

G S O U N D O F G R A C E

... it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace ... Hebrews 13:9

Issue 118—June 2005

Inside this issue:

<i>Thoughts on the Book of Ecclesiastes—Part Eight</i>	1
John G Reisinger	
<i>The Parable of the Two Trains—Part Four of Four</i>	1
Mark Webb	
<i>Is There a Difference Between Old Covenant and New Covenant Holiness?</i>	3
Murray McLellan	
<i>Is Pharaoh Alive and Well?</i>	5
Gen. Clyde F Autio	
<i>The Law of Expediency</i>	7
Mike McInnis	
<i>The Graciousness of Grace</i>	19
Joe Terrell	

Thoughts on the Book of Ecclesiastes — Part Eight John G. Reisinger

The writer of Ecclesiastes keeps reminding us that life under the sun has no real meaning. Everything is meaningless to the man who views the world apart from any revelation from God. Thus far, in chapter 3 of Ecclesiastes, we have seen that God sovereignly ordains every event as well as the timing of that event. While this leads an unbeliever to question the meaning and purpose of work, it is a great comfort to a child of God. The believer knows that everything God ordains will ultimately be for God's glory and the believer's good.

Walter Kaiser calls the section

that runs from 3:1 through 5:20 "Understanding the All-Encompassing Plan of God." He suggests the following outline for the section.

- I. 3:1-15: The Principle: God has a plan that embraces every man and woman and all of their actions in all times.
- II. 3:16-4:16: The Facts: The anomalies and apparent contradictions in this thesis are examined and reflected upon.
- III. 5:1-17: The Implications: Certain

Reisinger (Continued on page 2)

The Parable of the Two Trains—Part Four of Four by Mark Webb

For the sake of those who might be joining this discussion in mid-stream, let me briefly review the points covered so far. Covenant Theology tends to stress the continuity of the Old and New Testament eras. It sees but one covenant, administered at first by Moses and then by Christ. My model of this system uses a single train running on a single track.

The train journeys through both the Old and New Testament ages, picking up passengers as it goes. At the juncture of these ages, a slight change does take place—Christ replaces Moses as the engineer. Other than this, it's the same train, track, and people that ran through the earlier age. Dispensationalism, on the other hand, stresses the discontinuity of God's dealings with man,

breaking history up into distinct epochs. In each age, God deals with man by placing him under a self-contained covenantal system, having no necessary connection to the covenant of another age. I've illustrated this as two trains running on two separate, but parallel tracks. One is engineered by Moses and collects Israel. The other is engi-

Webb (Continued on page 15)

Reisinger (Continued from page 1)

cautions and warnings must be raised lest a hasty calculation lead men and women to deny the reality and existence of God's providence and plan.

IV. 5:18-20: Conclusion.

We saw how verses 2-8 show that God controls everything that happens, as to both substance and timing. His control covers the day of our birth and the time of our death. God ordained your birthday and your funeral and everything in between. Likewise, God fixed the seasons for planting and harvesting. Whether we look at man's life or the world of vegetables and fruits, we see God's sovereign control. God's reign extends even to timing. Useless stones are discarded, but the same stones may later be gathered to be used in a building. Sometimes God's providence puts us in a place where we are stirred up to anger and in other times and places we are stirred up to love.

Contributions Orders

We accept VISA or MasterCard

If you wish to make a tax-deductible contribution to *Sound of Grace*, please mail a check to: *Sound of Grace*, 5317 Wye Creek Drive, Frederick, MD 21703-6938.

Please check the mailing label to find the expiration of your subscription. Please send payment if you want your subscription to continue—\$10.00 for ten issues. If you are unable to subscribe at this time, please call or drop a note in the mail and we will be glad to continue sending the *Sound of Grace* free of charge.

In 3:9, the Seeker again asks the nagging question he first asked in 1:3: "What does the worker gain from his toil?" The answer is "nothing." That answer is both clear and frustrating to an unbeliever, but very reassuring to a child of God. Since every event in life has its origin and its timing from God, nothing man does can control or change the timing or circumstances of those events. Everything unfolds under God's sovereign control, right on schedule: birth/death, growth/harvest, joys/sorrows, acquiring/losing, speaking up/being silent, and war/peace.

9 What does the worker gain from his toil?

10 I have seen the burden God has laid on men.

11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

12 I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live.

13 That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil—this is the gift of God. (NIV)

Verses 9 through 13 address the theme of the vanity of toil. The author begins the idea back in 2:4-26, references it from the point of view of time in 3:1-8, and then directly confronts it again in 3:9. Even though it is vanity, God has laid work on humanity (vs. 10: burden in the NIV, busyness in the ESB, and tasks in NKJ). What function does all this toil serve, since all things come in God's timing (the point of the preceding passage, verses 1-8)? Why bother to work for anything since it really accomplishes nothing? It is not men who make things beautiful by their effort (toil), but God, who makes everything beautiful in its time. As if the

Sound of Grace is a ministry of Grace Bible Fellowship of Maryland. It is published 10 times a year. The subscription price is \$10.00 per year. This is a paper unashamedly committed to the truth of God's sovereign grace and New Covenant Theology. We invite all who love these same truths to pray for us and help us financially.

We do not take any paid advertising.

The use of an article by a particular person is not an endorsement of all that person believes, but it merely means that we thought that a particular article was worthy of printing.

Sound of Grace Board: John G. Reisinger, Moe Bergeron, Ken Keefer, Jacob Moseley, Bud Morrison, and Lloyd Scalyer.

Editor: John G. Reisinger;
Phone: (717)960-9383; e-mail:
24jreisinger26@comcast.net.

WebMaster is Maurice Bergeron,
webmaster@soundofgrace.com

General Manager: Jacob Moseley,
info@newcovenantmedia.com

Send all orders and all subscriptions to: *Sound of Grace*, 5317 Wye Creek Drive, Frederick, MD 21703-6938 – Phone 1-800-376-4146 or 301-473-8781
Fax 240-206-0373

Address all editorial material and questions to: John G. Reisinger, *Sound of Grace*, 1313 Woodward Drive, Carlisle, PA 17013.

Visit the *Sound of Grace* Web Page at: <http://www.soundofgrace.org>

Scripture quotations marked (NIV) are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by Permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked "NKJV" are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by Permission. All rights reserved.

idea that work is a waste of time were not disheartening enough, God has put this idea of timelessness into the psyche of human beings. We are limited creatures stuck in a limited function called time, doing work that accomplishes nothing, and we know that there is more to

Reisinger (Continued on page 4)

Is there a Difference between Old Covenant and New Covenant Holiness?

Murray McLellan

“Because it is written, ‘Be holy for I am holy.’” 1 Peter 1:16 (Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version)

The Need for a Biblical Blueprint

I once heard an audiotape message by William Sasser in which he told the following story to emphasize the need of a clear biblical hermeneutic.

A fellow was candidating for a position as a Bible teacher. In an attempt to discern just how well this individual knew his Bible, the selection board asked the man to tell them the story of the good Samaritan. “Well, gentlemen,” the man began, “There was a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho, but he fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked him. And as he went, he didn’t have any money. But he met the Queen of Sheba, and she gave him 1,000 talents of gold, and 100 changes of raiment. Then he got into a chariot, and drove furiously. And while he was going, he passed under a big juniper tree. And while he was going under that juniper tree, his hair caught on a limb of that tree, and he hung there many days and many nights; and the ravens brought him food to eat and water to drink. And he ate 5,000 loaves of bread and two fishes. One night he was hanging there asleep, and his wife, Delilah, came along and cut off his hair, and he dropped and fell on stony ground. But he got up and went on. Soon it began to rain, and it rained 40 days and 40 nights, so

he hid himself in a cave. And he lived on locusts and wild honey. Then he went on until he met a servant who said, “Come take supper at my house.” But he made an excuse and said, “No, I won’t, for I have married a wife and I cannot come.” And the servant went out into the highways and hedges and compelled him to come in. After supper, he went on until he came down to Jericho. And when he got there, he looked up and saw that old queen, Jezebel, sitting way up high in a window, and she was laughing at him. And he said, “Throw her down,” and they threw her down. And he said, “Throw her down again,” and they threw her down again. And he said, “Throw her down yet again.” And they threw her down seventy times seven. And of the fragments that remained thereof, they picked up 12 baskets full, besides women and children. Now whose wife do you think she will be on that great judgment day? And you ask me if I know the Bible?”

