

Has God forgotten the British covenant?

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In times of revival in the Old Testament, God's people would often covenant together to follow Him with all of their heart. These covenant renewals were frequently led by Israel's political leader of the time, namely, the king. An example of this would be King Josiah in 2 Chronicles 34: 29-32.

During the Reformation, many Protestants believed their nations should follow the pattern established by Israel and make covenants with the Lord. Scotland was in the forefront of this concept of "national covenanting." This nation first made a covenant with God in 1581, and it was famously renewed in 1638.

In 1643 the governments and national churches of England, Scotland and Ireland covenanted together to follow the Lord in the Solemn League and Covenant. Unfortunately, within a few years King Charles II officially declared that the Solemn League and Covenant was void and that those who upheld it would be punished. Because many conscientious Christians refused to obey the king's dictate to abandon their covenant with God, thousands of them were exterminated during the 1660s through to the 1680s. Most of these people were in Scotland and earned the nickname "Scottish Covenanters."

King Charles II was followed by the even more wicked James II and, ultimately, most people in Britain realized that the Covenanters were right to resist their evil rulers. Thus James was overthrown in the popular Glorious Revolution of 1689. The violent persecution of God's faithful remnant came to an end.

However, the new government of King William of Orange decided to ignore the Solemn League and Covenant and follow its own path of disobedience to God. William was a good man in many respects, but his government refused to uphold the covenant vows taken by England in 1643. While most people accepted this because William was so much better than Charles and James, a remnant of Covenanters refused to accept the new governmental and ecclesiastical situation known as "the Revolution Settlement." This remnant would slowly grow over time into the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland (RPCS), the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland (RPCI), and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA).

The events of the seventeenth century are long past and few people have any idea about those events and their significance. Even the ecclesiastical descendants of the Covenanters, the Reformed Presbyterians, are frequently ignorant of their past and what it means for today.

Then again, what does it mean for today? Is "national covenanting" a Biblical ordinance as the sixteenth and seventeenth century Presbyterians believed? If so, is the Solemn League and Covenant a Biblical covenant? And would anyone be bound by it today?

In 1643 the legitimate ecclesiastical and civil rulers of Britain swore that they and their descendants would serve God and obey His Word. Let me offer, for your consideration, that because this covenant was Biblical, the obligation to keep it is still in effect for the three original nations as well as the nations that descended from them, in particular the British settler nations of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the USA. If this line of reasoning has any legitimate basis, then these nations are covenant-breaking nations under judgment from God.

I realize that this article will appear to be obscure and perhaps bizarre to most people. But even if you think I may be off my rocker, if you consult mainstream historical sources you will see that the historical events outlined above did actually occur. Britain made an explicit covenant with God in 1643. The Parliament of England, the "mother Parliament" to Canada's House of Commons, made an explicit covenant with God. This was a major event of international significance, but it is largely forgotten today. Forgotten, that is, by men. I don't think the Lord has forgotten.