

Covenant Theology takes the wrong perspective by relying on non-biblical covenants.

- † Covenant theology interprets scripture through a filter of the extra-biblical construct of the covenant of redemption. No doubt the triune God was in agreement with itself about the plan to redeem mankind, but using this non-biblical theological construct to then interpret all of scripture is artificial.
- † There was no covenant of works. God created Adam in grace, gave him his image and glory and responsibilities by grace, brought him into Eden by grace, allowed him to communicate with God by grace, sustained him by grace, and did not destroy him when he sinned by grace. Mankind's relationship with God has always been sustained by grace alone.
- † The theme of our existence and the biblical record is not about redemption, it is doxological, about God glorifying himself. God glorifies himself through redeeming people, but also somehow by not redeeming others and by several other means as well.

The biblical covenants are important for understanding the rest of God's revelation.

- † Adamic: God created and sustained mankind, who would represent God as his image. [See the first set of three circles in the Genesis teaching.]
- † Noahic: God would not destroy the Earth again, and mankind would represent him.
- † Abrahamic: God would create a representative people, who would represent God to the nations. [See the second set of three circles in the Genesis teaching.]
- † Mosaic: God would deliver Israel into fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises, and they would represent God to the nations.
- † Davidic: God would put David's heir on the throne forever, and David and his heir would represent and rule for God.
- † New: Christ ushered in this covenant ultimately to fulfill the others: He would deliver Israel from apostasy, sin, and oppression, restoring them as a people for God; he would be the Davidic King who would rule over Israel and through Israel over the nations, he would be the ultimate image of God, representing God on Earth. You see here a reason for a millennial kingdom... In this time of waiting until Christ returns, the church enjoys partial fulfillment of this covenant as the people representing God to the rest of the world [See the third set of three circles in the Genesis teaching, for church age; ultimately, Christ will fulfill all three models.]

The biblical covenants make clear that the Church is not Israel.

- † The Mosaic Covenant was about the deliverance of Israel to be a representative people. The Old and New Testaments teach that the New Covenant will replace the Mosaic, and Christ said he was inaugurating the New with his blood.
- † The church replaces Israel as the representative people of God during this time period, with promises, missional priorities, and obligations distinct from those of Israel. This affects how we use the OT today!
- † The church [including Gentiles] is enjoying partial fulfillment of the New Covenant blessings, including forgiveness of sins, indwelling of the Holy Spirit, sanctifying grace, etc. However, God's promises to Israel will still come true, because God's promises always do.
- † Therefore, Christ will return as the legitimate Davidic King of Israel. As such he will represent God perfectly and reign for God on David's throne and he will create in Israel a representative people over all the other nations.

- † Also, in the millennial kingdom, God will fulfill his original intentions of mankind representing God and making the earth Edenic.

Biblical dispensations also are important for understanding the rest of God's revelation.

- † There are many different perspectives on the dispensations. Covenant theologians tend to argue with classic or revised dispensationalists from several decades ago, but most dispensationalists now are some variety of progressive, and thus more willing to admit some continuity with the time before Christ as well as some discontinuity. Svigel's views are closest to mine. What follows are my modifications of his notes [he based his dispensations on NT revelation].
- † Covenants primarily are God's promises for mankind to believe in faith and anticipate in hope, along with some ways to act in faith and obedience, which move the elect closer to the ultimate fulfillment of all promises through Christ.
- † Dispensations primarily are about God given responsibilities for mankind to rule over itself, as history moves toward fulfillment of the perfect rule of Christ.
- † Innocence/Garden: Pre-fall Adam [Genesis 1-2] [Three circles #1]
- † Conscience: Post-fall Adam [Romans 2.14-15]: there is some inherent image awareness and some revelation such as sacrifice. This presages the law written on our hearts ultimately.
- † Government: starting with Abraham [some say Noah; Romans 13.1-7]: authority through the patriarch/judge/king. This presages Christ's ultimate reign over mankind. [Three circles #2]
- † Theocracy: starting with Saul or David [Romans 3.1-2]: the king would represent God to the people and through them to the rest of the world. Presages Christ as the legitimate heir to the throne and his reign.
 - The above all build on one another, as God progressively revealed his will and shaped humanity.
- † Law: starting with Moses [Galatians 3.19]: Israel formed as a representative nation to represent God to the others. This dispensation ended because of Israel's failure to represent God well. Presages Christ's rule being just.
- † Church [Ephesians 3.1-12]: The church begins with Peter [Matthew 16.18] at Pentecost. The church formed to proclaim the New Covenant promises of redemption in Christ – which we enjoy partially as a foreshadowing of the fulfillment to come – and act as prophet and mediator to the world [Three circles #3]. This dispensation will end as the church develops the same traits as Israel. Presages the New Covenant renewal under Christ.
 - Today, Christ is anointed as King but not on earth reigning [Matthew 25.31]; sitting at right hand of Father until God makes his enemies a footstool for his feet. Similar to David during Saul's reign.
 - Today, we represent Christ who represents God the Father. Our goal is to be Christ-like, which is the image we were created to be. As such, we have a responsibility to glorify God and grow to be like Christ. We also have to obey Christ, who gave us the great commandment and great commission.
- † Kingdom [Revelation 20.4-6]: This is the culmination of the others as Christ and his elect reign on the Earth, representing God as his image and making the earth like Eden. [This fulfills all the circle models]. Thus all dispensationalists are pre-millennial, because of how we see this working out in God's plan.
- † Eternity [Revelation 21-22]: The Kingdom will go on forever, once Satan, demons, and the condemned are dealt with finally.