Though this example obviously is extreme for the sake of humor, yet it truly does underline the need to read and understand the context of any passage and statement of Scripture. As I strive to be holy, am I allowed to eat pork or shrimp? May I wear clothing made of mixed threads of linen and wool? May I plant carrots and peas in the same garden plot? Since all of these things are forbidden in clear statements in the book of Leviticus (Lev. 11:7-8, 10-12; 19:19), what do we tell someone who sees us enjoy a tasty ham sandwich? Our

consciences will be clear only when we understand the relationship between the Old and New Testaments, and the progressive nature of the Scriptures. [Please note: I will use the terms ‘testament’ and ‘covenant’ interchangeably in this article, as they are two translations of the same Greek word *διαθήκη* (*diathē kēs*).]

Progressive Revelation

The Bible is not a compilation of proof texts; it is an organic whole. The Scriptures contain the unfolding of redemptive history – centered in Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1-3). What better theme could there be!

We properly understand individual parts of the story only when we read them within their correct context. Each part sits against the background of what has gone before and prepares the way for what comes afterward. Only from the vantage point of the story’s conclusion can the reader observe the way in which the divine author has directed every part so that each contributes collectively to the end.

The Bible tells one main story; the unity of that story is perceived only from the standpoint of the story’s conclusion or goal – Jesus Christ! He and the glorious New Covenant that he established through his blood is the fulfillment of it all (Matt. 5:17-18).

We need to see how each detail fits into the overall scheme of God’s plan as he discloses it. In the Bible, the revelation of the Christ

McLellan (Continued on page 13)

Reisinger (Continued from page 2)

life than this. We do not know what eternity is like, nor can we find out



through all our efforts. The Seeker concludes that since we cannot find out what God has chosen not to reveal, the best response is to enjoy what God has given—food, drink, and work—and to appreciate them as gifts that direct our attention back to God, and not as ends in themselves.

Although sin has made everything ugly, including work, God's grace will make everything "beautiful in God's time." In God's world, he has made everything fit together in a perfect whole. The old saying, "A place for everything and everything in its place" reaches its highest fulfillment in God's good work. Everything fits into its appointed time and place.

The Seeker's comments in verse 11 go past mere acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God's ordaining of each event. He adds that everything God does is beautiful in God's time. Walter Kaiser has caught the essence of verse 11.

The key word in verse 11 is "eternity": "God has put **eternity** in their heart." This quest is a deep-seated desire, a compulsive drive, because man is made in the image of God to appreciate the beauty of creation (on an aesthetic level); to know the character, composition, and meaning of the world (on an academic and phi-

losophical level); and to discern its purpose and destiny (on a theological level). There is the majesty and the madness of the whole thing. Man has an inborn inquisitiveness and capacity to learn how everything in his experience can be integrated to make a whole. He wants to know how the mundane "down under" realm of ordinary, day-to-day living fits with the "upstairs" realm of the hereafter; how the business of living, eating, working, and enjoying can be made to fit with the call to worship, serve, and love the living God; and how one can accomplish the integration of the sciences, and humanities. But in all the vastness and confusion, man is frustrated by the "vanity" of selecting any one of the many facets of God's "good" world as that part of life to which he totally give himself.¹

Man must come to terms with his limitations. He must bow to the sovereignty of God and learn why godliness with contentment in every situation is the real goal of life. He can only know that as God sovereignly reveals it to him. Not only is every good thing we have a gift from God, but even the ability to receive and enjoy it as such is also a gift from God.

In 3:12, the writer uses what will later become one of Paul's favorite expressions, "I know." The KJV and the NIV each have a different slant on this text. The KJV says, "I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life." The NIV says, "I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live." The KJV would emphasize that there is no good in any and all work, so man must find his mean-

ing and purpose some other place. The NIV emphasizes the best thing a man can experience is true happiness in whatever God's providence gives him. In verse 12, the writer knows the secret of life. This is the same idea that Paul expresses by "godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Tim. 6:6). Before we were Christians, we failed in all our attempts to hang on to happy relationships or joyous occasions. Now we can say, "There really is a 'joy unspeakable' and it really is lasting."

In 2:24, we encountered the beginning of a radically different worldview. Secularism had begun to give way to theism. God had come into the picture. The Seeker repeats that focus in 3:13. Here, secularism gives way to theism. Pessimism gives way to optimism. Human autonomy gives way to the humility of faith. Philosophy gives way to biblical revelation. The song now becomes, "What ever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, it is well, it is well, with my soul."

In verse 14, the writer again says, "I know." Two of Paul's favorite phrases are "I know" and "I am persuaded." If you want a good Bible study, look up the specific things that Paul knows and of which he is persuaded. Our post-modern culture "insists that objec-



tive knowledge is neither attainable nor desirable."² This translates into boasting about its ignorance and its

Reisinger (Continued on page 6)

IS PHARAOH ALIVE AND WELL?

Gen. Clyde F. Autio

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. 2 Chronicles 7:14

Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people. Proverbs 14:34

Who should the people obey in the conflict between God's law and the law of the land?

Recently, I was watching a morning news show on a major network. One of the hosts was interviewing the co-founder of a major electronics and computer organization. The subject of the interview was the potential problems of the emerging micro-technology industry. Included in this new industry are such things as genetically developed pathogens and micro-robots. The host asked his guest what problems he foresaw. The guest was concerned about the likelihood that elements of the new technology could fall into the hands of the 'bad-guys.' He cited, as a specific threat, the human devastation caused if a genetically designed pathogen was released into the population which had no natural immunity because the pathogen was new. His immediate solution was that the president should convene a panel for the purpose of developing government programs to control the new technology and to prevent any misuse.

My most immediate reaction was, "Why would such a learned and capable man think that our gov-

ernment would be the proper guardian to constructively manage any new technology?" This thought quickly gave way to another thought, "Why can't the media and industrial leaders learn that, based upon the government's track record, they are the last agency to put in charge of something that would have moral and ethical considerations?" It reminded me so much of Pharaoh's experience with Moses and Aaron—Exodus 7:8 through 12:31. God had sent his word, through Moses and Aaron, to warn Pharaoh to not prevent God's people from leaving their homes in Egypt to return to the land that had been promised to them. Pharaoh did not want to lose such a diligent and worthy labor force, which would then require the Egyptians to do their own manual labor. This passage recounts the various plagues Moses and Aaron promised to Pharaoh and how he subsequently hardened his heart after each warning. Finally, after numerous encounters, God took the lives of all the first-born in Egypt—except for those households which had been covered with blood—and Pharaoh reluctantly relented, long enough for the Israelites to get an adequate head start.

The current application of this story is that Pharaoh, the government of Egypt, was preventing God's people from pursuing service to their God. The government then became an active force to prevent the Israelites from being obedient to this call from God.

Doing a fast forward to our time and issues, both our government and our culture have repeatedly ig-

nored God's warnings of obey or perish. The modern version of the message and messengers is not as colorful as the exhortations given by Moses and Aaron about specific catastrophes or the open rebellion by Pharaoh. The modern version has godly pastors and evangelists faithfully preaching God's word from the Bible and both the government and culture turning their backs on the truth. In both scenarios, the source of the word is the same—God; the messengers are the same—called by God; the purpose is the same—obey my commands; and the results are the same—arrogant refusal to obey. If we see all of these elements to have similarities, why should we not expect to have the same final consequence? Should we be surprised if the repeated turning away from God doesn't provoke ever more dreadful consequences? God's messengers went to Pharaoh some fifteen times, ten to warn of an impending catastrophe and several to remove the catastrophe. On the last occasion, God had Moses and Aaron lay the dreaded gauntlet of death before Pharaoh. That broke his spirit long enough for the Israelites to pack their belongings, gather the valuables donated by the Egyptians and get out of town.

