

The Powerful Message
of the
Two Covenants
in the
Doctrine of
Righteousness by Faith



This Camp Book was
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INTRODUCTION

The development of the theology of the two covenants within Seventh-day Adventism has an amazingly wonderful history. This history has followed the “ups and downs” of the “cosine” curve of life, reaching its **zenith** in the 1888 message of the covenants as presented by Elder Dr. E. J. Waggoner.

A most fascinating aspect of this history was the development of E. J. Waggoner as a doctor, pastor, teacher, writer and editor. His Spirit-led, inductive approach to Bible study was the basis of the new and fresh ideas of truth he presented to Adventism.

The **nadir** of the history of the covenants was the rejection of the 1888 message and its messengers (E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones).

The correct understanding of the two covenants is of absolutely crucial importance. Those who oppose the Sabbath truth have traditionally used the two covenants in their attack. One of their main points is the **dispensationalist** concept of the covenants. Another crucial point is the question of the law in Galatians chapter 3.

Most Early Adventist teachers on the subject held the dispensationalist view that the Old Covenant was the one which operated **before** the Cross while the New Covenant **started** at the Cross and continues to the end. They also believed that the law in Galatians 3 was the ceremonial or ritual law of sacrifices.

E. J. Waggoner was the first to teach clearly and accurately that the new covenant and the old covenant are two parallel roads that have run from the Fall and will run until the end. The covenants are conditions of the heart **not** dispensations of time. The new covenant is the everlasting covenant, the only one ever **initiated and given** by God. It is the ministration of righteousness. The old covenant is Satan’s counterfeit, the ministration of death, the producer of bondage. The new covenant is faith in the promise of God. The old covenant is the promise of man to be obedient and is always initiated by man not by God.

Waggoner moreover clearly proved that the law Paul meant in Galatians 3 is the moral law, the Decalogue, which must always perform its functions of describing the righteousness of God, defining sin, and, as a schoolmaster, bringing the sinner to Christ to be justified by faith and then witnessing to the fact that the righteousness received as a free gift by faith in Christ is the genuine article.

This 2002 Summer Camp Meeting book is a comprehensive study of the covenants within the context of righteousness by faith. The book presents firstly seven lessons, in question and answer form, on the covenants with abundant references to the writings of E. J. Waggoner.

Secondly, the writings of A. T. Jones on the covenants is presented. A. T. Jones, without initial collusion, developed the same line of Biblical truth as Waggoner did.

Thirdly the writings of Ellen G. White are presented and lastly the 1888 Message Study Committee material on the covenants which was presented to the General Conference Primacy of the Gospel Committee. Also included is a chapter on Christian character perfection from the 1994 Camp book.

The seven-lessons in the first section present the scriptural evidences for the Waggoner-Jones idea of the covenants.

During the camp meeting, we hope to thoroughly go through the messages in lecture form, group discussions and individual study so that each camper should have a clear understanding of this wonderful truth.

But more importantly we **need** to experience consistently the new covenant victory given in Jesus Christ! A genuine new covenant experience gives genuine victory over lukewarmness and will launch the true remnant into the “**loud-cry**” finishing of the work.

Ignorance or rejection of the light of the 1888 message of the two covenants and righteousness by faith eventually leads to departure from the genuine Third Angel’s Message.

D. M. Canright, who became an ordained S.D.A. minister in 1865, finally apostatized in 1887 and became a Baptist preacher. His book “*Seventh-day Adventism Renounced*”, published in 1889, is still used by enemies of the truth. Canright’s apostasy had to do with confusion over the covenants.

More recently, Dale Ratzlaff has also abandoned the Sabbath truth and his book “*Sabbath In Crisis*” is also being extolled by Sunday-keeping ministers as wonderful light.

All of this highlights how utterly important it is to **study, understand and accept** the light which God sent to Seventh-day Adventism on the covenants and righteousness by faith in 1888.

For those interested in the history of the covenants, we highly recommend the book “CALVARY AT SINAI: THE LAW AND THE COVENANTS IN SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST HISTORY,” by Paul E. Penno, Jr. M. Div. (Andrews University). His book is a wonderful work and should be read by all Seventh Day Adventists.

Welcome to Camp 2002! Let us believe the promises of God, which are “yes” and “Amen” in Jesus Christ, until we are filled with all the fullness of God!

Section One

Seven
Lessons on
the
Covenants

in Question & Answer Form

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the Two Covenants

LESSON ONE

God's Covenant: Definition & Basic Principles



1. What is God's Covenant?

- **God's covenant is God's Promise.**

Since Scripture interprets Scripture we should let the Bible answer this question (rather than the dictionary). Read the following texts: *Genesis 12:2,3; 13:14-16; 15:1-6; Romans 4:2,3,13; Galatians 3:17,18*. It should be clear by comparing *Galatians 3:16-18* with *Romans 4:13* that this is Paul's definition of God's covenant.

E. J. Waggoner was very clear on this point. Study the following passage carefully:

“That the covenant and promise of God are one and the same thing is clearly seen from *Galatians 3:17*, where it appears that to disannul the covenant would be to make void the promise. In *Genesis 17* we read that God made a covenant with Abraham to give him the land of Canaan—and with it the whole world—for an everlasting possession; but *Galatians 3:18* says that God gave it to him by promise. God's covenants with men can be nothing else than promises to them: “Who hath first given to Him and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things.” *Romans 11:35, 36*. It is so rare for men to do anything without expecting an equivalent, that theologians have taken it for granted that it is the same with God. So they begin their dissertations on God's covenant with the statement that a covenant is “a mutual agreement between two or more persons, to do or refrain from doing certain things.” But God does not make bargains with men, because He knows that they could not fulfill their part. After the flood God made a covenant with every beast of the earth, and with every fowl: but the beasts and the birds did not promise anything in return. *Genesis 9:9-16*. They simply received the favor at the hand of God. That is all we can do. God promises us everything that we need, and more than we can ask or think, as a gift. We give Him ourselves, that is, nothing, and He gives us Himself, that is, everything. That which makes all the trouble is that even when men are willing to recognize the Lord at all, they want to make bargains with Him. They want it to be a “mutual” affair—a trans-

action in which they will be considered as on a par with God. But whoever deals with God must deal with Him on His own terms, that is, on a basis of fact—that we have nothing and are nothing, and He has everything and is everything, and gives everything.” **Glad Tidings 70-71.**

2. How many kinds of salvation covenant did God make with mankind?

- **God has made only one kind of salvation covenant with mankind; it is called the New Covenant or the Everlasting Covenant.**

Since God is changeless (*Malachi 3:6; James 1:17*) we should expect that He only makes one kind of covenant with mankind. This covenant is called the New Covenant or the Everlasting Covenant. Read *Hebrews 8:13 and 13:20*.

Waggoner put it this way:

“The covenant, that is, the promise of God to give men the whole earth made new, after having made them free from the curse, was “confirmed before of God in Christ.” He is the Surety of the new covenant, even the everlasting covenant. “For how many soever be the promises of God, in Him is the yea; wherefore also through Him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us.” *2 Corinthians 1:20, R. V.* In Him we have obtained the inheritance (*Ephesians 1:11*), for the Holy Spirit is the first-fruits of the inheritance, and the possession of the Holy Spirit is Christ Himself dwelling in the heart by faith. God blessed Abraham, saying, “In thy Seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed,” and this is fulfilled in Christ, whom God has sent to bless us in turning us away from our iniquities.” *Acts 3:25, 26. G.T. 71.*

When God made His seven-fold promise to Abraham, did He ask Abraham to make any promise in return?

3. What was Abraham’s sole response?

- **God did not ask Abraham to make any promise in return. Abraham’s sole response was to “believe” – faith.**

Genesis 15:5, 6; Romans 4:3, 13-22; Hebrews 11:8-12.
(Study again Waggoner’s explanation under question 1).

4. When was the New Covenant formulated in the mind of God?

- **The New Covenant “originated” in eternity past, i.e. it had always existed in God’s mind.**

Read *Ephesians 1:3, 4; 3:11; Romans 16:25*.

“The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of “the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal.” *Romans 16:25, R. V.* It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God’s throne. From the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan, and of the fall of man through the deceptive power of the apostate. God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence, and made provision to meet the terrible emergency. So great was His love for the world, that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, “that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” *John 3:16.*” **D.A. 22.**

5. When was the New Covenant *first announced to mankind*?

- **The New Covenant was first announced to mankind after the fall and it was given in the promise of Genesis 3:15.**

Read *Genesis 3:15*.

Notice again that *Genesis 3:15* was a promise!

“To man the first intimation of redemption was communicated in the sentence pronounced upon Satan in the garden. The Lord declared, “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” *Genesis 3:15*. This sentence, uttered in the hearing of our first parents, was to them a promise. While it foretold war between man and Satan, it declared that the power of the great adversary would finally be broken. Adam and Eve stood as criminals before the righteous Judge, awaiting the sentence which transgression had incurred; but before they heard of the life of toil and sorrow which must be their portion, or of the decree that they must return to dust, they listened to words that could not fail to give them hope. Though they must suffer from the power of their mighty foe, they could look forward to final victory.” **P.P. 65.**

6. What became the most famous proclamation of the New Covenant in Old Testament times?

- Without a doubt (*Genesis 12:3; 15:5, 6*) God's promise to Abraham became the benchmark proclamation of the New Covenant.

7. Between the fall and Abraham's call are there any examples of New Covenant experiences revealed in the Bible?

- Yes! Abel, Enoch and Noah were men who had beautiful New Covenant experiences!

Read *Hebrews 11:4-7; Genesis 4:1-8; Genesis 5:21-24; Genesis 6:8.*

8. When, by whom and by what was the New Covenant ratified?

- The New Covenant was ratified in A.D 31, by Jesus Christ, by His own blood shed in His infinite sacrifice on Calvary's cross.

Read *Daniel 9:24-27; Hebrews 9:11-15; Hebrews 10:12-14.*

LESSON TWO

The Old Covenant



1. What is the first formal classical description of the Old Covenant in the Bible?

- **The Sinaitic Covenant**

Read *Exodus 19*; *Galatians 4:21-24*.

“The one from Sinai which gendereth to bondage.”

2. Why is the Sinaitic Covenant called the First or Old Covenant although it was formally established at Sinai long after the Abrahamic or New Covenant?

- **The Sinaitic covenant is called the “first” or “Old” covenant not because it was the “first” given but because it was the “first” ratified by sacrificial blood, the blood of oxen, calves, goats. Whereas the everlasting or “new” covenant was ratified at Calvary centuries after the ratification of the Old.**

Read *Hebrews 9:18-21*; (*Exodus 24:4-8*); *Hebrews 9:13-15*. The Bible numbers the covenants not in the order in which they were first announced, but rather in **THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY WERE RATIFIED** by sacrificial blood.

“Though this (the new) covenant was made with Adam and renewed to Abraham, it could not be ratified until the death of Christ. It had existed by the promise of God since the first intimation of redemption had been given; it had been accepted by faith; yet when ratified by Christ, it is called a new covenant. The law of God was the basis of this covenant, which was simply an arrangement for bringing men again into harmony with the divine will, placing them where they could obey God’s law.

“Another compact—called in Scripture the “old” covenant—was formed between God and Israel at Sinai, and was then ratified by the blood of a sacrifice. The Abrahamic covenant was ratified by the blood of Christ, and it is called the “second,” or “new,” covenant, because the blood by which it was sealed was shed after the blood of the first covenant. That

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the new covenant was valid in the days of Abraham is evident from the fact that it was then confirmed both by the promise and by the oath of God –the “two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie.” *Hebrews 6:18.* P.P. 370 – 371.

3. Was anything wrong with the Old Covenant?

- **The “old” or “first” covenant was faulty and it produced bondage i.e. it enslaved souls to sin and defeat.**

Read *Galatians 4:24* and *Hebrews 8:7*

4. Who was at fault in the “old” or “first” covenant?

- **The fault was with “them.” The people were at fault.**

Read *Hebrews 8:8* (first part).

5. What was the fault?

- **The fault was the promise of the people to obey all that God told them.**

Read *Hebrews 8:6*.

Since the New Covenant was established upon better promises, it must mean that the Old Covenant was established upon ineffectual promises.

Whereas the New Covenant is established upon the promises of God, the Old Covenant was established upon the promises of the people. Read *Exodus 19:8:24:3*.

6. Why was the people’s promise faulty?

- **They promised what, in and of themselves, it was impossible to do.**

Read *Romans 7:19-23*, *Romans 8:7*.

Paul enlightens us on this matter by informing us that we cannot, in ourselves, of ourselves, obey God.

7. Did God make the Old Covenant with Israel?

- **God never makes “old” covenants with anyone. The Sinaitic covenant was made by the people by their promise to do what in and of themselves they could not do.**

Read *Galatians 4:21-31*; *Hebrews 8:6-13*.

Since the Old Covenant produces bondage and defeat, since it is faulty and useless it should be obvious that it was not established by God. It was made by the people of Israel. God never enslaves His people nor does He make anything faulty. And yet God did not abandon them, He took the responsibility and continued to work with them and for them, with the intention of bringing them back to the Abrahamic covenant. *Nehemiah 9* (especially verses 7 to 19).

“But if the Abrahamic covenant contained the promise of redemption, why was another covenant formed at Sinai? In their bondage the people had to a great extent lost the knowledge of God and of the principles of the Abrahamic covenant. In delivering them from Egypt, God sought to reveal to them His power and His mercy, that they might be led to love and trust Him. He brought them down to the Red Sea—where, pursued by the Egyptians, escape seemed impossible—that they might realize their utter helplessness, their need of divine aid; and then He wrought deliverance for them. Thus they were filled with love and gratitude to God and with confidence in His power to help them. He had bound them to Himself as their deliverer from temporal bondage.

“But there was a still greater truth to be impressed upon their minds. Living in the midst of idolatry and corruption, they had no true conception of the holiness of God, of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts, their utter inability, in themselves, to render obedience to God’s law, and their need of a Saviour. All this they must be taught.

“God brought them to Sinai; He manifested His glory; He gave them His law, with the promise of great blessings on condition of obedience: “If ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then . . . ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.” *Exodus 19:5, 6*. The people did not realize the sinfulness of their own hearts, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God’s law; and they readily entered into covenant with God. Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, they declared, “All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.” *Exodus 24:7*. They had witnessed the

proclamation of the law in awful majesty, and had trembled with terror before the mount; and yet only a few weeks passed before they broke their covenant with God, and bowed down to worship a graven image. They could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken; and now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Saviour revealed in the Abrahamic covenant and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. Now by faith and love they were bound to God as their deliverer from the bondage of sin. Now they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant.” **P.P. 371-372.**

E.J. WAGGONER:

“What are the two covenants?—The two women, Hagar and Sarah; for we read that Hagar is Mount Sinai, “which gendereth to bondage.” That is, just as Hagar could not bring forth any other kind of children than slaves, so the law, even the law that God spoke from Sinai, cannot beget freemen. It can do nothing but hold them in bondage. “The law worketh wrath.” “for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” The same is true of the covenant from Sinai, for it consisted merely of the promise of the people to keep that law, and had, therefore, no more power to make them free than the law itself had,—no more power than they already had in their bondage. Nay, rather, it “gendered to bondage,” since their making it was simply a promise to make themselves righteous by their own works, and man in himself is “without strength.”

“Consider the situation: The people were in the bondage of sin; they had no power to break their chains; but the speaking of the law made no change in their condition; it introduced no new feature. If a man is in prison for crime, you cannot release him by reading the statutes to him. It was the law that put him there, and the reading of it to him only makes his captivity more painful.

“Then did not God Himself lead them into bondage?” Not by any means; since He did not induce them to make that covenant at Sinai. Four hundred and thirty years before that time He had made a covenant with Abraham, which was sufficient for all purposes. That covenant was confirmed in Christ, and, therefore, was a covenant from above. See *John 8:23*. It promised righteousness as a free gift of God through faith, and it included all nations. All the miracles that God had wrought in delivering the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage were but demonstrations of His power to deliver them and us from the bondage of sin. Yes, the deliv-

erance from Egypt was itself a demonstration not only of God's power, but also of His desire to lead them from the bondage of sin, that bondage in which the covenant from Sinai holds men, because Hagar, who is the covenant from Sinai, was an Egyptian. So when the people came to Sinai, God simply referred them to what He had already done, and then said, "Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine." *Exodus 19:5*. To what covenant did He refer? Evidently to the one already in existence, His covenant with Abraham. If they would simply keep God's covenant, that is, God's promise,—keep the faith,—they would be a peculiar treasure unto God, for God, as the possessor of all the earth, was able to do with them all that He had promised. The fact that they in their self-sufficiency rashly took the whole responsibility upon themselves, does not prove that God led them into making that covenant, but the contrary. He was leading them out of bondage, not into it, and the apostle plainly tells us that the covenant from Sinai was nothing but bondage.

"Further, if the children of Israel who came out of Egypt had but walked "in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised" (*Romans 4:12*), the law would never have been spoken from Sinai; "for the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith" (*Romans 4:13*). Faith justifies, makes righteous; if the people had had Abraham's faith, they would have had the righteousness that he had; and then there would have been no occasion for the entering of the law, which was "spoken because of transgression." The law would have been in their hearts, and they would not have needed to be awakened by its thunders to a sense of their condition. God never expected, and does not now expect, that any person can get righteousness by the law proclaimed from Sinai; and everything connected with Sinai shows it. Yet the law is truth, and must be kept. God delivered the people from Egypt, "that they might observe His statutes, and keep His laws." *Psalms 105:45*. We do not get life by keeping the commandments, but God gives us life in order that we may keep them." **Glad Tidings pg. 99-100.**

LESSON THREE

The Error of Dispensationalism



1. Are the covenants dispensational?

- **The covenants are *not* dispensational.**

Many theologians teach that the Old Covenant was the covenant of God before Calvary. They teach that the New Covenant started at Calvary and continues as the covenant of the Christian era.

Now read *Galatians 4:21-31* again and see that both covenants existed in Abraham's family. **The covenants are conditions of the heart not dispensations of time.** Before the Cross Abel had a New Covenant experience whereas Cain had an Old Covenant experience.

Before the Cross Abraham had a New Covenant experience and also had the experience of lapsing into the Old Covenant.

After the Cross the Pharisees, who professed to be Christians, seduced the Galatians into slipping from a New Covenant experience into an Old Covenant experience.

Therefore it is not a matter of time or place it is a matter of the condition of the heart.

The New Covenant was valid in Abraham's day. *Heb. 6:18*.

E.J. WAGGONER:

“Note the statement which the apostle makes when speaking of the two women, Hagar and Sarah: “These are the two covenants.” So then the two covenants existed in every essential particular in the days of Abraham. Even so they do today; for the Scripture says now as well as then, “Cast out the bondwoman and her son.” We see then that the two covenants are not matters of time, but of condition. Let no one flatter himself that he cannot be under the old covenant, because the time for that is passed. The time for that is passed only in the sense that “the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revelings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries.” *1 Peter 4:3*. **Glad Tidings pg. 100.**

2. Are there such things as dispensation of “Law” and dispensation of “Grace?”

- **No!**

Read *Galatians 3* (especially verses 16-29). Such a teaching is also popular but false. God has always had only one way to save men, by grace through faith in the only Saviour.

Those who teach that before the cross men were saved by obedience to the law but after the cross men are saved by faith in Christ have failed to understand the true doctrine of the covenants.

E.J. WAGGONER:

“The difference is just the difference between a freewoman and a slave. Hagar’s children, no matter how many she might have had, would have been slaves, while those of Sarah would necessarily be free. So the covenant from Sinai holds all who adhere to it in bondage “under the law;” while the covenant from above gives freedom, not freedom from obedience to the law, but freedom from disobedience to it. The freedom is not found away from the law, but in the law. Christ redeems from the curse, which is the transgression of the law. He redeems us from the curse, that the blessing may come on us; and the blessing is obedience to the law. “Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.” *Psalms 119:1*. This blessedness is freedom. “I will walk at liberty; for I seek Thy precepts.” *Psalms 119:45*.

“The difference between the two covenants may be put briefly thus: In the covenant from Sinai we ourselves have to do with the law alone, while in the covenant from above, we have the law in Christ. In the first instance it is death to us, since the law is sharper than any two-edged sword, and we are not able to handle it without fatal results; but in the second instance we have the law “in the hand of a Mediator.” In the one case it is what we can do; in the other case it is what the Spirit of God can do. Bear in mind that there is not the slightest question in the whole Epistle to the Galatians as to whether or not the law should be kept. The only question is, How shall it be done? Is it to be our own doing, so that the reward shall not be of grace but of debt? or is it to be God working in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure?” **Glad Tidings pg. 100-101.**

3. What is the end-time form of Old Covenant experience?

- **Lukewarm Laodicean experience is a subtle and malignant form of the Old Covenant in these last days.**

Read *Revelation 3:14-22*.

LESSON FOUR

The Law and the Covenants



1. How is righteousness obtained in the New Covenant?

- **Righteousness is the gift of God, given to mankind in Jesus Christ by the grace of God, and received by faith.**

Read *Ephesians 2:8-12; Rom. 4:4, 5; Rom. 3:22-25; 5; 15-18.*

2. How did Israel in *their* Sinaitic covenant seek to obtain righteousness?

- **In “Old” covenant experience religionists seek to obtain righteousness by their own obedience.**

Read *Romans 10:3.*

“The people did not realize the sinfulness of their own hearts, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God’s law; and they readily entered into covenant with God. Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, they declared, “All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.” *Exodus 24:7. P.P. 372.*

3. In Galatians 3:19-25 which law was Paul talking about?

- **The law in *Galatians 3:19-25* is *specifically* the moral law.**

Compare the following texts: *Galatians 3:19; Acts 7:53; Nehemiah 9:13.*

“The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (*Galatians 3:24*). In this Scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ, and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The law of ten commandments is not to be looked upon as much from the prohibitory side, as from the mercy side. Its prohibitions are the sure guarantee of happiness in obedience. As received in Christ, it works in us the purity of character that will bring joy to us through eternal ages. To

the obedient it is a wall of protection. We behold in it the goodness of God, who by revealing to men the immutable principles of righteousness, seeks to shield them from the evils that result from transgression.

“We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death.

“The law is an expression of God’s idea. When we receive it in Christ, it becomes our idea. It lifts us above the power of natural desires and tendencies, above temptations that lead to sin.” **1MR. 1896.**

Paul was speaking **specifically** of the moral law of the Ten Commandments. The word “added” means “spoken.” God spoke His moral law at Mount Sinai. The ceremonial sacrificial system or law had been given way back in the time of Abel.

The ceremonial law represented Christ and His High Priestly ministry in the ages before the Cross. When the Israelite broke the moral law He then had to go to the ceremonial law which represented Christ in that day.

E.J. WAGGONER:

“This is the question that the apostle Paul asks in verse 19, both for the purpose of anticipating the objections of the Antinomians, and also that he may the more emphatically show the place of the law in the Gospel. The question is a very natural one. Since the inheritance is wholly by promise, and a covenant confirmed cannot be changed,—nothing can be taken from it, and nothing added to it,—why did the law come in four hundred and thirty years afterward? “Wherefore then serveth the law?” More literally, Why then the law? What business has it here? What part does it act? Of what use is it?

“It was added because of transgressions.” Let it be understood that “the entering of the law” at Sinai was not the beginning of its existence. The law of God existed in the days of Abraham, and was kept by him.

“The word here rendered “added” is the same as that rendered “spoken” in *Hebrews 12:19*: “They that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more. ‘It is the same word that occurs in the Septuagint rendering of *Deuteronomy 5:22*, where we read that God spoke the ten commandments with a great voice; “and He added no more”. So we may read the answer to the question, “Wherefore then the law?” thus: “It was spoken because of transgressions.” It is the reprove of sin. **Glad Tidings pg. 73-73.**

4. The moral law has certain crucially important functions but there is one function the law cannot do, in fact, it was never intended to do. What is it the law cannot do?

- **In the Plan of Redemption the law cannot justify, sanctify or perfect the believer because saving righteousness and spiritual life do not come from the moral law or any other law.**

Read *Galatians 2:16; Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:21, Galatians 3:21.*

The moral law cannot give righteousness. The moral law cannot give life.

5. What are the three (3) functions of the moral law of God?

- **The moral law:**
 - (i) The first function of the law is written down in *1 John 3:4 and Romans 7:7*. The law defines sin and points out sin, gives knowledge of sin.**
 - (ii) The second function of the law is written down in *Galatians 3:23, 24*. The law as our “schoolmaster” shuts us up in our guilt and condemnation allowing us no way of escape until it brings us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.**
 - (iii) The third function of the law is written down in *Romans 3:21*. The law bears witness, or confirms, that the gift of the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ which is received by faith is the very righteousness written down in and demanded by the law.**

“When the mind is drawn to the cross of Calvary, Christ by imperfect sight is discerned on the shameful cross. Why did He die? In consequence of sin. What is sin? The transgression of the law. Then the eyes are open to see the character of sin. The law is broken but cannot pardon the transgressor. It is our schoolmaster, condemning to punishment. Where is the remedy? The law drives us to Christ, who was hanged upon the cross that He might be able to impart His righteousness to fallen, sinful man and thus present men to His Father in His righteous character.” **ISM. 341.**

- (i) Defines, points out, gives the knowledge of sin**
- (ii) The law functions as a “schoolmaster” to convict us of our guilt and bring us to Christ.**
- (iii) The law is a witness that the righteousness we have in Christ is that which the law demands (but cannot give).**

E.J. WAGGONER

“Is the law then against the promises of God?”—Not by any means. Far from it. If it were, it would not be in the hands of a Mediator, Christ; for all the promises of God are in Him. *2 Corinthians 1:20*. So we find the law and the promise combined in Christ. We may know that the law was not and is not against the promises of God, from the fact that God gave both the promise and the law. We know, also, that the giving of the law introduced no new element into the covenant, since, having been confirmed, nothing could be added to or taken from it. But the law is not useless, else God would not have given it. It is not a matter of indifference whether we keep it or not, for God commands it. But, all the same, it is not against the promise, and brings no new element in. Why?—Simply because the law is in the promise. The promise of the Spirit includes this: “I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts.” *Hebrews 8:10*. And this is what God indicated had been done for Abraham when “He gave him the covenant of circumcision.” Read *Romans 4:11; 2:25-29; Philippians 3:3*.

“The law, as already seen, is not against the promise, because it is in the promise. The promise that Abraham and his seed should inherit the world, was “through the righteousness of faith.” But the law is righteousness, as God says: “Harken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My law.” *Isaiah 51:7*. So, then, the righteousness which the law demands is the only righteousness that can inherit the

promised land, but it is obtained, not by the works of the law, but by faith. The righteousness of the law is not attained by human efforts to do the law, but by faith. See *Romans 9:30-32*. Therefore, the greater the righteousness which the law demands, the greater is seen to be the promise of God; for He has promised to give it to all who believe. Yea, He has sworn it. When, therefore, the law was spoken from Sinai, “out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice,” accompanied by the sounding of the trump of God, and with the whole earth quaking at the presence of the Lord and all His holy angels, thus indicating the inconceivable greatness and majesty of the law of God, it was, to every one who remembered the oath of God, but a revelation of the wondrous greatness of God’s promise; for all the righteousness which the law demands, He has sworn to give to every one who trusts Him. The “loud voice” with which the law was spoken, was the loud voice that from the mountain-tops proclaims the glad tidings of the saving mercy of God. See *Isaiah 40:9*. God’s precepts are promises; they must necessarily be such, because He knows that men have no power. All that God requires is what He gives. When He says, “Thou shalt not,” we may take it as His assurance that if we but trust Him He will preserve us from the sin against which He warns us. He will keep us from falling.

“Jesus said of the Comforter, “When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” *John 16:8*. Of Himself He said, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” *Mark 2:17*. “They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick.” A man must feel his need before he will accept help; he must know his disease before he can apply the remedy. Even so the promise of righteousness will be utterly unheeded by one who does not realize that he is a sinner. The first part of the comforting work of the Holy Spirit, therefore, is to convince men of sin. So “the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” *Romans 3:20*. He who knows that he is a sinner is in the way to acknowledge it; and “if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” *1 John 1:9*. Thus the law is in the hands of the Spirit an active agent in inducing men to accept the fulness of the promise. No one hates the man who has saved his life by pointing out to him an unknown peril; on the contrary, such an one is regarded as a friend, and is always remembered with gratitude. Even so will the law be regarded by the one who has been prompted by its warning voice to flee from the wrath to come. He will ever say, with the psalmist, “I hate vain thoughts, but Thy law do I love.”

“If there had been a law given which could make alive, verily righteousness would have been of the law.” This shows us that righteousness is life. It is no mere formula, no dead theory or dogma, but is living action. Christ is the life, and He is, therefore, our righteousness. “The Spirit is life because of righteousness.” The law written on two tables of stone, could not give life, any more than could the stones on which it was written. All its precepts are perfect, but the flinty characters can not transform themselves into action. He who receives only the law in letter, has a “ministration of condemnation,” and death. But “the Word was made flesh.” In Christ, the Living Stone, the law is life and peace. Receiving Him through the “ministration of the Spirit,” we have the life of righteousness, which the law approves.

“This twenty-first verse shows that the giving of the law was to emphasize the importance of the promise. All the circumstances attending the giving of the law,—the trumpet tone, the awful voice, the quaking earth, the “fire, and blackness, and tempest,” the thunders and lightnings, the bounds about the mount, beyond which it was death to pass,—all these told that “the law worketh wrath” to “the children of disobedience.” But the very fact that the wrath which the law works comes only on the children of disobedience, proves that the law is good, and that “the man that doeth them shall live in them.” Did God wish to discourage the people?—Not by any means. The law must be kept, and the terrors of Sinai were designed to drive them back to the oath of God, which four hundred and thirty years before had been given to stand to all people in all ages as the assurance of righteousness through the crucified and everliving Saviour.

“Note the similarity between verses 8 and 22. “The Scripture hath concluded [that is, shut up] all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” “The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.” We see that the Gospel is preached by the same thing—the Scripture—that shuts men up under sin. The word “conclude” means literally “shut up,” just as is given in verse 23. Of course, a person who is shut up by the law is in prison. In human governments a criminal is shut up as soon as the law can get hold of him; God’s law is everywhere present, and always active, and, therefore, the instant a man sins he is shut up. This is the condition of all the world, “for all have sinned,” and “there is none righteous, no, not one.”

“Those disobedient ones to whom Christ preached in the days of Noah were “in prison.” *1 Peter 3:19, 20*. But they, like all other sinners, were “prisoners of hope.” *Zechariah 9:12*. God “hath looked down from the height of His sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death.” *Psalms 102:19, 20*. Christ is given “for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.” *Isaiah 42:6, 7*.

“Let me speak from personal experience to the sinner who does not yet know the joy and freedom of the Lord. Some day, if not already, you will be sharply convicted of sin by the Spirit of God. You may have been full of doubts and quibbles, of ready answers and self-defense, but then you will have nothing to say. You will then have no doubt about the reality of God and the Holy Spirit, and will need no argument to assure you of it; for you will know the voice of God speaking to your soul, and will feel, as did ancient Israel, “Let not God speak with us, lest we die.” Then you will know what it is to be shut up in prison,—in a prison whose walls seem to close on you, not only barring all escape, but seeming to suffocate you. The tales of people condemned to be buried alive with a heavy stone upon them, will seem very vivid and real to you, as you feel the tables of the law crushing out your life, and a hand of marble seems to be breaking your very heart. Then it will give you joy to remember that you are shut up for the sole purpose that “the promise by faith of Jesus Christ” might be accepted by you. As soon as you lay hold of that promise,—the key that will unlock any door in Doubting Castle,—the prison doors will fly open, and you can say, “Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken, and we are escaped.” *Psalms 124:7*.

