

Semper Reformanda: Part 3

The Covenants and New Covenant Theology

Definition: “A covenant is a bond in blood sovereignly administered.” O. P. Robertson, The Christ of the Covenants, p. 4.

Elements: (1) Oaths – Gen. 21:22-23; (2) Ritual blood-shedding – Gen. 15:9-11, 17-18; (3) Signs – Gen. 9:12-13

Types: (1) Parity – between equals, Gen. 21:22-33; Mal. 2:14; (2) Royal grant – a King’s unconditional gift to a servant, 1 Sam. 8:10-14; 22:7; (3) Suzerain – a King pledges protection to a vassal on the condition of the vassal’s loyalty, Josh. 9:3-15

Theologically Implied Covenants

1. Covenant of Redemption (Pre-creation)

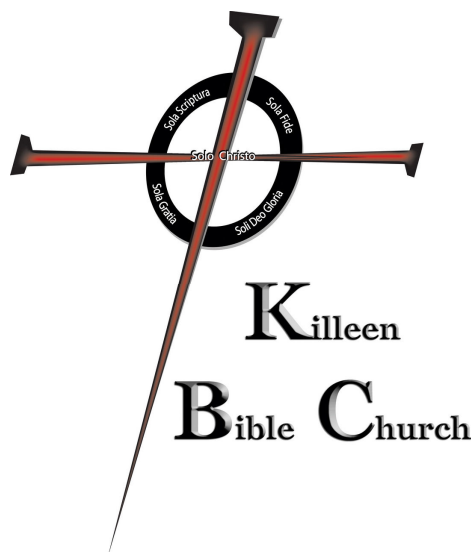
- Parties – God the Father and God the Son
- Time – Eternity past
- Terms – The Father’s gift of the elect to the Son as a reward of obedience

2. Covenant of Works (Pre-fall)

- Parties – God and Adam
- Time – Beginning of the world in the garden of Eden
- Terms – “Do this and live”

3. Covenant of Grace (Post-fall covenant of continuity)

- Parties – God and sinful man
- Time – Genesis 3:15
- Terms – Eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ



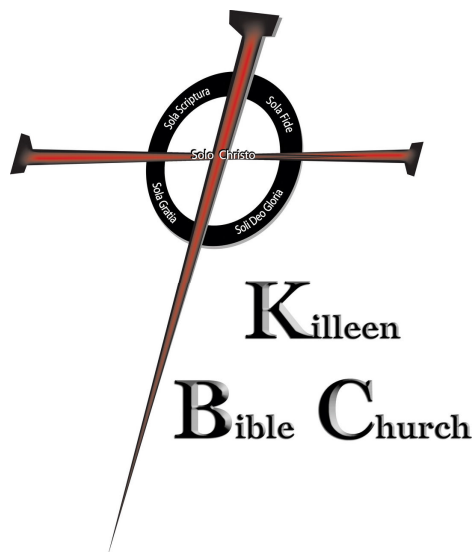
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Historically Revealed Covenants

Covenants	Text	Type	Parties	Promise
Adam	Gen. 1:28-29; 2:15-17; Hos. 6:7	Suzerain	God and Adam	Continuation of Edenic life
Noah	Gen. 9:8-17	Royal Grant	God and all creation	Preservation of the world
Abraham	Gen. 15:9-17 Gen. 17:1-14	Royal Grant Suzerain	God and Abram	Land, Seed, Bless nations
Moses	Exodus 19-- 24	Suzerain	God and Israel	Kingdom of priest and holy nation
David	2 Sa. 7:5-16; Ps. 89:28	Royal Grant	God and David	Permanent dynasty
New	Jer. 31:31-34	Royal Grant	God and Israel/Judah	Complete redemption from sin

APPLICATIONS

1. NCT affirms the covenantal approach to the Scriptures by allowing the historical covenants to be interpreted in light of their own Biblical contexts and not by predetermined theological categories.
2. NCT affirms the continuity which exists between the canon of the Old and New Testament Scriptures without flattening the discontinuity between the Biblical covenants.
3. NCT reads the OT in light of the NT, but never the Old as if it were the New!



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