The objects of the modern catastrophes, our government and culture, cannot see God's hand at work in their presence so they stubbornly ignore God's warnings and set about to create new programs to solve the age-old problems of sinful rebellion. The family structure is in the process of being disassembled;

Autio (Continued on page 19)

Reisinger (Continued from page 4)

lack of assurance about anything. To be open-minded is to reject all absolutes and to be sure of nothing. "All truth claims are merely true for some people, even if not for all people at all times and places."³ The problem is that when you are sure of nothing, you are ready to believe anything that comes down the pike (See Acts 17:19-21). It is no accident that our present society has produced so many weird and wonderful cultic religious organizations. The strong postmodern voice in our society is positive that you cannot be sure of anything except that you cannot be sure of anything. In their dogmatism, they do not realize how inconsistent their statement is. How can you be positive that you cannot be positive about anything? Contrast their anti-foundational stance with the words of the Seeker, "I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it." The absolute language is striking: know, everything, forever, and nothing. The Seeker uses unqualified terminology to convey his faith in the full-blown sovereignty of God.

If all that is under the sun is futile, transient, and unreliable, then security can be found only in God's sovereign unchanging grace. God's purposes are just as sure as his power in grace is sure. God's work is effective and complete. In glorification, he will conform us completely to the image of Christ. God's redemptive work, or new creation, is secure. Nothing can destroy or mar it in any way. It is not like the first work of creation. This kind of sovereignty fills a lost man with fear, but it fills a believer with joy and hope. I often tell people who are going through tough times, "I read the last chapter! We win – big time." We know that "he who hath begun a good work in [us] will

perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6). Likewise, we know we are sealed with no less a seal than the Holy Spirit himself, and that sealing is "unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30). That seal remains until the day of our full redemption is reached. It is the absolute guarantee that we will make it to glory! Man cannot add to or take away one single thing from the sovereign purposes of God.



Verse 15 emphasizes the absolute unchangeableness of God's purposes and plans. The Seeker offers a poetic expression of his conclusions about toil, beauty and eternity and introduces the idea of judgment, which will occupy the next several verses. "Whatever is has already been, and what will be has been before; and God will call the past to account." Derek Kidner, in his commentary on Ecclesiastes, writes,

The earthbound man, in the light of verses 14 and 15, is the prisoner of a system he cannot break or even bend; and behind it is God. There is no escape, and nowhere to jettison what encumbers and incriminates him. But the man of God hears the verse with no such misgivings. To him verse 14 describes the divine faithfulness that makes the fear of God a fruitful and filial relationship; and verse 15 assures him that with God all things are foreknown, and

nothing overlooked. God has no abortive enterprises or forgotten men.⁴

Nothing is outside the scope of God's providence or care. Even our tears are remembered by God:

"Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book? When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me. In God will I

praise his word: in the LORD will I praise his word." (Psalm 56:8-10. See also Ecclesiastes 4:1.)

"Whatever is has already been," means that the present is as sure as the past, because God's decree is that trustworthy. We know that we cannot go back and change the past be-

cause the events have already occurred—they are historical facts. The present is just as secure, because God chooses to bring it to pass. "Whatever will be has been before." Like the past and the present, the future is secure because God has determined it. Nothing can change God's decree, and nothing can escape his judgment. The past may be hidden from us, but God will call it to account.

Verse 16 introduces the subject of the rule of injustice and the harshness of life. At first glance, it looks like a new theme, but it is not. The thought of set times and their power over us is still present in verse 17. Justice may seem to be missing, but God has set a time for that as well. As D. A. Carson is fond of saying, "A time will come when justice will be done, and will be seen to have been done." Chap-

Reisinger (Continued on page 8)

THE LAW OF EXPEDIENCY

Mike McInnis

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. 1 Cor 10:23

The LORD GOD JEHOVAH delivered a law to the children of Israel, (in the wilderness wherein they wandered), on their journey to the promised land of Canaan. That law was delivered to them through the prophet Moses. That law consisted of many commandments which governed every aspect of their lives, both as to the manner in which they were to worship GOD and also how they were to interact with their fellow man. Much of it was summed up in what is generally called the “ten commandments” although it was more far reaching than this “Decalogue”, since even the foods which they could and could not eat were spelled out in great detail. Not only was this an exact and comprehensive set of rules but it also carried with it a principle (or law) which under girded its every jot and tittle, “Do this and live, disobey and perish” (Deut.27:26; Gal.3:10).

This law could not minister life unto its hearers because there was a flaw in the fulfilling of it. Man’s sinful flesh rose up in rebellion against it and could not (or would not) keep it. The law as God gave it (as are all things which he does) was perfect, just, and holy and totally above all reproach. When Israel disobeyed this law they could neither blame God nor could they escape the law’s condemnation. (See Rom.3:19; 8:3; Heb.7:18, 19)

Much error has been perpetuated concerning the giving of these laws to Israel. Men have sought to use

these laws to bind others into religious conformity or to establish a standard of righteousness which they have assumed sets them apart from the heathen. The Pharisees during the time of Christ’s ministry on earth were the epitome of such error. They delighted themselves in its letter yet had no regard to its intent. They were (as are all religious men who are not acquainted with their own natural enmity to the law of God) convinced that God gave these laws to establish righteousness in the earth. But the main reason that these laws were given was to establish and demonstrate man’s inability and unwillingness to submit himself to God. (See Rom.3:20; Gal. 3:21; Rom.7:5-11) Not only in the jot and tittle of the law as given to the Jews but in its “principle of law” (do this and live) which was given not only to the Jews but to the gentiles as well. (See Rom.2:12)

This very principle brings condemnation upon all in that “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23) whether one is a Jew or a Greek. There was a law (principle) given by Moses, but there is a greater one given by Christ which speaks better things than condemnation (Heb.12:24) and goes beyond the deadly “do this and live” with great power to transform the lives of its subjects. Yes that principle of law which Christ has established in the earth is the fulfillment of the prophecy “*I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their GOD, and they shall be my people*” (Jer 31:33). Whereas the old law principle was weak through the flesh, this new principle is not de-

pendent on the flesh for its fulfillment but on what Christ has done in satisfying the claims of the law which were against us and in his power to make us new creatures whose delight is in the things of God.

As the old principle was “death and destruction to those who disobey” the new one centers on this: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law (principle) of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law (principle) of sin and death” (Rom.8:1-2). We are no longer under a schoolmaster but are the Lord’s free men. (See John 14:15, 16; Gal.4:28-31)

Now while there is a natural enmity in man’s heart against the law of God there is an even stronger enmity against submitting to Him with our whole heart. The natural man would rather embrace a law principle which is satisfied with letter obedience than he would to submit himself to the principle which Christ demands. (An illustration of this is in Mat.19:16-22) The principle of ‘expediency’ is to be our guide rather than ‘lawfulness’ for as the apostle says all things are lawful to us but all things are not proper. What may be permissible under law is not necessarily permissible under expediency. Because something is lawful does not mean that it is edifying (i.e.; enriching) This is exactly what the apostle Paul is teaching in the text before us when he points out that our main concern with our conduct is not

McInnis (Continued on page 19)

Reisinger (Continued from page 6)

ter 4 will elaborate on this subject. It will also come up at least five more times in the rest of the book.

The writer brings forth six facts of life as he sees and understands it that seem to contradict his thesis that God sovereignly controls all people and all events. How can God be in total control and allow even the courts of justice to be corrupted and used against the very people those courts were designed to protect? Are men no better than beasts? Is it true that the fortunate position is never to have been born?

I. The halls of justice are filled with unrighteousness (3:16, 17).

And I saw something else under the sun: In the place of judgment—wickedness was there, in the place of justice—wickedness was there.

I thought in my heart, “God will bring to judgment both the righteous and the wicked, for there will be a time for every activity, a time for every deed.” (NIV)

II. Men, just like beasts, die (3:18-21).

I also thought, “As for men, God tests them so that they may see that they are like the animals.

Man’s fate is like that of the animals; the same fate awaits them both: As one dies, so dies the other. All have the same breath; man has no advantage over the animal. Everything is meaningless.

All go to the same place; all

come from dust, and to dust all return.

Who knows if the spirit of man rises upward and if the spirit of the animal goes down into the earth?”



