

ORDINANCE OF COVENANTING.

Renovation of Covenants.

(Part 5.)

“That public, social covenanting, is an ordinance of God, obligatory on churches and nations under the New Testament; that the National Covenant and the Solemn League are an exemplification of this divine institution; and that these Deeds are of continued obligation upon the moral person; and in consistency with this—that the Renovation of these Covenants at Auchensaugh, 1712, was agreeable to the word of God.”—Fourth Term of Communion.

Question 1.—*What may any nation, or church, guilty of perjury, by breach of covenant, fear or expect in justice, in the day that God visits the offending party?*

Answer.—The consequences of national and ecclesiastical covenant breaking are laid before us in a series of curses, Deut. 29:20-28. Besides these listed, we may gather, 1.) Terrors and tormenting, panic, distracting fears, the quagmire of guilty consciences, Lev. 26:16; causing to flee when none pursues, Lev. 26:17, 36; Deut. 28:67. This is felt in part in many shameful yieldings, flights and discomfitures. 2.) Mortal and contagious distempers of body, consumptions, burning agues [fevers], Lev. 26:16; pestilence, Lev. 26:25; inflammations, Deut. 28:21, 22; plagues, Deut. 28:27, 35, 59-61. 3.) Enemies, depredations, depopulations and devastations, eating of the seed, Lev. 26:16; slaying and chasing, Lev. 26:17; a sword to avenge the quarrel of the covenant, Lev. 26:25; Deut. 28:25, 34, 49, 52; Jos. 7:12, 15; Jer. 15:2; 34:18, 20. 4.) Tyrants' dominion, Lev. 26:17; Deut. 28:43, 48. 5.) Barrenness and unfruitfulness of the ground, Lev. 26:19, 20; Deut. 28:23, 24; Isa. 24:3. 6.) Wild beasts devouring, Lev. 26:22; Jer. 15:3; or men as bad as beasts. 7.) Famine, Lev. 26:26, 29; Deut. 28:53, 57; Jer. 15:2. Although many of the poor feel this in the beginning, it is easy for the Lord to reach the rich when He will. 8.) Desolation of cities and sanctuaries, Lev. 26:31, 32, 34; 2 Kings 17:15, 18; Isa. 24:6. 9.) Exile and slavery, Lev. 26:33, 38; Deut. 28:25, 36, 37, 64, 68. 10.) A curse and vexation in and upon all enjoyments and employments, Deut. 28:15, 20; 2 Chron. 24:20. 11.) Infatuations, being deprived of sound judgment, Deut. 28:28. 12.) Desertion from God, and hiding of His face, Deut. 31:17; Jer. 15:1. Many troubles, Deut. 31:17; all evils, even to utter destruction, Jos. 23:15, 16.

Question 2.—*What shall be the inquiry and answer, upon the observation of this tremendous punishment of sin?*

Answer.—The question is propounded in Deut. 29:24. This is frequently predicted to be the question of spectators, that shall observe the national punishment of national crying sins. As in the case of the Temple's desolation for Temple polluting sins, 1 Kings 9:8, 9; 2 Chron. 7:21, 22. The like also, Jer. 22:8, 9. When this shall be the question of nations, it will be easy to answer it. It is not so at the beginning of the Lord's contendings, when it is only the question of the apostatizing generation itself. Then only the faithful watchmen,

instructed of God, will answer it suitably, Jer. 5:19; 16:10. And it will be no easy task to find such, so instructed, Jer. 9:12, 13. The most guilty will often allege the most innocent to be the causes of the land's trouble, as Ahab to Elijah, 1 Kings 18:17, 18. And even the prophets, lacking understanding, may see false burdens and causes of banishment, Lam. 2:14.

The answer to the question is given in Deut. 29:25. This answer shall be extorted from man, all men, that are men of any consideration: 1.) Prophets, Jer. 5:19; 9:13; 16:10. 2.) Covenant breakers themselves, Deut. 31:17. 3.) Strangers, 2 Chron. 7:21, 22; Jer. 22:8, 9.