“We have just read that the Scripture hath shut up all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. Before faith came, we were kept in ward under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. We know that whatsoever is not of faith is sin (*Romans 14:23*); therefore, to be under the law is identical with being under sin. We are under the law solely because we are under sin. The grace of God brings salvation from sin, so that when we accept God’s grace we are no longer under the law, because we are freed from sin. Those who are under the law, therefore, are the transgressors of the law. The righteous are not under it, but are walking in it.

“So that the law hath been our tutor unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” The words “to bring us” are marked both in the old version and the new as having been added to the text, so we have dropped them out. It really makes no material difference with the sense whether they are retained or omitted. It will be noticed also that the new version has “tutor” in the place of “schoolmaster.” This is better, but the sense is still better conveyed by the word that is used in the German and Scandinavian translations, which signifies “master of a house of correction.” The single word in our language corresponding to it would be jailer. The Greek word is the word which we have in English as “pedagogue.” The *paidagogos* was the slave who accompanied the boys to school to see that they did not play truant. If they attempted to run away, he would bring them back, and had authority even to beat them to keep them in the way. The word has come to be used as meaning “schoolmaster,” although the Greek word has not at all the idea of a schoolmaster. “Taskmaster” would be better. The idea here is rather that of a guard who accompanies a prisoner who is allowed to walk about outside the prison walls. The prisoner, although nominally at large, is really deprived of his liberty just the same as though he were actually in a cell. The fact is that all who do not believe are “under sin,” “shut up” “under the law,” and that, therefore, the law acts as their jailer. It is that that shuts them in, and will not let them off; the guilty cannot escape in their guilt. God is merciful and gracious, but He will not clear the guilty. *Exodus 34:6, 7*. That is, He will not lie, by calling evil good: but He provides a way by which the guilty may lose their guilt. Then the law will no longer be against them, will no longer shut them up, and they can walk at liberty.

“Christ says, “I am the door.” *John 10:7, 9*. He is also the sheepfold and the Shepherd. Men fancy that when they are outside the fold they are free, and that to come into the fold would mean a curtailing of their liberty; but it is exactly the reverse. The fold of Christ is “a large place,” while unbelief is a narrow prison. The sinner can have but a narrow range of thought; the true “free thinker” is the one who comprehends with all saints what is the length, and breadth, and depth, and height of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. Outside of Christ is bondage; in Him alone is there freedom. Outside of Christ, the man is in prison, “holden with the cords of his sins.” *Proverbs 5:22*. “The strength of sin is the law.” It is the law that declares him to be a sinner, and makes him conscious of his condition. “By the law is the knowledge of sin;” and “sin is not imputed when there is no law.” *Romans 3:20; 5:13*. The law really forms the sinner’s prison walls. They close in on him, making him feel uncomfortable, oppressing him with a sense of sin, as though they would press his life out. In

vain he makes frantic efforts to escape. Those commandments stand as firm as the everlasting hills. Whichever way he turns he finds a commandment which says to him, “You can find no freedom by me, for you have sinned.” If he seeks to make friends with the law, and promises to keep it, he is no better off, for his sin still remains. It goads him and drives him to the only way of escape—the promise by faith of Jesus Christ. In Christ he is made “free indeed,” for in Christ he is made the righteousness of God. In Christ is “the perfect law of liberty.”

“But,” says one, “the law says nothing of Christ.” No; but all creation does speak of Christ, proclaiming the power of His salvation. We have seen that the cross of Christ, “Christ and Him crucified,” is to be seen in every leaf of the forest, and, indeed, in everything that exists. Not only so, but every fiber of man’s being cries out for Christ. Men do not realize it, but Christ is “the Desire of all nations.” It is He alone that “satisfies the desire of every living thing.” Only in Him can relief be found for the world’s unrest and longing. Now since Christ, in whom is peace, “for He is our peace,” is seeking the weary and heavyladen, and calling them to Himself, and every man has longings that nothing else in the world can satisfy, it is evident that if the man is awakened by the law to keener consciousness of his condition, and the law continues goading him, giving him no rest, and shutting up every other way of escape, the man must at last find the Door of Safety, for it always stands open. He is the City of Refuge, to which every one pursued by the avenger of blood may flee, sure of finding a welcome. In Christ alone will the sinner find release from the lash of the law, for in Christ the righteousness of the law is fulfilled, and by Him it is fulfilled in us. *Romans 8:4*. The law is so far from requiring men to keep it in order to be saved, as some suppose, that it will not allow anybody to be saved unless he has righteousness which is of God by faith,—the faith of Jesus Christ.” **Glad Tidings pg. 75-81.**

6. Are these functions of the law limited to a particular dispensation?

- **No. The functions of the law apply to both the pre-cross and post-cross era until the end of time.**

Read *Romans 7:7-13; Psalm 19:7*.

Wherever and whenever there are sinners to be saved the law must perform its three functions. In other words the law must continue its functions in the Plan of Redemption until the end of time. Read *Matthew 5:17-20*.

E.J. WAGGONER:

“Strangely enough, many have supposed that there was a definite time fixed for faith to come. This passage has been “interpreted” to mean that men were under the law until a certain time in the history of the world, and that at that time faith came, and then they were henceforth free from the law. The coming of faith they make synonymous with the manifestation of Christ on earth. We cannot say that anybody ever thought so, for such an “interpretation” indicates utter absence of thought about the matter. It would make men to be saved in bulk, regardless of any concurrence on their part. It would have it that up to a certain time all were in bondage under the law, and that from that time henceforth all were free from sin. A man’s salvation would, therefore, depend simply on the accident of birth. If he lived before a certain time, he would be lost; if after, he would be saved. Such an absurdity need not take more of our time than the statement of it. No one can seriously think of the idea that the apostle is here speaking of a fixed, definite point of time in the history of the world, dividing between two so-called “dispensations,” without at once abandoning it.

“When, then, does faith come? “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” *Romans 10:17*. Whenever a man receives the Word of God, the word of promise, which brings with it the fulness of the law, and no longer fights against it, but yields to it, then faith comes to him. Read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, and you will see that faith came from the beginning. Since the days of Abel, men have found freedom by faith. The only time fixed is “now,” “today.” “Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” “Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.” **Glad Tidings pg. 81.**

7. In the “Old Covenant” condition or experience where is the law written and how does the professed “believer” respond to it?

- **In the “Old Covenant” condition or experience the law is written down on “Tables of Stone” in Exodus 20 and the “so-called” believer looks at the law and promises and tries to obey the law in and of himself or with the “help” of God.**

Read *2 Corinthians 3:6,7*.

8. Where is the law written in the New Covenant condition?

- In the “New Covenant” condition the law of God is written in the “heart” and mind of the believer who abides in Christ.

Read *Hebrews 10:16; Hebrews 8:10; 2 Cor. 3:6-18; Rom. 8:1-4.*

9. What then is the difference between the Old Covenant condition and the New Covenant condition? Is it a change in the law or a change of heart?

- It is not a change in law but a change of heart. The same law that is written as a letter in Old covenant experience is written as spirit (love) in the human spirit by the Holy Spirit in the New Covenant experience in Christ.

Romans 8:5-10; Romans 8:3,4; Hebrews 10:16.

It is the same law in either covenant which must define righteousness and point out sin and shut up the sinner to the conviction of guilt.

In Old Covenant experience people promise to obey and try to get righteousness and salvation by their obedience. But in the New Covenant the believer believes God’s promises, surrenders to God, abides in Christ and receives righteousness and spiritual life as a free gift. Christ dwells in the believer’s heart and lives out this righteousness through the believer. This righteousness of God in Christ is the same righteousness described in the law.

E.J. WAGGONER

“That death is the curse is evident from the last part of verse 13, “Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” Christ was made a curse for us, in that He hung on a tree, that is, was crucified. But sin is the cause of death. “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” *Romans 5:12*. “The sting of death is sin.” *1 Corinthians 15:56*. So we have the substance of verse 10 thus, that those who do not continue in the things written in the law are dead. That is, disobedience is death. And this is what the Scripture says: “When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” Sin contains death, and men out of Christ are “dead in trespasses and sins.” It matters not that they walk about seemingly full of life, the words of Christ are, “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.” *John 6:53*. “She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.” *1 Timo-*

thy 5:6. It is a living death—a body of death—that is endured. *Romans 7:24.* Sin is the transgression of the law; the wages of sin is death. The curse, therefore, is the death that is carried about concealed even in the most attractive sin. “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law.” Let us stop right here and contemplate this fact, leaving the way of redemption for later consideration. We need to consider the statement very carefully, for some who read it straightway rush off frantically exclaiming, “We don’t need to keep the law, because Christ has redeemed us from the curse of it,” as though the text said that Christ redeemed us from the curse of obedience. Such read the Scriptures to no profit. The curse, as we have seen, is disobedience. “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” Therefore, Christ has redeemed us from disobedience to the law. God sent forth His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, “that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.” *Romans 8:4.*

“Some one may lightly say, “Then we are all right; whatever we do is right so far as the law is concerned, since we are redeemed.” It is true that all are redeemed, but not all have accepted redemption. Many say of Christ, “We will not have this Man to reign over us,” and thrust the blessing of God from them. But redemption is for all; all have been purchased with the precious blood—the life—of Christ, and all may be, if they will, free from sin and death. By that blood we are redeemed from our “vain manner of life.” *1 Peter 1:18, R.V.*

“Stop and think what this means; let the full force of the announcement impress itself upon your consciousness. “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law,”—from not continuing in all its righteous requirements. We need not sin any more. He has snapped asunder the cords of sin that bound us, so that we have but to accept His salvation in order to be free from every besetting sin. It is not necessary for us any longer to spend our lives in earnest longings for a better life, and in vain regrets for desires unrealized. Christ raises no false hopes, but He comes to the captives of sin, and cries to them, “Liberty! Your prison doors are open. Go forth.” What more can be said? Christ has gained the complete victory over “this present evil world,” over “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,” and our faith in Him makes His victory ours. We have but to accept it.

“That “Christ died for the ungodly” is evident to all who read the Bible. He “was delivered for our offenses.” *Romans 4:25*. The Innocent suffered for the guilty; the Just for the unjust. “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” *Isaiah 53:5, 6*. But death came by sin. Death is the curse that has passed upon all men, simply because “all have sinned.” So, as Christ was “made a curse for us,” it follows that Christ was “made to be sin on our behalf.” *2 Corinthians 5:21, R.V.* He bore “our sins in His own body” up to the tree. *1 Peter 2:24, margin*. Note that our sins were “in His body.” It was no superficial work that He undertook. The sins were not merely figuratively laid on Him, but they were actually in Him. He was made a curse for us, made to be sin for us, and consequently suffered death for us.

“To some this truth seems repugnant; to the Greeks it is foolishness, and to the Jews a stumbling-block, but “to us who are saved, it is the power of God.” For bear in mind that it was our sins that He bore in His own body—not His own sins. The same scripture that tells us that He was made to be sin for us, assures us that He “knew no sin.” The same text that tells us that He carried our sins “in His own body,” is careful to let us know that He “did no sin.” The fact that He could carry our sin about with Him, and in Him, being actually made to be sin for us, and yet not do any sin, is to His everlasting glory and our eternal salvation from sin. All the sins of all men were on Him, yet no person ever discovered the trace of sin upon Him. No sin was ever manifested in His life, although He took all sin upon Himself. He received it and swallowed it up by the power of the endless life in which He swallows up death. He can bear sin, and yet be untainted by it. It is by this marvelous life that He redeems us. He gives us His life, so that we may be freed from every taint of the sin that is in our flesh.

“Christ, “in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death,” “was heard in that He feared.” *Hebrews 5:7*. But He died! Yes; but no one took His life from Him; He laid it down, that He might take it again. *John 10:17, 18*. The pangs of death were loosed, “because it was not possible that He should be holden of it.” *Acts 2:24*. Why was it not possible for death to hold Him, even though He voluntarily put Himself in its power? Because He “knew no sin;” He took sin

upon Himself, but was saved from its power. He was “in all things” “made like unto His brethren,” “in all points tempted like as we are” (*Hebrews 2:17; 4:15*), and since He could of Himself do nothing (*John 5:30*), He prayed to the Father to keep Him from being overcome and thereby falling under the power of death. And He was heard. In His case these words were fulfilled: “The Lord God will help Me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth Me; who will contend with Me?” *Isaiah 50:7, 8*.

“Whose sin was it that thus oppressed Him, and from which He was delivered?—Not His own, for He had none. It was your sin and mine. Our sins have already been overcome—vanquished. We have to fight only with an already defeated foe. When you come to God “in the name of Jesus,” having surrendered yourself to His death and life, so that you do not bear His name in vain, because Christ liveth in you, you have only to remember that every sin was on Him, and is still on Him, and that He is the conqueror, and straightway you will say, “Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” “Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of His knowledge by us in every place.” *2 Corinthians 2:14. Glad Tidings pg. 60-63*.

10. Why did God speak the moral law at Sinai?

- **To show them how destitute of His righteousness they were and how much they needed to be given the righteousness they needed.**

Read *Romans 5:20; 7:13*.

E.J. WAGGONER

“Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound.” *Romans 5:20*. In other words, “that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.” *Romans 7:13*. It was given under circumstances of the most awful majesty, as a warning to the children of Israel that by their unbelief they were in danger of losing the promised inheritance. They did not, like Abraham, believe the Lord; and “whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” But the inheritance was promised “through the righteousness of faith,” and, therefore, the unbelieving Jews could not receive it. So the law was spoken to them, to convince them that they had not the righteousness that was necessary for the possession of the inheritance; for,

although righteousness does not come by the law, it must be witnessed by the law. *Romans 3:21*. In short, the law was given to show them that they had not faith, and so were not true children of Abraham, and were therefore in a fair way to lose the inheritance. God would have put His law into their hearts, even as He put it into Abraham's heart, if they had believed; but when they disbelieved, yet still professed to be heirs of the promise, it was necessary to show them in the most marked manner that their unbelief was sin. The law was spoken because of transgression, or, what is the same thing, because of the unbelief of the people."

"Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith." *Habakkuk 2:4*. The people of Israel were full of self-confidence and of unbelief in God, as is shown by their murmuring against God's leading, and by their assumption of ability to do anything that God required, or to fulfil His promises. They had the same spirit as their descendants, who asked, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" *John 6:28*. They were so ignorant of God's righteousness that they thought that they could establish their own righteousness as an equivalent. *Romans 10:3*. Unless they saw their sin, they could not avail themselves of the promise. Hence, the necessity of the speaking of the law." **Glad Tidings pg. 73-74.**

LESSON FIVE

The Sabbath and the Covenants



1. Who is the source of rest?

- **Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord is our only Source of rest. In fact Jesus is our Rest!**

Read *Matthew 11:28-30*.

2. What is the relationship between rest and righteousness?

- **Rest is the result of righteousness.**

Read *Isaiah 32:17, 18; Romans 5:1*.

3. Who is our righteousness in the New Covenant experience?

- **Jesus Christ is the Lord our *Righteousness* and therefore He is also our *Rest*.**

Read *1 Corinthians 1:30; Jeremiah 23:6*.

4. How does the believer enter into God's Rest?

- **By faith, faith in Christ.**

Read *Hebrews 4:3*.

5. Why did the Israelites in the Sinaitic Old Covenant not enter into God's rest?

- ***Unbelief* prevented them from entering into God's rest.**

Read *Hebrews 3:10,11 & 19; 4:1,2*.

6. With what original restfulness does Paul compare the rest of salvation?

- **The rest the believer has in Christ is the *same* rest which the creation enjoyed in the beginning at the end of creation-week before Adam's fall.**

Read *Hebrews 4:3, 9, 10*.

The sweet harmony, peace and rest which characterized the oneness between God and man before the entrance of sin into the world, is the same harmony, peace and rest which the believer has in Christ in the New Covenant experience.

7. How did God celebrate the creation rest in the beginning?

- **God celebrated the creation rest by resting upon, blessing and sanctifying the seventh day of creation-week.**

Read *Genesis 2:1-3; Hebrews 4:4.*

8. According to Jesus, for whom did God make the Sabbath?

- **The Sabbath was made for man.**

Read *Mark 2:27, 28.*

9. Are New-Covenant believers in Christ to celebrate their salvation rest in the same way as, or in a different way to, how God celebrated His creation rest?

- **The believer who has entered into rest ceases from his own works as God ceased from His. And how did God cease from His? Read *Genesis 2:1-3.***

Read *Hebrews 4:9,10,4.*

Therefore both the **New-Covenant rest** and the **creation-rest** are celebrated on the *seventh* day of the week.

10. Is it true that circumcision was the entrance sign to the Old Covenant?

- **Here Paul states very clearly that circumcision was given to Abraham as a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had before circumcision. Therefore circumcision was given as a sign of the New Covenant. But Israel perverted the whole arrangement and came to regard circumcision as salvation itself!**

Read *Romans 4* especially verse 11.

E.J. WAGGONER:

“These false brethren had said, “Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.” Literally, you have not power to be saved. They made salvation only a human thing, resulting solely from the exercise of human power. They had no knowledge of what circumcision really is. “He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” *Rom. 2:28, 29*. There was a time, after Abraham believed God, when he listened to the voice of Sarai, instead of to God, and sought to fulfil the promises of God by the power of his own flesh. See *Genesis 16*. The result was a failure—a bond-servant instead of an heir. Then God appeared to him again, exhorting him to walk before Him with singleness of heart, and repeating His covenant. As a reminder of his failure, and of the fact that “the flesh profiteth nothing.” Abraham received “the sign of circumcision,”—a cutting off of the flesh. This was to show that since in the flesh “dwelleth no good thing,” the promises of God can be realized only by the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh, through the Spirit. “For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” *Phi. 3:3*. Abraham was, therefore, really circumcised as soon as he received the Spirit through faith in God. “And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised.” *Rom. 4:11*. Outward circumcision was never anything more than a sign of the real circumcision of the heart; when this was absent, the sign was a fraud; but when the real circumcision was present, the sign could be dispensed with. Abraham is “the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised.” The “false brethren” who visited the church at Antioch, subverting the souls of the disciples, and those of the same class who afterwards troubled the Galatians, perverting the Gospel of Christ, were substituting the empty sign for the reality. With them the shell of the nut without the kernel counted for more than the kernel without the shell.”

Glad Tidings pg. 31-32.

(See also Chapter 15 in Section Two)

11. Is it true that the Sabbath was the memorial sign of the Old Covenant?

- **The Old Covenant was established by people through their promises and not by God. Therefore God never gave any initiating or commemorating sign to that faulty covenant. What God says about the Old Covenant condition is that it must be “cast out!” *Galatians 4:30, 31.***

Read *Hebrews 8:6-10.*

The Sabbath was spoken as part of the moral law, which describes righteousness and defines sin, which law, according to Jesus is changeless. *Matthew 5:17-19.*

12. Why is it impossible for the seventh-day Sabbath to be a memorial sign of the Old Covenant?

- **The seventh-day Sabbath was instituted *before* the entrance of sin into the world i.e. before the fall. Therefore it could not initially have been a sign of any covenant, far less of the old!**

If there were no fall mankind would have celebrated God’s seventh day Sabbath every week. Therefore the seventh-day Sabbath is not a type or shadow. “Shadows” or “types” were things instituted after the fall to point forward to the redemptive work of Christ. The yearly feast days or annual Sabbaths were the shadows Paul talks about in *Colossians 2:16, 17.*

The seventh-day Sabbath was instituted before the fall to commemorate the rest of the oneness between God and His unfallen creation on earth. That same oneness has been restored through the plan of salvation in Christ and its rest is celebrated on the same seventh-day as the creation rest.

LESSON SIX

Agape Love: The Driving Force in the New Covenant



1. The New Covenant is established upon the promises of God, and the faith response of His people. How does faith work?

- Faith works by love. Read *Galatians 5:6*.

2. How only can we love God?

- God's love for us enables us to love Him. Read *1 John 4:19*.

3. Therefore what must we always know and believe?

- We must constantly know and believe the love that God has for us and toward us. Read *1 John 4:16*.

4. What does God's love do for us?

- God's love casts out our fear and enables us to love Him, to trust Him, to believe His promises and to surrender to Him. Read *1 John 4:17, 18; James 4:6-8*.

E.J. WAGGONER:

“Sometimes when a declaration of love is made, the loved one asks, “Why do you love me?” Just as if anybody could give a reason for love! Love is its own reason. If the lover can tell just why he loves another, then that very answer shows that he does not really love. Whatever object he names as a reason for love, may sometime cease to exist, and then his supposed love ceases to exist; but “love never faileth.” Therefore love can not depend upon circumstances. So the only answer that can be given to the question as to why one loves, is “because,” because of love. Love loves simply because it is love. Love is a quality of the individual who loves, and he loves because he has love, irrespective of the object. The truth of this is seen when we go back to God, the Fountain of love. He is love; love is His life; but no explanation of His existence can be given. The highest human conception of love is to love because we are loved, or because the object of our love is lovable. But God loves the unlovely, and those who hate Him. “We also were aforetime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hate-

ful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Saviour, and His love toward man, appeared, not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us." *Titus* 3:3, 4, *R.V.* "If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?" "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." *Matthew* 5:46, 48. **Glad Tidings pg 116.**

5. What was the supreme demonstration of God's love?

- **The infinite sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary's cross was the supreme demonstration of God's Agape—His absolutely selfless, self-sacrificing, All-for-the-other love.**

Read *1 John* 4:9; *John* 3:16; *Romans* 8:31, 32-39.

E.J. WAGGONER:

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour." The word "neighbour" means whoever dwells near. Love, therefore, extends to everything with which it comes in contact. He who loves must necessarily love everybody. It may be objected that love does make distinctions, and the case of husband and wife, or of any of the members of a family, may be cited. But the objection does not hold, for the family relation, rightly understood, was instituted in order that by a union, love might the more effectually be manifested to others. On the principle that strength is not merely doubled, but increased tenfold, by union, as shown by the statement that "one shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight," union multiplies the working value of love. If two persons each of whom has this unselfish love to all mankind, unite in love, then their union makes them ten times better able to serve others. If anyone thinks this is too high a standard let, him remember that we are considering a very high thing—the highest thing in the universe. We are talking of love, absolute and unqualified, as it comes from heaven, and not that which has been dragged through the mire of earth. Poor, frail human beings certainly need the very best.

"Since love worketh no ill to his neighbour, it obviously follows that Christian love,—and there is really no other love, as we have seen—does not admit of wars and fightings. No philosophy can ever make it appear that it does a man any good to kill him. When the soldiers asked John the Baptist what they should do, as followers of the Lamb of God, to whom he pointed, he replied, "Do violence to no man." *Luke* 3:14. Those who

asked were “soldiers on service,” as we see from the margin of the Revised Version. And the margin also gives as the alternative rendering of John’s answer, ‘Put no man in fear.’ It would be a very mild war in which this command was followed. If an army were composed of Christians,—true followers of Christ,—when they came in contact with the enemy, instead of shooting them, they would find out what they needed, and supply their wants. “If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” *Romans 12:20, 21.* G.T. pg. 117.

6. In whom are all the promises of God fulfilled and guaranteed?

- **Christ is the seed in whom all the promises are guaranteed. Whoever has Christ has all the New Covenant promises. Gal. 3:26-29.**

Read *2 Corinthians 1:20; Galatians 3:14, 16; Ephesians 1:3.*

E.J. WAGGONER:

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” “There is no difference.” This is the keynote of the Gospel. All are alike sinners, and all are saved in the same way. They who would make a distinction on the ground of nationality, claiming that there is something different for the Jew than for the Gentile, might just as well make a difference on the ground of sex, claiming that women can not be saved in the same way and at the same time as men, or that a servant can not be saved in the same way as his master. No; there is but one way, and all human beings, of whatever race or condition, are equal before God. “Ye are all one in Christ Jesus,” and Christ is the One. So it is that “He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ.” “For ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” There is but one seed, but it embraces all who are Christ’s.

“In putting on Christ, we “put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” *Ephesians 4:24.* He has abolished in His flesh the enmity,—the carnal mind,— “for to make in Himself of twain one new man.” *Ephesians 2:15.* He alone is the real man,— “the Man Christ Jesus.” Outside of Him there is no real manhood. We

come unto “a perfect man” only when we arrive at “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Ephesians 4:13. In the fulness of time God will gather together in one all things in Christ. There will be but one Man, and only one Man’s righteousness, even as the seed is but one. But “if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” **G.T. pg. 83.**

7. How are good works produced in the believer’s life in New Covenant experience?

- **The righteousness (good works) of God in Christ is reproduced in the believer by the Holy Spirit.**

Read *Ephesians 2:8-10; Philippians 2:12, 13; Heb. 13:20, 21.*

E.J. WAGGONER:

“The Bible does not disparage good works. On the contrary, it exalts them. “This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable.” *Titus 3:8.* The charge against the unbelieving is that they are “unto every good work reprobate.” *Titus 1:16.* Timothy was exhorted to “charge them that are rich in this world,” “that they do good, that they be rich in good works.” *1 Timothy 6:17, 18.* And the apostle Paul prayed for us all, that we might “walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work.” *Colossians 1:10.* Still further, we are assured that God has created us in Christ Jesus “unto good works,” “that we should walk in them.” *Ephesians 2:10.*

““He has Himself prepared these works for us, wrought them out, and laid them up for all who trust in Him’. *Psalms 31:19.* “This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.” *John 6:29.* Good works are commended, but we can not do them. They can be performed only by the One who is good, and that is God. If there be ever any good in us, it is God who worketh in us. There is no disparagement of anything that He does. “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.” *Hebrews 13:20, 21.*

“When we read the frequent statement, “The just shall live by faith,” it is necessary to have a clear idea of what the word just means. If we read the same text in the Revised Version, we shall learn. It has it, “The righteous shall live by faith.” To be justified by faith is to be made righteous by faith. “All unrighteousness is sin” (*1 John 5:17*), and “sin is the transgression of the law” (*1 John 3:4*). Therefore, all unrighteousness is transgression of the law, and of course all righteousness is obedience to the law. So we see that the just, or righteous, man is the man who obeys the law, and to be justified is to be made a keeper of the law.

“Righteousness is the end to be obtained, and the law of God is the standard. “The law worketh wrath,” because “all have sinned,” and “the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.” How shall we become doers of the law, and thus escape wrath, or the curse? The answer is, “The righteous shall live by faith.” By faith, not by works, we become doers of the law. “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.” *Romans 10:10*. That no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident. From what does it appear?—From this,—that “the just shall live by faith.” If righteousness came by works, then it would not be by faith; “if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace.” *Romans 11:6*. “To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” *Romans 4:4, 5*. There is no exception, no halfway working it is not said that some of the just shall live by faith, or that they shall live by faith and works, but, simply, “the just shall live by faith,” and that proves that it is not by their own works. All of the just are made and kept just by faith alone. This is because the law is so holy. It is greater than can be done by man; only Divine power can accomplish it; so by faith we receive the Lord Jesus, and He lives the perfect law in us.

“The law is not of faith.” Of course it is the written law, no matter whether in a book or on tables of stone, that is here referred to. That law simply says, “Do this,” or, “Do not do that.” “The man that doeth them shall live in them.” That is the sole condition on which the written law offers life. Works, and works only, commend themselves to it. How those works are obtained is of no consequence to it, provided they are present. But none have done the requirements of the law, and so there can be no doers of the law, that is, none who in their own lives can present a record of perfect obedience.

“The man that doeth them shall live in them.” But one must be alive in order to do. A dead man can do nothing, and he who is “dead in trespasses and sins” can do no righteousness. Christ is the only one in whom there is life, for He is the life, and He alone has done and can do the righteousness of the law. When, instead of being denied and repressed, He is acknowledged and received, He lives in us all the fulness of His life, so that it is no more we but Christ living in us, and then His obedience in us makes us righteous. Our faith is counted for righteousness, simply because our faith appropriates the living Christ. In trust we yield our bodies as temples of God; Christ, the Living Stone, is enshrined in the heart, which becomes God’s throne, and so the living law is our life; for out of the heart are the issues of life.

“Let the reader pay particular attention to the fact that there is in this epistle no controversy over the law, as to whether or not it should be obeyed. No one had claimed that the law was abolished, or changed, or had lost its force. The epistle contains no hint of any such thing. The question was not if the law should be kept, but how it was to be kept. Justification—being made righteous—was admitted to be a necessity; the question was, is it by faith, or by works? The false brethren were persuading the Galatians that they must be made righteous by their own efforts; Paul was by the Spirit showing that all such attempts were useless, and could result only in fastening more firmly the curse upon the sinner. Righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ is set forth to all men in all time as the only real righteousness. The false teachers made their boast in the law, but through breaking it caused the name of God to be blasphemed. Paul made his boast in Christ, and by the righteousness of the law, to which he thus submitted, caused the name of God to be glorified in him.” **Glad Tidings pg. 58-60.**

8. How is the wonderful grace of God accessed in the New Covenant?

- **By faith.**

Read *Romans 5:1, 2.*

9. The grace of God, the wonderful love-gift of all His promises and blessing in Jesus Christ, motivates and energizes the believer to experience and enjoy two privileges. What are these two privileges?

- **To behold the love of Christ revealed in His word and to be progressively transformed by that love so as to walk in the advancing light of truth.**

Read *2 Cor. 13:17,18; 1 John 1:7.*

“Beholding Christ means studying His life as given in His Word. We are to dig for truth as for hidden treasure. We are to fix our eyes upon Christ. When we take Him as our personal Saviour, this gives us boldness to approach the throne of grace. By beholding we become changed, morally assimilated to the One who is perfect in character. By receiving His imputed righteousness, through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, we become like Him. The image of Christ is cherished, and it captivates the whole being.” (MS 148, 1897).

“Hanging upon the cross Christ was the gospel. Now we have a message, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.” Will not our church members keep their eyes fixed on a crucified and risen Saviour, in whom their hopes of eternal life are centered? This is our message, our argument, our doctrine, our warning to the impenitent, our encouragement for the sorrowing, the hope for every believer. If we can awaken an interest in men’s minds that will cause them to fix their eyes on Christ, we may step aside, and ask them only to continue to fix their eyes upon the Lamb of God. They thus receive their lesson. Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. He whose eyes are fixed on Jesus will leave all. He will die to selfishness. He will believe in all the Word of God, which is so gloriously and wonderfully exalted in Christ.

“As the sinner sees Jesus as He is, an all compassionate Saviour, hope and assurance take possession of his soul. The helpless soul is cast without any reservation upon Jesus. None can bear away from the vision of Christ Jesus crucified a lingering doubt. Unbelief is gone.” MS 49, 1898.

“The cross of Calvary challenges, and will finally vanquish every earthly and hellish power. In the cross all influence centers, and from it all influence goes forth. It is the great center of attraction; for on it Christ gave up His life for the human race. This sacrifice was offered for the purpose of restoring man to his original perfection. Yea, more, it was offered to give him an entire transformation of character, making him more than a conqueror.

“Those who in the strength of Christ overcome the great enemy of God and man, will occupy a position in the heavenly courts above angels who have never fallen.

