

Hebrews 8:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

Analysis

The new covenant will 'not be according to the covenant I made with their fathers' at the Exodus, which 'they did not continue in' despite God's husbandly faithfulness ('I disregarded them' better translated 'I was a husband to them'). The old covenant was bilateral (conditional on human obedience); the new is unilateral (based on Christ's obedience and God's sovereign grace). Reformed theology emphasizes the new covenant's superiority in its gracious, effectual nature.

Historical Context

The Exodus covenant at Sinai was ratified with the people's promise: 'All that the LORD has said we will do' (Exodus 19:8). Yet they broke covenant almost immediately with the golden calf. The new covenant doesn't depend on human promises but divine performance.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. Why did the old covenant fail, despite being God's law given to His chosen people?
2. How does the new covenant's basis in Christ's obedience rather than yours provide security?

Interlinear Text

οὐκ κατὰ τὴν διαθήκην ἦν ἐποίησα τοῖς πατράσιν
Not according to covenant that I made with fathers
G3756 G2596 G3588 G1242 G3739 G4160 G3588 G3962

αὐτῶν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπιλαβομένου μου τῆς χειρὸς
their in the day when I took by the hand G3588 G5495
G846 G1722 G2250 G1949 G3450

αὐτῶν ἐξαγαγεῖν αὐτῶν ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου ὅτι
their to lead their out of the land of Egypt because
G846 G1806 G846 G1537 G1093 G125 G3754

αὐτῶν οὐκ ἐνέμειναν ἐν τῇ διαθήκῃ μου καὶ γὰρ
their Not continued in covenant by the hand and I
G846 G3756 G1696 G1722 G3588 G1242 G3450 G2504

ἡμέλησα αὐτῶν λέγει κύριος·
not their saith the Lord
G272 G846 G3004 G2962

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 31:32 (Covenant): 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:

Galatians 4:24 (Covenant): Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

Mark 8:23 (Parallel theme): And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought.

Isaiah 40:11 (Parallel theme): He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

Isaiah 63:9 (Parallel theme): In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

Acts 13:11 (References Lord): And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

Acts 9:8 (Parallel theme): And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.

Psalms 77:20 (Parallel theme): Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Psalms 78:57 (Parallel theme): But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow.

Psalms 105:43 (Parallel theme): And he brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness: