last Days.

In the extensive teachings of both Paul and John, we are able to gain some foresight into events, yet to unfold. Luke 1:76-77

In those End Times, we will see many gospel themes fulfilled, with the advent of the Parousia of God I Thess 4:13-18, Resurrection of the Dead John 5:19-29, Final Judgement and the Eternal Kingdom of God.

At the Second Coming of Christ, the dead will be resurrected and all of us will stand accountable, at the Final Judgment. Unbelievers, the devil and his evil spirits will suffer punishment, by eternal torment. Righteous Christians will be spared and live in the hope of God's Eternal Kingdom.

Conclusion:

In our examination of the New Eternal Covenant with Christ, we have determined that it is NOT just a unilateral agreement made by Christ with His people.

Instead, we should view it as a bilateral agreement, where we have a responsibility to fulfil our role as Christians. That is, we should acknowledge our sins and repent, then strive to live a Christ-like life, both as individuals and also, in the wider Church community.

Our reward will be a closer relationship forever, with our Saviour and Covenant-keeper, Jesus Christ.

Bibliography:

Lehman, Chester (1974) "Biblical Theology: New Testament"
Scottdale, Pa. p329- 535

Grenz, S.J (1994) "Theology for the Community of God." Grand Rapids,
MI: Eerdmans. p326-356

Helene, Corinne (1952) "New Age Bible Interpretation. Vols V & VI ."
Los Angeles 26, California. p125-138

Montizambert, Eric (1955) "The Flame of Life." Greenwich, Connecticut.

Gann, W.D. (1950) "The Magic Word." Pomeroy, W.A. pp47-54

Jenkins, Mark (Sept 2005) "The Philidelphia Trumpet." pp32-33.

Helene, Corinne (1961) "Questions and Answers on the Bible." pp73-74

Geard, S. (online 28102005) "Covenant Theology" ... access link below:

<http://members.ozemail.com.au/~sdgeard/ct.html>