

Is the New Covenant Still future?

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One idea that I have heard repeated recently is that the New Covenant is still future. In other words, it is something that God is still going to do at some point in the future – it's not here yet. The first time I heard this I was quite surprised, and even shocked. Not only have I heard this preached from the front, but I have seen it in publications and heard it in discussions.

I never knew that this concept even existed. I always understood that the New Covenant was established when Christ died on the cross. I thought that was what everyone believed on the subject. It seemed so plain and obvious to me that I was amazed to hear otherwise. And yet, it seems that some believe that the “ultimate fulfillment” of the New Covenant is still to come in the future.

Well, this set me to search and examine my own position. I wanted to know for sure what the biblical answer was. It's not safe to assume anything, not matter how obvious it may seem. Has the promise of the New Covenant been fulfilled or is it still to come in the future?

Jeremiah

The prophet Jeremiah prophesied of the New Covenant and its glorious promise:

Jeremiah 31:31-34 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: (32) Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: (33) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house



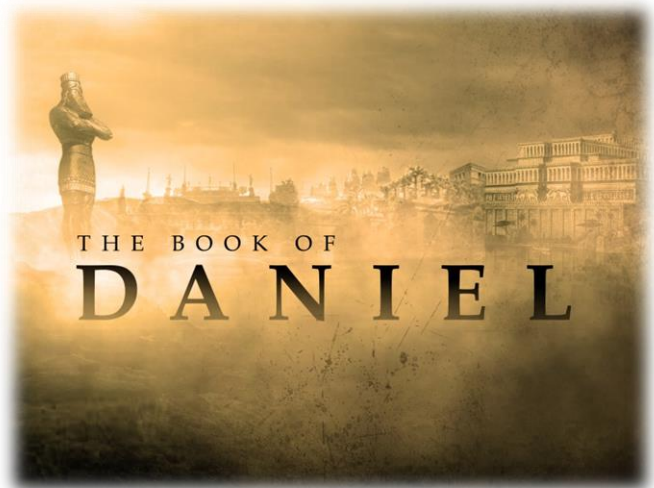
of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. (34) And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

To the fulfillment of this promise did prophets and faithful men look with great longing. The time when God would make a *New Covenant* with His people.

Daniel

Daniel spoke of the coming of the Messiah who would accomplish salvation for mankind. His prophecy speaks of the same covenant that Jeremiah spoke of:

*Daniel 9:27 And he shall **confirm the covenant** with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease ...*



Daniel was referring to the New Covenant. The Messiah would *confirm* this New Covenant with many. The word “confirm” literally means “he shall make strong”. Confirming the covenant means to ratify it and make it valid. The idea is that of giving strength or stability; of making something firm and sure. This is what the Messiah would do in the midst of the week.

Jeremiah and Daniel’s prophecies provide some very clear indicators to the fulfillment of the New Covenant. Jeremiah told us *what* the New Covenant would entail. Daniel gives the timing of *when* it will be confirmed. Before the 70 weeks of Daniel 9:24 expired, the New Covenant would be established!

Jesus

Jesus, the promised Messiah, proclaimed clearly that the time for the establishing of the New Covenant was at hand.

*Luke 22:20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, **This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.***



The blood of Christ (the life of Christ) is the active ingredient of this New Covenant. The long awaited Covenant that Jeremiah and Daniel spoke of was now here. Through the shedding of His blood Christ would seal and forever establish the glorious New Covenant. This was

accomplished within the time frame of the 70 weeks. The long wait was now over. The cross of Christ stands as an eternal witness that the New Covenant is now a reality.

Paul

In his epistle to the Hebrews the Apostle Paul actually quotes the prophecy of Jeremiah as having come to pass. His quote is found in Hebrews 8:7-12. He then concludes by adding:

*Hebrews 8:13 In that he saith, **A new covenant, he hath made the first old.** Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.*

Not content with stating this glorious truth once, the Apostle again affirms it in Hebrews 10:16, 17. Paul knew and understood that the New Covenant was not still to come in the future – it was already a present reality in his time.

*Hebrews 12:24 And to **Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.***

Paul had no doubts that the New Covenant was now established. His great evidence was the shed blood of Jesus. Jesus Christ, the long awaited Messiah, is now the mediator of the New Covenant.

Is it still future?

Yet, in stark contrast to this evidence, some claim that the New Covenant is till future, or that it is only partially fulfilled today. To uphold this view, it is pointed out that the New Covenant is “with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah” (Jeremiah 31:31).

It is simple and easy to recall that when Jesus said “This cup is the new testament,” he was speaking to twelve men of Israel. When Peter preached the Gospel on the day of Pentecost he was addressing the “men of Judaea” and the “men of Israel” (Acts 2:14, 22). Paul preached to his “brethren, children of the stock of Abraham” (Acts 13:26).

God did indeed make His New Covenant with the houses of Israel and Judah. “the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” “For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him” (Romans 1:16; 10:12).



Contrary to what some might say, the New Covenant is not about an inheritance of land. There is no mention of land at all, rather this is what the prophecy stated about it: “I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts ...they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother... for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” This is the glorious Covenant that Christ established! Without this Covenant, no one can inherit the Promised Land.

What about Ellen White?

The above evidence is clear and conclusive. There can be no doubt that the New Covenant promised in the Old Testament is now here. The death of Christ and the preaching of the Apostles with Pentecostal power is irrevocable proof.

I would like to share a few quotes from the pen of Ellen White for those who might be wondering "What about Ellen White?" While it is not necessary to do so to provide further proof, it is of interest to note that what she says is in harmony with the aforementioned conclusion.



The earthly priesthood ceased; but we look to Jesus, **the minister of the new covenant**, and "to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." {DA 166.1}

The "true tabernacle" in heaven is **the sanctuary of the new covenant**. {GC 417.1}

In partaking with His disciples of the bread and wine, Christ pledged Himself to them as their Redeemer. **He committed to them the new covenant**, by which all who receive Him become children of God, and joint heirs with Christ. By this covenant every blessing that heaven could bestow for this life and the life to come was theirs. **This covenant deed was to be ratified with the blood of Christ**. {DA 656.5}

The atoning sacrifice is full and sufficient. **It is the new covenant, sealed with His blood, which was shed for many for the remission of sins. This Christ declared at the last supper**. In this cup there is to those who drink in faith, peace-making, soul-cleansing efficacy. It is the balm of Gilead, which God has provided to restore health and soundness to the stricken soul (Letter 108, 1899). {5BC 1102.6}

Ellen White's understanding of the covenants is in harmony with the Bible. Her statements are too plain to be misunderstood. No one who teaches that the New Covenant is still future can claim that Ellen White is in support of that idea. We have the New Covenant of grace and life that was foretold by the prophets of old. Praise God, Jesus fulfilled those predictions.

Conclusion

The New Covenant is the essence of the three angels' message. It is the everlasting Gospel that is to be preached in the entire world. We preach the reality of the Gospel that is already here, not one that is still coming in the future. The new testament/covenant is here now, fulfilled for both Jew and Gentile in the Gospel of Christ. To teach otherwise is to teach a different gospel.

Only the New Covenant can produce the people referred to in the familiar words "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12.



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