“Christ declares, “I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” If the cross does not find an influence in its favor, it creates an influence. Through generation succeeding generation, the truth for this time is revealed as present truth. Christ on the cross was the medium whereby mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other. This is the means that is to move the world.” **MS 56, 1899.**

10. What key does faith and love employ to unlock heaven’s storehouse and therefore to enjoy full access to God’s grace?

- **Prayer is the key in the hand of faith by which heaven’s boundless resources are released into the believer’s life. Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is through prayer that we “live” in the Spirit and “walk” in the Spirit.**

Read *Luke 18:1; Philippians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Ephesians 6:18; Romans 8:26, 27, 28; 1 John 5:14, 15.*

E.J. WAGGONER:

“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” Is there any doubt as to whether or not we live in the Spirit?—Not the slightest, nor is there any implied. Because we live in the Spirit, we are in duty bound to submit to the Spirit. Only by the Spirit’s power—the same Spirit that in the beginning hovered over the face of the deep and brought order out of chaos—can any person live. “The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.” *Job 33:4.* By the same breath were the heavens made. *Psalms 33:6.* The Spirit of God is the life of the universe. The Spirit of God in our nostrils (*Job 27:3*) keeps us in life.

The Spirit is the universal presence of God, in whom “we live, and move, and have our being.” We are dependent on the Spirit for life, and therefore should walk according to, or be guided by, the Spirit. This is our “reasonable service.”

“What a wondrous possibility is here set forth! To live in the flesh as though the flesh were spirit. “There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.” “Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterwards that which is spiritual.” *1 Corinthians 15:44, 46*. The natural body we now have; the spiritual body all the true followers of Christ will receive at the resurrection. See *1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 50-53*. Yet in this life, in the natural body, men are to be spiritual,—to live just as they will in the future spiritual body. “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.” Romans 8:9. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them; because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things.” *1 Corinthians 2:14, 15*.

“Except a man be born again [from above], he can not see the kingdom of God.” “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” *John 3:3, 6*. By our natural birth we inherit all the evils enumerated in this fifth chapter of Galatians, “and such like.” We are fleshly; corruption rules in us. By the new birth we inherit the fulness of God, being made “partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” *2 Peter 1:4*. “The old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts” (*Ephesians 4:22*), is crucified, and “put off,” “that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin” (*Romans 6:6*). Abiding in the Spirit, walking in the spirit, the flesh with its lusts has no more power over us than if we were actually dead in our graves. It is then the Spirit of God alone that animates the body. The Spirit uses the flesh as an instrument of righteousness. The flesh is still corruptible, still full of lusts, still ready to rebel against the Spirit, but as long as we yield our wills to God, the Spirit holds the flesh in check. If we waver, if we in our hearts turn back to Egypt, or if we become self-confident and so relax our dependence on the Spirit, then we build again the things that we destroyed, and again make ourselves transgressors. But this need not be. Christ has “power over all flesh,” and He has demonstrated His ability to live a spiritual life in human flesh.

“This is the Word made flesh, God manifest in the flesh. It is the revelation of “the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we might be filled with all the fulness of God.” With this Spirit of love and meekness ruling us, we shall not be desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another. All things will be of God, and this will be acknowledged, so that none will have any disposition to boast over another.

“This Spirit of life in Christ—the life of Christ—is given freely to all. “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” “For the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.” **Glad Tidings pg. 123-124.**

“Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” A simple statement of fact, that cannot be made plainer by any amount of talk. The harvest, which is the end of the world, will reveal what the sowing has been, whether wheat or tares. “He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” “Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you. *Hosea 10:12.* “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool,” and equally foolish is he who trusts in other men, as is seen from the next verse: “Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies; because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men.” “Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm,” whether it be his own flesh or that of some other man. “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.” *Jeremiah 17:5, 7.*

“Everything enduring comes from the Spirit. The flesh is corrupt, and it corrupts. He who consults only his own pleasure,—fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,—will reap a harvest of corruption and death. But “the Spirit is life because of righteousness,” and he who consults only the mind of the Spirit, will reap everlasting glory; for “if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.” “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall

die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” *Rom. 8:11, 13*. Wonderful! If we live, we die; if we die, we live! This is the testimony of Jesus: “Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it.” *Matt. 16:25*.

“This does not mean the loss of all joy in this present time. It does not mean undergoing a continual deprivation and penance, going without something that we long for, for the sake of getting something else by and by. It does not mean that life in this present time shall be a living death, a long-drawn-out agony. Far from it. That is a crude and false idea of the Christian life—the life that is found in death. No; whoever comes to Christ and drinks of the Spirit, has in himself “a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” *John 4:14*. The joy of eternity is his now. His joy is full day by day. He is abundantly satisfied with the fatness of God’s house, drinking of the river of God’s own pleasure. He has all that he longs for, because his heart and his flesh cry out only for God in whom is all fulness. Once he thought he was “seeing life,” but now he knows that he was then but gazing into the grave, the pit of corruption. Now he begins really to live, and the joy of the new life is “unspeakable, and full of glory.” So he sings:

**“Now none but Christ can satisfy,
 None other name for me; There’s love and life,
 and lasting joy, Lord Jesus, found in Thee.”**

“A shrewd general always seeks to seize upon the strongest positions; so wherever there is a rich promise to believers, Satan tries to distort it, so as to make it a source of discouragement. Accordingly, he has made many believe that the words, “He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption,” mean that they must all their lives, even after being born of the Spirit, suffer the consequences of their former life of sin. Some have supposed that even in eternity they would have to bear the scars of their old sins, saying, “I can never hope to be what I should have been if I had never sinned.”

“What a libel on God’s mercy, and the redemption that is in Christ Jesus! That is not the freedom wherewith Christ makes us free. The exhortation is, “As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants

to righteousness unto holiness;” but if the one who thus yields himself to righteousness must always be handicapped by his former bad habits, that would prove that the power of righteousness is less than that of sin. But that is not so. Grace abounds over sin, and is as mighty as the heavens.

“Here is a man who for gross crimes has been condemned to imprisonment for life. After a few years’ imprisonment he receives a free pardon, and is set at liberty. Some time afterward we meet him, and see a fifty-pound cannon ball attached to his leg by a huge chain, so that he can move about only with the greatest difficulty. “Why, how is this?” we ask in surprise. “Were you not given your freedom?” “Oh, yes,” he replies, “I am free; but I have to wear this ball and chain as a reminder of my former crimes.” One would not think such “freedom” as that very desirable.

“Every prayer inspired by the Holy Ghost is a promise of God; and one of the most gracious of these is this: “Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; according to Thy mercy remember Thou me for Thy goodness’ sake, O Lord.” *Psalms 25:7*. When God forgives our sins, and forgets them, He gives us such poLesson One

Yes; they that sow to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, as we have all proved in ourselves. “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.” The Spirit has power to free us from the sins of the flesh, and from all their consequences. Christ “loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” *Ephesians 5:25-27*. “By His stripes we are healed.” The memory of sin,—not of individual sins,—will be perpetuated in eternity only by the scars in the hands and feet and side of Christ, which are the seal of our perfect redemption.”
Glad Tidings pg. 133 – 135.

LESSON SEVEN

New Covenant Perfection



1. What is the inheritance promised to Abraham in the New Covenant?

- **The New Jerusalem in Heaven and on the earth made new.**

Read Chapter 16 in Section Two, *Hebrews 11:8-10; 2 Peter 3:13; Galatians 3:26-29; Romans 4:13; Galatians 4:26; Revelation 231:1-8.*

2. How only could this promise be absolutely sure?

- **Only as it was given by God's grace and received by the faith of Jesus.**

Read *Romans 4:16; 2 Corinthians 1:20; Ephesians 1:3; Galatians 3:18.*

3. Perfect righteousness is required in order to qualify anyone to receive the inheritance. How is this righteousness obtained in the New Covenant?

- **The righteousness of God and the inheritance of God are both promised and given freely in and through Jesus Christ to all.**

Read *Romans 4:13; 2 Peter 3:13, 14; Romans 4:1-5; Galatians 3:21-29, 14; Ephesians 2:8-10.*

4. Through what priesthood is this righteousness freely ministered and received by all who come in faith?

- **Through the Melchisedec Priesthood of Jesus Christ in the heavenly sanctuary.**

Read *Hebrews 4:14-16; Hebrews 5; Hebrews 2:14-17; Hebrews 7:11-28; Hebrews 8:1-6.*

“Christ’s priestly intercession is now going on in the sanctuary above in our behalf. But how few have a real understanding that our great High Priest presents before the Father His own blood, claiming for the sinner who receives Him as his personal Saviour all the graces which His covenant embraces as the reward of His sacrifice. This sacrifice made Him abundantly able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him, seeing He liveth to make intercession for them.” MS 92, 1899.

5. Which earthly priesthood was given as a teaching model of the Melchisedec Priesthood?

- **The Levitical Priesthood in the earthly sanctuary before the cross.**

Read *Hebrews 9*.

6. Paul in *Hebrews 9* summarizes the functions of the Levitical Priesthood. There were *daily* ministrations in the Holy Place and a once yearly ministration in the Most Holy Place by the High Priest.

According to which prophecy do we know the time for the commencement of the Most Holy Place final High Priestly ministration of Jesus Christ?

- **The 2300 day-years started in 457BC and ended in 1844 October. Since 1844 Christ commenced the final phase of His Highly Priestly ministry.**

Read *Daniel 8:14; Hebrews 10:19-22*.

7. What are the objectives of this final phase of the High Priestly ministry of Christ in the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary?

- **Our great High Priest must achieve 2 objectives for His people:**
 - (i) Their perfection of Christian character and**
 - (ii) Their unification into one final remnant who will be victorious over the Beast, its image and mark.**

Read *John 10:16; John 17: 20-23; Revelation 12:17; 14:12*.

8. What qualifies Jesus to be our great High Priest and to have the right to impart His perfection of character, (His sinless, victorious righteousness), into the experience of His end-time saints?

- **In the incarnation the Son of God took on our corporate sinful, fallen human flesh and He overcame the sinfulness of our flesh by faith in and submission to His Father. He therefore lived a sinless life in our sinful flesh. He was really tempted in all points as we are, yet He overcame by absolute dependence on His Father. He is therefore qualified to give us His victory and to succour us in our trials and temptations.**

Read *Romans 1:3; 8:3; Hebrews 2:14-17 & Hebrews 4:14-16.*

9. As we approach the final crisis what privilege is ours?

- **We must know, understand and follow by faith the work of our High Priest in the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary.**

Read *Hebrews 8:19-22; 6:19, 20; Psalm 73:17; 77:13.*

“The intercession of Christ in man’s behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. By His death He began that work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven. We must by faith enter within the veil, “whither the forerunner is for us entered.” Hebrews 6:20. There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected. There we may gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption. The salvation of man is accomplished at an infinite expense to heaven; the sacrifice made is equal to the broadest demands of the broken law of God. Jesus has opened the way to the Father’s throne, and through His mediation the sincere desire of all who come to Him in faith may be presented before God.” **G.C. 489.**

Before Christ can come the second time He must accomplish the complete at-one-ment of the character of His living church with the Character of God. This will bring the New Covenant to complete fruition in the lives of His remnant people.

Believe the following New Covenant promises, *2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 4:7-16; 1 Peter 4:1,2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23,24; Hebrews 13:20,21; 12:1,2; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Rev. 3:14-21.*

Section

Two

A. T. Jones:
Review and Herald

Articles on
Galatians

A.T. JONES (1)

The Two Covenants

Galatians 4:21-24 — June 5, 1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.”

Thus the two covenants were in the family of Abraham. For *“these women are two covenants.”* Verse 24, R.V.

But how did the two covenants get into the family of Abraham, and one of these even the covenant from Mount Sinai? *“For these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.”*

Since Hagar is one of the two covenants,—the one from Sinai, and the one which genders to bondage,—the story of Hagar in the family of Abraham is the story of the covenant from Sinai.

But God had made a covenant with Abraham himself, before ever Hagar was heard of. And this covenant was confirmed in Christ before ever any mention was made of Hagar.

This covenant was the covenant of God’s promise to Abraham and to his seed—not seeds, as of many: but as of one. *“And to thy seed, which is Christ.”* This was the covenant of God’s righteousness,—the righteousness of God which is by faith,—for when God had made promise to Abraham, Abraham *“believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”*

This promise was to Abraham, that in him should “all families of the earth be blessed,—that to his seed would he give the land of promise, which is the world to come; and that his seed should be as the stars of heaven.

This seed, to whom the promise was made, being Christ, this covenant was made in Christ; and, when Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness, this covenant was confirmed in Christ. This is, therefore, the everlasting covenant, which answers to Jerusalem which is above; for, in that covenant, because of that promise, Abraham *“looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”* Hebrews 11.

All this came to Abraham when as yet he had no child; and the promise was to be accomplished in his seed. Several years had passed after the first mention by the Lord of Abraham’s seed when as yet he had no child. Abraham was already

old when the thought of his seed was first suggested, and was growing older without seeing any seed. Accordingly, he said:

“Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

“And behold, the word of the Lord came unto him saying, This shall not be thine heir, but he that shalt come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shalt thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness. And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.” Gen. 15:2-7.

And when Abram asked: *“Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?”* the Lord *“said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.”*

Then it was that the Lord, by passing between those pieces, “made a covenant with Abraham,” a blood covenant, in which he pledged himself to the fulfillment of every promise that had yet been made to Abraham.

Here, then, was God’s own heavenly, everlasting covenant, made and confirmed with Abraham, with God’s own life pledged that everything promised should be accomplished, so that nothing promised could any more fail than that the Lord should cease to exist.

But still the time passed, and no child was seen; for “Sarai Abram’s wife bare him no children.” But Sarai *“had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her.” Gen. 16:1,2.* Thus Hagar comes upon the scene, and is brought into the story.

But how was it that Hagar was brought into the story at all? Was it by trusting the promise of God?—No. It was altogether because of distrust. Was it by faith?—No. It was altogether because of unbelief. This is confirmed by the fact that when this part of the program had all been carried through, it all had to be repudiated, and the promised seed had still to be expected by Sarah herself, and *“through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.” Heb. 11:11.*

This being so at the last, why was it, then, AT THE FIRST, that “*Sarai Abram’s wife bare him no children?*”—It was simply because of her unbelief, and her not judging “*him faithful who had promised.*”

Then it was that, in this distrust of God, this unbelief, Sarai invented the scheme which brought in Hagar. And this scheme, springing from distrust of God, and unbelief in him, was altogether a scheme of the natural mind—an invention of the flesh—to fulfill the promise of God.

The important consideration in this scheme of Sarai’s is that it was to fulfill the promise of God. The thought was not merely that the Lord had not fulfilled his promise; but that he had refused to fulfill it. For Sarai said plainly, “*Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing.*” This straightly charged unfaithfulness on the part of the Lord. And since it was held that the Lord had failed to fulfill his promise, it was naturally concluded that they were to fulfill it themselves, by an invention altogether of their own, springing from distrust and unbelief in God.

And even Abram swerved from his trust in God, from his faith in the Lord’s promise. Abram fell in with this scheme of distrust and unbelief, this invention of the flesh. “*Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.*”

“*And Sarai Abram’s wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife. And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived.*” “*And Hagar bare Abram a son.*” *Gen. 16:3, 4, 15.*

“*But he who was of the bondwoman was born after THE FLESH.*” How could he be born of anything else? The whole scheme by which he was ever born at all, was altogether of the natural mind, in distrust and unbelief of God,—an invention of the flesh.

“*Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai. Which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia.*”

The covenant, therefore, for which Hagar stands, — the covenant from Mount Sinai, — is a covenant in which people, in distrust of God and unbelief of his promise, knowing only the natural man and the birth of the flesh, seek by their own inventions, and their own efforts, to attain to the righteousness of God, and to the inheritance which attaches to that righteousness.

But the righteousness of God, with the accompanying inheritance in all its fullness, is a free gift.

A.T. JONES (2)

The Two Covenants

Galatians 4:21-25 — June 12, 1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia.”

Hagar represents the covenant from Sinai. Hagar was a bondwoman, and an Egyptian. Her son, therefore, was a bondson. He was a bondson, by whatsoever means he might have been born: because his mother was a bondwoman.

As we have seen, the means by which Hagar’s son was born was altogether out of distrust of God and of unbelief in his promise—was only a scheme of the flesh; and, therefore, “he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh.” But,

“The minding of the flesh, the carnal mind, is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Rom. 8:7, 8, margin.

Accordingly, the covenant for which Hagar stands—the covenant from Mount Sinai—is a covenant in which people, knowing only the natural man and the birth of the flesh, seek, by their own inventions and their own efforts, to attain to the righteousness of God, and to the inheritance which attaches to that righteousness. This, because, as we have also seen, Sarai and Abram had the fullness of the promise of God, and of his righteousness, in God’s covenant confirmed in Christ, before ever the scheme concerning Hagar was invented. And this scheme was invented, and could be invented, only by forsaking that promise and covenant. And to forsake that promise and covenant was to trust only in the flesh.

Did, then, the people at Sinai have any promise of God, or any covenant, in which they could trust, before they entered into the covenant of Sinai?—They had. They had the Abrahamic covenant, exactly as had Abram and Sarai before they entered into the scheme which brought in Hagar.

Not simply did they have this covenant with Abraham, as a far-distant thing, bedimmed by the lapse of time between Abraham and them: but they had it repeated to them, directly by the Lord, and made with them, as with Abraham;

and all this before they ever left Egypt at all. Read,

“And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord: and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them. And I have also established my covenant with them, TO GIVE THEM THE LAND OF CANAAN, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers. And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have REMEMBERED MY COVENANT.

“Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: and I WILL TAKE YOU TO ME FOR A PEOPLE, and I WILL BE TO YOU A GOD, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptian, and I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I DID SWEAR (“lift up my hand,” margin) to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I WILL GIVE IT TO YOU FOR AN HERITAGE; I am the Lord.” Ex. 6:2-8.

Here was given to the children of Israel, in Egypt, all that was ever given to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. The same covenant precisely that was “made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac,” and which was “confirmed” unto Jacob, was made with Israel, WHILE THEY WERE YET IN EGYPT, when God came down to deliver them from Egypt.

How, then, could it come about that Israel must enter into a covenant at Sinai?—Just as the scheme concerning Hagar had come about. How could another covenant be brought in at all?—Just as Hagar was brought in—altogether because of distrust of God’s covenant; altogether because of unbelief of the promise of God confirmed by his oath. For if they had trusted the promises of God which he had made to them in Egypt, they would have had all that Abraham or any other person ever could have, they would have had the righteousness of God, his everlasting salvation, and the inheritance promised to Abraham: and this ALL IN CHRIST; for this is how Abraham had it.

True, they had sung the song of triumphant faith at the Red Sea, after crossing; and if they had continued in this faith, they would have continued in God’s everlasting covenant which he gave them in Egypt: and there never would have been any covenant at Sinai.

But they did not continue in that faith; for immediately afterward, when in their journey they came to Marah, they murmured against the Lord. And when the Lord had delivered them from their fears of that place, and they came into the Wilderness of Sin, “the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured” again.

“And the children of Israel said unto them (Moses and Aaron), Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots, and when we did eat bread to the full: for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.” Exodus 16:3.

And when the Lord had delivered them from their fears that time, and they had left the Wilderness of Sin, and had come to Rephidim, again they murmured, and said:

“Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, What shall I do unto this people?” Exodus 17:3.

All this shows confirmed distrust of God, and unbelief of him, on the part of Israel. And this distrust and unbelief hid from them the blessings and the power given to them in the covenant with Abraham, which God had given to them when they were in Egypt.

They could not trust God for the inheritance to which they were coming, nor for the righteousness which alone would entitle them to that inheritance. This they thought that they themselves could earn. And, that they might see how far short of earning it they would come, the Lord gave to them the widest possible opportunity to try. Accordingly, he said:

“Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice INDEED, and keep my covenant, THEN ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine; and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. So shall ye be my people, and I will be your God. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.” Jer. 11:4.

“And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, all that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.” Ex. 19:4-6.

They had not yet heard his voice; but, when they did hear it, the ten commandments were spoken. And so they had agreed to obey the ten commandments indeed. And, even after they had heard his voice in such majesty that they fear and “removed and stood afar off,” they declared, “All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.” Ex. 24:7.

But they corresponded to the child of Hagar the bondwoman, who “was born after the flesh.” They knew only the birth of the flesh; and so had only the mind of the flesh, which “is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God,

neither indeed can be;” and they could no more obey that law “indeed” than Ishmael, the child of the flesh in the family of Abraham, could fulfill the promise to Abraham. In that condition they could no more keep God’s covenant than the scheme of Sarai in bringing in Hagar was the keeping of that covenant.

How, then, could such a covenant ever be brought in? Why did they enter into such a covenant? They had no true conception of the holiness of God, of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts, their utter inability, IN THEMSELVES, to render obedience to God’s law, and their need of a Savior. All this they must be taught. The people did not realize THE SINFULNESS OF THEIR OWN HEARTS, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God’s law; AND THEY READILY ENTERED INTO COVENANT WITH GOD. Feeling that they were able to establish THEIR OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS, they declared,

“All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.”—

Patriarchs and Prophets pages 371, 372.

They were already in the bondage of sin and self-righteousness; and in that bondage, with minds “*not subject to the law of God,*” and which indeed could not be, they promised to obey the law of God “indeed.” But in the condition in which they were, it was inevitable that they would break their promise: they simply could not keep their promise. It was not in them to do it. Thus, in that covenant, they were breakers of the law, and BREAKERS OF THEIR PROMISE not to break the law.

And this is all that they could be, in that covenant, or by virtue of anything in that covenant. Accordingly that covenant, AS HAGAR, gendered, and could gender, only to bondage. And this, all simply because of their distrust of God and their unbelief of his promise as revealed in the covenant with Abraham, which covenant was given to them directly, before they ever started from Egypt at all.

“These are the two covenants; the one from Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above IS FREE, which is the mother of us all... NOW WE, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.”

A.T. JONES (3)

The Two Covenants

Galatians 4:21-25 — June 19, 1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants.”

Ishmael was the son of Abraham, born after the flesh. And what was his disposition? Before he was born the Lord described it: “He will be a wild ass man.” The Revised Version translates it: “He shall be as a wild ass among men.” “His hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him.”

Remember that this child of Hagar, this son that was born after the flesh, this “*wild ass among men*,” was the fruit of the invention of Sarai’s, which sprang from her distrust of God and unbelief of his promise to give a son. Accordingly, bear in mind that this son was intended by Sarai to fulfill the promise of God. It was really intended, and even expected by Sarai, and even by Abraham, that this child of the flesh, this wild man, should be accepted by the Lord as the son whom he intended in his promise: and that the promises to Abraham should be fulfilled in him. This is certain, by the fact that, afterward, when the Lord told Abraham that he would give him a son by Sarai, Abraham answered; “O that Ishmael might live before thee!” Genesis 17:18.

Now remember that Hagar, the mother of this “*wild ass man*,” represents the covenant from Sinai; and her son, who was born after the flesh,—this wild man,—represents the children of that covenant from Sinai. And just as, in the invention which brought forth Ishmael, it was intended that he should fulfill the promise of God, and that the Lord’s covenant with Abraham should be through him, so these children of the covenant at Sinai, like Ishmael, born after the flesh, expected that they could fulfill the promise of God, and that the Lord’s covenant with Abraham should be accomplished in its fullness through them; that is, through the flesh.

But Abraham kept the commandments of God. The righteousness of God is an essential part of the covenant with Abraham; for, without it, no one can attain unto the inheritance given to Abraham in the covenant. But how would Ishmael, born after the flesh, keep the commandments of God, when the minding of the flesh is only enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, and neither

indeed can be? How could that wild ass man keep the commandments of God, with his hand against every man, when one of the two principles of the whole law of God is, *“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself?”*

And this child of Hagar the bondwoman corresponds to the children of that covenant at Sinai, which gendereth to bondage. As Ishmael, they know only the birth of the flesh, and only *“the minding of the flesh,”* which is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, they covenanted to keep the law of God *“indeed!”*

But Ishmael was not the son intended by the Lord: he could not fulfill the promise of God, nor could the promise of God be fulfilled in him. So far as God’s promise was concerned, and God’s covenant with Abraham, Ishmael’s birth was no more than as if he had never been born at all.

Accordingly, when Abraham said to the Lord:

“O that Ishmael might live before thee!” “God said, Nay, but Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.” Gen. 18:19-21, R.V.

At this time Sarai had become a believer in God’s promise, and trusted God alone, and the Lord had changed her name to Sarah. And so, *“through faith Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed;”* and according to the promise Isaac was born. (*Hebrews 11:11*).

Now what was Isaac’s disposition?—It is illustrated in his conduct at the time that Abraham and he supposed that he was to be offered as a sacrifice. He submitted, as a lamb, to be offered. It is further illustrated in the record in Genesis 26: After Abraham had died, and Isaac was the heir of the covenant, he dwelt for a time in the land where the Philistines were.

“Now all the wells which his father’s servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth. And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we. And Isaac departed thence, and encamped in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

“And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them. And Isaac’s servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.” Gen. 26:15-19, R.V.

These wells were doubly Isaac's. Abraham had digged them, and they therefore belonged to Abraham. And when Isaac became heir of Abraham, these wells became his by inheritance. And now he had digged them again, which was the same as if he had digged them new. Thus they were doubly his. Yet by even more than this they were his, because the Philistines, when the wells were open, had filled them with earth, showing in the strongest possible way that they did not wish them at all.

Yet the Philistines come now to Isaac, and say of the wells which he had opened, and which, by such full right, were his: "*The water is ours.*" Verse 20. Isaac let them have it. But what would Ishmael have done? And what would you do? Which of the "*two sons*" of Abraham are you? "*These are the two covenants.*" Of which covenant are you?

Isaac "*digged another well,*" and the Philistines "*strove for that also.*" But Isaac, instead of striving with them for this, which was by such large right altogether his own, "*removed from thence, and digged another well.*" But what would Ishmael have done? And what would you do? Which of the "*two sons*" of Abraham are you? "*These are the two covenants.*" Of which covenant are you?

When Isaac had digged this last well, for it the Philistines "*strove not: and he called the name of it Rohoboth: and he said, for now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful In the land.*" Verse 22.

But how was it that the Lord made room for him?—Simply by Isaac's refusal to strive with the Philistines, by his yielding to them all that they claimed, even when it was his by every possible right. But could the Lord have ever "*made room*" for Ishmael and those Philistines? Does the Lord "*make room*" for you and the envious opposers? Which of the "*two sons*" of Abraham are you? "*These are the two covenants.*" Of which covenant are you?

"And he went up from thence to Beer sheba. And the Lord appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father; fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake. And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants digged a well."

"Then Abimelec went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phicol the chief captain of his army. And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you? And they said, We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee. . . Thou art now the blessed of the Lord." Verses 28-29.

But it was only by Isaac's continual yielding before then that they ever had any opportunity to see that the Lord was with him, and that he was the blessed

of the Lord. But what would Ishmael have done? And what would you do? What do you do? Which of the “two sons” of Abraham are you? “*These are the two covenants.*” Of which covenant are you?

And so “*it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory; for these are the TWO COVENANTS: the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bond which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.*” Are you?

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

June 26, 1900

Sabbath, July 7, begins in all Sabbath-schools the study of the book of Galatians. The following article, contributed by Brother L. A. Reed, will be so helpful to all, as preliminary, that we lay over for this week the regular "Study in Galatians: the Two Covenants," to give place to this article.

(Compiler's note: I believe that what Brother Reed had to say will also be helpful to us as we continue on with A. T. Jones in his studies in Galatians, so I have chosen to include it here).

A great deal of interest just now centers in the book of Galatians. It is to be the subject of study for six months now in our Sabbath-schools everywhere.

We know that the epistles of Paul were addressed respectively to certain companies or individuals at given times in the early history of the Christian church. They were written to correct certain errors that had sprung up at that time. And as is always true, these errors took on certain forms due to the education and customs of the times.

Thus the disciples of Christ in Galatia were told by some that it was not enough to receive the gospel, which is the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," or the "power of God unto salvation," but that they must also perform certain ceremonies. There had been a time when these ceremonies were intended for performance; but that day was now past. But the fact that these rites were no longer in force did not effect the principle which Paul outlines. Even in the days when these ceremonies were in force, the mere performance of them could not, and was not intended to, make the doers thereof righteous. And what Paul attempts to show is that at no time could righteousness so come. And if these rites, when in force, would not make the doers thereof righteous, how much more shall they not when abrogated?

These ceremonies we all now acknowledge are of no binding force. There is therefore no danger now that any man will declare obedience to them necessary. And if men are now liable to make a mistake similar to that of the Galatians, it is manifest that this latter-day mistake must take on a form different from that made back there. In other words, the law of circumcision, animal sacrifices, etc., is now a dead letter, and ceremonialism of that form is no longer threatening any man's welfare. And if God, in the message to the Galatians, is referring only to the ceremonial law, and ceremonialism of the particular form, then—I say it without qualification—all that message of God has become dead, and is of value only as a record of the mistakes of those of old.

But ceremonialism of that particular form is not the only ceremonialism mentioned in Galatians. There is a ceremonialism which any man in any age of

this world may drop into. And as God's word is directed to every man and any man, in every age and any age, that ceremonialism is the mistake which now you and I are warned against. And as the things which concern you and me are of more importance to you and me than that which more truly concerns others in some other age, it follows that this other ceremonialism which we may drop into in these days is of greater interest to us, and should be the burden of our thought and study, rather than that which almost wholly concerned others in another age of the world now long gone by.

But what is ceremonialism?—It is to think that a man is justified by the works of the law; and not to know “*that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ.*” Gal. 2:16,21; 3:5-14, 18-27. Almost every verse in the third chapter is but a declaration, variously made, of this one principle,—not by the works of the law, but by the faith of Christ.

There was a law called the ceremonial law; it was the law of circumcision, sacrifices, etc. It was given for a good and sufficient purpose; but it was never given with any idea that by observance of it righteousness could be won. And he who lost sight of its true import, and attempted to use it as a means of earning righteousness, dropped into mere ceremonialism into performing a dry round of ceremony. He began to live a Christless life; he fell from grace, fell under the curse.

There is another law—called the law of ten commandments. It was not given from Sinai with the idea that by observance of its precepts any man could win righteousness. He who thus lost sight of its true import, and attempted to use it as a means of earning righteousness, also dropped into mere ceremonialism. He began thereby the performance of a dry round of ceremony, of outward forms. His life at once became Christless, because he chose a way of salvation other than Christ. But Christ is “the Way;” and there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Such a man falls from grace, falls under the curse.

There was yet a manifestation of the law, other than the form given in the commandments; namely, the Law of love. But he who takes even that manifestation of the law, that outward expression of the law,—love to God and love to man,—and attempts by his own efforts to live it out; that is, to earn righteousness by its works,—that man, like the others, drops into ceremonialism; possibly of another form, but nevertheless ceremonialism. He loses the true import of the law of love, falls from grace, and lives a Christless life.

There was still another manifestation of the law, a clearer presentation of its claims, in the “law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.” But the man who reads of the working of that law in Christ, and then by a copying of those acts of Christ attempts to earn righteousness, to make himself like Christ,—the man does not know the true import of the Christ life. He, too, has dropped into ceremonialism,

dry routine, dead works, yea, Christlessness.

Furthermore, ceremonialism in any of its forms must have to do with the “ten-commandment law of God.” This is true of that form of ceremonialism which takes its root in a misapprehension of the ceremonial law. He who so misread God’s purpose relative to the ceremonial law, must misread his purpose relative to the moral law. The constitution of the mind itself would produce this. And the fact that the ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings was but a form of the gospel for the time then present, and therefore was a preaching of the moral law, would also bring it about. And the ceremonialism of the Jews not only in the things of the law of sacrifices, but in the things of the moral law, testifies that the two forms of ceremonialism go hand in hand. He who made the one mistake made the other.

When God indited the book of Galatians, he did not strike at a few particular forms of error, but at the great principle which was at the bottom of that error. The error might take on many forms; a form at one time giving way to another form at a later time. A word directed merely at one form, must go out of date when that particular form vanished; but a word directed at the principle underlying the various forms, and aimed to destroy the principle that gave rise to them,—that word, I repeat, must forever be needed, so long as human hearts and minds are liable to misapply the principle, and thus create these various forms.

What, then, is now the message of the book of Galatians?—It is, as we have said, to show that righteousness is a gift of God; that it comes by promise; and that it is by faith in Christ; and that it is not by the works of the law; “*for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*” Gal. 2:16.

And what is the ceremonialism which in the book of Galatians you and I are warned against, Is it not that ceremonialism which now is the only ceremonialism possible for us to drop into—that ceremonialism which is an outward conformity, or attempted outward conformity, to the ten-commandment law, and especially to the fourth commandment of that law?—Yes, such are the works of the law which you and I are apt to trust to; and so the message of the Galatian epistle now is relative to the ten commandments, and even the fourth of the ten, or any one of the ten, or all of the ten. It can mean nothing else to us now; and whatever more it may have included, only lends force to this other one warning not to trust in attempts to outwardly keep that law.

If you will, in the light of these things, open your Bible with a prayerful heart, and read, not having in your mind those who lived two thousand years ago, but having only your own case in mind, and your own soul in the judgment balance,—I say, if you will so read, having in mind only your mistakes and liabilities to mistakes, and your own responsibility to God, I will trust your conclusions as to what law God’s Spirit reads to you out of Gal. 3:19, or any other part of the epistle.

A.T. JONES (4)

The Two Covenants

Galatians 4:21-31 — July 3, 1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.” Galatians 4:21-31.

The scheme invented by Sarai, and agreed to by Abram, which brought forth Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman, who was born after the flesh, proved unsatisfactory to the whole company, from the first step taken toward carrying it out.

“Sarai Abram’s wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.” Gen. 16:3, 4.

And although, as the record says, Sarai was the first to propose this plan, and that “Sarai. . . took Hagar her maid the Egyptian,.. and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife,” yet, as soon as she found herself despised by Hagar, and this because of the success of Sarai’s own plan, she turned in reproach upon Abram, and said: “*My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived I was despised in her eyes.*” Verse 5.

“But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee.” And Sarai dealt so “hardly with her” that Hagar ran away. And

though the Lord told Hagar, "Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands," it is evident that all was not peaceful and pleasant afterward.

Further, as we have seen, when, after Ishmael was born, Abram said to the Lord, "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" he was not heard; but Ishmael was plainly set aside, and Abram was told that Sarai his wife should bear him a son indeed, and that he should call his name Isaac; "and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him." Gen. 17:18, 19.

"Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him." "And the child grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned. And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had borne unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son. And God said unto Abraham, Let this not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called." Gen. 21:2, 8-12.

But not yet was the record clear. Abraham had swerved from the clear promise of God and had put dependence in the flesh; and not only must the bondwoman and her son be cast out, but every item of that whole scheme which had brought in the bondwoman and her son must be utterly renounced and abandoned. Accordingly, the Lord said to Abraham: "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Gen. 22:2.

Isaac was the child of promise. There was no other promise of a child, there could be no other such promise; and there could be no other child without another promise. And now for Abraham to offer Isaac for a burnt offering was, so far as could be seen, to take away all that had been promised. But when Abraham had looked thus far, he looked yet further, even back to the original promise of God, and trusted and expected that when he should offer Isaac, God would certainly fulfill his promise by raising him from the dead—by bringing him back from the ashes when he should have been burned in sacrifice.

This call of the Lord, therefore, to Abraham to offer Isaac for a burnt offering, brought Abraham back to the night of the original promise, when God had said to him: "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him. So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness." Gen. 15:5, 6.

Thus Abraham was brought to depend upon and trust in the naked promise of God alone, for all that the promise contained. And if Abraham had stood there

from the first and refused Sarai's suggestion with regard to Hagar, there would have been no such family trouble as came between Sarai and Hagar; Ishmael never would have been born; and Abraham would never have been called to offer Isaac had he from the first "*staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief*" (Rom. 4:20), but been strong in faith, giving glory to God, fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform, righteousness might have been imputed to him throughout.

"*These are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.*" The covenant at Sinai was the fruit of the flesh, of distrust and unbelief in God, just as was the plan that introduced Hagar and brought forth Ishmael. And just as Hagar and Ishmael, the bondwoman and her son, had to be cast out, and the whole scheme that brought them in had to be utterly repudiated, so the covenant from Mount Sinai had to be cast out, and all that brought it in had to be utterly repudiated.

As Abraham and Sarah had to cast out Hagar and Ishmael, and repudiate the whole scheme that had brought them in, and themselves come back to the original promise of God, to depend wholly upon that for all that was in it, so must the covenant from Sinai be cast out, and all that brought it in must be utterly repudiated by Israel and everybody else, and God's original covenant with Abraham be depended upon and trusted in, wholly and alone, for all that it promises. And so we read:

"In delivering them from Egypt, God sought to reveal to them his power and his mercy, that they might be led to love and trust him. He brought them down to the Red Sea—where, pursued by the Egyptians, escape seemed impossible—that they might realize their utter helplessness, their need of divine aid; and then he wrought deliverance for them. Thus they were filled with love and gratitude to God, and with confidence in his power to help them. He had bound them to himself, as their deliverer from temporal bondage.

But there was still greater truth to be impressed upon their minds. Living in the midst of idolatry and corruption, they had no true conception of the holiness of God; of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts; their utter inability, in themselves, to render obedience to God's law; and their need of a Savior. All this they must be taught.

God brought them to Sinai; he manifested his glory; he gave them his law, with the promise of great blessings on condition of obedience: "*If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant then . . . ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.*" Ex. 19:5, 6. The people did not realize the sinfulness of their own hearts, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God's law; and they readily entered into covenant with God. FEELING THAT THEY WERE ABLE TO ESTABLISH THEIR OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS, they declared, "*All*

that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.” Ex. 24:7.

They had witnessed the proclamation of the law in awful majesty, and had trembled with terror before the mount; and yet only a few weeks passed before they broke their covenant with God and bowed down to worship a graven image. They could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken, and NOW, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon they were brought to feel THEIR NEED OF THE SAVIOR REVEALED IN THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT, and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. NOW by faith and love they were bound to God as their deliverer from the bondage of sin. NOW they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of THE NEW COVENANT.” *Patriarchs and Prophets. pages 371, 372.*

A. T. JONES (5)

The Two Covenants

Galatians 4:21-24 — July 10, 1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants: the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.”

The covenant from Mount Sinai is the covenant that God made with the children of Israel when he took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt.

That covenant was faulty. *“For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.”* Heb. 8:7.

That covenant was faulty in the promises: for the second covenant is “a better covenant” than that, in that it *“was established upon better promises.”* Heb. 8:6.

The fault in that covenant was primarily, in the people. *“For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold the days come, saith the Lord when I will make a new covenant.”* Heb. 8:8.

Therefore, since the fault of that covenant was in its promises, and the fault was primarily in the people themselves, it follows that the promises upon which that covenant was established were primarily the promises of the people.

What, then, were these promises?—They are in the covenant which was made with them when they came forth out of Egypt, and here is that covenant:—

“Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” “And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.” Ex. 19:4-6, 8.

In this agreement, all the people promised to obey the voice of the Lord. They had not yet heard what that voice would speak. But in the twentieth chapter, they heard that voice speaking the words of the ten commandments, to which, when

the Lord had spoken, “he added no more.” “And when they had heard this, they solemnly renewed their promise “All that the Lord hath said will we do and be obedient.”

That this is the covenant that the Lord made with them when he took them by the hand to bring them out of Egypt, is made certain by the following words:

“For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices; but this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.” Jer. 7:22, 23.

And this certainly is confirmed in the following words:

“Thus saith the Lord God of Israel: Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant, which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you; so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God.” Jer. 11:3, 4.

Note carefully each of these three statements of the covenant, and see how the promises lie. The first one runs, on the part of the Lord: “*If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, THEN... ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation,*” etc. By this the Lord’s promises could not come in until they had fulfilled their promises; for the covenant begins with an “if.” “If ye will” do so and so, “THEN” so and so.

This is the arrangement also in the second statement, “Obey my voice and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.” According to this agreement, he was not to be their God, nor they his people, until they had done what they promised; until they had obeyed his voice, as they had promised.

The third statement stands the same: “*Obey my voice and do them according to all which I command you: So shall ye be my people, and I will be your God.*” This makes it perfectly plain, not only that none of the Lord’s part could come in until they had done what they had promised; but that the Lord’s part was to come in BY THE DOING of what they had promised. “Obey my voice,” “and do;” “So (in this way, by this means) shall ye be my people, and I will be your God.”

Since, then, in this covenant the Lord’s part, what the Lord could do, the Lord’s promises, could come in only in the secondary way as a consequence of the people’s doing what they had promised, it is perfectly plain that that covenant

rested, was established, only upon the promises of the people.

What, then, were these promises of the people worth? What had they promised? They had promised to obey the voice of the Lord indeed. They had promised to obey his law,—to keep the ten commandments, indeed.

But what was their condition when they made these promises?—It corresponded to the condition of Ishmael in the family of Abraham. They corresponded to Ishmael: they had been born only of the flesh, and knew only the birth of the flesh, and so had only the mind of the flesh. But “the minding of the flesh is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” “They that are in the flesh cannot please God.”

This being their condition, what could be the worth of any promises that they might make to keep the ten commandments indeed?—Any or all such promises could be worth simply nothing at all.

Accordingly, in that covenant, the people promised to do something that it was simply impossible for them to do. And since the Lord, with his promises, could not, in that covenant, come in until they had fulfilled their promises: until they had done what they agreed, it is certain that, for any practical purpose which the people discerned, or designed, that covenant was worth nothing at all, because the promises upon which it rested were worth nothing at all.

In the nature of things that covenant could only gender to bondage; because the people upon whose promises it rested were themselves already subject to the bondage of the flesh, the bondage of sin; and instead of keeping the commandments of God indeed, they would break them. And not only would they break the commandments, which they had promised not to break, but they would inevitably break the promises that they had made not to break the commandments. This simply because they were in a condition in which they were not subject to the law of God and could not be.

And this was demonstrated immediately. For, when Moses had gone up into the mount, to receive a copy of the law, which they had promised to “obey indeed,” he had been gone but forty days when they exclaimed: “*Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.*” *Ex. 32:1.* And they made themselves a golden calf—the god of Egypt—and worshiped it, after the manner of Egypt; which shows that, in heart, they were still in Egyptian bondage, and were indeed as Ishmael, the son of Hagar the Egyptian, “*born after the flesh.*”

And though all this is written for the understanding of all people who should come afterward, and for our admonition “upon whom the ends of the world are

come,” it is a singular fact that even today there are persons who, knowing only the birth of the flesh, not having been born again, not knowing the birth of the Spirit, yet will enter into exactly such a covenant; and will sign to it, to keep all the commandments of God indeed. But the trouble with these is just the trouble that was with the people at Sinai, as it is always the trouble with people at Sinai: *“They had no true conception of the holiness of God; of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts... Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, THEY DECLARED: All that the Lord hath said will we do and be obedient.”*

Of course the questions arise here, Why, then, were they allowed of the Lord to enter into such a covenant? Why did the Lord make such a covenant with them? The answer to these questions will be given next week.

A.T. JONES (6)

The Two Covenants

Galatians 4:21-31 — July 17, 1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not: break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.”

The first covenant was faulty. It was faulty in the promises; because it rested primarily upon the promises of the people wherein the people promised something that it was impossible for them to do.

Why, then, were they allowed of the Lord to enter into such a covenant? Did he not know that the people could not do what they promised?—To be sure, he did.

But they did not know it. “Living (in Egypt) in the midst of idolatry and corruption, they had no true conception of the holiness of God; of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts; their utter inability, in themselves, to render obedience to God’s law; and their need of a Savior. ALL THIS THEY MUST BE TAUGHT. God brought them to Sinai; he manifested his glory; he gave them his law, with the promise of great blessings on condition of obedience... The people did not realize the sinfulness of their own hearts, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God’s law; and they readily entered into covenant with God. Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, they declared, ‘All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.’”

Since the people did not know these essential things concerning themselves;—“their utter inability, etc.;—since they would not believe God, so that they could know;—and since “all this they must be taught,”—the only sure means by which

they could be caused to learn this which they did not know was to have them try, and fail; and so learn by experience that they could not of themselves establish their own righteousness as the righteousness of God. Then they would be willing to accept by faith God's righteousness, which is established by faith.

This is all perfectly plain from the circumstances of the case.

As we have seen in a former study, before they left Egypt the Lord had said: "*I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God.*" Now is it not perfectly plain that if they had known that God was already the Lord their God (Ex. 6:7), would they have needed to promise that they would keep His law "indeed" so that they might be his people, and He be their God?—Plainly, no.

If they had believed that the Lord would "give" to them "for an heritage" the inheritance that he had sworn to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob (Ex. 6:8), could there ever have been found any place for a bargain into which they would enter, and according to which they would, by works, earn that inheritance?—Plainly, no.

In other words: If they had known, and had been in, God's covenant with Abraham, the everlasting covenant, would they have ever needed to know, or to enter into, this other covenant at Sinai, which in substance was only their own, because it rested only on their promises?—Plainly, no.

Following back the thought to its original in the parallel, in these verses in Galatians, the parallel question is,—

If Sarai and Abram had believed God's promise, and had held fast only to that, would Ishmael ever have found a place in the family of Abraham? Would two sons ever have been born to Abraham?—Plainly, no.

Plainly, then, there never was any need of Abraham's having more than one son, the son that God had promised. Yet, "these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar."

And just as there was never any need of Abraham's having but one son,—the son that God had promised,—so there was no need for Israel ever to have but the one covenant—the covenant of God with Abraham—the everlasting covenant.

Just as there was no need of those two sons, so there was no need of the two covenants.

And as, through unbelief and distrust of God, Hagar and Ishmael were brought in on the side; just so, through unbelief and distrust of God, the covenant at Sinai was brought in on the side.

And as Hagar and Ishmael never had any recognition at all in the promise that God made to give Abraham a son, just so the covenant at Sinai never had any recognition at all in God's promise of salvation to mankind.

As Hagar and Ishmael had to be cast out, and all that had brought them in had

to be utterly repudiated, in order that the son whom God had promised should have the place that belonged to him; just so the covenant at Sinai had to be cast out, and all that brought it in had to be utterly repudiated, on the part of the people, upon whose promises alone that covenant rested, in order that God's original covenant—the covenant with Abraham—the everlasting covenant—should have the place that belongs to it, in the life and salvation of men.

Yet, as the troubles and the failure of Sarai and Abram in the scheme that brought in Hagar and Ishmael, were instrumental in bringing them at last to the point where they did trust implicitly in the promise of God alone; so the trouble and the dismal failure that Israel experienced in the first covenant brought them to the point where they appreciated, and implicitly trusted in, God's original covenant,—the covenant with Abraham,—his everlasting covenant,—which he had given them before they left Egypt at all.

For, as we have seen Israel broke both the law of God and their covenant not to break it. And when Moses came down from the mount, having in his hands the table of the law that they had covenanted to obey “indeed,” and saw what they had done, “he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount” (Ex. 32:19), “thus signifying that as they had broken their covenant with God, so God had broken his covenant with them.”—Patriarchs and Prophets, page 320.

They thus found themselves stranded, and utterly helpless, with all their resources utterly exhausted. For “*They could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken; and now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Savior revealed in the Abrahamic covenant, and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. Now they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant.*”—*Id.*, page 372.

Thus the covenant from Sinai brought them to the covenant with Abraham. The first brought them to the second covenant. The old covenant brought them to the new covenant. And thus the law, which was the basis of that covenant,—the broken law—was the schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, that they might be justified by faith.

Please study this study closely and carefully; for, in the next studies, we pass from this to the study of the new covenant.

A.T. JONES (7)

The Two Covenants

Galatians 4:21-24, 28 — July 24, 1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants... Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.”

As Ishmael was born altogether of the flesh, without any promise of God, but from distrust and unbelief of the promise of God, so was the first covenant—the covenant from Sinai.

And as Isaac was born altogether of the promise of God, solely from dependence upon that promise, so is the new covenant—the everlasting covenant.

The first covenant rested upon the promises of the people, and depended solely upon the efforts of the people. The second covenant consists solely of the promise of God, and depends upon the power and work of God.

The first covenant runs: “If ye will” do so and so. The new covenant has neither “if” nor any of men’s doing, but is altogether the doing of the Lord. Look at them as they stand together:

THE OLD COVENANT

“If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” “Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.” “Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you: So shall ye be my people, and I will be your God.” Ex. 19:5, 6; Jer. 7:23; 11:4.

THE NEW COVENANT

“I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people, and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” Heb. 10:16-18.

Let us read the new covenant, beginning with at “If ye will,” etc.: “If ye will put my laws into your minds, and write them in your hearts, then I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.” “Put my laws in your minds, and write them in your hearts, that I may be your God, and ye may be my people.”

If the new covenant read thus, how many persons could ever become the Lord’s people? and of how many persons could He ever be the God?—None at all; because no person can write the law of God in his heart; no person can put the law of God into his mind; for “the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Nothing short of the power of God alone, through the eternal Spirit, can ever put the law of God in anybody’s mind, or write it in his heart.

Yet, to do just this, was practically what the people of Israel agreed to do at Sinai, in the old covenant. For they agreed to keep the law of God “indeed,” which no person can do without that law being put into his mind, and written in his heart. They agreed to keep the law of God “indeed,” so that, in order that, they could be His people, and He be their God. Their agreement, therefore, was plainly in effect that they themselves would put the law of God in their minds, and write it in their hearts; and this when, as yet, they knew only the birth of the flesh; when, as yet, they had only the carnal mind, which “is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”

Thus it was by their own efforts that they were to be righteous; and by this righteousness they were to make themselves God’s people, and win Him to be their God.

Thus that covenant was altogether one of works; of righteousness by works; of winning the favor of God by works; of salvation by works.

It was a covenant in which, because of their works, the reward was to be not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

It was a covenant by which there was no such thing as the forgiveness of sins: it was of bondage, and gendered only to bondage.

And this is why that covenant is brought into this letter of instruction to the Galatians. The Galatians were seeking righteousness by works, by their own efforts. They were seeking to be “made perfect by the flesh.” But whatsoever Christian seeks righteousness, or to be perfect, in that way, has fallen from grace. He has indeed forsaken grace; because “to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.” And “*if it be of works, then it is no more grace.*” *Rom. 4:4; 11:6.*

This was the position and the condition of “*the Pharisees which believed,*” who had led the Galatians astray. Into a system of righteousness by works, and of seeking to be made perfect by the flesh, the Pharisees that believed had turned everything that God had given them to save them from the bondage of self-

righteousness and the works of the flesh; and they would even have perverted to that false system the very gospel of Christ itself.

On the other hand, the new covenant is wholly of grace, and of the work of God by grace.

It is a covenant in which the work is solely the work of God, and righteousness is the righteousness of God.

It is a covenant in which every one who shares it is born of the Spirit, and who thus receives a new mind and a new heart, in which mind the law of God is put, and upon which heart that law is written by the Spirit of the living God.

It is a covenant in which, by the creative power of the promise of God, each one who submits to that promise is created a child of God. *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Eph. 2:10.*

It is a covenant in which, solely because of the mercy of God, and by his promise, there is obtained forgiveness of sins, full and free: the sins and iniquities to be remembered no more forever.

It is a covenant by which indeed forgiveness must be found for the sins of the people even under the first covenant. For *“he (Christ) is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” Heb. 9:15.*

I note, again, that in the new covenant there is no mention of any doing on the part of the people. The doing is all of God: “I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts.” “I will be to them a God.” “I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”

In the new covenant it is God who is the worker; *“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Phil. 2:13.* It is *“through the blood of the everlasting covenant,”* that *“the God of peace”* makes *“you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ”* who is the *“surety”* of this *“better testament.”* Heb. 13:20, 21; 7:22.

The only way in which the people come into this covenant is passively: they must submit themselves unto the righteousness of God. Rom. 10:3. They *“yield”* themselves unto God and their *“members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”* Rom. 6:13.

Thus, whoever is partaker of this covenant in any way whatever, is partaker of it wholly by the promise of God; and so becomes, *“as Isaac was,”* a child of promise.

There is no other way to be a partaker of the new covenant than by the promise of God: for there is nothing in the covenant but the naked promise of God. There is no way to be a child of God, but by the promise of God: that promise accepted

by faith. Our sins are forgiven, our unrighteousness is pardoned, because God says it, and by the word of that promise we know it. He who accepts and depends only on the promise of God is of the people of God because God has said it. God is his God, because God has said it. The law of God is in his mind, and is written upon his heart, because God has promised that he will put it in his mind and write it on his heart; and he has submitted himself to God to have it done by God. And having so submitted himself to the righteousness of God, he rests securely in the promise of God in Christ, who is the mediator and the surety of the new covenant. And “this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”

The old covenant consisted, and ever consists, of the promises and the works, of the righteousness, of people who know only the birth and the mind of the flesh. The new covenant consists forever of the promises and the works of righteousness of God in those who know the birth of the Spirit by the promise of God.

A.T. JONES (8)

The Two Covenants

Galatians 4: 21-31; 5:1 — July 31,1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now, we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”

The first covenant depended upon the promises of a people who knew only the birth of the flesh. These promises were that they would keep the ten commandments “indeed.” But, knowing only the birth of the flesh, they were, at the time, transgressors of the law of God, and so were in bondage to sin. And knowing only the birth of the flesh, and having only the mind of the flesh their promise to obey the law of God “indeed,” was worthless, because “*the minding of the flesh is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*”

If they had made no promise at all to obey the law, they would have broken it; because they knew only the birth of the flesh, and “*they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*” Therefore, without any promise to keep the law, without the new birth they would have continued in the bondage of sin. And when they promised to keep the law “indeed,” and then broke their promise (which, having only the mind of the flesh, it was inevitable that they would do), this brought them only yet deeper into bondage; because to “*vow a vow unto the Lord,*” and then “*slack to pay it*”, is “*sin in thee.*” Deut. 23:21.

Therefore, that covenant being entered into by those who were already in bondage, and being a covenant which, by its terms, gendered to bondage, it was

only a covenant of bondage—a covenant in which their very efforts to deliver themselves from the bondage in which they already were, brought them only deeper into bondage, the bondage of sin, the bondage of their own works and broken promises, which were only sin.

Consequently, all that was seen, or could be seen, in the first covenant was, and is, the broken law. And that this should be forever so plain that no one could fail to see it, when Moses came down from the mount and saw their idolatry, he, having the tables of the law of God in his hands, “*cast the tables out of hands, and brake them beneath the mount.*” *Ex. 32:19.*

They were at first breakers of the law. They promised nevermore to break the law. They again broke both the law and their promise not to break it.

And when, therefore, because of this, Moses cast out of his hands the tables of the law of God, and broke them, this was to give to them, and to all people forever, a divine object lesson, that in the first covenant, in all their efforts at self-righteousness, and in all their promises not to break the law, no one can ever see anything but THE BROKEN LAW.

But, there was then and there present the Abrahamic covenant, the covenant of faith, God’s everlasting covenant, to deliver them from the bondage and the yoke of bondage that was upon them because of the covenant of works, of unbelief, into which they had entered. “*They could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken*”—through a covenant in which nothing could be seen but the broken law of God. And now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Savior, revealed in the Abrahamic covenant and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings.

It was the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob which Moses pleaded to God, for mercy to the people worshipping the golden calf at the foot of the mount, while he was yet in the mount, before he had come down the first time. Notice: in Ex. 32:1-6 is given the account of the people’s making the golden calf and worshipping it. In verse seven “*the Lord said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten calf, and have worshiped it... Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them.*” *Verses 7, 10.*

And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand?

Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swearest by thine own

self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever. And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.” Verses 11-14.

Thus it was the Abrahamic covenant, God’s everlasting covenant, that saved the people from the bondage and the curse of their sins, in the first covenant. And so it is ever. Heb. 9:15.

Then Moses came down from the mount, with the tables of the law in his hands, and cast out of his hands the tables of the law, and broke them, thus “*signifying that as they had broken their covenant with God, so God had broken his covenant with them;*” and signifying that in that covenant there was nothing to be seen but the broken law; and that they “*could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken.*” And “*now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Saviour revealed in the Abrahamic covenant, and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. Now by faith and love they were bound to God as their deliverer from the bondage of sin. Now they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant.*”—

Patriarchs and Prophets, page 373.

Thus the covenant from Sinai brought them to the covenant with Abraham. The first covenant brought them to the second covenant. The old covenant brought them to the new covenant. And thus the law, which was the basis of that covenant,—the broken law,—was the schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, that they might be justified by faith.

Thus “*the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou breakest.*” Ex. 31:1. And, says Moses, “*I made an ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand. And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the Lord spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the Lord gave them unto me. And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be as the Lord commanded me.*” Deut. 10:3-5.

There was then established among the people the sanctuary service, with the Saviour shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings: and with Christ, “*the Mediator of the new covenant,*” the “*one Mediator between God and men,*” represented in the high priest in his ministration in the sanctuary. To that sanctuary they brought, in penitence and faith, their offering, and confessed their sin. The blood of their offering was taken by the high priest into the sanctuary, atonement was made

for them, and the sin was forgiven. And in the great day of atonement the blood of the offering for all the people was sprinkled upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat, which was upon the top of the ark, over the tables of the law.

Thus between the sinner and the law there was always the sacrifice, representing Christ (and which, in his faith, was Christ, the Surety of the “better testament”), by which was brought to the sinner the forgiveness of sins, and the righteousness of God, which satisfied all the demands of the law. And thus, through faith in Christ, in this covenant in which Christ is Mediator, and of which he is the Surety, there is seen only the unbroken law.

Such was, and is, the true meaning of the new order of things at Sinai, after the breaking of the table, and after the complete nullification of the first covenant. It was the way of faith, the way of the “righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.”

But, behold, in their unbelief Israel afterward turned all this into a system of works, precisely as was the first covenant. And those sacrifices and offerings, and the ceremonies connected therewith, were given by the Lord to be altogether the expression of faith. But Israel, in their unbelief, missed all this, and made it only a system of works, of ceremonialism. Instead of righteousness coming by faith, and the sacrifices and offerings being but the expression of the faith, they expected righteousness by means of the offering itself, and because of their good work in making the offering.

Thus it was in the time of Christ on earth, and in the time of Paul and the Galatians. Thus it was with “*the Pharisees which believed,*” who had confused the Galatians and driven them back from righteousness by faith to righteousness by works and ceremonialism. And, therefore, Paul could write, and did write, “*that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.*”

Thus the very means that God had given to deliver them from the bondage of the old covenant they, through unbelief, had turned into a system of bondage, which corresponded exactly to that bondage of the old covenant. They had, indeed, perverted the new covenant as then expressed, into the very principle of the old covenant—righteousness by works. That which was the gospel as expressed in the sacrifices, offerings, and ministry of that time, they perverted to the bondage of righteousness by works, and ceremonialism, exactly as among the Galatians the “Pharisees which believed” were perverting the gospel as expressed in the sacrifice and ministry of Christ himself.

And just as Hagar and Ishmael were cast out, that God's covenant with Abraham might be fully enjoyed; and just as the covenant at Sinai had to be repudiated and cast out, that the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, the new covenant, might be enjoyed; so when Christ came, and, by the sacrifice and offering of himself and by his own ministration, brought in the fullness of the gospel—in order that this should be fully enjoyed, there must be repudiated and cast out that system of ceremonies and ceremonialism, that system of righteousness by works, into which Israel had perverted that which in its time was indeed the expression of the true gospel, of righteousness by faith. *“Jerusalem which now is... is in bondage with her children... Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman.” “Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. Now, we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.”*

And thus was cast out forever the very principle of ceremonialism—the very principle of the bondage of righteousness by works in whatever form it might present itself; and there was established in its place the principle of divine liberty in righteousness by faith. “So then, brethren, we are not the children of the bondwoman, but of the free.” And because of this there is sounded to all people forever the blessed rallying cry, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”

The old covenant, the covenant from Sinai, is summed up in the word “SELF.” The new covenant, the everlasting covenant, is summed up in the word “CHRIST.”

The old covenant is self and his righteousness. The new covenant is Christ and the righteousness of God.

The old covenant is self and the bondage of sin and works of law. The new covenant is Christ and the liberty of righteousness which is by faith.

The old covenant—self—must be cast out, and utterly repudiated, that the new covenant—Christ—may have its proper place and may manifest its saving power, for the son of the bondwoman can never be heir with the son of the free.

A.T. JONES (9)

Galatians 5:2-4 — August 14, 1900

“Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”

Through unbelief and distrust of the promise of God in his covenant with Abraham, the eyes of Sarah and Abraham were hidden from the truth and blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, God’s everlasting covenant. Therefore, the real truth and spirit of that covenant they must be taught. Through the disappointing experience of Sarai’s scheme in bringing in Hagar and her son Ishmael, Sarah and Abraham were brought to sincerely trust in the promise of God by which they received the child of promise; and by which Abraham was enabled to see the day of Christ, and, in seeing it, to rejoice and be glad. *John 8:56.*

Through the darkness of Egypt, which was upon their minds and hearts,—the darkness of unbelief and self-righteousness,—Israel at Sinai could not discern the truth and blessings of the Abrahamic covenant. *“All this they must be taught.”* By their experience in the covenant at Sinai, they were brought to the knowledge of themselves, of *“their need of the Saviour revealed in the Abrahamic covenant and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings,”* and *“were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant.”*

Through the darkness of Egypt, which was upon their minds and hearts,—the darkness of unbelief and self-righteousness,—Israel before Calvary, and at Calvary, and *“the Pharisees which believed”* after Calvary, could not discern the Savior revealed in the Abrahamic covenant and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings—the blessings of the new covenant. All this they must be taught. And by Stephen, and especially by Paul; and by the church in council at Jerusalem, and especially by inspiration in the epistle to the Galatians, they were taught that there was not to be put upon the necks of Christians the yoke which neither their fathers nor themselves were able to bear; but that Christians are to stand fast in the freedom of the Abrahamic covenant,—God’s everlasting Covenant,—*“the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.”*

Therefore it is written: *“Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.”*

It is the truth that Timothy was circumcised, and it is also the truth that Christ did profit Timothy unto the very fullness of the salvation of God. How, then, can

it be true that *“if ye be Circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing,”* and yet Timothy be both circumcised and profited by Christ?

The key to this problem lies in the purpose for which circumcision was employed. The Pharisees which believed, who had confused the Galatians, and were making this contention against Paul, *“taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.” Acts 15:1.* With them, then, circumcision was the means of salvation; and to be saved was the object in the circumcision. And how entirely salvation was made to depend upon circumcision is shown in the fact that this was said to persons who were already saved by the faith of Jesus Christ.

The Galatians had heard the gospel in its purity, preached by Paul. They had believed the gospel; and in that they had believed on the Lord Jesus, and had received him as their Saviour. Thus, they were already saved by faith in Christ; for by that they received the gospel, which is *“the power of God unto salvation (working salvation) to every one that believeth.”* And it was to these Christians who were already saved by Christ, through the faith of Christ,—to these it was that *“the Pharisees which believed”* had said, *“Except ye be circumcised... ye can not be saved.”*

This was, therefore, nothing else than to put circumcision above Jesus Christ as the way of salvation. It was to set Christ aside as the Saviour, and to put circumcision in his place as the Savior. Therefore it is perfectly plain, in itself, that whosoever was circumcised under that scheme and for that purpose, Christ would profit him nothing; because, in the very process, he set Christ aside for circumcision; he repudiated Christ as the Saviour, and took circumcision as his Savior.

And while that controversy was going on, as yet unsettled, Paul would not give countenance for a moment to any suggestion to circumcise Titus, or anybody else. But when the controversy had been settled by the Holy Spirit, and the decree had been published by the Holy Spirit from the council at Jerusalem, that people are saved by Christ, without circumcision, and where there was no question of salvation in the circumcision that was performed,—then Paul circumcised Timothy, so that a wider door should be open to both Paul and Timothy in the preaching of the gospel without circumcision.

Now, with those *“Pharisees which believed”*, circumcision was the badge, the seal, the very pinnacle of works, of self-righteousness, and of salvation by works of self-righteousness. And these works included the law,—all law, moral and ceremonial, which the Lord had given,—and the ceremonies which the Pharisees had heaped upon all that the Lord had given. So that the scheme meant justification, salvation, by “law” and works of law, by ceremonialism, not by Christ and the faith of Christ. Therefore exactly as he wrote of circumcision, so now he writes

of law: “*Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by law; ye are fallen from grace.*” The Greek is *nomos*, law, in general: not *ho nomos*, the law, in particular.

In this controversy the question was not whether it is right or wrong to keep the law of God. The question is whether or not men are justified, saved, by works of law, whatever law it may be. These people were already saved by Christ, and by faith in him; and now, to those who were saved by Christ, and by faith alone in him, these “*Pharisees which believed*” insisted that these must be circumcised, and keep the law, in order to be saved.

This was putting the law, the keeping of the law, above Christ. It was, in fact, the setting aside of Christ as Saviour, and putting in his place as the Saviour their own works of law. And therefore, plainly enough, in the very fact of so doing they were “fallen from grace.” For, for any one to turn from Christ, for any purpose whatever,—and, above all, for the purpose of being saved,—is most definitely to fall from grace.

And all this is true forever. Men are never saved by any of their own works in the keeping of any law. They are saved alone by Christ, and the faith of Christ: saved to the uttermost.

A.T. JONES (10)

Galatians 5:3 — August 21, 1900

“For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.”

“*Debtor to do the whole law.*” It is curious that men, in considering this statement, have made it mark a distinction between two laws, and have made it exclude the law of God from the subject under consideration, by allowing to the word “debtor” only the sense of “obligation.”

They know, by the scripture, that it is the whole duty of man to fear God and keep his commandments. They know that there cannot be any other scripture to contradict that. They know that every man is under obligation to keep the whole law of God, whether he is circumcised or uncircumcised. And, allowing that this term implies only obligation,—that if he is circumcised, he is under obligation to do the whole law,—they conclude that this must exclude the law of God: they conclude that it must be some law that no person is under any obligation to do unless he be circumcised; and that therefore the “*whole law*” here under consideration must be only the whole ceremonial law of sacrifices and offerings.

On the other hand, there are those who hold themselves under no obligation whatever to keep the law of God, who bring in this text to support them in their disobedience and opposition. They will have it that only those who are circumcised are under any obligation to keep the law of God, and that it was only by being circumcised that the obligation comes; and they know that they are not under any obligation to be circumcised. From this they argue that they are under no obligation to keep the ten commandments.

But both of these are wrong; both of them fail to see the thought that is in this verse. And the cause of this failure is in their allowing to the word “debtor” only the sense of “obligation.”

It is true that the word signifies “obligation.” But, in this place, and in every other place in its connection with men’s moral obligations, the word has a meaning so much broader and deeper than that of mere obligation that the sense of mere obligation becomes really secondary.

The word “debtor” in this verse—Gal. 5:3—signifies not only that a person is in debt, and under obligation to pay; but that, beyond this, he is overwhelmingly in debt, with nothing at all wherewith to pay. If a man is debtor, and so under obligation, to pay one thousand dollars, and yet has abundance, or even only the ability to pay the one thousand dollars, that is easy enough. But if a man is debtor, and so under obligation, to pay fourteen millions of dollars (\$14,000,000) and

has not a single cent wherewith to pay, and is in prison besides, and has no ability whatever to make a cent wherewith to pay his debt, to that man the word “debtor” signifies a great deal more than mere “obligation to pay.”

And that is precisely the case here. That is the thought in this verse. That is the meaning embodied here in the word “debtor.” This because the word “debtor,” when used in connection with morals, implies, and can imply, only sin: that the man is a sinner.

This word “debtor” in Gal. 5:3 is precisely the word that is used in Luke 13:4,—“*Those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?*”—where the word “sinners” is in the text, is “debtors” in the margin.

It is the word used in the Lord’s prayer (Matt. 6:12). “*Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;*” and which, in Luke’s version of the prayer, plainly expresses the thought of sin, in the words: “*Forgive us our sins: for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us.*” Luke 11:4.

It is the same word also that is used by the Savior in Luke 7:41, 42: “*There was a certain creditor which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing (with which) to pay, he frankly forgave them both.*”

It is the same word also that is used in the parable in Matt. 18:23-35. Indeed, from the verse, Luke 13:4, where the word “sinners” is used in the text and “debtors” is in the margin, the reference is direct to this parable in Matthew 18. That is the parable in which it is said that when a certain king “*had begun to reckon*” with his servants, “*one was bought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents,*”—about fourteen million four hundred thousand dollars,—and he had nothing with which to pay. Then the lord “*forgave the debt.*” But, when the servant found one of his fellow servants who owed him about fifteen dollars, he would not forgive him the debt, but cast him into prison until he should pay the fifteen dollars. Then the king called up his debtor, “*and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my Heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.*” Matt. 18:23, 35.

That thought of delivering the debtor to the tormentors until he should pay all that was due to his lord, belongs with the word; for “*the use of the word involves the idea that the debtor is one that must expiate his guilt.*” And “*sin is called hamartia, because it involves expiation and the payment of it as a debt, by punishment and satisfaction.*”

From these scriptures the attentive reader can begin to see that in the words of Gal. 5:3, —“*he is debtor to do the whole law,*”—there is far more suggested than that he is merely under obligation to accept the claims of the law upon him, and do his best to meet them. All this shows that he is not only under obligation to recognize the binding claims of the law of God, but that he is actually debtor

to render to that law all the claims that it has upon him. And in this it is further shown that, of himself, he must everlastingly be debtor, because he has absolutely nothing wherewith to pay, and of himself has no means of acquiring anything with which to pay.

And this indebtedness lies not only in his obligation to do the law from this time forward; it also lies in obligation to make satisfaction for all that is past,—for all the accumulations of the past, up to the present time.

Accordingly, of himself, every man is everlastingly a debtor in all that is implied in this thought in Gal. 5:3, and the kindred texts that we have here cited; because “*all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*” And whosoever would be circumcised in order to be saved and thus seek to be saved by works of self-righteousness, thereby takes upon himself the obligation to pay to the law of God his whole debt, from the beginning of his life unto the end of it. And in that, he also takes upon himself the obligation to expiate all the guilt attaching to his transgressions, and accumulated thereby.

That is what it is to be “*debtor to do the whole law.*” That is what is stated in the words: “*I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.*” He is not only debtor; but, by that transaction, he himself voluntarily assumes of himself to discharge all that is involved in his indebtedness.

Now it is true that every man in the world is, of himself that kind of a debtor. It is also true that any man today who seeks justification by his own works, even in the doing of the ten commandments, or of anything else that the Lord has commanded does thereby assume, and bind himself to pay, all that is involved in the indebtedness. But he cannot pay. There is not with him the first element of any possibility, in himself, to pay any of the debt. He is overwhelmed and lost.

But, thanks be to God, whosoever has the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, whosoever depends only on the Lord Jesus and that which Jesus has done, though he be of himself debtor just like any other man, yet, in Christ, he has wherewith abundantly to pay all the indebtedness. Christ has expiated, by punishment and satisfaction, all the guilt of every soul; and by the righteousness of God which he brings, Christ supplies abundance of righteousness to pay all the demands that the law may ever make in the life of him who believes in Jesus.

Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift of the unsearchable riches of Christ. Oh, believe it! Oh, receive it! Poor, overwhelmed, lost “debtor;” “*buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed.*” “*Yea, come, buy . . . without money and without price.*” Rev. 3:18; Isa. 55:1.

A.T. JONES (11)

Galatians 5:16-18 — September 18, 1900

“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.”

“If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law;” because *“as many as are led of the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”* As sons of God, these have the mind of the Spirit, the mind of Christ; and so with the mind they *“serve the law of God.”* Accordingly, whosoever is led of the Spirit of God, and thus has the mind of Christ, fulfill the law; because, by that Spirit, there is shed abroad in the heart the love of God, which, in itself, is the fulfilling of the law, in whomsoever has it.

On the other hand, whomsoever is led of the flesh, and so has the mind of the flesh, does the works of the flesh, and so serves the law of sin.

And the two ways, the way of the Spirit and the way of the flesh, are always open before every man. As certainly as the flesh is there, it *“lusteth against the Spirit;”* and as certainly as the Spirit is there, it *“lusteth against the flesh.”* Whosoever is led of the flesh cannot do the good that he would; he serves the law of sin, and so is under the law. But whosoever is *“led of the Spirit is not under the law.”*

And every man is always free to choose which shall be his way—the way of the Spirit, or the way of the flesh. *“If ye live after the flesh, he shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” Rom. 8:13.*

Note that, in the text of Galatians now under consideration, and its kindred texts in Romans and also in Colossians, it is stated in words, and constantly held in view, that the flesh, in its true, fleshly, sinful nature, is still present with him who has the Spirit of God; and that this flesh is warring against the Spirit.

That is, when a man is converted, and is thus brought under the power of the spirit of God, he is not so delivered from the flesh that he is actually separated from it, with its tendencies and desires, so that, by the flesh, he is no more tempted, and that with it he has no more contest. No; that same degenerate, sinful flesh is there, with its same tendencies and desires. But the individual is no longer subject to them. He is delivered from subjection to the flesh, with its tendencies and desires, and is now subject to the Spirit. He is now subject to a power that conquers, and brings under, crucifies, and keeps under, the flesh, sinful as it is, with all its affections and lusts. Therefore, it is written that *“ye through the Spirit do mortify*

the deeds of the body.” “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.” Col. 3:5. Note that all these things are there in the flesh and would live and reign if the flesh were to rule. But since the flesh itself is brought into subjection to the power of God, through the Spirit, all these evil things are killed at the root, and thus prevented from appearing in the life.

This contrast between the rule of the flesh and the rule of the Spirit, is clearly shown in Rom. 7:14-24 and in 1 Cor. 9:26, 27. In the seventh of Romans is pictured the man who is under the power of the flesh, “*carnal, sold under sin,*” who longs to do good, and wills to do good, but is subject to a power in the flesh that will not let him do the good that he would. “*For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.*” “*I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law IN MY MEMBERS, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*” That describes the man who is subject to the flesh, “*to the law of sin*” that is in the members. And when he would break away from the power of the flesh, and would do good, that power still brings him into captivity, and holds him under the dominion of the flesh, the law of sin, which is in his members.

But there is deliverance from that power. Therefore, when he cries out, “*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*” there is given instantly the answer: “*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*” There is the way of deliverance; for Christ alone is the Deliverer.

And now this man, though he is thus delivered, is not delivered from A CONTEST: he is not put into a condition where he has no fighting to do with the flesh. There is a fight still to be carried on; and it is not a make-believe fight; it is not the fighting of a phantom. Here is the man of 1 Cor. 9:26, 27: “*So fight I, not as one that beateth the air. But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*”

Thus, in the battle that the Christian fights, is his body, is the flesh, with its affections and lusts. The body is to be, by the Christian, kept under, and brought into subjection, by the new power of the Spirit of God, to which he is now subject, and to which he became subject when delivered from the power of the flesh and the law of sin.

This is made yet more expressive by the fuller rendering of the Greek word translated “keep under,” in 1 Cor. 9:27: “*I keep under my body.*” It means literally, “to strike under the eyes, hit and beat the face black and blue.” Accordingly,

Conybeare and Hawson translate this passage thus: "I fight not as the pugilist who strikes out against the air; but I bruise my body and force it into bondage."

Thus the seventh of Romans shows the man subject to the power of the flesh and the law of sin that is in the members, but longing for deliverance. The ninth of first Corinthians shows the flesh subject to the man through the new power of the Spirit of God. In the seventh of Romans, the flesh is ruling, and the man is under. In the ninth chapter of Corinthians, the man is ruling, and the flesh is under.

And this blessed reversal of things is wrought in conversion. By conversion the man is put in possession of the power of God, so that, by that power, he is made ruler over the flesh, with all its affections and lusts; and, through the Spirit, he crucifies the flesh with the affections and lusts, in his fighting "the good fight of faith."

Men are not saved by being delivered utterly from the flesh; but by receiving power to conquer and rule over all the evil tendencies and the desires of the flesh. Men do not develop character (in fact, they never could) by being delivered into a realm of no temptation; but, by receiving power, in the field of temptation exactly where they are, to conquer all the temptation.

If men were to be saved by being delivered utterly from the flesh just as it is, then Jesus need never have come to the world. If men were to be saved by being delivered from all temptation, and set in a realm of no temptation, then Jesus need not have come into the world. But never, by any such deliverance as that, could man have developed character. Therefore, instead of trying to save men by delivering them utterly from the flesh, just where they were, Jesus came to the world, and put himself IN THE FLESH, just where men are; and met that flesh, JUST AS IT IS, with all its tendencies and desires; and by the divine power which he brought by faith, he "*conquered sin in the flesh,*" and thus brought to all mankind that divine faith which brings the divine power to man to deliver him from the power of the flesh and the law of sin, just where he is, and to give him assured dominion over the flesh, just as it is.

Instead of Jesus trying to save men in a way in which they would be limp and characterless, by setting them in a realm of no temptation, he came to man, just where man is, in the midst of all his temptations. Jesus came in the very flesh such as man has; and in that flesh, he met all the temptations known to that flesh, and conquered every one of them; and by that conquest brought victory to every soul in the world. Bless his name.

And every soul can have in its fullness that victory, who will receive and keep "*the faith of Jesus.*" For "*this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*"

A.T. JONES (12)

Galatians — September 26, 1900

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

Fornication, uncleanness, and lasciviousness are but different forms of the practice of adultery; as Jesus said: *“Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.”* Matt. 5:27, 28.

Thus, adultery begins in the unclean thought, the lascivious desire. Indeed, truly and strictly speaking, it begins in any thought which, if carried to its ultimate extent, could possibly lead to adultery. This is why it is that the commandments of God are “exceeding broad.” Each of the commandments of God forbids the ultimate act, by forbidding the imagination of the thought which, if followed up, could possibly lead to the ultimate act. And thus the law of God, with its eternal “Thou shalt not,” forbids all unrighteousness of men, and asserts the righteousness of God.

Idolatry is the having of other gods before the Lord. And anything that, in the estimation of anyone, stands, to him, before the Lord, is an idol; and he who so allows such a thing is an idolater. Perhaps the clearest and most comprehensive statement of what is idolatry, is that by John: *“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.”* 1 John 2:15-17. As expressed by James, it is, *“Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”* James 4:4.

The world, with its ways, is not of God, but is of Satan; for it is written: *“The whole world lieth in the wicked one.”* 1 John 5:19, R.V. And it is *“the god of this world”* who blinds *“the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”* 2 Cor. 4:4. Accordingly, any way of this world that is followed by any one in preference to the way of God—that is idolatry to that person, and he is an idolater.

Witchcraft is, literally, sorcery; and in other translations is mostly rendered sorcery. The original word is pharmakeia, which means “the preparing or using of medicine,” and is the original of the present English word “pharmacy,” the art of compounding medicines and drugs. From the original meaning of “the preparing of medicine,” the word was applied to “the using of any kind of drugs, potions, or spell.” Hence, it signifies “the use of super natural knowledge or power gained in any manner, especially through the connivance of evil spirits, magic art, enchantment, witchcraft, spells, charms.”

And how natural a work of the flesh is that tendency to divination! How many persons there are who like to know their fortune; and who, therefore, are always ready to respond to the invitations of a gypsy or a crone. And how ready people naturally are to wish to feel the experience of being mesmerized, or hypnotized! All these things come under the heading of this word pharmakeia, witchcraft, or sorcery. They are all works of the flesh. And bear in mind that it is written that *“they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”* In the eternal righteousness, the eternal life, and the eternal promises, which God has given in Jesus Christ our Lord, the Christian already knows his fortune, even to the depths of all eternity; and he needs no pharmacy, no drugging, no charms, spells, witchcrafts, or sorcery, at any time, not in any way whatever.

Hatred, being the opposite of love, all the following-named works of the flesh—“variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders”—are but variations of it, just as we have seen that fornication, uncleanness and lasciviousness are simply various forms of adultery. Or the commandment which says, “Thou shalt not kill,” and which, in that, forbids hatred, which is, in itself, murder. For *“whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.”* As defined in the sermon on the mount, the thought stands: *“Ye have heard that is was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgement: but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgement; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.”* Matt. 5:21, 22.

However, it is well to look at each of these words, that we may get as clear a view as possible of the subtlety and deceitfulness of sin in the works of the flesh. This, because few persons realize that they hate a person unless they actually do regard them “with a strong and passionate dislike, or aversion,” or “with extreme ill-will.” But when there is borne in mind the principle that the law of God in forbidding the ultimate act of evil, forbids the very imagination of the thought which, if carried out, could possibly lead to that ultimate act; and when it is borne

in mind that, according to the Lord's own definition, to hate a person, or to speak ill of a person, is to break the commandment that says, "Thou shalt not kill,"—then it can be easily understood that hatred can be indulged without that direct and extreme ill-will and aversion to the presence, or even the thought, of the person hated, which alone is commonly recognized as hatred.

"Variance" suggests "difference," especially "difference that produces disagreement or controversy; dispute; disuasion; discord." The original word signifies "strife, quarrel, debate, wordy wrangling, disputation, contention." The spirit and tendency therefore, of "variance," is a readiness to differ and to ruse questions, and then hold tenaciously to personal views, and run the difference into debating and dissension; then to ill-will, which, in itself, is hatred, which, in itself, in turn, is the breaking of the commandment that says, "Thou shalt not kill."

It is not in vain that, in the Scriptures, debate is catalogued with "envy, murder," "deceit," and "malignity," and is placed definitely between murder and deceit. Whoever, therefore, would avoid murder must avoid hatred; and whoever would avoid variance must diligently avoid the spirit that raises questions and indulges differences that lead to controversy, debate, and its further train of evils, which continues unbroken unto hatred, which itself is murder. And this thought is worthy of special attention everywhere in the study and recitation of the Sabbath-school lessons.

"Emulations" is the "love of superiority; desire or ambition to equal or excel others;" "the desire and the resulting endeavor to equal or surpass another, or others, in some quality, attainment, or achievement," It is the expression of sheer love of self-superiority, and inability to endure the thought that another should be superior. The original word is, literally, "jealousy;" and in other translations it is so rendered; and the declaration of the word of God, as to jealousy, is that it "is cruel as the grave." Its synonym is "envy:" and envy is "a feeling of uneasiness, mortification, or discontent, excited by the contemplation of another's superiority, property, or success, accompanied with some degree of enmity or malignity, and often, or usually, with a desire or an effort to discomfit or mortify the person envied." Emulation appears first, and aims to attain to a standing of superiority over another. And when that cannot be attained, then envy sweeps in with its tide. When emulation has obtained its aim, it is succeeded immediately by exaltation at the defeat of the foe. When emulation in itself is defeated, it is immediately followed by envy, which, being "enmity prompted by covetousness," waits in secret for an opportunity to vent its malignity, which, it itself, is hatred.

It is easy to see how, in association with variance, emulations, and envyings, there should also appear “wrath, strife, seditions [a going apart], heresies [a choosing for one’s self],” and, finally “murder,” which is but the ultimate of any one of the works of the flesh named in this list, beginning with “hatred” and ending with “murders.”

Drunkenness and revelings are simply all manner of intemperance, which, in itself, is idolatry, and carries in its train a multitude of the evils already described in the dreadful works of the flesh.

“And such like” of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things SHALL NOT INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

A.T. JONES (13)

Galatians 5:22-26 — October 2, 1900

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another.”

We have seen somewhat of the essential evil and deceitfulness of the works of the flesh. But, thank the Lord, there is a better picture.

The Spirit of God, which, in his fullness, is freely given to every believer, lusteth against the flesh, so that in him who is led by the Spirit of God the flesh cannot do the things that it would. In such the Spirit of God rules, and causes to appear in the life “the fruit of the Spirit,” instead of “the works of the flesh.”

And though it be true “*that they which do such things*” as we described in the list of the works of the flesh, “*shall not inherit the kingdom of God,*” yet in the gift of the Holy Spirit, through the grace of Christ, God has made full provision by which every soul, in spite of all the passions, lusts, desires, and inclinations of the flesh, can “*inherit the kingdom of God.*”

In Christ the battle has been fought, on every point, and the victory has been made complete. He was made flesh itself—the same flesh and blood as those whom he came to redeem. He was made in all points like these; he was “in all points tempted like as we are.” If in any “point” he had not been “like as we are,” then, on that point he could not possibly have been tempted “like as we are.”

He was “touched” with the feeling of our infirmities, because he “*was in all points tempted like as we are.*” When he was tempted, he felt the desires and the inclinations of the flesh, precisely as we feel them when we are tempted. For “*every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lusts (his own desires and inclinations of the flesh) and enticed.*” James 1:14. All this Jesus could experience without sin; because to be tempted is not sin. It is only “*when lust hath conceived,*” when the desire is cherished, when the inclination is sanctioned,—only then it is that “*it bringeth forth sin.*” And Jesus never even in a thought cherished a desire, or sanctioned an inclination of the flesh. Thus, in such flesh as ours, he was tempted in all points as we are, and yet without a taint of sin.

And thus, by the divine power that he received through faith in God, he, in our flesh, utterly quenched every inclination of that flesh, and effectually killed at its root every desire of the flesh; and so “condemned sin in the flesh.” And in so doing, he brought complete victory, and divine power to maintain it, to every soul in the

world. All this he did *“that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Rom. 8:4.*

This victory, in its fullness, is free to every soul in Christ Jesus. It is received by faith in Jesus. It is accomplished and maintained by *“the faith of Jesus,”* which he has wrought out in perfection, and has given to every believer in him. For *“this is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith.”*

He *“abolished in his flesh the enmity”* that separated mankind from God. Eph. 2:15. In order to do this, he took the flesh, and must take the flesh, in which that enmity existed. And he *“abolished in his flesh the enmity,”* *“for to make,”* in order to make *“In himself of twain,”* God and the estranged man, *“one new man, so making peace.”*

He *“abolished in his flesh the enmity,”* in order *“that he might reconcile both”* Jew and Gentile—all mankind who are subject to the enmity—*“unto God, in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity in himself.”* Eph. 2:16, margin. *“The enmity”* was *“in himself,”* by being *“in his flesh.”* And there *“in his flesh”* he slew it and abolished it. And he could do this only by its being indeed *“in his flesh.”*

Thus Jesus took upon him the curse, in all its fullness, precisely as that curse is upon mankind. This he did by *“being made a curse for us.”* But *“the curse causeless shall not come,”* and never came. The cause of the curse is sin. He was made a curse for us, because of our sins. And to meet the curse as it is upon us, he must meet sin as it is in us. Accordingly, God *“hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin.”* And this *“that we might be made the righteousness of God IN HIM.”* 2 Cor. 5:21.

And though he thus placed himself entirely at the same great disadvantage as are all mankind—made in all points like us and so, *“in all points tempted like as we are,”*—yet not a single tendency or inclination of the flesh was ever allowed the slightest recognition, even in thought; but every one of them was effectually killed at the root by the power of God, which, through divine faith, he brought to humanity.

And thus, *“as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also HIMSELF LIKEWISE took part of THE SAME; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.”* Heb. 2:14-18.

And this victory which Christ wrought out in human flesh, is brought by the Holy Spirit to the rescue of everyone in human flesh who today believes in Jesus.

For by the Holy Spirit the very presence of Christ himself comes to the believer; for it is his constant desire to “*grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.*” Eph. 3:16-19.

Thus the deliverance from the guilt of sin and from the power of sin, which holds the believer in triumph over all the desires, the tendencies and inclinations, of his sinful flesh, through the power of the Spirit of God,—this is wrought today by the personal presence of Christ Jesus IN HUMAN FLESH in the believer, precisely as it was wrought by the personal presence of Christ in human flesh “eighteen hundred and seventy years ago.”

Christ is ever the same—“*the same yesterday, and today, and forever.*” The gospel of Christ is ever the same—the same yesterday, and today, and forever. The gospel of Christ today is the same that it was eighteen hundred and seventy years ago. Then it was “*God manifest in the flesh,*” and today it is the same—“*God manifest in the*” same flesh, the flesh of sinful men, human flesh, just as human nature is.

That gospel is “*Christ in you, the hope of glory,*”—Christ in you just as you are, sins, sinfulness, and all; for he gave him for our sins, and for our sinfulness. And you, just as you are Christ has bought, and God “bath made accepted” in him. He received you just as you are; and the gospel, “*Christ in you, hope of glory,*” brings you under the reign of the Spirit of makes you so subject to the power of Christ and of God that fruit of the Spirit appears in you, instead of “the works of flesh.”

And the fruit of the Spirit is—

LOVE—the love of God which is shed abroad in the heart by the Spirit of God. And instead of hatred or any of its kin ever being allowed, even in thought, no man can possibly do anything that can cause you to do anything but love him. For this love, being the love of God, is “the same yesterday, and today, forever;” and loves not for reward, but for the mere sake of loving; it loves simply because it is love, and being only that, can not do any thing else.

JOY—is “ardent happiness arising from present or expected good.” But in this case, the alternative “or” is excluded; for this joy is ardent happiness arising from present AND expected good; for the cause of it is eternal. Accordingly, it is everlastingly present, and is everlastingly to be expected. And therefore, it is “exultant satisfaction.”

PEACE—perfect peace that rules in the heart—“the peace of God, which passeth all understanding,” and which “keeps the heart and mind” of him who has it.

LONG-SUFFERING, GENTLENESS, GOODNESS. FAITH—This faith—

pistis, Greek—is “firm persuasion; the conviction which is based upon trust, NOT upon knowledge (the faith of “the heart,” not of the head; the faith of Christ, not of the creed,): a firmly relying confidence cherished by conviction, and bidding defiance to opposing contradictions.”

MEEKNESS, TEMPERANCE.—Temperance is self-control. Thus, the Spirit of God delivers the man from subjection to his passions, lusts, and habits, and makes him a free man, master of himself.

“*Against such there is no law.*” The law of God is against nothing but sin. In human lives the law of God is against everything that is not the fruit of the Spirit of God. Therefore it is certain that everything in human life that is not the fruit of the Spirit of God, is sin. And this is but stating, in another way, the eternal truth that whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

Therefore “*if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*” And because we do live in the Spirit and walk in the Spirit, “*let us not*”—yea, we shall not; yea, we cannot— “*be desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another.*”

A.T. JONES (14)

Galatians 2:20 — October 24, 1899

“I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

It may not be amiss to emphasize what this scripture does say, by noting what it does not say.

It does not say, I want to be crucified with Christ. It does not say, I wish I were crucified with Christ that he might live in me. It does say, “*I am crucified with Christ.*”

Again: it does not say, Paul was crucified with Christ; Christ lived in Paul, and the Son of God loved Paul, and gave himself for Paul. All that is true; but that is not what the scripture says, nor is that what it means; for it means just what it says. And it does say, “*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave his life for me.*”

Thus this verse is a beautiful and solid foundation of Christian faith for every soul in the world. Thus it is made possible for every soul to say, in full assurance of Christian faith, “*He loved me.*” “*He gave himself for me.*” “*I am crucified with Christ.*” “*Christ liveth in me.*” Read also *1 John 4:15*.

For any soul to say, “*I am crucified with Christ*” is not speaking at a venture. It is not believing on a guess. It is not saying a thing of which there is no certainty. Every soul in this world can say, in all truth and all sincerity, “*I am crucified with Christ.*” It is but the acceptance of a fact, the acceptance of a thing that is already done, for this word is the statement of a fact.

It is a fact that Jesus Christ was crucified. And when he was crucified, we also were crucified; for he was one of us. His name is Immanuel, which is “*God with us*”—not God with him, but “*God with us.*” Then his name is not God with him, but “*God with us:*” and when God with him was not God with him, but God with us, then who was he but “*us?*” He had to be “*us*” in order that God with him could be not God with him, but “*God with us.*” And when he was crucified, then who was it but “*us*” that was crucified?

This is the mighty truth announced in this text. Jesus Christ was “*us.*” He was of the same flesh and blood with us. He was of our very nature. He was in all points like us. “*It behooved him to be made in all points like unto his brethren.*” He emptied himself, and was made in the likeness of men. He was “*the last Adam,*” and precisely as the first Adam was ourselves, so Christ, the last Adam, was ourselves. When the first Adam died, we being involved in him, died with him.

And when the last Adam was crucified,—he being ourselves and we being involved in him, —we were crucified with him. As the first Adam was in himself the whole human race, so the last Adam was in himself the whole human race; and so when the last Adam was crucified, the whole human race—the old, sinful, human nature—was crucified with him. And so it is written: “*Knowing this, that our old man is CRUCIFIED WITH HIM, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*”

Thus every soul in this world can truly say, in perfect triumph of Christian faith, “*I am crucified with Christ; my old sinful human nature is crucified with him, that this body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth I should not serve sin. Rom. 6:6. Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. Always bearing about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus,—the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, for I am crucified with him,—that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in my body. For I who live am always delivered unto death for Jesus sake that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in my mortal flesh. 2 Cor. 4:10, 11. And therefore the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

In this blessed fact of the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, which was accomplished for every human soul, there is not only laid the foundation of faith for every soul but in it there is given the gift of faith to every soul. And thus the cross of Christ is not only the wisdom of God displayed from God to us, but is the very power of God manifested to deliver us from all sin, and bring us to God.

O sinner, brother, sister, believe it, oh, receive it. Surrender to this mighty truth. Say it, say it in full assurance of faith, and say it forever. “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Say it; for it is the truth, the very truth and wisdom and power of God, which saves the soul from all sin.

A.T. JONES (15)

Galatians 3:6-9 — December 5, 1899

The Galatians and other Gentiles were justified by faith in Christ without circumcision. They thus became children of Abraham, because Abraham was justified by faith in Christ without circumcision. They thus became heirs also of the inheritance promised to Abraham, because Abraham received the promise of the inheritance by faith, without circumcision. Therefore, since they were children of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise to Abraham, and had the righteousness which fully entitles them to the inheritance,—all without circumcision,—and since in all this they were exactly as Abraham was, and were walking in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham which he had being yet uncircumcised, what possible need could there be of circumcision?

This is the answer that was made to the demands of the Pharisees who believed, who insisted that Gentiles who believe in Christ must be circumcised in order to be saved. This is the answer, in both Romans and Galatians, to the contention of the Pharisees who believed. This is the Christian argument.

But to this they came back with the question, What profit was there ever in circumcision? What was circumcision for? How did it ever come in? And why should it ever have come in? And they argued, even admitting that Abraham had all this before he was circumcised, and the Gentiles now coming in and finding it all by faith without circumcision, just as Abraham did, the fact is that after Abraham got it all by faith, he was circumcised. Then, admitting that these have it all by faith, as he got it, why should not these be circumcised after they have it by faith, just as Abraham was circumcised after he got it by faith? Thus, claimed the Pharisees, it is not enough to say that Abraham received this by faith without circumcision, and that the Gentiles have gone far enough when they have received it all without circumcision, as did Abraham; because, when Abraham had received it without circumcision, he was afterward circumcised. Then the Gentiles have not gone far enough in the way of Abraham unless they, having what Abraham had without circumcision, also, as did Abraham, go yet farther, and be circumcised.

This was the claim of the Pharisees who believed, and who went everywhere in opposition to the work of Paul, insisting that all the Gentiles who believe in Christ must be circumcised in order to be saved.

And this same question is raised, even to this day, by many persons. Even today there are large numbers of people who ask the question, Why should not Christians be circumcised, because surely Abraham was circumcised, and he is the father of all them that believe? So that, though the same contention is not still

carried on that was started by the Pharisees of Jerusalem in the days of the apostles, yet really the same query abides. And Romans and Galatians—Galatians particularly—is, even today, present truth; not only because of its insisting upon the everlasting truth that those who are justified by faith, as was Abraham, without circumcision are the children of Abraham, and heirs of the promise without circumcision.

Why, then, was Abraham circumcised after he received the righteousness and the promises, and yet his true children—his children by faith—now be not circumcised? The answer is: For the simple reason that circumcision was not in the original plan. It was no part, and is no part, of the original order of God in justification or salvation. The truth is that if Abraham had continued to walk in the faith in which he walked before he was circumcised, he never would have been circumcised, nor any of his children.

Why, then, was Abraham circumcised? It is important to know. And in order to know, it is important to look at the record in the Bible; for it is all there, and it is all plain. Notice, in Gen. 11:29-32 is the record of Abram's leaving his native country. Then Gen. 12:1 tells us that the Lord "had said" unto Abram, "*Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee.*" This shows that it was in obedience to the call of the Lord that Abram left his country, though his father's house and his kindred were with him in this. And it was at that time, when God "had said" to him thus, that God also showed that he would justify the heathen through faith; for then it was that he preached the gospel unto Abram, saying, "*In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*" Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:8.

After his father died, Abram came into the land of Canaan and then it was that "*the Lord appeared unto Abram and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land,*" Gen. 12:7. But Abram's kindred were yet with him; and though the Lord had now promised him the land, he had not yet showed it to him as he had said he would do, and he could not show it to him until he had become separated from his kindred as well as from his country and from his father's house. But in the thirteenth chapter, Lot and his people, the only kindred that were with him, did separate from him; and just then, "*after that Lot was separated from him,*" the Lord said unto Abram, "*Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever.*" And the land which Abram then saw, and which was then promised to him, included "*the world;*" for this promise was "*the promise, that he should be the heir of the world.*" Rom. 4:13.

Then in Genesis 15, Abram said to the Lord "*Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come*

forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.” Verses 3-6.

At the same time the Lord said to him: “*I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.*” And Abram asked, “*Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?*” In answer the Lord made a covenant with Abram,—a covenant of sacrifice—pledging his own life to the fulfillment of all that he had promised and spoken; for he told Abram to take “*an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon.*” And when Abram had divided them all in the midst except the birds, and had laid the pieces one against another upon the altar in sacrifice to God, and watched the sacrifices until the going down of the sun, then “*a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him,*” and “*when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.*” And “*the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land.*” *Gen. 12:7-18.*

Thus Abram had received the blessing of God, which was to make him a blessing to all nations; he had received the promise of the world for an inheritance; he had received the promise of the seed in whom all nations should be blessed; he had received the righteousness of God; and God had made his covenant with him, in which he pledged himself: and all this by faith alone, utterly without circumcision, and with no mention or even hint of circumcision, or of any necessity for it. Thus the Lord had given to Abram, and by faith Abram had received, all that the Lord has to give anybody, and all that anybody ever can receive. And it was, and is, altogether of faith, and faith alone—faith without works, without circumcision.

In the sixteenth chapter of Genesis, “*Sarai said unto Abram. Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.*” *Gen. 16:2.* Hagar conceived and bare Ishmael. And we know, from the other scriptures, that this whole arrangement was altogether a scheme of the flesh, springing wholly from distrust of the promise of God, springing from unbelief; and Abraham had to repudiate it all, and bear the fearful test of the offering of his only son Isaac, on Mount Moriah, before he recovered his true standing in faith alone. It was an effort of themselves to fulfil the promise of God, which, in the nature of things, God alone could fulfil. It was an effort of the flesh to do the works of the Spirit, and so was a lapse by Abram from the true faith and work of God, into unbelief and the plans of self and the works of the flesh. Then it

was that circumcision came in. And it was because of this that circumcision did come in. It was a mark made in the flesh as a reminder, a humiliating reminder, of Abram's resort to the flesh; and thus also a reminder that every one who bore it must not make the same mistake that Abram did, but must remain true to the faith and work of God.

Consequently, it is written: "*Circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the law, but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.*" And Abraham was "*the father of circumcision*" to them who are of the circumcision, when, and only when, they walked "*in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.*" Thus it was "a token that God had cut them out and separated them from all nations as his peculiar treasure."—**Spirit of Prophecy. Vol. 1, page 262** This must be so until the seed should come in the line of Abraham, in whom alone all these things can be fulfilled.

Thus it is perfectly plain that if Abraham had been faithful to that which he received from God by faith, he never would have been circumcised. And it is equally certain that when any one, receiving by faith in Christ alone, as Abraham received it, that which Abraham received, he needs not to be circumcised.

Since the Seed has come who is the giver of all the promises, who is the pledge of the covenant, who is the One from whom must come all that was promised to Abram, and which Abraham received by faith alone, then, whosoever believes in Him and walks by faith alone in him, as did Abram before he was circumcised, in the nature of things he needs not be circumcised. For the fruit of this faith was, in Abram, and is in every one who believes, the keeping of the commandments of God. Gen. 26:5; Gal. 6:1; Cor. 7:19. And so it is written: "If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision."—**Patriarchs and Prophets, page 364.**

And since the faith of Jesus brings to the believer in Jesus, and gives to the believer in Jesus, the perfect keeping of the law of God, the perfect righteousness of God, there is "no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision." And let all the people say, Amen.

This is the mighty truth that Paul saw. This is the mighty truth that Stephen saw. And though it is made so plain in the Scriptures, and is now so plain to us, yet to the carnally minded Jews and the formalistic "*Pharisees which believed,*" it seemed but the uprooting of all religion, and as fairly an attack upon the very foundations of the Throne.

A.T. JONES (16)

Galatians 3:18 — January 30, 1900

“For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise, but God gave it to Abraham by promise.”

The Greek words are “o nomos” “of law,” not “tou nomos” of signifying law in general rather than any particular law. Thus the inheritance, exactly as justification, is received by faith, and not at all by the works or deeds of any law.

It cannot possibly be otherwise, because the inheritance is the first and grand object in the call of Abraham. For, first of all, God said to Abram: “*Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee.*” *Gen. 12:1.* And in this ‘he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance; and when so called he “obeyed, and he went out not knowing whither he went.” *Heb. 11:8.*

And since this inheritance is altogether in the world to come, and includes the whole world to come, it is absolutely impossible for any one ever to obtain it by works. It was and is impossible for Abraham or any other man ever to work enough to earn it; and so, since the inheritance is so utterly beyond all possible reach of the works of any man, in the nature of things it must come only as the gift of God, and can be received by men only by faith, altogether as the gift of God.

And since the inheritance is the one great object in the call of Abraham, everything else that came from God to Abraham was only contributory to this great object; it was only to fit Abraham to enter upon and enjoy in all its fullness that wondrous inheritance which is the original and settled object of the call to him.

For instance, God said to Abraham: “*I will bless thee.*” This blessing is essential to entering upon the inheritance; for no one who is under the curse can possibly have any part in the inheritance. Therefore, to be relieved from the curse, and to be put under the blessing of God, is an essential to any one’s ever having any part in the inheritance. And this blessing upon Abraham, relieving him from the curse, and preparing him for the inheritance, was to be extended, through him, to all the families of the earth, that these also might be relieved of the curse and receive the blessing, and thus have a part in the grand inheritance.

Again, we have found that in the covenant with Abraham there was sacrifice and a priesthood—the Melchisedec priesthood. This also was essential to the entering upon the inheritance, because “all have sinned,” and “without shedding of blood is no remission. Therefore every one who will enter upon that grand inheritance must be absolutely cleansed and purified from all sin. But this can be done only by that great sacrifice which God made in the gift of his Son, and by

the ministration of that priest and priesthood of Christ unto which he was ordained by God alone, “*after the order of Melchisedec.*” Thus the sacrifice and service of the priesthood are also essential in behalf of every soul who shall enter into that inheritance, and are essential in order that He may enter into that inheritance.

Righteousness is essential to the entering upon that inheritance. It is an eternal inheritance; the righteousness, which alone can fit anyone to enter upon the inheritance, must be eternal righteousness. But the only righteousness that is eternal is the righteousness of God. To this no man can possibly attain by works, or anything that he can do. It is only the righteousness of God, and it can come to man only as the free gift of God, and can be received by man only by faith.

Again, as this inheritance is an eternal inheritance, whosoever enters upon it must have eternal life in order to possess it. But all have sinned and “*the wages of sin is death.*” How then can these who are subject only to death ever obtain eternal life by any works that they can do?—It simply cannot be done. This life, therefore, being eternal life, must come from him who is eternal—the only source of eternal life, which is God. It can, therefore, come to men in no conceivable way except as the gift of God, and can be received only by faith. And since only in the way of righteousness is life, only in the way of eternal righteousness can be eternal life. And these both being essential to entering upon the inheritance, every soul who will ever enter upon that inheritance must have these. And they can come only as the gift of God, received only by faith.

Thus the inheritance being the great and original object of the call of Abraham; that inheritance being altogether the gift of God; and it being impossible for man ever to have obtained it otherwise, it follows that everything that can help man unto that inheritance, and fit him for the inheritance, must also be altogether from God, as the gift of God, received by men only by faith. And since the blessing of God, the sacrifice and priesthood of Christ, eternal righteousness, and eternal life, are the essentials to receiving the inheritance; and since all these are utterly beyond any possible reach of man by anything that he can do, it follows that these all, in the nature of things, come as the gift of God, and are obtained by men only by faith in God.

And, thank the Lord, he has given all these:

He has given the blessing; for it written: “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ;*” and “*sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.*”

He has given his only begotten Son, the “*Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*” He has made him our great high priest, who “*ever liveth to make intercession*” for us. He has given his righteousness, the free gift of God “*unto all and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference. To every*

creature he has sent his gospel, wherein is “the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.”

He has given eternal life; for it is written: “*This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*” 1 John 5:11, 12. And the Son of God says: “*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*” John 5:24.

Therefore the inheritance cannot possibly be of law—of any kind of law, nor of all kinds of law,—for if the inheritance be of law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise. And everything that God ever gave or ordained after this promise, is, in the nature of things, contributory to the promise. And whoever would use anything God ever gave after the promise, at any time or in any way, without, in such use, holding the promise in view, frustrates every purpose of God in the giving of those things.

Therefore even though it had been a man’s covenant, yet, once confirmed, no man could disannul it nor add thereto. Much more, being God’s covenant, and being even doubly confirmed, it could not possibly be disannulled, neither could anything be added thereto. And since “*to Abraham and his seed were the promises made,*” and that seed “*is Christ;*” and since that covenant was confirmed before of God in Christ, anything that came afterward can not take the place of the covenant, neither can it be added to the covenant.

A.T. JONES (17)

Galatians 3:19 — February 6, 1900

It will be noticed that the word “serveth” is a supplied word. It really adds nothing to the sense. The question stands just as strong and just as plain to read. “Wherefore then the law?” Another translation is, “Why then the law?”

This was the ready argument of “*the Pharisees which believed*,” against all the gospel which was presented by Paul. And this, because the gospel presented justification by faith of Christ, and not by works of law. And wherever this was presented, “the Pharisees which believed,” who had no conception of justification in any other way than by works of law, raised this inquiry, “Wherefore then the law?” “What is the use of the law?” In their estimation, this objecting question was a sufficient refutation of all that might ever be said as to justification by faith, without any deeds of any law.

And, indeed, this same argument, in this same superior, self-assertive way, is used for this same purpose by “*the Pharisees which believe*” today. Let the claims of the law of God, precisely as God wrote it, be presented today in any part of this whole land, or even in any other land, and immediately professed ministers of the gospel will arise, all bristling with objections, and will oppose every claim of the law of God upon them, because it never could justify anybody.” They will single out, and search out, every expression they can find in the Scriptures, such as, “*By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified;*” and, “*Whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace,*” etc.; and with strong voice will ring forth and then vigorously demand, “What is the use of such a law? What is it good for? It can not justify anybody.”

The scene here described is perfectly familiar to thousands upon thousands of the readers of the REVIEW AND HERALD, and especially to the preachers of the gospel, in the Third Angel’s Message, which calls all people to the keeping of “the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

It is worthy of notice, however, that in the ancient days this objection was never raised by the Gentiles, but only by “*the Pharisees which believed*;” never by the plain, simple sinner, who knew that his works could not justify him, and who therefore longed for justification indeed; but only by those who professed to know God, and to know justification, but who knew only justification by their own works of law. And so it is even now.

Therefore, this inquiry— “Wherefore then the law?”— is present truth, and will be present truth forever. To a person whose conception of justification is altogether justification by works, such an inquiry, presented in objection, is a sufficient refutation of all the claims of the law of God; and no stronger proof

could ever be given by any one that his only conception of justification is altogether by works, than that he should raise against the law of God, this objecting inquiry, “Why then the law?” “What is the use of the law?” This because such an objection certifies that in his estimation, there can be no possible use for law of any kind unless it will justify a man, even the transgressor.

But every one who knows justification in truth, which is justification by faith, knows full well, and can see with perfect plainness, that there may be abundant use for law, altogether apart from any idea of justification by it. And thus there is a place for this question, in sober inquiry.

“Why then the law?” The answer is—

1. “By the law is the knowledge of sin:” “that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful,” in order that men, knowing the enormity of sin, may be able to appreciate the greatness of the salvation that God has sent in the gift of his Son.

Even so, it is said in another place. “The law entered, that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

2. When the sinner, having learned by the law the greatness of his sin, and having found in the Lord Jesus a salvation so great as to save him from all sin, and a righteousness so complete as to reign in him against all the power of sin, he still finds a second grand use for the law in its witnessing, in his behalf, to the righteousness of God, which he obtained without the law. And so, it is written: “*By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. “But now the righteousness of God WITHOUT THE LAW is manifested, being witnessed BY THE LAW and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference.”*

Such, and so far, is, wherefore then the law?

A.T. JONES (18)

Galatians 3:27-29 — May 1, 1900

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have “put on Christ.” The Greek word here translated “put on,” expresses the thought of putting on of clothes: “to be clothed in: have on to wear.” It well expresses the thought of baptism, as expressed elsewhere: of being buried, lost sight of: baptism being a burial in the water, so that the person baptized is overwhelmed, lost sight of, and shut away from the sight of the world.

Baptism in water is but the form in which is expressed the fact that the individual is buried, overwhelmed, clothed, and lost sight of, in Christ; so that instead of the old man being seen in the world and by the world, it is only Christ that is seen in the baptized individual.

The thought of this verse is expressed in another place: “*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.*” As you have put on Christ, and so are clothed in Christ, so wear him as your clothing, that you yourself may be hidden, and only Christ appear.

This is the truth expressed in baptism. Oh, that this truth were indeed always expressed in baptism. How many realize that baptism in the water is not itself the true baptism; but is only the outward expression of that which is the true baptism? For though a person be baptized, buried, overwhelmed, and lost sight of in the water—if that be all, then it is but nothing. For baptism consists not in the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God. 1 Peter 3:21. And a good conscience is found only in “*the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God.*” Heb. 9:14. When each soul, to be baptized in the water has already been, by faith, overwhelmed, clothed, and lost sight of, in Christ, and the baptism in the water is the expression of his faith which has clothed him indeed in Christ, then baptism will not only bear to Christians its true meaning, but will also bear to the world its true meaning.

“*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*” Among those who are Christians, there are neither racial, tribal, national, nor any other distinctions, for all are one in Christ Jesus. And, whoever among those professing to be Christians, there are seen any distinctions of any kind, by that very fact it is therein declared that among them Christ is not truly apprehended. Accordingly, the Revised Version brings out this very thought, that among those who have been baptized into Christ, and so have put on Christ, “*there can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female,*” for all are one in only Christ.

The thought is that, when the man has died, and has been buried—baptized—into Christ, overwhelmed, lost sight of, in Christ, he is forever taken away from himself, and is not himself any more if he was an American before, he is not an American now: he is a Christian. If he was a Scythian before, he is not a Scythian now: he is a Christian. If he was an African before, he is not “an African” now: he is a Christian. If he was a slave before, he is not a slave now: he is a Christian. So that among those who are truly Christ’s, who have put on Christ, and who are wearing Christ, all manner of racial, tribal, national, or whatsoever distinction, is utterly gone. There is no respect of persons with God, nor with those who are the children of God: it is only character that counts and that the character of Christ—the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ.

And thus, “*if ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise*”. For the promise is only to Abraham, and to his seed, which is Christ. Accordingly, that promise, that inheritance, could not possibly fall to any person but to Christ. For, “*he saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one. And to thy seed, which is Christ.*” Then, whosoever shall not be found with Christ, so that Christ is the individual who is seen, can never be heir to the inheritance nor receive the promise. And wherever among professed Christians there are divisions or dissensions, the promise of the inheritance is forfeited. Because the promise is not unto “seeds as of many, but as of one. And to thy seed, which is Christ;” and Christ is not divided. He is one, and only those who are one IN HIM, can possibly receive the inheritance.

A.T. JONES (19)

Galatians 4:1-7 — May 8, 1900

“Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and go vernors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: but when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

“God sent forth his Son,” “made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.” As we have seen abundantly, to be under the law is to be under the dominion of sin. And such are all men of themselves, because *“all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,”* and *“what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God.”*

Now, it is these people who are under sin: who are under the curse: who are condemned to death, because *“the wages of sin is death;”*—it was them whom God sent his son to redeem. And in order to redeem them, it behoved him to be made in all things *“like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.”* Heb. 2:17. *Therefore, that he might meet men just where men are and be a complete Deliverer, he himself came to men where they are, and was made like to men where they are. Therefore, he was even made to be sin.* 2 Cor. 5:21.

He took the place of the transgressor: he became flesh, just as is the transgressor: he was made to be sin, just as the transgressor is sin: he bore the sins of men, *“for the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”* He took the condemnation, because the sins of the transgressor were imputed to him. And, as to the transgressor himself, the consciousness of sin is accompanied with the consciousness of guilt and condemnation; so when these sins were imputed to him who knew no sin, it was the sin indeed, with its accompanying sense of guilt and condemnation. He bore the curse, for sin brings the curse; and he bore the curse even unto death, because sin brings the curse even unto death.

Thus, *“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.”* Thus he redeems them that are under the law. All the penalty, all the curse, all the wrath, all the condemnation that the law can work upon the transgressor met upon him. And, in the divine sacrifice which he thus made, there was rendered

all that the law can ever demand of the transgressor. So that everything that can possibly stand between the transgressor and God is swept away in the sacrifice of Christ.

In this, God has reconciled the world unto himself so completely that he cannot impute their trespasses unto them (2 Cor. 5:19); and thus is extended freedom—absolute freedom—to every soul in the wide world. And every soul can have it, to the full and to all eternity, merely by accepting it. And, in accepting this redemption from under the law, every soul receives “the adoption of sons:” for, “*as many as received him, to them gave the power (“the right, or privilege” margin) to become the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*” Gal. 3:26.

And then, being sons of God, and “*because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son then an heir of God through Christ.*”

Before this deliverance, we “*were in bondage under the elements of the world.*” The only elements of the world that there are, are the elements of sin; for “*all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.*” 1 John 2:16. But, when delivered into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, we “*have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear;*” but “*have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself*” bearing “*witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ: Romans 8:15-17.*”

“*Joint heirs with Christ.*” That is, all that he had falls also to each one of the other sons. The inheritance is not divided up in equal shares among all the sons, as if they were equal heirs. No; all the inheritance belongs to each one of the sons, because they are joint heirs. This because God has no favorites among his sons; but all that belongs to any one, belongs equally to every other one. Accordingly, all that falls to Christ the Son and heir falls also to each and every other son and heir. And this wonderful truth Jesus wants the world to know; for, in his great prayer for us all, he prayed, “*That the world may know that thou has sent me and has loved them, as thou has loved me.*” John 17:23.

And, this wonderful fact: that God has no favorite nor preference among his sons, but that all are equal, and, therefore, that each redeemed soul is, in his estimation, equal to Jesus, and takes his stand on a plane, and in the reward, equal in all things to Christ: it is this wonderful fact that caused John, in beholding it, to exclaim: “*Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. . . .*”

“*Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*” 1 John 3:1, 2.

Section

Three

Spirit of
Prophecy
Material

THE LAW & THE COVENANTS

Ellen G. White - Patriarchs & Prophets

Chapter 32

Adam and Eve, at their creation, had a knowledge of the law of God; they were acquainted with its claims upon them; its precepts were written upon their hearts. When man fell by transgression the law was not changed, but a remedial system was established to bring him back to obedience. The promise of a Saviour was given, and sacrificial offerings pointing forward to the death of Christ as the great sin offering were established. But had the law of God never been transgressed, there would have been no death, and no need of a Saviour; consequently there would have been no need of sacrifices.

Adam taught his descendants the law of God, and it was handed down from father to son through successive generations. But notwithstanding the gracious provision for man's redemption, there were few who accepted it and rendered obedience. By transgression the world became so vile that it was necessary to cleanse it by the Flood from its corruption. The law was preserved by Noah and his family, and Noah taught his descendants the Ten Commandments. As men again departed from God, the Lord chose Abraham, of whom He declared, "Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." *Genesis 26:5*. To him was given the rite of circumcision, which was a sign that those who received it were devoted to the service of God—a pledge that they would remain separate from idolatry, and would obey the law of God. The failure of Abraham's descendants to keep this pledge, as shown in their disposition to form alliances with the heathen and adopt their practices, was the cause of their sojourn and bondage in Egypt. But in their intercourse with idolaters, and their forced submission to the Egyptians, the divine precepts became still further corrupted with the vile and cruel teachings of heathenism. Therefore when the Lord brought them forth from Egypt, He came down upon Sinai, enshrouded in glory and surrounded by His angels, and in awful majesty spoke His law in the hearing of all the people.

He did not even then trust His precepts to the memory of a people who were prone to forget His requirements, but wrote them upon tables of stone. He would remove from Israel all possibility of mingling heathen traditions with His holy precepts, or of confounding His requirements with human ordinances or customs. But He did not stop with giving them the precepts of the Decalogue. The people had shown themselves so easily led astray that He would leave no door of temptation unguarded. Moses was commanded to write, as God should bid him,

judgments and laws giving minute instruction as to what was required. These directions relating to the duty of the people to God, to one another, and to the stranger were only the principles of the Ten Commandments amplified and given in a specific manner, that none need err. They were designed to guard the sacredness of the ten precepts engraved on the tables of stone.

If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign, they would never have been seduced into idolatry, nor would it have been necessary for them to suffer a life of bondage in Egypt; they would have kept God's law in mind, and there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai or engraved upon the tables of stone. And had the people practiced the principles of the Ten Commandments, there would have been no need of the additional directions given to Moses.

The sacrificial system, committed to Adam, was also perverted by his descendants. Superstition, idolatry, cruelty, and licentiousness corrupted the simple and significant service that God had appointed. Through long intercourse with idolaters the people of Israel had mingled many heathen customs with their worship; therefore the Lord gave them at Sinai definite instruction concerning the sacrificial service. After the completion of the tabernacle He communicated with Moses from the cloud of glory above the mercy seat, and gave him full directions concerning the system of offerings and the forms of worship to be maintained in the sanctuary. The ceremonial law was thus given to Moses, and by him written in a book. But the law of Ten Commandments spoken from Sinai had been written by God Himself on the tables of stone, and was sacredly preserved in the ark.

There are many who try to blend these two systems, using the texts that speak of the ceremonial law to prove that the moral law has been abolished; but this is a perversion of the Scriptures. The distinction between the two systems is broad and clear. The ceremonial system was made up of symbols pointing to Christ, to His sacrifice and His priesthood. This ritual law, with its sacrifices and ordinances, was to be performed by the Hebrews until type met antitype in the death of Christ, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Then all the sacrificial offerings were to cease. It is this law that Christ "took . . . out of the way, nailing it to His cross." *Colossians 2:14*. But concerning the law of Ten Commandments the psalmist declares, "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven." *Psalms 119:89*. And Christ Himself says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law. . . . Verily I say unto you"—making the assertion as emphatic as possible—"Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." *Matthew 5:17, 18*. Here He teaches, not merely what the claims of God's law had been, and were then, but that these claims should hold

as long as the heavens and the earth remain. The law of God is as immutable as His throne. It will maintain its claims upon mankind in all ages.

Concerning the law proclaimed from Sinai, Nehemiah says, “Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments.” *Nehemiah 9:13*. And Paul, “the apostle to the Gentiles,” declares, “The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” *Romans 7:12*. This can be no other than the Decalogue; for it is the law that says, “Thou shalt not covet.” Verse 7.

While the Saviour’s death brought to an end the law of types and shadows, it did not in the least detract from the obligation of the moral law. On the contrary, the very fact that it was necessary for Christ to die in order to atone for the transgression of that law, proves it to be immutable.

Those who claim that Christ came to abrogate the law of God and to do away with the Old Testament, speak of the Jewish age as one of darkness, and represent the religion of the Hebrews as consisting of mere forms and ceremonies. But this is an error. All through the pages of sacred history, where the dealings of God with His chosen people are recorded, there are burning traces of the great I Am. Never has He given to the sons of men more open manifestations of His power and glory than when He alone was acknowledged as Israel’s ruler, and gave the law to His people. Here was a scepter swayed by no human hand; and the stately goings forth of Israel’s invisible King were unspeakably grand and awful.

In all these revelations of the divine presence the glory of God was manifested through Christ. Not alone at the Saviour’s advent, but through all the ages after the Fall and the promise of redemption, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” *2 Corinthians 5:19*. Christ was the foundation and center of the sacrificial system in both the patriarchal and the Jewish age. Since the sin of our first parents there has been no direct communication between God and man. The Father has given the world into the hands of Christ, that through His mediatorial work He may redeem man and vindicate the authority and holiness of the law of God. All the communion between heaven and the fallen race has been through Christ. It was the Son of God that gave to our first parents the promise of redemption. It was He who revealed Himself to the patriarchs. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses understood the gospel. They looked for salvation through man’s Substitute and Surety. These holy men of old held communion with the Saviour who was to come to our world in human flesh; and some of them talked with Christ and heavenly angels face to face.

Christ was not only the leader of the Hebrews in the wilderness—the Angel in whom was the name of Jehovah, and who, veiled in the cloudy pillar, went before the host—but it was He who gave the law to Israel. Amid the awful glory of Sinai,

Christ declared in the hearing of all the people the ten precepts of His Father's law. It was He who gave to Moses the law engraved upon the tables of stone.

It was Christ that spoke to His people through the prophets. The apostle Peter, writing to the Christian church, says that the prophets "prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." *1 Peter 1:10, 11*. It is the voice of Christ that speaks to us through the Old Testament. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." *Revelation 19:10*.

In His teachings while personally among men Jesus directed the minds of the people to the Old Testament. He said to the Jews, "Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of Me." *John 5:39, R. V.* At this time the books of the Old Testament were the only part of the Bible in existence. Again the Son of God declared, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." And He added, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." *Luke 16:29, 31*.

The ceremonial law was given by Christ. Even after it was no longer to be observed, Paul presented it before the Jews in its true position and value, showing its place in the plan of redemption and its relation to the work of Christ; and the great apostle pronounces this law glorious, worthy of its divine Originator. The solemn service of the sanctuary typified the grand truths that were to be revealed through successive generations. The cloud of incense ascending with the prayers of Israel represents His righteousness that alone can make the sinner's prayer acceptable to God; the bleeding victim on the altar of sacrifice testified of a Redeemer to come; and from the holy of holies the visible token of the divine Presence shone forth. Thus through age after age of darkness and apostasy faith was kept alive in the hearts of men until the time came for the advent of the promised Messiah.

Jesus was the light of His people—the Light of the world—before He came to earth in the form of humanity. The first gleam of light that pierced the gloom in which sin had wrapped the world, came from Christ. And from Him has come every ray of heaven's brightness that has fallen upon the inhabitants of the earth. In the plan of redemption Christ is the Alpha and the Omega—the First and the Last.

Since the Saviour shed His blood for the remission of sins, and ascended to heaven "to appear in the presence of God for us" (*Hebrews 9:24*), light has been streaming from the cross of Calvary and from the holy places of the sanctuary above. But the clearer light granted us should not cause us to despise that which in earlier times was received through the types pointing to the coming Saviour. The gospel of Christ sheds light upon the Jewish economy and gives significance

to the ceremonial law. As new truths are revealed, and that which has been known from the beginning is brought into clearer light, the character and purposes of God are made manifest in His dealings with His chosen people. Every additional ray of light that we receive gives us a clearer understanding of the plan of redemption, which is the working out of the divine will in the salvation of man. We see new beauty and force in the inspired word, and we study its pages with a deeper and more absorbing interest.

The opinion is held by many that God placed a separating wall between the Hebrews and the outside world; that His care and love, withdrawn to a great extent from the rest of mankind, were centered upon Israel. But God did not design that His people should build up a wall of partition between themselves and their fellow men. The heart of Infinite Love was reaching out toward all the inhabitants of the earth. Though they had rejected Him, He was constantly seeking to reveal Himself to them and make them partakers of His love and grace. His blessing was granted to the chosen people, that they might bless others.

God called Abraham, and prospered and honored him; and the patriarch's fidelity was a light to the people in all the countries of his sojourn. Abraham did not shut himself away from the people around him. He maintained friendly relations with the kings of the surrounding nations, by some of whom he was treated with great respect; and his integrity and unselfishness, his valor and benevolence, were representing the character of God. In Mesopotamia, in Canaan, in Egypt, and even to the inhabitants of Sodom, the God of heaven was revealed through His representative.

So to the people of Egypt and of all the nations connected with that powerful kingdom, God manifested Himself through Joseph. Why did the Lord choose to exalt Joseph so highly among the Egyptians? He might have provided some other way for the accomplishment of His purposes toward the children of Jacob; but He desired to make Joseph a light, and He placed him in the palace of the king, that the heavenly illumination might extend far and near. By his wisdom and justice, by the purity and benevolence of his daily life, by his devotion to the interests of the people—and that people a nation of idolaters—Joseph was a representative of Christ. In their benefactor, to whom all Egypt turned with gratitude and praise, that heathen people were to behold the love of their Creator and Redeemer. So in Moses also God placed a light beside the throne of the earth's greatest kingdom, that all who would, might learn of the true and living God. And all this light was given to the Egyptians before the hand of God was stretched out over them in judgments.

In the deliverance of Israel from Egypt a knowledge of the power of God spread far and wide. The warlike people of the stronghold of Jericho trembled. "As soon as we had heard these things," said Rahab, "our hearts did melt, neither

did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for Jehovah your God, He is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.” *Joshua 2:11*. Centuries after the exodus the priests of the Philistines reminded their people of the plagues of Egypt, and warned them against resisting the God of Israel.

God called Israel, and blessed and exalted them, not that by obedience to His law they alone might receive His favor and become the exclusive recipients of His blessings, but in order to reveal Himself through them to all the inhabitants of the earth. It was for the accomplishment of this very purpose that He commanded them to keep themselves distinct from the idolatrous nations around them.