So I saw that there is nothing better for a man than to enjoy his work, because that is his lot. For who can bring him to see what will happen after him? (NIV)

III. Man is oppressed (4:1-3).

Again I looked and saw all the oppression that was taking place under the sun: I saw the tears of the oppressed—and they have no comforter; power was on the side of their oppressors—and they have no comforter. And I declared that the dead, who had already died, are happier than the living, who are still alive. But better than both is he who has not yet been, who has not seen the evil that is done under the sun. (NIV)

IV. Man is in constant rivalry (4:4-6).

And I saw that all labor and all achievement spring from man’s envy of his neighbor. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind. The fool folds his hands and ruins himself. Better one handful with tranquillity than two handfuls with toil and chasing after the wind. (NIV)

V. Men are alone and isolated (4:7-12).

Again I saw something meaningless under the sun: There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth. “For whom am I toiling,” he asked,

“and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?” This too is meaningless—a miserable business! Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. (NIV)

VI. Popularity is only temporary (4:13-16).

Better a poor but wise youth than an old but foolish king who no longer knows how to take warning. The youth may have come from prison to the kingship, or he may have been born in poverty within his kingdom. I saw that all who lived and walked under the sun followed the youth, the king’s successor. There was no end to all the people who were before them. But those who came later were not pleased with the successor. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind. (NIV)

In five of the six cases, the writer introduces his argument with “Moreover I saw” (3:16), “I indeed saw” (3:18; 4:4), or “Again I saw” (4:1; 4:7); only 4:13 does not use some form of this introduction. Let us look at these problems one at a time.

First, there is wickedness in the courts. This seems to contradict the concept of a good God who is in charge of things. Surely, the one place that God would assure that justice prevailed is in the courts, but the writer sees the courts as hotbeds of tyranny and wickedness. After all, was not God’s purpose in setting up human tribunals for the express purpose of protecting the poor and vulnerable in society? “And I

Reisinger (Continued on page 17)

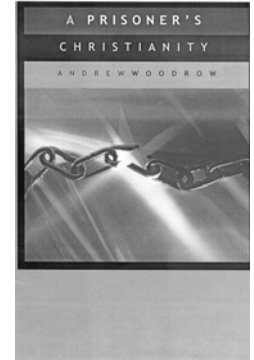
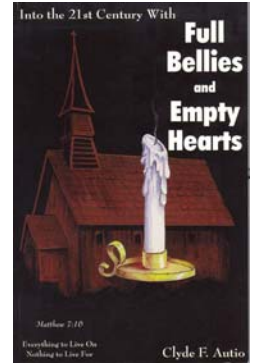
Book Title	Quantity	Retail Price	Total Retail Price
<i>Abraham's Four Seeds</i> —Reisinger	_____	\$10.95	_____
<i>All Things New</i> —Hoch	_____	\$19.98	_____
<i>The Believer's Sabbath</i> —Reisinger	_____	\$3.75	_____
<i>Chosen In Eternity</i> —Reisinger	_____	\$5.50	_____
<i>Christ, Lord and Lawgiver Over the Church</i> —Reisinger	_____	\$2.50	_____
<i>The Doctrine of Baptism</i> —Sasser	_____	\$3.50	_____
<i>Full Bellies and Empty Hearts</i> —Autio	_____	\$14.99	_____
<i>Grace</i> —Reisinger	_____	\$4.75	_____
<i>Is John G. Reisinger an Antinomian?</i> —Wells	_____	\$4.25	_____
<i>Jonathan Edwards on Biblical Hermeneutics and the "Covenant of Grace"</i> —Gilliland	_____	\$3.95	_____
<i>Limited Atonement</i> —Reisinger	_____	\$7.00	_____
<i>The New Birth</i> —Reisinger	_____	\$5.50	_____
<i>New Covenant Theology</i> —Wells & Zaspel	_____	\$19.95	_____
<i>The Obedience of Christ</i> —Van Court	_____	\$2.50	_____
<i>Our Sovereign God</i> —Reisinger	_____	\$4.45	_____
<i>Perseverance of the Saints</i> —Reisinger	_____	\$6.00	_____
<i>A Prisoner's Christianity</i> —Woodrow	_____	\$9.50	_____
<i>Tablets of Stone</i> —Reisinger	_____	\$10.95	_____
<i>The Sovereignty of God and Prayer</i> —Reisinger	_____	\$5.75	_____
<i>The Sovereignty of God in Providence</i> —Reisinger	_____	\$4.45	_____
<i>Total Depravity</i> —Reisinger	_____	\$5.00	_____
<i>What is the Christian Faith?</i> —Reisinger	_____	\$2.50	_____
Total Number of Books	_____		_____
Discount _____% (from Quantity Discount Chart on page 10)		Minus Discount	_____
		Discounted Cost	_____
See Rate Chart		Shipping	_____
<i>Canadian orders—Visa or MasterCard only, please..</i>		Total Order	_____

New Covenant Media Books

Ship to: _____		
Street Address: _____		
City: _____	State: _____	Zip: _____

Free Books

Every new subscription (makes a nice gift) or renewal between now and June 30, 2005 will receive a free copy of *Full Bellies and Empty Hearts* by Clyde F Autio and *A Prisoner's Christianity* by Andrew Woodrow.



SUBSCRIBE NOW: \$10.00 FOR TEN ISSUES

My check (payable to *Sound of Grace*) is enclosed.
 Charge to my: VISA MasterCard Expires ____/____
 Account Number: ____ - ____ - ____ - ____
 Signature: _____
 Name: _____
 Street Address: _____
 City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

Please send *Full Bellies and Empty Hearts* and *A Prisoner's Christianity*. Included is \$10.00 for the subscription to *Sound of Grace* and \$3.00 to cover postage and handling.

Quantity Discount Chart for New Covenant Media Books

NUMBER OF BOOKS	RETAIL PRICE DISCOUNT
6—10	10%
11 - 20	15%
21 +	20%
Church Book Tables (21 minimum)	25%
Resellers	Call

Postage & Handling Rates—U.S.

Up to \$20.00	\$3.50
\$20.01—\$50.00	\$5.00
\$50.01 and Up	10%

Postage & Handling Rates—Canada— VISA or MasterCard

Up to \$35.00	\$5.00
\$35.01 and Up	15%

Postage & Handling Rates—Overseas

Please Call

BY MAIL: New Covenant Media, 5317 Wye Creek Drive, Frederick, MD 21703-6938

BY PHONE: 301-473-8781 OR 800-376-4146, Please have your VISA or MasterCard ready.

BY FAX: 240-206-0373, List your VISA or MasterCard Number along with a four-digit expiration date.

ONLINE: www.newcovenantmedia.com; **EMAIL:** info@newcovenantmedia.com

() My check (payable to *New Covenant Media*) is enclosed.
 () Charge to my: () VISA () MasterCard Expires ____/____
 Account Number: ____ - ____ - ____ - ____
 Name (please print) _____ Signature: _____

Author	Title	Pages	List	Sale	No.	Cost
John G. Reisinger	<i>When Should a Christian Leave a Church?</i>	14	\$3.50	\$2.50		
John G. Reisinger	<i>John Bunyan and the Sabbath</i>	12	\$3.00	\$2.00		
Gary D. Long	<i>Context! Evangelical Views on the Millennium Examined</i>	386	\$25.00	\$21.50		
Gary D. Long	<i>Biblical Law & Ethics: Absolute and Covenantal</i>	58	\$2.95	\$1.50		
Preface by Gary D Long	<i>The First London Confession of Faith—1646 Edition (new reprint w/new preface)</i>	32	\$7.99	\$6.50		
Tom Wells	<i>Come Home For Ever</i>	79	\$4.99	\$3.40		
William Sasser	<i>The Doctrine of Christ</i>	72	\$4.75	\$3.75		
William Sasser	<i>The Doctrine of Salvation</i>	78	\$4.75	\$3.75		
William Sasser	<i>The Doctrine of Man</i>	72	\$4.75	\$3.75		
William Sasser	<i>The Doctrine of God</i>	52	\$4.00	\$3.00		
William Sasser	<i>The Atoning Work of Jesus Christ</i>	84	\$5.00	\$4.00		
Kent Clark	<i>Acquitted in the High Court of Heaven (Only a few on hand)</i>	17	\$2.50	\$1.75		
Chris Scarborough	<i>The New Covenant and the Law of Christ</i>	53	\$10.95	\$9.50		
Robert Morey	<i>How to Keep Your Kids Drug Free</i>	106	\$4.95	\$1.00		
Robert Morey	<i>Battle of the Gods</i>	316	\$10.95	\$2.00		
Robert Morey	<i>Here Is Your God</i>	142	\$9.95	\$2.00		
Robert Morey	<i>The Origins and Teaching of Freemasonry</i>	144	\$7.95	\$2.00		
Robert Morey	<i>Introduction to Defending the Faith</i>	46	\$4.95	\$1.00		
John Korsgaard	<i>Should Christians Fear God Today?</i>	70	\$6.95	\$3.50		
James White	<i>Justification By Faith</i>	68	\$6.95	\$2.75		
James White	<i>Answers To Catholic Claims</i>	164	\$9.95	\$2.00		
James White	<i>The Fatal Flaw</i>	240	\$11.95	\$2.50		
James White	<i>Drawn By the Father</i>	61	\$5.95	\$2.50		
James White	<i>God's Sovereign Grace</i>	160	\$8.95	\$3.50		
David A. Reed	<i>Behind the Watchtower Curtain</i>	153	\$10.95	\$2.00		
Patrick J. Campbell	<i>How to Share Christ with a Jehovah's Witness</i>	56	\$5.95	\$2.00		
Loraine Boettner	<i>Reformed Doctrine of Predestination</i>	447	\$12.99	\$10.00		
Leonard Verduin	<i>The Reformers and Their Stepchildren</i>	292	\$9.95	\$9.50		
John Bunyan	<i>The Pilgrim's Progress (The Accurate Revised Text by Barry E. Horner)</i>	210	\$12.00	\$9.75		
Alexander Strauch	<i>Biblical Eldership</i>	337	\$14.99	\$9.30		
Alexander Strauch	<i>Biblical Eldership—Study Guide (spiral bound)</i>		\$19.99	\$12.50		
Alexander Strauch	<i>Biblical Eldership—Mentor's Guide (spiral bound)</i>		\$19.99	\$12.50		

