

## V. THE NEW COVENANT

### A. THE PROVISIONS SET FORTH IN THE NEW COVENANT (Jer. 31:31-34).

1. The New Covenant is an eternal and unconditional covenant which contains certain features regarding Israel's national redemption.
  - a. First of all, Israel will be forgiven of her sins and restored to favor with God (Jer. 31:34; Hos. 2:19,20).
  - b. Secondly, Israel will be given a new mind and heart which speaks of regeneration (Jer. 31:33; Isa. 59:21).
  - c. Thirdly, Israel will be indwelt by the Holy Spirit who will teach her God's will (Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 36:27).
  - d. The Scriptures also point out other features such as material blessings and peace and prosperity associated with the new covenant (Jer. 32:41; Isa. 61:8; Ezek. 34:25-27; Hos. 2:18).
2. The New Covenant was called a covenant, confirmed as a covenant and has continued on through successive generations (Jer. 32:40; Isa. 61:8,9; Ezek. 37:21-28). According to this covenant Israel, as a nation, will one day be forgiven, regenerated, and restored as God's people.

### B. THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE NEW COVENANT TO THE CHURCH.

1. Since there is no redemption apart from shedding of blood (Heb. 9:22) the New Covenant is based on the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, it must be seen that the New Covenant was made with Israel, or Abraham's physical seed, and not with the church. Note these considerations:
  - a. The name Israel always refers to the physical descendants of Abraham.
  - b. Secondly, the church is never promised earthly blessings such as a land, material blessings, and rest from oppression.
  - c. Thirdly, Israel's national redemption cannot occur until after the Tribulation Period and the advent of Israel's Messiah. The Scriptures teach that the church will be raptured before the Tribulation Period.
  - d. Notice for these reasons the New Covenant cannot be fulfilled in the church.
2. It must be understood that the church participates presently in the blessings of the New Covenant but it does not fulfill the New Covenant.
  - a. The church participates in the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant through His seed, Christ (Ga. 3:14; 4:22-31), but the church does not fulfill that covenant.
  - b. Notice in a similar way, the church participates in the blessings of the New Covenant

without fulfilling it (Lk 22:20; I Cor. 11:25; II Cor. 3:6; Heb. 8:8; 9:15). Fred Lincoln points out how the believer today participates in these blessings:

"The believer... partakes of the Lord's supper in remembrance of the blood of the New Covenant (I Cor. 11:25), and he is also a minister of the New Covenant (II Cor. 3:6). It is also said of the believer that he is a child of Abraham because he is of faith (Gal. 3:7) and of Christ (Gal. 3:29). (202).

3. It should be noted that there is a growing number of constituents who have adopted positions contrary to these truths.
  - a. So-called covenant and reformed theology has adopted a replacement position believing that the church has replaced Israel as God's people and that there will be no future and literal fulfillment of God's promises to Israel. Such a position is contrary to the teachings of the Scriptures (Rom. 9-11) and an abandonment of a literal interpretation.
  - b. A second group called "progressive dispensationalists" have adopted a position holding that the Kingdom promises to Israel are being spiritually fulfilled in the Church. This group sees the spiritual aspects of the Kingdom inaugurated when Christ came, and the literal aspects of the Kingdom fulfilled at Christ's Second Coming. While it may be noted that the church participates in the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant and the New Covenant, "Progressive Dispensationalism" is a compromise to accept, within the ranks of dispensationalism, those who have abandoned a literal dispensational view of the Scriptures. Robert Saucy has stated:

"In our opinion there is a mediating position between non-dispensationalism and traditional dispensationalism that provides a better understanding of Scripture."

4. Notice a major problem associated with these diverse positions.
  - a. First of all, to replace Israel with the church is unscriptural and does away with all the literal promises God made to Israel.
  - b. Secondly, those who abandon the literal promises made to Israel may well take a position against Israel. An example of this is seen in recent declarations made by the Presbyterian Church, USA against Israel and in favor of the Palestinians. Believers should be reminded of what God said concerning Abraham (Gen. 12:3).
  - c. It is interesting to note the relationship of present-day "Land for Peace" talks with a number of catastrophes which have come upon our own Nation. Author William Grady has made some alarming associations:

On October 30, 1991, a fateful "peace" conference was convened in Madrid, Spain, by President George Bush. From that moment until now, the panacean pipe dream for a lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been called - "land for peace." President Bush set the pace from the opening bell. An excerpt from his speech follows:

Throughout the Middle East, we seek a stable and enduring settlement. We've not defined what this means. Indeed, I make these points with not map showing

where the final borders are to be drawn. **Nevertheless we believe territorial compromise is essential for peace.**

While President Bush was speaking in Madrid, a portentous atmospheric phenomenon began to occur in the North Atlantic Ocean. A powerful storm developed off the coast of Nova Scotia packing sustained winds of 73 mph (only one mph short of hurricane status). This was quite unusual, as most hurricanes originate in the tropics (after forming off the west coast of Africa). And while the normal weather pattern for America is westward to eastward, this storm would travel over a thousand miles in the opposite direction! You might say it had a mind of its own.

The following day (October 31), the tempest decided to come ashore for some "trick-or-treating." It abruptly smashed its way into New England with waves in excess of one hundred feet - the highest on record. The storm was initially called a "monster," as it was literally hundreds of miles wide. It then proceeded down the coast all the way to Florida, causing multiplied millions of dollars in damage.

The nation's meteorologists were astonished by their own data. The extremely rare weather patterns that coalesced to create this "Halloween Monster" can only happen about once every century. They concluded that it was one of the most powerful storms to have ever occurred. These findings resulted in a book being written about the event, followed by a feature length Hollywood film; both entitled *The Perfect Storm*.

The front-page headlines of The New York Times and USA Today newspapers featured the Madrid peace conference and the Perfect Storm stories right next to each other! The adjacent articles in USA Today were titled "One-on-one peace talks next" and "East Coast hit by rare storm."

On August 23, 1992, President Bush moved the deadly Madrid peace conference to American soil. The theme for the Washington, D.C. - based talks remained the same - "land for peace." The U.S. representative was acting Secretary of State, Lawrence Eagleburger. In an interview with Eagleburger, The New York Times reported that the peace negotiations were resuming "in the context of an Israeli Government that is prepared to be far more forthcoming." Better duck, America!

That very day Hurricane Andrew devastated southern Florida, causing \$30 billion in property damage and leaving 180,000 homeless (with another 25,000 displaced in Louisiana), making it the worst natural disaster in history! The National Hurricane Center described Andrew as a 25 to 30-mile-wide tornado! Andrew was so furious it even destroyed the wind-measuring device, making it impossible to confirm the storm's top wind speed. The last recorded figure was 175 mph, though officials have rendered estimates as high as 200 mph!

Once again, the Madrid peace conference and "Mother Nature's response" shared front-page coverage in the national press. The headlines for USA Today on August 24 were, "1 Million flee Andrew" "This will make Hugo look weak," and "Monster storm targets Fla." Also on page one was an article entitled, "Mid-East peace talks to resume on positive note."

On January 16, 1994, President Bill Clinton and Syria's President Hafez Assad met in Geneva to discuss more "land for peace" arrangements. This time Israel would have to return the Golan Heights to Syria. Clinton was quoted in the press as stating, "Israel must make concessions that will be politically unpopular with many Israelis." Less than twenty-four hours later, a 6.9 earthquake pulverized southern California. The quake, centered in Northridge, became the second-most deadly "natural" disaster to come against America. (For added emphasis, the quake's epicenter just happened to strike in the very district where 95 percent of America's pornographic films are produced."

The source for these amazing "coincidences" is a well-researched book entitled *Israel: The Blessing or the Curse*, by co-authors John McTernan and Bill Koenig. Mr. McTernan is a retired federal agent who served for twenty-six years with the Treasury Department while Mr. Koenig is a White House correspondent, residing in the Washington, D.C., area. These men are to be highly commended for producing such a timely and insightful warning on America's coming judgment (1-6).

### **C. THE IMPLICATIONS WHICH THE NEW COVENANT HAS UPON FUTURE EVENTS.**

1. For the New Covenant to be fulfilled, Israel must experience national repentance and conversion. This will come about as a result of the Tribulation Period (Hos. 5:14-6:3; Zech. 12:10; (Rom. 9-11).
2. For the New Covenant to be fulfilled, Israel must be given a new heart and be regenerated. This will come about when Christ comes at the close of the Tribulation Period (Rom. 11:26-29). This conversion will no doubt be restricted to those Jewish converts of the Tribulation Period (Matt. 25:1-30; Rev. 7).
3. Israel must be in her land and receive the material blessings of the Millennial Kingdom which God has promised as well. This means Palestine must be reclaimed and Israel restored in the land.

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