

New Covenant Theology – Response

“Though New Covenant Theology (NCT) has positive aspects such as an insistence on a biblically based theology, several aspects of the system are not so positive. For example in pursuing a middle course between Dispensationalism and Covenant Theology its theologians rely on a strained view of Dispensationalism and adopt an interpretive methodology called supersessionism. A noteworthy omission in NCT’s listing of covenants is the Davidic. To a degree, NCT agrees with Dispensationalism on the Noahic and Abrahamic covenants, but the system fails to grasp the thematic continuity of the OT covenants. Instead, NCT stresses discontinuity as the defining characteristic of a covenant because of the biblical contrast of the Old and New Covenants, and follows a redemption, fulfillment, and kingdom hermeneutic rather than a literal, normal or plain hermeneutic. NCT and Dispensationalism agree on the centrality of the Abrahamic Covenant in the theology of the OT, but NCT sees one kind of fulfillment of that covenant’s land promises in the days of Joshua. It understands the spiritual aspects of the Abrahamic Covenant as ultimately fulfilled in the Messiah and the possession of the promised land as ultimately fulfilled in a spiritual rest. The system holds that the gospel was not clearly revealed before the coming of Christ. The system takes the Old Covenant as fulfilling the physical parts of the Abrahamic. Covenant and the New Covenant as fulfilling the spiritual parts. NCT holds that the Israelites redeemed from Egypt were physically redeemed, but not spiritually redeemed because the Mosaic Covenant was based on works. This leads to the strange position that OT saints were not saved until after the death and resurrection of Christ. NCT thinks that the Davidic Covenant was fulfilled in the death and resurrection of Christ and fails to allow for the NT teaching of a future kingdom. With all its positive features, NCT misses vital points featured in the OT covenants.”

—— Bill Barrick, New Covenant Theology and the Old Testament Covenants, *The Master’s Seminary Journal* 18, no 1 (Fall 2007), 165–180.