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____

Total for books	
(See Rate Chart) Postage	
TOTAL ORDER	

Book Order Page

Canadian orders—Visa or MasterCard only, please.

() My check (payable to *Sound of Grace*) is enclosed. () Charge to my: () VISA () MasterCard
 Account Number: _____ - _____ - _____ - _____ Expires ___/___ Signature: _____

Audio Tapes

21st Annual John Bunyan Conference—2005

Code	Subject and Description	Quantity
	Jerry Bridges	
JB05-A1	Personal Godliness 1 Timothy 4:7 &8	
JB05-A2	Personal Godliness Hebrews 11:5 & 6	
JB05-A3	Personal Godliness 1 Timothy 4:7 &8 (continued)	
	Dr. Donald A. Carson	
JB05-A4	The Glorious Gospel of the Blessed God—1 Timothy 1:1-20	
JB05-A5	Characteristics of Spiritual Leaders—Part 1 1 Timothy 3:1-7	
JB05-A6	Characteristics of Spiritual Leaders—Part 2 1 Timothy 3 and other texts	
JB05-A7	Christian Leaders and Money—1 Timothy 6:3-21 (The last few minutes of the sermon is missing.)	
JB05-A8	Christian Leaders in the Last Days—2 Timothy 3:1-4:6	
JB05-A9	Living Priorities for Those with Sound Doctrine Titus 2:1-3:11	
JB05-P1	The God Who Helps—Psalm 40 (Pre-conference message delivered to Cornerstone Church of Skippack)	
	Dr. Michael Haykin	
JB05-A10	Evangelism and the Early Church—Part 1	
JB05-A11	Evangelism and the Early Church—Part 2	
JB05-A12	Evangelism and the Early Church—Part 3	
	Rev. David Morris	
JB05-A13	Mysteries of the New Covenant—A Study in Discontinuity (w/discussion)	
	Rev. John G Reisinger	
JB05-A14	Typology Philemon 10-22	
	Rev. James Zaspel	
JB05-A15	Grace in Unanswered Prayer—2 Corinthians 12:1-10	

Postage & Handling Rates—U.S.		Total quantity
Under \$10	\$.70/tape	Price per tape (see below)
\$10.00—\$30.00	\$3.00	Total amount for tapes
\$30.01 and Up	\$5.00	Postage (per Rate Table)
Postage & Handling Rates—Canada VISA or MasterCard		Total amount
Up to \$35.00	\$5.00	
\$35.01 and Up	20%	
Postage & Handling Rates—Overseas Please Call		

Tape Price List	
1—5	\$3.00 each
6—10	\$2.80 each
11—15	\$2.65 each
16—20	\$2.55 each
21+	\$2.50 each

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

TAPES may be ordered:
 BY MAIL: Sound of Grace, 5317 Wye Creek Drive, Frederick, MD 21703-6938
 BY PHONE: 301-473-8781 OR 800-376-4146, Please have your VISA or MasterCard ready.
 BY FAX: 240-206-0373, List your VISA or MasterCard Number along with a four-digit expiration date.
 EMAIL: info@newcovenantmedia.com

() My check (payable to *Sound of Grace*) is enclosed. () Charge to my: () VISA () MasterCard
 Account Number: ____ - ____ - ____ - ____ Expires ____/____ Signature: _____

McLellan (Continued from page 3)

unfolds progressively. The nature of progressive revelation requires that the earliest part of that revelation is incomplete. Thus, we need to grasp the partial and elementary nature of the Old Testament revelation.



In Genesis 3:15, we have the first promise of the seed to come. The Scriptures then progressively unfold more details regarding this promised seed – this deliverer. In Genesis 22, we learn that the deliverer would be a substitute, provided in the mount known as Moriah. As we continue through the Scriptures, we discover the need for blood sacrifice. By the time we reach Isaiah 53, the description of the deliverer and his atoning sacrifice has become more explicit. We continue from the age of promise and the time of anticipation in the law and the prophets until that preliminary era reaches its revelatory climax with the prophet John. *“For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John”* (Matt. 11:13).

A voice came crying in the wil-

derness; the forerunner proclaimed that the promised kingdom was dawning. *“Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”* (John 1:29). The light of the world had dawned. A new day was unfolding – a day that would fulfill all that had been foreshad-

owed by the law and the prophets. We are not surprised to read that the prophets prophesied, but we also must note that the law, too, prophesied until John. There was a prophetic aspect to the law. Jesus Christ, in his incarnation and accomplishment of what had been promised for his people, brought the law and the prophets to their goal. He fulfilled what they foretold, foreshadowed, and anticipated.

The Relationship between the Old and New Testaments

Holiness under the Old Covenant and holiness under the New Cove-

nant are distinct from each other in the same way that redemption in the Old Covenant and redemption in the New Covenant are. In order to avoid misunderstandings, let me explain the word redemption in its various contextual settings. The Old Covenant people of God were a redeemed people. The New Covenant people of God are a redeemed people. Does it mean the same thing? Are they redeemed in the same way? (Please note: I am not referring to “believers” in the Old and New Covenant eras, I am referring to the nature of the two covenants and their members.) There is a huge difference. The first pictured and foreshadowed the second, which is the true or ultimate redemption.

The Old redemption was physi-

cal and temporary.

“He [God] saved them [Israel] from the hand of him [Egypt/Pharaoh] who hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.” (Psalm 106:10)

The New redemption is spiritual and eternal.

“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law...” (Gal. 3:13)

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace” (Eph. 1:7)

The Old Covenant people had a redeemer – Moses. He was a faithful mediator who stood in the gap. The New Covenant people have a Redeemer – Jesus Christ. He is a better mediator. Moses, the old mediator, made the people of Israel drink the bitterness of their sin and idolatry (Ex. 32:20). Our New Covenant mediator, Jesus, drank the bitter cup of his people’s iniquity himself, that they might drink a cup of blessing. Jesus is a superior mediator.

The Old Covenant people were a freed people (i.e. from physical bondage). The same is true for the New Covenant people of God. However, the citizens of the holy nation of the New Covenant are freed, not from the bondage of physical slavery, but from spiritual bondage.

The typological relationship between Old Covenant/New Covenant events is true also of objects under each covenant. The Old Covenant had a temple. The New also has a temple – one made of living stones, which is Christ’s body, with Jesus himself having become the chief cornerstone. That old temple had a veil that warned, “Keep out or die!” In the new, the veil is Christ’s flesh, through which we may boldly draw near into the presence of God, on

McLellan (Continued on page 14)

McLellan (Continued from page 13)

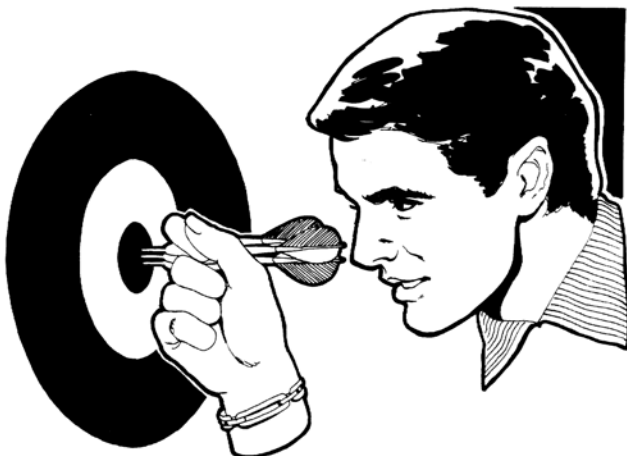
the basis of Christ's all-sufficient sacrifice (Heb. 10:19-20).

You probably can think of many more physical/spiritual connections between the two covenants, such as the examples listed in the table to the right.

When we talk about holiness in the Old and holiness in the New, there is a definite relationship. In fact, 1 Peter 1:16, the New Covenant command to be holy, is a direct quote from Leviticus 19:2 (See also Lev. 11:44, 45; 20:7). However, the question we want to consider is if the particulars that define holiness are the same in both contexts. *"But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy for I am holy'"* (1 Peter 1:15-16).

As we examine the command in both contexts, the first point to consider is that God did indeed command his people in both covenants to be holy. Is the same reason given in both covenants? We see it is – because God is holy. Now, does the fact that Peter quotes Leviticus mean that I must go back to Leviticus and read all those lists of commands to learn how to be holy now? Do I go back to the Mosaic Law to discover how I am to live my daily life?

This is an important question to



OLD COVENANT

Were God's people physically

A covenant people (most unbelievers)

The promises were physical and temporary

Had a Sabbath where the people ceased from their labors one day a week

Had a Passover lamb

Were a holy people (separated in a physical sense – i.e. no bacon; stay away from those Gentiles!)

NEW COVENANT

Are God's spiritual people

A covenant people (all believers)

The promises are spiritual and eternal (better!)

Has a Sabbath who is Christ, and thus, we have ceased from our labors and found our rest in Christ and his finished work!

Has a better Passover Lamb!

Are a holy people (separated in a spiritual sense – i.e. may eat all things, may live in the world, but not live as if we are of the world)

consider. Too often, I have heard Sunday School lessons or Bible teachers make a statement and then list verses with no real regard for their context – not even their covenantal context. How often have you been exhorted to be obedient by a lesson that teaches “do and be blessed”? Have you ever wondered how good you have to be, or how much you have to do in order to be blessed? Is it not perfection? Or is God satisfied with sincere effort; you will be blessed if you give it your best shot? Christ alone can provide the required righteousness for blessing. In him, we are blessed, and so we “do” – out of love. This is an entirely different motivation.

A New Motivation

Under the Old Covenant, the Mosaic Law provided a motivation for obedience – externally. The Old Testament Jew was obligated to obey from without; he was under the threat of punishment - do or die.¹ In the New Covenant, God's people are motivated internally because the law is written on the heart. We are motivated by our love

of Christ. We do not have the Ten Commandments written on our heart; we have the love of God poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). In the New Testament era, Christ sets a higher principle, love, grounded on the fact of his death, not on the threat of our death. The New Covenant guarantees that all the members of its community will have clean hearts that love God and obey him because of that love.

“Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.” (Ezek. 36:25-27)

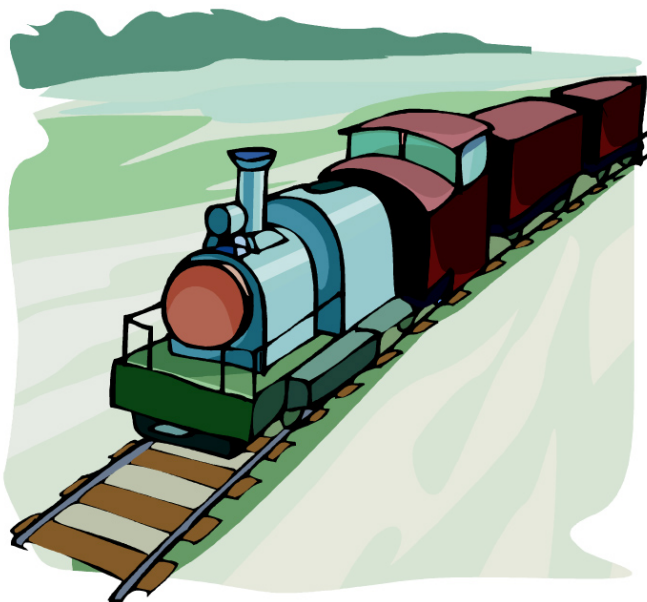
I believe that Jesus is referring to this passage in Ezekiel when he states in John 3:5, *“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”* We know from John 3:10 that Jesus told Nicodemus that a teacher of Israel

McLellan (Continued on page 18)

Webb (Continued from page 1)

neered by Christ and collects the Church. The two systems are completely distinct. As an alternative, I've set forth a third model representing my view of an approach more in line with the Biblical data. This illustration utilizes two trains and two tracks, one engineered by Moses and the other by Christ. Although similar at this point to Dispensationalism, in this case, the two tracks run at right angles to one another, rather than parallel. They intersect at a station house, representing the point of Christ's coming in history. As the train of Moses pulls into the station, an announcement is made that the passengers are now to switch to the train of Christ. Some do, but most don't, and the train of Moses soon derails. The train of Christ now runs through history, picking up mainly Gentiles to join the mainly Jewish riders who made the switch. Note that this model keeps the covenantal systems distinct. It emphasizes the temporality of the Mosaic system on the one hand, while it maintains the one way of salvation and the unity of God's people on the other.

In the first article of this series, it was stated that any covenantal system, to be Biblical, must reflect



three characteristics, all beginning with the letter *T*. So far we've looked at two of these, *transition* and *transference*. Now we'll proceed to the final *T*—the idea of *transcendence*.

Transcendence

In defining *transcend*, Webster uses phrases such as “to rise above,” “to go beyond the limits of,” or “to surpass.” This term quite accurately summarizes what the Bible teaches when it describes the New Testament and compares it to the Old. The New Covenant is neither an extension of the Old, nor the Old slightly modified—it transcends it in every way. Let us examine three passages that clearly express this idea.

Mo' Better

First, there's the epistle to the Hebrews. For the first ten chapters or so, this book declares the superiority of Christ, the Covenant He ratifies, and the age He ushers in, compared to all that has come before. The words “more” and “better” are sprinkled liberally throughout the discussion. Christ has a “more excellent name” than the angels. He's a greater captain than Moses and a greater priest than Aaron. He has a “more excellent” ministry than earthly priests in that He's the mediator of a better covenant established upon better promises. His



sacrifice surpasses those offered under the law. His blood avails where that of animals could not. As we say in the south, Christ is “mo' better”!

Is this new arrangement merely the continuation of the previous covenant? Note, especially, the discussion related to the Melchizedek priesthood of Christ in Hebrews 7. The point is made that Christ was not qualified to be a priest under the Mosaic system, since He “sprang out of Judah” and not Levi. The Melchizedek order (*i.e.* “type” or “kind”) of priest, namely the “King-Priest” type (see Heb. 7:1), was absolutely unknown under the Mosaic covenant. In that economy, the offices of king and priest were strictly segregated. This kind of change requires more than just minor alterations on the existing system. It requires a change of the law itself (Heb. 7:12), along with the abrogation of the commandments contained therein (Heb. 7:18). The carnality, temporality, and partiality that characterized Moses' system is now superseded by that which is spiritual, eternal, and complete. May I anticipate two objections here? First, some will hear an anti-nomian ring in this talk of the “law” being set aside. Let me point out that the moral principles of God's law did not begin at Sinai; neither

Webb (Continued on page 16)

Webb (Continued from page 15)

do they end if the system of law inaugurated there is set aside! The New Testament, if anything, magnifies the moral duties of Christ's people in comparison to those living in the former age. Secondly, some will reply that it was not "Moses' Law," but "God's Law" established at Sinai—and how dare we set aside that which God has established. Well, may I point out it was also not "Aaron's priesthood," but "God's priesthood" established at Sinai. If the fact that God authored the Mosaic law argues for its perpetuity, why doesn't the same principle hold true for the priesthood He likewise authored?