Idolatry and all the sins that followed in its train were abhorrent to God, and He commanded His people not to mingle with other nations, to “do after their works,” and forget God. He forbade their marriage with idolaters, lest their hearts should be led away from Him. It was just as necessary then as it is now that God’s people should be pure, “unspotted from the world.” They must keep themselves free from its spirit, because it is opposed to truth and righteousness. But God did not intend that His people, in self-righteous exclusiveness, should shut themselves away from the world, so that they could have no influence upon it.

Like their Master, the followers of Christ in every age were to be the light of the world. The Saviour said, “A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house”—that is, in the world. And He adds, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” *Matthew 5:14-16*. This is just what Enoch, and Noah, Abraham, Joseph, and Moses did. It is just what God designed that His people Israel should do.

It was their own evil heart of unbelief, controlled by Satan, that led them to hide their light, instead of shedding it upon surrounding peoples; it was that same bigoted spirit that caused them either to follow the iniquitous practices of the heathen or to shut themselves away in proud exclusiveness, as if God’s love and care were over them alone.

As the Bible presents two laws, one changeless and eternal, the other provisional and temporary, so there are two covenants. The covenant of grace was first made with man in Eden, when after the Fall there was given a divine promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head. To all men this covenant offered pardon and the assisting grace of God for future obedience through faith in Christ. It also promised them eternal life on condition of fidelity to God’s law. Thus the patriarchs received the hope of salvation.

This same covenant was renewed to Abraham in the promise, “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” *Genesis 22:18*. This promise pointed to Christ. So Abraham understood it (see *Galatians 3:8, 16*), and he trusted in Christ

for the forgiveness of sins. It was this faith that was accounted unto him for righteousness. The covenant with Abraham also maintained the authority of God's law. The Lord appeared unto Abraham, and said, "I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect." *Genesis 17:1*. The testimony of God concerning His faithful servant was, "Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." *Genesis 26:5*. And the Lord declared to him, "I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee." *Genesis 17:7*.

Though this covenant was made with Adam and renewed to Abraham, it could not be ratified until the death of Christ. It had existed by the promise of God since the first intimation of redemption had been given; it had been accepted by faith; yet when ratified by Christ, it is called a new covenant. The law of God was the basis of this covenant, which was simply an arrangement for bringing men again into harmony with the divine will, placing them where they could obey God's law.

Another compact—called in Scripture the "old" covenant—was formed between God and Israel at Sinai, and was then ratified by the blood of a sacrifice. The Abrahamic covenant was ratified by the blood of Christ, and it is called the "second," or "new," covenant, because the blood by which it was sealed was shed after the blood of the first covenant. That the new covenant was valid in the days of Abraham is evident from the fact that it was then confirmed both by the promise and by the oath of God—the "two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie." *Hebrews 6:18*.

But if the Abrahamic covenant contained the promise of redemption, why was another covenant formed at Sinai? In their bondage the people had to a great extent lost the knowledge of God and of the principles of the Abrahamic covenant. In delivering them from Egypt, God sought to reveal to them His power and His mercy, that they might be led to love and trust Him. He brought them down to the Red Sea—where, pursued by the Egyptians, escape seemed impossible—that they might realize their utter helplessness, their need of divine aid; and then He wrought deliverance for them. Thus they were filled with love and gratitude to God and with confidence in His power to help them. He had bound them to Himself as their deliverer from temporal bondage.

But there was a still greater truth to be impressed upon their minds. Living in the midst of idolatry and corruption, they had no true conception of the holiness of God, of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts, their utter inability, in themselves, to render obedience to God's law, and their need of a Saviour. All this they must be taught.

God brought them to Sinai; He manifested His glory; He gave them His law, with the promise of great blessings on condition of obedience: "If ye will obey

My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then . . . ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” *Exodus 19:5, 6*. The people did not realize the sinfulness of their own hearts, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God’s law; and they readily entered into covenant with God. Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, they declared, “All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.” *Exodus 24:7*. They had witnessed the proclamation of the law in awful majesty, and had trembled with terror before the mount; and yet only a few weeks passed before they broke their covenant with God, and bowed down to worship a graven image. They could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken; and now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Saviour revealed in the Abrahamic covenant and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. Now by faith and love they were bound to God as their deliverer from the bondage of sin. Now they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant.

The terms of the “old covenant” were, Obey and live: “If a man do, he shall even live in them” (*Ezekiel 20:11; Leviticus 18:5*); but “cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them.” *Deuteronomy 27:26*. The “new covenant” was established upon “better promises”—the promise of forgiveness of sins and of the grace of God to renew the heart and bring it into harmony with the principles of God’s law. “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 . . . I will forgive their iniquity, and will remember their sin no more.” *Jeremiah 31:33, 34*.

The same law that was engraved upon the tables of stone is written by the Holy Spirit upon the tables of the heart. Instead of going about to establish our own righteousness we accept the righteousness of Christ. His blood atones for our sins. His obedience is accepted for us. Then the heart renewed by the Holy Spirit will bring forth “the fruits of the Spirit.” Through the grace of Christ we shall live in obedience to the law of God written upon our hearts. Having the Spirit of Christ, we shall walk even as He walked. Through the prophet He declared of Himself, “I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart.” *Psalms 40:8*. And when among men He said, “The Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him.” *John 8:29*.

The apostle Paul clearly presents the relation between faith and the law under the new covenant. He says: “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.” “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh”—it could not justify man, because in his sinful nature he could not keep the law—“God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful

flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” *Romans 5:1, 3:31, 8:3, 4.*

God’s work is the same in all time, although there are different degrees of development and different manifestations of His power, to meet the wants of men in the different ages. Beginning with the first gospel promise, and coming down through the patriarchal and Jewish ages, and even to the present time, there has been a gradual unfolding of the purposes of God in the plan of redemption. The Saviour typified in the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law is the very same that is revealed in the gospel. The clouds that enveloped His divine form have rolled back; the mists and shades have disappeared; and Jesus, the world’s Redeemer, stands revealed. He who proclaimed the law from Sinai, and delivered to Moses the precepts of the ritual law, is the same that spoke the Sermon on the Mount. The great principles of love to God, which He set forth as the foundation of the law and the prophets, are only a reiteration of what He had spoken through Moses to the Hebrew people: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.” *Deuteronomy 6:4, 5.* “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” *Leviticus 19:18.* The teacher is the same in both dispensations. God’s claims are the same. The principles of His government are the same. For all proceed from Him “with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” *James 1:17.*

Section

Four

Perfect In
Christ

PERFECT IN CHRIST

Christian Character Perfection

The High Calling

*“I press toward the **mark** for the prize of the **high calling** of God in Christ Jesus.” Paul (Phil. 3:14).*

What is the **mark of the high calling** of God in Christ Jesus?

*“Till we all come in unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a **perfect man**, unto the **measure** of the **stature** of the **fullness** of Christ.” Paul (Eph. 4:13).*

Read also *Matt. 5:48; Col. 1:27,28; 2 Cor. 13:5-9; Eph. 3:16-19; 4:11-15; John 15:4,5; Eph. 2:8-10.*

God’s **ideal** for His children is that they reach the **mark**.

“God’s ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. ‘Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.’ This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates our **complete** recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning.

“The tempter’s agency is not to be accounted an excuse for one wrong act. Satan is jubilant when he hears the professed followers of Christ making excuses for their deformity of character. It is these excuses that lead to sin. There is no excuse for sinning. A holy temper, a Christlike life, is accessible to every repenting, believing child of God.

The ideal of Christian character is Christlikeness. As the Son of man was perfect in His life, so His followers are to be perfect in their life. Jesus was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of man; yet He was the blameless Son of God. He was God in the flesh. His character is to be ours. The Lord says of those who believe in Him ‘I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.’ *2Cor.6:16.*

Christ is the ladder that Jacob saw, the base resting on the earth, and the topmost round reaching to the gate of heaven, to the very threshold of glory. If that ladder had failed by a single step of reaching the earth, we should have been lost. But Christ reaches us where we are. He took our nature and overcame, that we through taking His nature might overcome. Made 'in the likeness of sinful flesh' (*Rom. 8:3*), He lived a sinless life. Now by His divinity He lays hold upon the throne of heaven, while by His humanity He reaches us. He bids us by faith in Him attain to the glory of the character of God. Therefore are we to be perfect, even as our 'Father which is in heaven is perfect.'" **D.A. 311, 312.**

It is one of Satan's charges (against God's government) that we cannot overcome.

"Satan represents God's law of love as a law of selfishness. He declares that it is impossible for us to obey its precepts." **D.A. 24.**

Therefore the honor of God is at stake in the answering of this particular charge.

"In describing to His disciples the office work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus sought to inspire them with the joy and hope that inspired His own heart. He rejoiced because of the abundant help He had provided for His church. The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church.

Of the Spirit Jesus said, 'He shall glorify Me.' The Saviour came to glorify the Father by the demonstration of His love; so the Spirit was to glorify Christ by revealing His grace to the world. The very image of God is to be reproduced in humanity. **The honor of God, the honor of Christ, is involved in the perfection of the character of His people."**
D.A. 671.

The Two Distinct but Inseparable Aspects of Righteousness by Faith

According to scripture the believer abides in Christ and Christ dwells in the believer's heart, through the Holy Spirit, by faith. The two distinct aspects of righteousness by faith are:

- (1) The believer **abiding in** Christ (you in Christ), and
- (2) Christ **in** the believer (Christ in you.)

So long as the believer **abides in** Christ, Christ **dwells in** the believer.

So long as you are **in** Christ, Christ is **in** you.

Read carefully *Rom. 8:1-14; 2 Cor. 13:5; Eph. 3:17; John 15:4, 5; 1 John 3:6; Eph. 2:4-13.*

Now we come to some very important facts about being in Christ.

The Believer Abiding in Christ

In Christ there is **no** condemnation because the believer is **covered** with the righteousness of Christ. And **so long as** the believer **abides in** Christ he **continues** to be **covered** with the **righteousness** of Christ. *Romans 8:1; Philippians. 3:7-9.*

In Christ the believer is a **new** creation, *2 Cor. 5:17*; and in *Christ* the believer has a **perfect** standing before God. *Col. 1:28.*

Our **standing** before God, both **initially** and at the **end**, depends **entirely** upon the **righteousness** and **sacrifice** of Christ **covering us**, and being **put** to our **account!** *Rev. 16:15; Rev. 3:18.*

Christ **obeyed perfectly** for us. *John 15:10; Rom. 5:18, 19.*

He **overcame completely** for us. *Rev. 3:21.*

He lived a **perfectly sinless** life for us. *1 Peter 2:22.*

He **died** the **second** death for us. *1 Cor. 15:3.*

He **suffered** the **full** penalty of sin for us. *1 Peter 2:21; Isa. 53:4-12.*

He **paid the price** for **every** human soul. *1 Peter 1:18, 19.*

He **fully satisfied** Divine Justice for us. *2 Cor. 5:21.* And now, as our High Priest in the Heavenly Sanctuary, He presents to the Father His own spotless character on our behalf and for us.

The law of God demands perfect obedience (that is, **life-long** perfection) and the broken law demands the **second** death. Jesus obeyed **for us** and He died **for us**. And God the Father accepts Christ's obedience and Christ's sacrifice **in the place** of our sinfulness.

Jesus therefore presents us to His Father **clothed** with His righteousness, **covered** with His atoning sacrifice, and **complete** in Himself. And the Father accepts us **in** Him! In Him we are accounted **perfect**.

This then is the *primary* meaning of the term “*perfect in Christ*.” Before we go on to the *secondary* meaning, let us carefully consider these quotations from the Spirit of Prophecy:

“Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law. We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. But Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness. If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Savior, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ’s character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned.” (S.C. 62).

“The only way in which he [the sinner] can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner’s account. Christ’s righteousness is accepted in place of man’s failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul treats him as though he were righteous and loves him as He loves His Son. This is how faith is accounted righteousness; and the pardoned soul goes on from grace to grace, from light to a greater light.” (1S.M. 367).

“The moment the sinner believes in Christ, he stands in the sight of God uncondemned; for the righteousness of Christ is his: Christ’s perfect obedience is imputed to him.” (C. E. 429).

Jesus says:

“I will be your representative in heaven. The Father beholds not your faulty character, but He sees you as clothed in My perfection. I am the medium through which Heaven’s blessings shall come to you. And everyone who confesses Me by sharing My sacrifice for the lost shall be confessed as a sharer in the glory and joy of the redeemed.” (D. A. 357).

“You are powerless to do good, and cannot better your condition. Apart from Christ we have no merit, no righteousness. Our sinfulness, our weakness, our human imperfection makes it impossible that we should appear before God unless we are *clothed* in Christ’s spotless righteousness. We are to be found in Him not having our own righteousness, but the righteousness which is in Christ.” (1S.M. 333).

“The provision made is complete, and the eternal righteousness of Christ is placed to the account of every believing soul. The costly, spotless robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has been provided for the repenting, believing sinner... *In ourselves we are sinners; but in Christ we are righteous.* Having made us righteous through the imputed righteousness of Christ, God pronounces us just, and treats us as just. He looks upon us as His dear children.” (1S.M. 394).

“By His spotless life, His obedience, His death on the cross of Calvary, Christ interceded for the lost race. And now, not as a mere petitioner does the Captain of our salvation intercede for us, but as a Conqueror claiming His victory. His offering is complete, and as our Intercessor He executes His self-appointed work, holding before God the censer containing His own spotless merits and the prayers, confessions, and thanksgiving of His people. Perfumed with the fragrance of His righteousness, these ascend to God as a sweet savor. The offering is wholly acceptable, and pardon covers all transgression.” (C.O.L. 156).

“Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided can make us meet to appear in God’s presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul.” (C.O.L. 311).

“Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His.” (D. A. 25).

“Jesus stands in the holy of holies, now to appear in the presence of God for us. There He ceases not to present His people moment by moment, complete in Himself... We are complete in Him, accepted in the Beloved, only as we abide in Him by faith.” (F.W. 107).

And what is meant by *abiding in Him* by faith? Abiding *in Christ* by faith means *trusting* Him, *believing* His word, fixing our *affections* upon Him, *surrendering* selffully to Him and having full *confidence* in Him to *save* us from *all* sin.

The abiding relationship is a relationship of *trust, surrender and communion*. We *trust* Him and *believe* the Good News that He has obeyed for us and died for us; that God accepts us in Christ.

We must **surrender** to Him thereby giving ourselves fully to Him and **depending entirely** on Him to save us. We must **claim** his forgiveness and **believe** that He forgives us.

And we must allow God to keep us in the relationship of **trust** and **surrender** by continuous **communion** through **prayer** and **study** of His word.

So we understand what **abiding in Christ** means. Remember that His perfect righteousness and infinite sacrifice will only cover us as we **abide in Him**. This brings us to the second aspect of righteousness by faith: **Christ in the believer**.

Christ in the Believer: Transformation of Character Unto Perfection

We have already learned that so long as the believer **abides in Christ** the righteousness of Christ covers the believer. Now we come to the other inseparable aspect. The righteousness which covers the believer also fills the believer's soul thereby progressively transforming his character unto Christlikeness or perfection of Christian character.

So long as the believer abides in Christ **the righteousness** of Christ covers the believer, and the **same** righteousness which covers the believer **fills** his soul and gives **progressive victory over every defect** thereby transforming the character unto Christlikeness.

So long as the believer abides in Christ the righteousness of Christ covers the believer and this is his **title** to Heaven. And the righteousness which **covers** him as his **title** to heaven, **fills** him and **transforms** him thereby **making** his character righteous, and this is his fitness for heaven.

"The proud heart strives to earn salvation; but both **our title** to heaven and **our fitness** for it are found in the righteousness of Christ." **D.A. 300.**

The same **righteousness** of Christ which **entitles** us to Heaven by **covering** us, fits us for heaven by **transforming** us, making us **Christlike** in character!

The righteousness of Christ cannot cover us without transforming us neither can it transform us without covering us. Therefore Jesus says to us:

"Abide in Me, and I in you." John 15:2.

"He that abideth in Me and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing." John 15:5.

There are some professed Christians who **only or mainly** emphasize Christ's righteousness as our **covering** while either rejecting or **limiting** the infilling and transforming aspect. Such persons believe that perfection of character can never be an **actual experience** before the Second Coming of Christ. To them perfection means only to be **covered** with Christ's righteousness.

Then there are others who **only or mainly** emphasize the character transformation while either rejecting or minimizing the aspect of Christ's righteousness

covering the believer. Such persons tend to believe that our standing before God depends upon our performance.

But in this study we believe that we are presenting the accurate and complete *balance* to this wonderful truth of righteousness by faith.

The righteousness of Christ must cover us as *our title*, and fill us as *our fitness*.

Both aspects, though *distinct*, are *inseparable* and *necessary*.

Those believers who die before *experiencing* character perfection (the majority) will have that work performed for them by our High Priest in the Pre-Advent Judgment. So long as they died in Christ His character is imputed and imparted to them through His work of intercession and judgment for them.

But the word of God is most definitely clear that God will have a final generation of believers who will reach the mark of *experiencing* Christian character perfection *while alive* on this earth *before* the closure of probation. It will be the righteousness of Christ fully reproduced in them giving them full victory over all sins. *Matt. 5:48; Rev. 3:21.*

Perfectionism: The Satanic Counterfeit to Character Perfection

Perfectionism is a false doctrine and a false experience in which the deluded person bases his acceptance with God upon his own performance and is fully conscious of his assumed perfection. Such a person boasts about his “holiness” and compares himself with others. The faults he sees in them are the reasons for his thinking he is so much better than others. Such persons usually claim that they are holy and they itemize proudly their good deeds.

In contrast, *true* Christian character perfection is characterized by *humility*, by depending *entirely* on the *covering* of Christ’s righteousness and by being *unconscious* of the imparted perfection because the mind is fixed upon Christ and what He has done rather than upon self and its performance.

“He who bears with him a continual sense of the presence of Christ cannot indulge in self-confidence or self-righteousness. None of the prophets or apostles made proud boasts of holiness. The nearer they came to perfection of character, the less worthy and righteous they viewed themselves. But those who have the least sense of the perfection of Jesus, those whose eyes are least directed to Him are the ones who make the strongest claim to perfection.” (F.W. 54).

“We may always be startled and indignant when we hear a poor, fallen mortal exclaiming, ‘I am holy; I am sinless!’ Not one soul to whom God has granted the wonderful view of His greatness and majesty has ever uttered one word like this. On the contrary, they have felt like sinking down in the deepest humiliation of soul, as they have viewed the purity of God, and contrasted with it their own imperfections of life and character... When the Spirit of Christ stirs the heart with its marvelous awakening power, there is a sense of deficiency in the soul, that leads to contrition of mind, and humiliation of self, rather than to proud boasting of what has been acquired.” (**R.H. Oct. 16, 1888**).

“Those who experience the sanctification of the Bible will manifest a spirit of humility. Like Moses, they have had a view of the awful majesty of holiness, and they see their own unworthiness in contrast with the purity and exalted perfection of the Infinite One.

“The prophet Daniel was an example of true sanctification. His long life was filled up with noble service for his Master. He was a man ‘greatly beloved’ (*Dan. 10:11*) of Heaven. Yet instead of claiming to be pure and holy, this honored prophet identified himself with the really sinful of Israel as he pleaded before God in behalf of his people: ‘We do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.’ ‘We have sinned, we have done wickedly,’ he declares: ‘I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people.’ And when at a later time the Son of God appeared, to give him instruction, Daniel says: ‘My comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.’ (*Dan. 9:18, 15, 20; 10:8*.)” (**G.C. 470, 471**).

“If we,’ says John, not separating himself from his brethren, ‘say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.’ (*1 John 1:8*) (**The Acts of the Apostles, p. 562**). Enoch was a man of strong and highly cultivated mind and extensive knowledge; he was honored with special revelations from God; yet being in constant communion with Heaven, with a sense of the divine greatness and perfection ever before him, he was one of the humblest of men. The closer the connection with God, the deeper was the sense of his own weakness and imperfection (**Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 85**).

“No man can look within himself and find anything in his character that will recommend him to God, or make his acceptance sure. It is only through Jesus, whom the Father gave for the life of the world, that the sinner may find access to God. Jesus alone is our Redeemer, our Advocate and Mediator; in Him is our only hope for pardon, peace and righteousness.” (**Selected Messages, Book 1, pp. 332, 333**).

“Before the believer is held out the wonderful possibility of being like Christ, obedient to all the principles of the law. But of himself man is utterly unable to reach this condition. The holiness that God’s Word declares he must have before he can be saved is the result of the working of divine grace as he bows in submission to the discipline and restraining influences of the Spirit of truth. Man’s obedience can be made perfect only by the incense of Christ’s righteousness, which fills with divine fragrance every act of obedience.” (**A.A. 532**).

“When the servant of God is permitted to behold the glory of the God of heaven, as He is unveiled to humanity, and realizes to a slight degree the purity of the Holy One of Israel, he will make startling confessions of *the pollution of his soul*, rather than proud boasts of his holiness.

One ray of the glory of God, one gleam of the purity of Christ, penetrating the soul, makes every spot of defilement painfully distinct, and lays bare the deformity and defects of the human character” (**Ellen G. White, in Review and Herald, Oct.16, 1888**: italics supplied).

“At every advance step in Christian experience our repentance will deepen. It is to those whom the Lord has forgiven, to those whom He acknowledges as His people, that He says, Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight.’ (Eze. 36:31)...Then our lips will not be opened in self-glorification. We shall know that our sufficiency is in Christ alone. We shall make the apostle’s confession our own. ‘I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing.’ (*Rom. 7:18*)” (**C.O.L. 160, 161**).

‘Those who are really seeking to perfect Christian character will never indulge the thought that they are sinless. Their lives maybe irreproachable, they may be living representatives of the truth which they have accepted; but the more they discipline their minds to dwell upon the

character of Christ, and the nearer they approach to His divine image, the more clearly will they discern its spotless perfection, and the more deeply will they feel their own defects.” (**The Sanctified Life**, p.7; italics supplied).

The Importance of Victory Over Defects

Our standing before God depends *entirely* upon the *righteousness and sacrifice* of Christ *covering* us, being put to our account.

But Christ’s righteousness will only cover us if we abide in Him to the end. And for the final generation of living saints the end means the close of probation after the great final test.

Every test and attack by Satan is aimed at *causing us to stop* abiding in Christ because he knows that *out* of Christ we are lost sinners. And at the great final test at the end of the “Loud Cry” period when probation will be closing Satan will attack God’s people severely in his last desperate attempt to get them to stop abiding in Christ. He will know only too well that if he gets any one of them at that point in time he will have that one for keeps.

Now comes an important question; Upon what will Satan be depending to get the people of God to succumb to his final attacks?

The answer: defects of character!

“Through defects in the character, Satan works to gain control of the whole mind, and he knows that if these defects are cherished, he will succeed. Therefore he is constantly seeking to deceive the followers of Christ with his fatal sophistry that it is impossible for them to overcome.”

G.C. 489.

Satan’s formula is this: his attacks from the outside combined with our defects of character on the inside will cause us to stop abiding in Christ. Therefore, he attacks us with progressively increasing pressure.

In the *final* crisis he will be attacking with the *final* pressure. A pressure which if it found any defects in the soul would cause the believer to give in and to stop abiding in Christ.

Therefore by the time the great final test comes at the close of probation every character defect will have been cleansed out or else the believer will be overcome!

God’s formula for victory is this: By abiding in Christ unto the end, His righteousness covers us while it fills us and transforms us giving us victory over every defect! And by the close of probation God’s faithful final generation of believers will be perfected in character. They will be perfect in Christ in both of the aspects dealt with before. **Firstly**: Christ’s perfection will cover them making them acceptable to the Father. **Secondly**: Christ’s righteousness will have filled

and cleansed them giving them victory over the assaults of Satan and making them fit for heaven!

Can the Love and Righteousness of Christ Give Complete Victory Over Sin?

The word of God answers yes! Read *2Cor. 10:4, 5; Rev. 3:21; 1Peter 4:1, 2; 1John 3:6; Rom., chapter 6!*

“The Saviour was deeply anxious for His disciples to understand for what purpose His divinity was united to humanity. He came to the world to display the glory of God, that man might be uplifted by its restoring power. God was manifested in Him that He might be manifest in them. Jesus revealed no qualities, and exercised no powers, that men may not have through faith in Him. His perfect humanity is that which all His followers may possess, if they will be in subjection to God as He was.”

D.A. 664.

“All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us.” **D.A. 668.**

The Final Remnant Will Be Sinless in Character at Probation’s Closure

According to *Rev. 22:11, 12* when probation closes there will be but *two* classes of people; those who are *righteous* and those who are *not righteous*.

The remnant people of God will have been purified from sin.

“Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort they must be conquerors in the battle with evil.” **G.C. 425.**

“We are preparing to meet Him who, escorted by a retinue of holy angels, is to appear in the clouds of heaven to give the faithful and the just the finishing touch of immortality. When He comes He is not to cleanse us of our sins, to remove from us the defects in our characters, or to cure us of the infirmities of our tempers and dispositions. If wrought for us at all, this work will all be accomplished before that time. When the Lord comes, those who are holy will be holy still. Those who have preserved their bodies and spirits in holiness, in sanctification and honor, will then receive the finishing touch of immortality. But those who are unjust, unsanctified, and filthy will remain so forever. No work will then be done for them to remove their defects and give them holy characters. The Refiner does not then sit to pursue His refining process and remove their sins and their corruption. This is all to be done in these hours of probation. It is now that this work is to be accomplished for us.” **Testimonies 2:355.**

Thus it is made very clear and plain that the righteous will have become truly and fully righteous and will have no sin in them, or on them, whatsoever during this period. But while this will be true in fact, it will not be known to them. Instead, they will be distressed by the terrible fear that there is still some hidden root of evil still within them during this time of fearful trouble.

If they could know that probation has ended, then they might resign themselves to whatever their fate might turn out to be, but they will not know that probation has closed; they will not know that their eternity is sealed to them, and, because they do expect that the end will come very soon, they will fear that it will come upon them while they are unprepared to stand sinless without a mediator through those final and trying scenes.

A truly sinless person is a truly selfless person. A selfless person is one whose concern is not for a moment in regard to himself and what will happen to him, but he is concerned only for the cause for which he is responsible, in part or in whole, as the case may be. The believers will be, therefore a selfless people during the time of Jacob’s trouble, so the fear and the trouble which they experience will not be on any account of concern for themselves, but rather for the Lord with whose cause they are concerned.

The remnant will have to live by faith alone. There will be no conscious boasting of holiness or self confidence. The remnant will put their confidence only in Christ’s righteousness and blood. They will fully reflect the humility of Christ and will have their eyes so fixed on Him that they will not be conscious of their character perfection.

Let us close with this account of the ordeal of the remnant just before, at, and after the close of probation:

“As Satan influenced Esau to march against Jacob, so he will stir up the wicked to destroy God’s people in the time of trouble. And as he accused Jacob, he will urge his accusations against the people of God. He numbers the world as his subjects; but the little company who keep the commandments of God are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. He sees that holy angels are guarding them, and he infers that their sins have been pardoned; but he does not know that their cases have been decided in the sanctuary above. He has an accurate knowledge of the sins which he has tempted them to commit, and he presents these before God in the most exaggerated light, representing this people to be just as deserving as himself of exclusion from the favor of God. He declares that the Lord cannot in justice forgive their sins and yet destroy him and his angels. He claims them as his prey and demands that they be given into his hands to destroy.

“As Satan accuses the people of God on account of their sins, the Lord permits him to try them to the uttermost. Their confidence in God, their faith and firmness, will be severely tested. As they review the past, their hopes sink; for in their whole lives they can see little good. They are fully conscious of their weakness and unworthiness. Satan endeavors to terrify them with the thought that their cases are hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes so to destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations and turn from their allegiance to God.

“Though God’s people will be surrounded by enemies who are bent upon their destruction, yet the anguish which they suffer is not a dread of persecution for the truth’s sake; they fear that every sin has not been repented of, and that through some fault in themselves they will fail to realize the fulfillment of the Saviour’s promise: I ‘will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world.’ *Rev. 3:10*. If they could have the assurance of pardon they would not shrink from torture of death; but should they prove unworthy, and lose their lives because of their own defects of character, then God’s holy name would be reproached.

“On every hand they hear the plottings of treason and see the active working of rebellion; and there is aroused within them an intense desire, an earnest yearning of the soul, that this great apostasy may be terminated and the wickedness of the wicked may come to an end. But while

they plead with God to stay the work of rebellion, it is with a keen sense of self-reproach that they themselves have no more power to resist and urge back the mighty tide of evil. They feel that had they always employed all their ability in the service of Christ, going forward from strength to strength, Satan's forces would have less power to prevail against them.

“They afflict their souls before God, pointing to their past repentance of their many sins, and pleading the Saviour's promise: ‘Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me.’ *Isa. 27:5*. Their faith does not fail because their prayers are not immediately answered. Though suffering the keenest anxiety, terror, and distress, they do not cease their intercessions. They lay hold of the strength of God as Jacob laid hold of the Angel; and the language of their souls is: ‘I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.’

“Had not Jacob previously repented of his sin in obtaining the birthright by fraud, God would not have heard his prayer and mercifully preserved his life. So, in the time of trouble, if the people of God had unconfessed sins to appear before them while tortured with fear and anguish, they would be overwhelmed; despair would cut off their faith, and they could not have confidence to plead with God for deliverance. But while they have a deep sense of their unworthiness, they have no concealed wrongs to reveal. Their sins have gone beforehand to judgment and have been blotted out, and they cannot bring them to remembrance.” **Great Controversy, 618-620.**

Section

Five

Appendices

BIBLE STUDY SEVEN

The Powerful Message of the Two Covenants

(No. 7 of 10 Bible Studies by the 1888 Message Study Committee)

The 1888 View of the Two Covenants

A Historical & Doctrinal Review by the 1888 Message Study Committee

BIBLE STUDY SEVEN

The Powerful Message of the Two Covenants

(No. 7 of 10 Bible Studies by the 1888 Message Study Committee)

A. Introduction

One of the most important of the 1888 message essentials was Jones' and Waggoner's view of the two covenants. It has within it an effective evangelism appeal that God intended should characterize the Revelation 18 loud cry of "the everlasting gospel." Unfortunately, within 20 years of the Minneapolis Conference, the opposers' view prevailed in the denomination, with the result that to this day confusion and spiritual apathy continue. Children and youth in Sabbath School and the Path finders Club are especially affected by a "Gospel" that embodies old covenant motifs. In 1890 Ellen White was shown in vision that Waggoner's view was correct and that the brethren were wasting their time trying to oppose it.⁽¹⁾ A world church cannot understand the truth of the new covenant and also remain lukewarm.

B. The Bible Evidence

Ex. 19:4-8.

The old covenant was initiated by the people at Mt. Sinai, established on their promise to obey God's commandments.⁽²⁾

Heb. 8:6, 7.

The new covenant is established on "better promises," that is, God's.

Ex. 32:7, 8.

The people could not keep their promise to obey. Even today, they cannot.

Gal. 4:24.

The old covenant is not merely a minor mistake; it produces slavery to spiritual discouragement, and thus to failures.⁽³⁾

Ex. 19:5.

The Hebrew word translated “obey My voice” means “listen to My voice” (shamea), and the Hebrew word translated “keep My covenant” means “cherish My covenant” (shamar).⁽⁴⁾ While human covenants are indeed “mutual agreements” or contracts, God’s covenant is always a one-sided promise on His part, for He knows we cannot keep our promises. “Cherish My covenant” therefore meant “Cherish My promise to Abraham.”⁽⁵⁾

Gal. 3:17;. Rom. 4:13

God’s “covenant” is His unilateral “promise.”⁽⁶⁾ 2 Chron. 36:14-17. The tragic failures of old covenant theology led to the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem, and the captivity of Judah.⁽⁷⁾ Gen. 12:1-3. Heb. 13:20, 21. The new covenant was God’s seven-fold promise to Abraham and to his descendants “in Isaac.”