Greater Glory

Another passage setting the covenants side by side is II Corinthians 3. The old covenant is characterized as that which is written on stones, whose ministry condemns and kills; the new covenant is that written in hearts, whose ministry is spiritual, makes alive, and produces righteousness. Not that the old covenant wasn't glorious. Indeed, it was. But, as the light of a candle pales in comparison to the light of the Sun, so the glory of the old was negligible and transitory compared to the glory of the new. Note again the idea of transcendence.

The Liberty of Sonship

Through Galatians 3 and 4, and into chapter 5, Paul discusses the change inaugurated by the coming of Christ. In this discussion, the Mosaic covenant is actually viewed as the new one, being preceded by a covenantal "promise" of blessing made to Abraham. The law actually seemed to work at cross-purposes to this promise, bringing cursing rather than blessing, death rather than life. It was "added" (lit: "came alongside"), for disciplinary reasons, until the ordained recipient of the promise actually came into the world—Christ. The contrast of the

saints' situation prior to Christ and after Christ is viewed as the change from that of a child set under a pedagogue to that of an adult. The child placed under tutors and governors is disciplined rigidly by such things as homework, rules, deadlines, a structured schedule, corporal punishment, etc. Every moment of every day he is under the stern eye of the schoolmaster. Upon becoming an adult, he is released from such a system. He now does from within the duties that were previously imposed from without. The rules have become "internalized." Likewise, Paul views New Testament saints as adult sons, freed from bondage to the "letteristic," external, and disciplinary principles of the Mosaic law. They now enjoy the full realization of their sonship, desiring to please their Father from the heart.

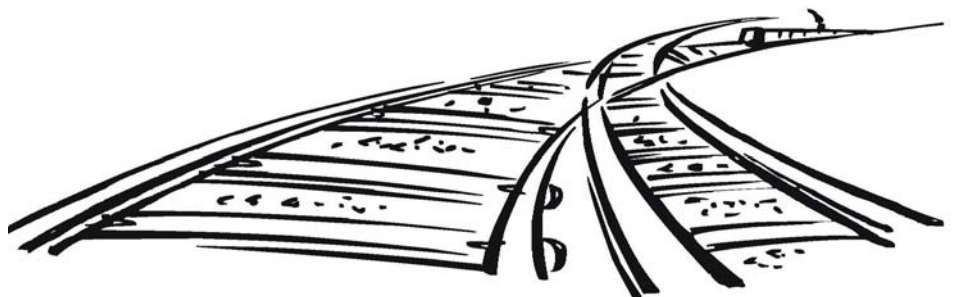
Back to the Trains

Let us now return to our model. To simply describe the change occurring at the coming of Christ as a change from one train to another just doesn't do justice to it! It's more like moving from a train pulled by an old steam locomotive into a sleek, modern passenger train. Further, the gauge of the tracks is completely different. The train of Moses couldn't run on this track even if it tried! The train of Christ, on the one hand, does bear a similarity to the train of Moses, and it incorporates many of its features. But, on the other hand, it is a new system, completely surpassing the old in every way.

Conclusion

My purpose, as stated from the beginning, is not to present a full-blown description of the various covenantal positions existing in today's theological world, nor a comprehensive defense of my own position. Rather, I've simply tried to offer an illustration that allows the average person to get an intellectual handle on the positions 'out there.' In addition, I've sought to throw some light on problems the two major positions fail to address, while attempting to offer a viable alternative. I hope that others will improve upon my offering. Anyone who strives to arrive at a solution to this problem that is biblical and Christ-honoring, that sets forth the demands of obedience to Christ while avoiding legalism, and that sets forth the glory of free grace while avoiding antinomianism, has my deepest respect and heartfelt appreciation!

So, while I'm not about to part company from those who see these matters differently from me, I do want to stress how important one's covenantal position is! How we see the 'big picture' will inevitably flavor and taint every area of our theology to some degree. If I am to be a careful and skillful teacher of God's Word, it's essential that I grasp the flow of God's redemptive purpose in Christ, the interrelationship of scripture, and, especially, the principles which define our duty to God and man. May God enlighten and assist us in this quest
Ω



Reisinger (Continued from page 8)

saw something else under the sun: In the place of judgment—wickedness was there, in the place of justice—wickedness was there” (v. 16).

As soon as the writer faces this troublesome fact, he immediately, in verse 17, proposes an answer to his distress. He knows that God has a time for everything, including the judgment of both the righteous and the wicked. “I thought in my heart, ‘God will bring to judgment both the righteous and the wicked, for there will be a time for every activity, a time for every deed’” (v. 17). Wicked men may appear to prevail in their tyranny over the poor and helpless, but they will someday face the Judge of all judges, God himself. Just as the cold and bitter winter will come to an appointed end and spring shall come in all of its beauty, so the night of weeping will end and the righting of all wrongs shall take place. Kidner comments,

... It reinforces the purely moral conviction that God will judge (17), by the realization that for this event, as for everything else, He has already appointed its proper time.

This is all very well, we may feel; but why the delay? Why is the present not the time for universal justice? To that unspoken question verses 18 ff. gives a typical abrasive answer, since our first need is not to teach God His business but to learn the truth about ourselves, a lesson we are very slow to accept. ... But we have to admit that quite apart from our tendencies to cruelty and squalor, which puts us in a class below the beasts, there are at least two facts about us which support the charge: the role of greed and cunning in our affairs (which is the subject under discussion, verse 16), and the mortality that man shares with all earthly creatures. The first of these sad facts reap-



pears in the next chapter; the second occupies the remainder of this one, and interacts with the rest of the Old Testament. Verse 20, showing us man on his journey from dust to dust, as in Genesis 3:19, confronts us with the Fall, and with the irony that we die like cattle because we fancied ourselves as gods.⁵

In 2 Kings 8:12-13, we find one of the most fearful incidents in the Old Testament Scriptures. The passage concerns a man named Hazael who would soon be king of Syria.

12 And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child.

13 And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The LORD hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria. (KJV)

When the prophet told Hazael about the crimes that he foresaw Hazael would commit, Hazael was horrified. He sincerely protested, “What, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?” He could not believe that he was capable of such crimes, but Hazael became King of Syria and acted as the

prophet predicted. Have not we all, under certain circumstances, been amazed at some of the things that we have done, or wanted to do, to get what we wanted? If anyone had told us that we would do those things, we would have protested with Hazael that we were not capable of such things only to discover that we, creatures made in the image of God, were more than capable of acting on a level lower than animals.

Our refusal to come to grips with total depravity in ourselves demonstrates the terrifying power of sin to deceive us. We can see a specific sin in another person and yet be blind to that same sin in ourselves. When David cried out to Nathan, “The man that committed that sin should die,” he was not being a hypocrite. He simply did not see his own sin in Nathan’s vivid and accurate description. He was just as blind as Hazael and as you and I. Of all God’s creatures, only man can fall so far below his original creation. We who were created to be princes can sink to a position worse than pigs and snakes. It is this awful power of sin that makes people so very self-righteous and constantly critical of other people for the very thing of which they themselves are guilty.

In our next article, we will look at the other five disturbing observations of the Seeker in the rest of chapter 4.

¹ Walter Kaiser, *Ecclesiastes, Total Life* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1979), 66-67.

² D. A. Carson, *Becoming Conversant With the Emerging Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 97.

³ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁴ Derek Kidner, *A Time to Mourn and a Time to Dance, The Message of Ecclesiastes* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1976), 40.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 42.

McLellan (Continued from page 14)

ought to know the truths of which he was speaking. The source of truth and knowledge of God upon which Israel's teachers relied was the Hebrew Scripture – what we call the Old Testament Scriptures. Something in Nicodemus' Holy Word should be the reference point for Jesus' words in verse 5. In our passage in Ezekiel, there is a clear reference to both water and the Spirit. In the New Covenant kingdom, a sinner is both cleansed (justified) and given a new heart (for sanctification) [see also 2 Thess. 2:13-14 and Titus 3:3-7]. Since God has caused the believer to be born from above, he or she is spiritually alive with a new heart. A Christian is an incurable God-lover! He is someone whom God has called out of the darkness of unbelief and self-centeredness into the light of knowing God and living for him.

The New Covenant believer understands that he has rebelled against the God of heaven and earth and thus, he deserves God's unending wrath. This is why God's grace is so overwhelming to him. The New Covenant member recognizes that when he sins, he sins against God. Sin is not simply about breaking a rule in God's book. Rather, it is a personal offense against God himself, and this is why a believer's own sin grieves him so much.²

In the Old Covenant era, there were holy places, holy people (i.e. priests), and holy times. These things were set aside from common, everyday use and consecrated solely for use in serving God. In the New Covenant era, everything is to be holy (used for serving God), for all his people are holy (set apart). Thus, every place that we are in becomes the holy place of God's presence. We are all holy priests. Every day is a holy moment to be used for God's glory. When we

A Gracious Influence

(J. C. Philpot, "Jesus, the Great High Priest")

The love of Jesus has a gracious influence on the life, conduct, and conversation of a true believer. The tree is known by its fruit; and those branches alone which bring forth fruit unto God, are in manifest union with the only true Vine.

Love to Jesus is the constraining principle of all holy obedience. "If you love Me, keep my commandments," was His dying injunction to His disciples. As, then, His bleeding love is experimentally known, there will be . . .

a conformity to His image,
an obedience to His will,
a walking in His footsteps.

Courtesy of Grace Gems—<http://www.gracegems.org/>

gather in a meeting room, *it* is not the sanctuary or a holy building; *we* are!

In the New Covenant, all the commandments are tied to Christ. Wives, submit to your husbands . . . as to the Lord. Husbands, love your wives . . . just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for her. Children, obey your parents . . . in the Lord. Servants, suffer under your masters . . . as to Christ. Give . . . as Christ became poor and gave himself – oh, what an indescribable gift! Forgive . . . as Christ forgave you. Be kind to one another and walk in love . . . as Christ also has loved us. Truly, our love of Christ is the issue, the wellspring from which all else in our lives flows. The New Testament Scriptures do not call us to moral behavior divorced from Christ. They do not simply say, "Do this," or "Do not do that." Grace, not moralism, motivates the believer.

To be continued

¹ This in no way suggests that individual Israelites who lived under the terms of the Old Covenant did not love God and obey him out of love. We only have to read the Psalms to find exquisite expressions of love to God and resolute determination to obey based on that love. The Old Covenant did not prevent anyone from loving obedience, but neither did it

provide a rationale for it. Furthermore, it demanded obedience to its terms, whether or not its community members loved God, hated him, or were indifferent to him.

² Again, while this same attitude may have been true for some members of the Old Covenant community, it was not true for all of them. Every member of the New Covenant community has the promised Spirit of God in his or her life, ever pushing him or her to continue to love God more than he or she loves sin.

Presented by Murray McLellan (an unworthy sinner upon whom the glorious sovereign of the universe has bestowed his mighty grace—*"But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God – and righteousness and sanctification and redemption – that, as it is written, 'He who glorifies, let him glory in the Lord.'"*)¹ 1 Cor. 1:30-31)

I do not claim to be, nor seek to be original in the preceding article. I seek to magnify and exalt the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. Unto Him belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Autio (Continued from page 5)

sexual perversions, associated diseases and broken lives are rampant; the abuse of numerous substances has epidemic proportions; and integrity, morality and ethics have been thrown onto the altar of expediency. Yet, God's messengers are ridiculed and the author of their message blasphemed.

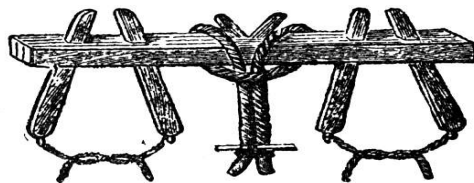
Yes, in one respect Pharaoh is alive and we must be about making preparations, as the Israelites of old, to honor and obey God. Ω

McInnis (Continued from page 7)

whether something is lawful or not but is it useful to the glory of the Lord. There is no law which holds sway over regenerate men, but the law of love, which is written not in tables of stone but on the fleshy tables of their hearts with the blood of Christ. A man's wickedness may be subdued for a season by the fear of the law's terror, but only a work of grace wrought by the Spirit of God can bring a man to a place of desiring to be conformed to the image of Christ.

The law says "an eye for an eye," expediency says "love your

enemies and pray for those who mistreat you." The law says "tithe", expediency says "give". The law says you are allowed to do this or that, expediency says "make sure your action brings glory to Christ and good to your fellow man." The law says, "You can eat anything", expediency says, "don't eat anything that will cause your brother to stumble." *"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"* (Gal 5:13-14). Ω



The Graciousness of Grace

Joe Terrell

You may ask, "Why is it so difficult to let Grace be gracious?" My own experience teaches me that it is because I am just not that gracious, and I assume others are somewhat like me. We all cast our god in the likeness of ourselves, and the lack of grace on the part of our gods reveals our own lack of grace. It seems to me that until I have been more tolerant than seems wise, more patient with others than seems good, and more forgiving than uprightness would counsel, I have not even begun to know what it is to live out grace. Let our grace to others be as shocking as God's grace to us!

This brings me to another point I find delightful: just as our gods are no more gracious than ourselves, the more we learn of our God, the more gracious we become. The Lord said, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me...and ye shall find rest to your souls." A yoke binds two together, and according to the law, binds two of the same kind together (what a wondrous thought, the gospel makes me of the same kind as Christ). Two yoked together must, of necessity, walk the same way. As we walk with Christ (which means to live as he did) we learn of him, and thus we find the rest which is given to us. As we learn to relate to others in grace and mercy, we learn by experience how it is that Christ relates to us, and thus the rest which He gave to us is found by us—we experience it. Those who do not experience the rest of the gospel are often found to be judgmental of others. Since they do not deal in mercy and grace with others, they have not learned this aspect of Christ, and therefore, do not find rest.

SOUND OF GRACE
5317 WYE CREEK DRIVE
FREDERICK, MD 21703-6938

Check your label for expiration. Please
renew your subscription promptly.

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 45
FREDERICK, MD 21701

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED



Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who do such things. Do you suppose, O man — you who judge those who do such things and yet do them yourself — that you will escape the judgment of God? Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. (Rom 2:1-5 ESV)

W
h
o
I
s
J
e
s
u
s
?

He is the First and Last, the Beginning and the End!
He is the keeper of Creation and the Creator of all!
He is the Architect of the universe and
The Manager of all times.
He always was, He always is, and He always will be...
Unmoved, Unchanged, Undefeated, and never Undone!
He was bruised and brought healing!
He was pierced and eased pain!
He was persecuted and brought freedom!
He was dead and brought life!
He is risen and brings power!
He reigns and brings Peace!
The world can't understand him,
The armies can't defeat Him,
The schools can't explain Him, and
The leaders can't ignore Him.
Herod couldn't kill Him,
The Pharisees couldn't confuse Him, and
The people couldn't hold Him!
Nero couldn't crush Him,
Hitler couldn't silence Him,
The New Age can't replace Him.
He is light, love, longevity, and Lord.
He is goodness, Kindness, Gentleness, and God.
He is Holy, Righteous, mighty, powerful, and pure.
His ways are right,
His word is eternal,
His will is unchanging, and
His mind is on me.
He is my Redeemer,
He is my Savior,
He is my guide, and
He is my peace!
He is my Joy,
He is my comfort,
He is my Lord, and

He rules my life!
I serve Him because His bond is love,
His burden is light, and
His goal for me is abundant life.
I follow Him because He is the wisdom of the wise,
The power of the powerful,
The ancient of days, the ruler of rulers,
The leader of leaders, the overseer of the overcomers,
The sovereign Lord of all that was and is and is to come.
He will never leave me,
Never forsake me,
Never mislead me,
Never forget me,
Never overlook me.
When I fall, He lifts me up!
When I fail, He forgives!
When I am weak, He is strong!
When I am lost, He is the way!
When I am afraid, He is my courage!
When I stumble, He steadies me!
When I am hurt, He heals me!
When I am broken, He mends me!
When I am hungry, He feeds me!
When I face trials, He is with me!
When I face persecution, He shields me!
When I face problems, He comforts me!
When I face loss, He provides for me!
When I face Death, He carries me Home!
He is God, He is faithful.
I am His, and He is mine!
God is in control, I am on His side, and
That means all is well with my soul.

(edited, author unknown)