Gen. 13:14-17; Gen. 15:4, 5

The promises were repeated and amplified. Never did God ask Abraham to promise anything in return.

Gen. 15:8-18.

With a solemn bloody oath God pledged His existence and His throne on His fulfillment of those promises.⁽⁸⁾

Heb. 9:1.

The Levitical sanctuary services were old covenant in nature. Jer. 7:22; Amos 5:21-26. God “hated” the sacrifices offered in an old covenant spirit.

Ex. 25:8.

As a consequence of the people’s old covenant promise at Sinai, the Lord had to “dwell among them,” rather than where He wanted to “dwell,” that is, in their hearts, as with their “father” Abraham.

2 Kings 18:4.

Due to old covenant encouragement to idolatry, Hezekiah had to destroy Moses' bronze serpent.⁽⁹⁾

Rev. 3:16, 17

A basic problem in the remnant church is old covenant spiritual pride and idolatry, and arrogance.⁽¹⁰⁾

Isa. 50:4, 5; Luke 19:10

The old covenant idea of "righteousness by faith" majors in our initiating and maintaining a "relationship" with Jesus; the new covenant demonstrates that He is initiating and maintaining a relationship with us, which will succeed if we do not resist Him by hard-hearted unbelief.⁽¹¹⁾

2 Cor. 5:14, 15.

The faith that "justified" Abraham was his believing God's new covenant promises. Thus the faith that works in "righteousness by faith" is a heart appreciation of God's new covenant promise to the individual believer today: the promise of the new earth as an "everlasting possession" requires Him to make the believer righteous, for in "the new heavens and new earth dwelleth [only] righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13).

Isa. 41:10, 13.

Salvation does not depend on us holding on to God's hand; but upon our believing that He is holding on to our hand. The former is old covenant in nature; the latter is new.

Heb. 8:6-8. *The cleansing of the sanctuary, the latter rain, the loud cry, the finishing of the gospel commission, embody the ultimate fulfillment of God's new covenant promises.*

Heb. 8:10.

When "the house of David [and] the inhabitants of Jerusalem" in Laodicea understand their corporate involvement in the crucifixion of Christ, God's law will be written in their hearts and minds (see Zech. 12:10; 13:1).

C. Summary

Old covenant “righteousness by faith” has us taking the initiative to promise God to be faithful and keep our promises. It is essentially the “faith-plus-works” brand of the gospel. The new covenant has God more actively involved in our salvation, initiating the entire process (“from first to last this has been the work of God,” *2 Cor. 5:18, NEB*), so that the only reason one can be lost is his own personal unbelief and resistance and rejection. Old covenant Adventists fear the new covenant message lest it lower standards of law-obedience, unmindful that only “agape is the fulfilling of the law,” and that all egocentric motivation produces either lukewarmness or eventual falling-away (*Rom. 13:10*; only “agape never faileth,” *1 Cor. 13:8*).

D. Conclusion

The truth of the two covenants is part of the “latter rain” message that would have prepared the church to proclaim the loud cry message to lighten the earth with glory. It is impossible for the “grain” in the harvest” to “ripen” if this greater Good News concept is absent. The Seventh-day Adventist Church desperately needs a clear revival and proclamation of this truth as the Lord in His great mercy sent it through Jones and Waggoner. Do not fear that the “most precious” Good News will weaken the devotion of our youth; nothing else will produce a lasting commitment on their part. Only then can they sense the motivation to take up the cross to follow Christ “whithersoever He goeth”—which means more than a brief missionary trip to Mexico or Honduras, etc.

References:

1. “Clear and convincing, plain light,” “the truth,” “brought great relief” (Letters 59, 82, 30, 1890).
2. A mistaken view of Deut. 5:2, 3, 28 gives rise to the view that God Himself initiated the old covenant, which would mean logically that He led Israel into spiritual “bondage.” The account in Exodus 19:4-8 shows God as seeking to restore the new covenant with Israel. The only sense in which Moses said that “the Lord our God made ... this covenant... with us” is that He was forced to ratify the covenant that the Israelites had mistakenly initiated. If they would not keep step with Him, He must humble Himself to keep step with them. Paul was probably the first to clearly understand what happened; “the law” had to become “our schoolmaster [pedagogue] bringing us” on a long detour of centuries until finally we should see the outworking of the old covenant “that we might be justified by faith” (Gal. 3:22-24). God’s statement that Israel “have well spoken all that they have spoken” can only be understood in the context of the next verse: their “heart”

was not in their words and could not be, so long as they did not believe God's new covenant promise. "That was a great speech! I just wish they had a heart ..." (Deut. 5:28, 29).

3. Steps to Christ, p.47, says that "the knowledge of our broken promises and forfeited pledges weakens our confidence in our own sincerity and causes us to feel that God cannot accept us." This sense of spiritual failure "genders to bondage," and is as poison to children and youth. The argument that we must lead children through the old covenant first is fallacious, because many never get out of it. They must be taught the new covenant from the first.

4. The Hebrew verb *shamar* is used in Genesis 2:15 to indicate Adam's care or cherishing of the Garden of Eden. Thus what the Lord said to Israel was: "If you will listen to My voice, and cherish My promise [made to your father Abraham], you will be a special treasure, etc."

5. See Waggoner *The Glad Tidings*, chapters 3, 4. Jones was in full agreement throughout (see his *The Everlasting Gospel of God's Everlasting Covenant*, July 20, 1907).

6. God's requirement of obedience must not be construed as a contract Israel, else we have God again leading Israel into bondage. In the new covenant that God made with Abraham, the only response He wanted was for Abraham to "believe in the Lord" (Gen. 15:6). The essence of "the everlasting gospel" of the plan of salvation is God's "faith" or confidence: when we learn to believe, such "faith works by love" and produces total obedience. The old and new covenants are not dispensational, that is, matters of time. They are present realities. Many today live under the old covenant; some anciently lived under the new (as Abraham).

7. The revivals and reformations led by kings of Judah such as Hezekiah and Josiah were short-lived because they were old covenant in nature.

8. There is no Bible record that God asked Abraham to "pass between" the divided "pieces" of the animals, and thus bind himself to this terribly awesome oath that he (Abraham) would be torn to pieces if he should fail to obey perfectly. In fact, he did fail; but God did not cut him in pieces!

9. See Exodus 32:1-7. The old covenant promise to obey the ten commandments functioned as "working wrath" (Rom. 4:15) that led the people to make the golden calf. They were angry with God and with Moses. Due to the pervasive teaching of the old covenant in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, we now see that same "wrath" operating in rebellions of youth and even of Adventist ministers such as Dale Ratzlaff and Richard Fredericks.

10. Our denominational spiritual pride ("rich and increased with goods") is old covenant in nature. Dale Ratzlaff's and Richard Frederick's core idea is based on a false view of the two covenants. It is sobering to realize that Ratzlaff claims to have gone through the entire Seventh-day Adventist educational system from elementary school to Theological Seminary at Andrews University, yet the evidence indicates that he was never exposed to the 1888 view of the covenants and of its history.

11. Again, the 1888 concepts emphasize the much more abounding nature of grace.

APPENDIX A

The 1888 View of the Two Covenants

A Historical & Doctrinal Review by the 1888 Message Study Committee

I. Introduction

We wish to examine the principal elements of Jones' and Waggoner's view:

1. Why did it elicit from Ellen White her enthusiastic endorsement?
2. Why did it elicit from the Battle Creek brethren the opposite - determined opposition?
3. Does Scripture uphold the Jones/Waggoner view?
4. Does their view contribute to happy, victorious Christian experience, especially for children and youth?
5. Does the view the opposing brethren held "gender to bondage" in practical Christian experience? Is the same view popular today?

We do not seek to discuss stratospheric "ivory tower" theology, but practical teaching that makes a positive difference in daily life among all cultures.

II. Ellen White's Endorsements Of The 1888 View

The Primacy of the Gospel Committee is initially concerned whether or not Scripture supports the 1888 views. However, since the Spirit of Prophecy is "the lesser light" that directs us to "the greater light," to see what Ellen White said about Waggoner's view may encourage us to view Bible teaching from a fresh perspective.

When Jones and Waggoner as editors of the Signs began in the 1880s to publish a view of Galatians different from that of the Battle Creek brethren, the latter were alarmed. Ellen White rebuked the two young men for not conferring first with church leadership (but when she later heard them in person she thanked Heaven for what they were saying!). As the controversy escalated, in 1886 the General Conference president published a book that castigated Waggoner for overemphasizing "the much vaunted doctrine of justification by faith." Ellen White defended the latter's right to reply as publicly, and conceded that open discussion at the forthcoming Session was inevitable (ironically, we have Butler to thank for the "Minneapolis message"!). It was when she heard Waggoner there that she responded with enthusiasm: "Every fiber of my heart said amen," "precious truths that I could respond to with all my heart."

The covenants problem was closely related to “the law in Galatians” because the function of the law “spoken” at Sinai was involved. Finally, in 1896 she spoke in favor of the Waggoner/Jones view (still later she said “both” laws were meant). However, she never endorsed the opposition view of the covenants (unless two 1904 statements do); rather, she said the opposing brethren were wasting their time. Her position in Patriarchs and Prophets was so much in harmony with the Jones/Waggoner view that one E. P. Dexter writing from the Kansas Tract Society in 1891 politely questioned her if she really meant what she wrote there as it “is substantially the position taken by Bro. A. T. Jones at the ministers’ institute, Battle Creek, 1888-89... [A] want of harmony was exposed in the (1890) lessons ...⁽¹⁾ “In Patriarchs and Prophets she had labeled as the “terms of the old covenant” the “obey and live” philosophy so popular among Adventists then and now (p.372).

The wording of Ellen White’s 1890 endorsements is as follows:

Since I made the statement last Sabbath that the view of the covenants as it had been taught by Brother Waggoner was truth, it seems that great relief has come to many minds.

I thought it time to take my position, and I am glad that the Lord urged me to give the testimony that I did (*Letter 30, March 10, 1890; The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, p.623*).

Now I tell you here before God, that the covenant question, as it has been presented, is the truth. It is the light. In clear lines it has been laid before me. And those that have been resisting the light, I ask you whether they have been working for God, or for the devil. It is the clear light of heaven, and it means much to us. (*MS 4, 1890; ibid., pp.596, 597*).

Night before last, the Lord opened many things to my mind. It was plainly revealed what your influence (Uriah Smith) has been, what it was in Minneapolis. ... ever since that meeting I have known that you were deceived and deceiving others ... as did Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. ... You have strengthened the hands and minds of such men as Larson, Porter, Dan Jones, Eldridge, and Morrison and Nicola and a vast number through them. All quote you, and the enemy of righteousness looks on pleased.... Consider how many Joined Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, ... men of renown in the tribes of Israel. ... Night before last I was shown that evidences in regard to the covenants were clear and convincing. Yourself, Brother Dan Jones, Brother Porter and others are spending your investigative powers for naught to produce a position on the covenants to

vary from the position that Brother Waggoner has presented. The covenant question is a clear question and would be received by every candid, unprejudiced mind, but I was brought where the Lord gave me an insight into this matter. You have turned from plain light because you were afraid that the law question in Galatians would have to be accepted. (*Letter 59, March 8, 1890; ibid., pp. 599-604*).

I told them yesterday that the position of the covenants I believed as presented in my Volume 1 (Patriarchs and Prophets), if that was Dr. Waggoner's position then he had the truth (*Letter 82, 1890; ibid., p. 617*).

III. What Was The Jones/Waggoner View Of The Covenants?

Sources for the following are articles and editorials published before 1888, The Gospel in Galatians (1887) distributed to the delegates at the 1888 Session, articles after 1888, the Sabbath School lessons of 1890 (in clear harmony with the later books), Waggoner's The Glad Tidings and The Everlasting Covenant (1900). There was no significant change throughout in their basic position on the covenants. The Everlasting Covenant was written largely in 1896, and published serially in the British Present Truth.⁽²⁾ Briefly stated, this was Waggoner's and Jones' idea:

1. The "everlasting" or "new covenant" was never a "contract" in the sense of covenants of the ancient Near Eastern lords and vassals. It was always initiated as a one-sided promise on the part of God. With this in mind, when referring to the new covenant, Paul's definition of "covenant" is "promise," not "contract" (Rom. 4:13; Gal. 3:17, 18).⁽³⁾ It is His covenant totally, not ours; He gives, and all we can do is receive.

2. Since His covenant is not a "contract," when God made His promises to Abram, He did not ask him to make any promise in return. Abram's sole response was to "believe"—faith, which God endorsed (Gen. 12:1-3, 13:14-17; 15:4-6). When one believes and appreciates God's promise, he cherishes, treasures it in his heart. This is the sense in which we "keep His covenant."

3. Because of this faith exercised by Abraham, he became "the father of all them that believe" (Rom. 4:11, 16, etc.). Under the terms of the new covenant, God has never asked us to make promises to Him. All He wants from us is the response of Abraham—to believe.⁽⁴⁾

4. When, 430 years later, Israel came out of Egypt, God proposed to renew to them His new covenant promises made to Abraham (His original plan, Ex. 19:4-6). His intention was not to institute another "old" covenant to replace permanently

or temporarily, or add to, the one He had made with Abraham for his descendants. God wanted them to focus on His mighty deliverance for them “that they might realize their utter helplessness, their need of divine aid” (P.P. 371).

5 Fresh out of slavery, the Israelites did not have the faith of Abraham. Their minds were darkened by legalism (self-centeredness, self-righteousness, fear). Misunderstanding God’s new covenant, they took the initiative to institute the old covenant by assuming that the “new” was a “contract” (the view embraced today by many). Hence their promise, “All that the Lord hath spoken we will do (vs. 8), a promise that Abraham had never made. They repeated the promise twice more (Ex. 24:3, 7). They felt “able to establish their own righteousness” (PP 372).

6. Not only is making promises to God not required, it is actually detrimental because it is the essence of self-righteousness. Whoever makes the promise is automatically the source of the righteousness. Hence the fundamental principle of the old covenant is making promises to God, and to add the proviso “with God’s help” is little better for it is then the faith-plus-works idea which is still mired in legalism. Properly understood, man’s part in the new covenant is solely Abraham’s response of faith—which is always “faith which works.”⁽⁵⁾

7. Israel’s unbelief required the Lord to follow an alternate plan, that is, to come down on Mt. Sinai with fire, lightnings, and earthquake to cause the people to “tremble” as He spoke the words of the ten commandments with the voice of thunder and wrote them in stone. God had done none of this for Abraham—He wrote those same ten precepts in the patriarch’s heart—the same plan He has for every one who is a child of Abraham “by faith.” God did not want Israel to make their promise, else He would be seen as a party to their continued spiritual bondage. “The word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it” (Heb. 4:2).

8. Thus was instituted a long detour of many centuries for God’s people, made necessary solely by their unbelief. The ten commandment law became our “schoolmaster” or pedagogue (jailer, disciplinarian “with a stick”), the function of which was to lead us eventually back to where Abraham was “that we might be justified by faith” (Gal. 3:24). It is possible that Paul was the first in history (aside from Jesus) to understand clearly this function of the law, or at least to articulate it so clearly. But when Waggoner also correctly articulated it, the opposing brethren were alarmed.⁽⁶⁾

9. The old covenant never brings salvation or deliverance to “Israel.” Rather, it “gendereth to bondage” (Gal. 4:24). The sad story of old covenant resolutions and promises stretches from Sinai all the way through Malachi, and on into the history of the Jews’ crucifixion of Christ. Adventism’s detour down the old covenant road is painfully evident in our own history. To teach the commandments of God without understanding “the faith of Jesus” (not merely mouthing

the words) is the essence of old covenant experience.

10. The old and new covenants are not dispensational, or matters of time, as is commonly understood. It is not correct to teach that children and youth should go through the old covenant experience before graduating into the new (many who do so never find their way back to the new covenant!). The covenants are conditions of the heart. One could, in Old Testament time, live under the new covenant (as did Abraham when he believed), and we today can live under the old covenant, if our understanding is legalist.

11. It is impossible for a church to be new covenant oriented and at the same time be lukewarm.

12. Understood in this light, “the third angel’s message in verity” is the gospel in the light of the new covenant.

IV. Is There Bible Support For The 1888 View?

1. Paul’s discussions of righteousness by faith are centered in the “promises” God made to Abraham. Rom. 4:3-25; Gal. 3, 4. In that context of practical day-by-day Christian living, Paul’s attention is largely focused on Abraham’s faith-experience.

2. Initially, God made a seven-fold promise to Abram (Gen. 12:1-3). No conditions were mentioned other than the command to leave his “country” and “kindred.”

3. The promise was repeated and detailed further in Genesis 13:14-17.

4. God spoke further emphasis in Genesis 15:4, 5. Then Abram responded.

5. His response was a heartfelt, fervent “amen” (the Hebrew for the word “believe”), an appreciation for the grace of Christ (vs. 6; John 8:56). Paul’s argument in Romans 4 and Galatians 3, 4 is that such a response of faith is all that God wants from us today. Lest legalist-minded Adventists fear lowered standards, it must be remembered that Paul’s definition of faith is a heart-response occasioned by the revelation of God’s agape (Rom. 10:10; Gal. 5:6). Thus Paul’s idea of faith is a “faith which works” and produces the obedience that we try so hard to emphasize. The “works” is a verb and not a noun. In this light, Paul’s doctrine of salvation “by grace through faith –not of works” is not antinomian fanaticism. Included in Abram’s response of “believing” was the humble, contrite reconciliation of an alienated heart to God, which includes His holy law of righteousness. The obedience is built-in! This could have been Abram’s hymn:

**When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride.**

This is the only appropriate response of any human heart to God's new covenant.

6. After his confession of faith, Abram and Sarai stumbled into old covenant unbelief in the Hagar-Ishmael incident (Gen. 16). Paul uses Hagar as a symbol of the old covenant—the ever popular faith-plus-works principle (Gal. 4:24).

7. Sarah (and Abraham) repented of their old covenant unbelief. Thus by faith she became pregnant in very old age (Heb. 11:11). Paul cites the triumphant Sarah as a symbol of the new covenant (Gal. 4:23, 24). Again, at no time in these episodes did God ask for any promise from either of them. It was a basic assumption: genuine faith would of itself produce or motivate obedience. This was the idea that fueled the Jones/Waggoner idea of the covenants.

8. Not cold, blind legalistic obedience motivated by fear, this kind of faith eventually enabled Abraham to offer his son Isaac (Gen. 24).

9. When Israel came out of Egypt 430 years after his justification by faith experience, God proposed to renew to them His new covenant promises to Abraham (Ex. 19:4-6):

a. It is not correct to assume that God made these promises to Israel on condition of their obedience (cf. SDA Bible Dictionary, p.229). Paul says that 430 years later God could not have abrogated or “disannulled” the terms of His promise to Abraham by requiring anything more than his faith, because He had confirmed it to Abraham by a solemn oath pledging His throne and existence (Gal. 3:17,18; Rom. 4:13-16; Heb. 6:13-18). Our Bible Dictionary misses the point, and so do many Adventists today.⁽⁷⁾

b. The Hebrew word in Exodus 19:5 usually understood as “obey” is rendered “hear” some 760 times, and “hearken” 196 times, and only a relatively few times as “obey.” The context of the sentence itself requires the meaning of “listen. (God simply wanted their attention and that is the idea in the Hebrew meaning of shamea).⁽⁸⁾

c. The Hebrew for the verb translated “keep My covenant” is used in Genesis 2:15 where God told Adam to “dress and keep” the Garden of Eden. To “obey” the garden is meaningless! The word shamar means primarily to “guard,” “give heed” (shimmur, “night watch,” root of “Samaria, meaning “guard”). Adam was to “cherish” or “treasure” the Garden of Eden, “prize” it highly. There seems a play on ideas here in Exodus 19:5, as if God said to them, If you will “treasure” My promise to Abraham, I will “treasure” you above all people as “special.”⁽⁹⁾

d. Thus the Lord said to Israel, if you will (1) listen, hearken, to My voice, and (2) if you will cherish, prize, appreciate, treasure the covenant I made to Abraham (promise, Rom. 4:13), then you will be a special treasure of Mine above all people. This was to be righteousness by faith, not righteousness by works or even partly by works.

e. God even prefaced His renewal of the new covenant with gospel Good News: “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself...” (Ex. 19:4). The Lord did not propose making a “contract” or “compact” with Israel based on their promises to obey. Their job was to believe, to appreciate with heartfelt thanks, the glorious salvation He had already accomplished.

f. Unless we involve God in self-contradiction, His statement apparently approving the Israelites’ vain promise, “They have well spoken all that they have spoken” (Deut. 5:28) must be understood as irony. The context would seem to require it: “That was a great speech! I just wish they had a heart. Biblical irony is common (see Section VI).

10. Instead of appreciating how the Lord “bore them on eagles’ wings,” they had already begun before reaching Sinai to murmur and complain (Ex. 15:24; 16:2; 17:3). Thus their hearts were “hardened” (Heb. 3:8). In this state of unbelief they responded to God’s new covenant promise with a “contract” mentality which was works-oriented, self-righteous “obedience”: “All that the Lord has spoken we will do” (Ex. 19:8). This promise of the people was the inception of the old covenant.

11. God could not brush this aside. Although they had made this contract, He had to live with it and ratify it with animal blood. If they would not keep step with Him, He must humble Himself and keep step with them. Now must begin a long detour of many centuries during which the “old testament” up-and-down history of God’s people must be tragically written.⁽¹⁰⁾ in: It is only in this sense that Moses later could say that “the Lord made this covenant... with us.” He specifically said “the Lord made not” such a covenant “with our fathers” (Deut. 5:3). Thus Moses recognized in principle what Paul was later to say, “The covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was 430 years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect” (Gal. 3:17). Moses made clear that it was not God’s original intention to “make” the old covenant of works with Israel. He was only forced to recognize it and to lead them on their detour.

12. The terrifying events of Exodus 19:10-25, the death threat, the trumpet sounding “long ... louder and louder,” the thunders, lightnings, thick cloud, the smoke, the earthquake-none of these had been necessary for “our father” Abraham. God did not need to write the law in stone for him, for He wrote it in his heart. All of this became necessary because of the old covenant the people had instituted. “What purpose then does the law serve?” asks Paul. “It was added because of transgressions” (Gal. 3:19, prostithemi, “place beside,” “increase,” “increase our faith,” Luke 20:11, 12). It could be rendered “underlined, “emphasized,” “set in bold type. “The law came in beside” not as an addition to the new covenant, but “that the offence might abound,” that the people might see their sin more clearly

pinpointed (Rom. 5:20; Patriarchs and Prophets, pp.371, 372). “The scripture has confined [concluded, KJV] all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe” (Gal. 3:22).

13. From then on, the law was to function as “our tutor [schoolmaster, KJV] to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith,” back where “our father Abraham” was when he “believed the new covenant (vs. 24).

14. Because of this understanding of the new covenant in Galatians 3, Jones and Waggoner saw the law in Galatians as the ten commandments rather than the ceremonial law. Their opposing brethren could not grasp the new covenant idea of salvation by simply believing God’s promise; they were mired in the mentality of Israel at Exodus 19. They saw the old covenant as instituted by God as a dispensational structure, part of His plan of salvation with a divinely appointed “dispensation” ending at the cross (see illustration at end of this appendix) whereas Jones and Waggoner saw the two covenants as matters of heart, not of dispensations. God’s original intention was that the old covenant “dispensation” end before it began!⁽¹¹⁾

15. Correctly understood, the new covenant is the message of righteousness by faith, the “everlasting gospel” of Revelation 14:6-12. In this time of the cleansing of the sanctuary, it is “the third angel’s message in verity.” God’s promises to Abraham are promises to “all families of the earth,” the loud cry message of Revelation 18. This is why Ellen White recognized in the 1888 message of the covenants its “beginning” (RH, Nov.22, 1892). Everyone is invited to receive His promises on exactly the same terms that Abraham received them, by saying “amen” -faith (Matt. 29:19, 20; Matt. 24:14; Acts 13:32; John 3:16; Eph. 2:8-10, etc.).⁽¹²⁾

V. The Two Covenants In Adventism Since 1888

1. Opposition from Minneapolis continued for decades. As late as 1902 Uriah Smith published anti-Waggoner articles on the covenants that occasioned a rebuke from Daniells. In 1907 the controversy was still alive, with the Sabbath School lessons for the third quarter on the covenants repeatedly stating that the new covenant was a “compact” of “obey and live,” directly contrary to what Ellen White had endorsed in 1890. This was doubtless due to a backlash against Jones and Waggoner inasmuch as both had lost favor by this time. Daniells characterized Brickley’s articles in the 1902 Review (supported by Uriah Smith) as “openly and squarely against the message that came to this people at Minneapolis” (letter to G. I. Butler, April 11, 1902). Three days later in a letter to W. C. White he said they were an “open and vicious attack on the message of righteousness by faith presented at Minneapolis,” “crooked and unsound,” “directly opposed to the truth of the gospel,” “in direct conflict with (Patriarchs and Prophets).” The failures of

Jones and Waggoner were used by Satan to create antipathy for their message (which influenced many despite Ellen White's warning that to disparage their message because of their personal failures would be "a fatal delusion"). In 1907 a firm decision was made to abandon their view of the two covenants and to support the view of those who had opposed them.⁽¹³⁾

2. In the late teens and 1920s (and into the 1930s) the evangelical philosophy of the Sunday School Times (Robert C. McQuilken) invaded the Adventist church. It was widely claimed that the popular Evangelical movement known as "the Victorious Life" was a restatement of the 1888 message, whereas the actual 1888 message was largely unknown, probably due to that prejudice.

3. By 1938-39 the 1888 view of the two covenants was virtually unknown in the church, at least in publications.

4. The SDA Bible Commentary and Bible Dictionary are very theological, but often fail to recover the sunlit clarity of the Waggoner presentations. The idea generally is built on the "contract" or "compact" understanding of the new covenant, attributing the "condition" of obedience which was not mentioned (for example, "on their part, the people were to yield implicit obedience," Bible Dictionary, p.229). The impression generally prevails that the old covenant was God's initiative rather than the people's. Again, this is not criticism; the writers had very likely never had occasion even to see the 1888 view, or Ellen White's support of it.⁽¹⁴⁾

5. In the accompanying illustration (which shows the "dispensational" view) Edwin Reiner sums up his concept: "Let no one say that the old covenant was a covenant of works, while the new covenant is by faith" (p.74). It is likely that neither the author nor the writer of the "Foreword" had ever been exposed to the 1888 view. Their lack of understanding was not their fault. The same can almost certainly be said for the author of the next exhibit.

6. The impact of popular Adventist thinking that the old covenant is good for children is illustrated in the following verses from Psalms for Tiny Tots, a widely published book among us for decades. The underlying philosophy is merit by self-righteousness (attractive four-color pictures accompany each verse; emphasis is supplied):

**There is a place where we are sure
That we can always be secure.
In Jesus' hands, so kind and strong,
Where all good boys and girls belong.**

If the child is biblically informed and has good sense, he knows that he is not "good." The implication: he/she does not belong in those "hands." If otherwise, this is only an appeal to fear.

**It must have been a thrilling thing
To see the tiny newborn King.
I know you wish you'd had a peek
At Baby Jesus mild and meek.
Well, we can all see Him someday
If all His words we will obey.**

The rhyme required the word “obey” instead of “believe,” so it is thoroughly old covenant. Now the author puts words in Jesus’ lips that He has never uttered, in violation of His warning in Rev. 22:18:

**“I will whisper in your ears (Jesus is pictured)
How I love you, children dear.
Promise Me you will be true
In every little thing you do.”**

The next page shows the child standing before the ten commandment law:

**I promise that I will obey
His Ten Commandments every day.
I promise that I'll never go
Where His commandments tell me no.
I promise that I'll always take
The path that His commandments make.**

It takes no imagination to know what will inevitably happen later. The child forgets, goes where he shouldn't, does or says something wrong; then the feeling of self-reproach and spiritual discouragement (“I'm a failure!”), precisely what Roger Dudley found in his survey of Adventist academy youth (*Why Teenagers Reject Religion*, pp.9-17). The “fault” of the old covenant is set forth in Steps to Christ: “Your promises and resolutions are like ropes of sand.... The knowledge of your broken promises and forfeited pledges weakens your confidence in your own sincerity, and causes you to feel that God cannot accept you. ... What you need to understand is the true force of the will. ... The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise” (p.47).

Note how the old covenant mind-set renders acceptable the Hindu idea of karma:

Helping Mother is lots of fun (little girl pictured doing the ironing)

In getting all her housework done.

I know that it makes Jesus glad,

It helps make up for when I'm bad.

VI. ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS

A. “Jones’ and Waggoner’s later history invalidates their view of the two covenants.”

Ellen White said that their possible downfall would not be the result of error in their God-given message, but would largely be due to “unchristlike persecution” inflicted on them by their unbelieving brethren. They might not be able to endure it (see Letter 019, 1892; S24, 1892; GCB, 1893, p.184).

Neither ever gave up his faith in Christ or his belief in the Bible:

Neither stopped keeping the Sabbath; the night of his death Waggoner wrote a letter breathing faith in Christ and love for his brethren, and shortly before his death Jones wrote a letter expressing firm faith in “the third angel’s message,” including the gift of prophecy in Ellen White (Letters, May 16, 1916; May 12, 1921). In today’s climate of church fellowship, both would remain church members.

The ultimate truth of the two covenants does not depend on them or even Ellen White, but on Scripture evidence.

B. “Leading children to make promises to God may help anchor them from backsliding.”

As with adults, children do not realize the sinfulness of their human hearts. When they inevitably break their promises to God, the resultant discouragement becomes a powerful incentive to apostasy (see S.C. 47).

In the light of Revelation 3:14-21, Christ is calling the Seventh-day Adventist Church to reformation in the principles of child evangelism. Much more abounding grace must be ministered to them, which alone can hold them.

C. “God expressed Himself as pleased with the people’s promises at Sinai. “The Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee [“we will hear it and do it”]: they have well said all that they have spoken.” (Deut. 5:28).

It is unthinkable that God would approve of a program that would “gender to bondage” for His people (Gal. 4:24). He disapproved of Abram’s plan to adopt Eliezer as his heir and thus “do works” for the fulfillment of God’s promises (Gen.

15:2, 3). Why would He now approve of a works program for Abraham's descendants?

In the next verse God expressed His real dissatisfaction with the people's response: "oh that there were an heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all My commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!" (vs. 29). The people had made their promises without the involvement of their heart. If their heart had been deeply moved as was Abraham's, they would have responded as he did with a fervent, humble "amen" of appreciation for their deliverance from Egyptian slavery.

God's supposed approval can be understood as divine irony: That was a great speech the people made. I just wish they had a heart that would make it possible for Me to bless them now and always as the nation of Israel! If they had the heart-faith of Abraham their father, there would be no need for the backsliding history that must come in future centuries. They would always be the head and not the tail.

Divine irony has often been expressed in Scripture. When the unbelieving king Ahab asked the prophet Micaiah, "Shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear?" the inspired prophet answered with biting sarcasm and irony: "Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand" (2 Chron. 18:8-14). The King's response indicates how well he understood the humor: "How many times shall I abjure thee that thou say nothing but the truth to me in the name of the Lord?" (vs. 15). Then the prophet delivered a devastating prediction of disaster couched in irony: "I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd." The story goes on with more biting irony (vss. 18-21). Speaking through Amos, the Lord asks Israel, "Have ye offered unto Me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?" knowing full well that the answer had to be negative (Amos 5:25). Another example of irony or even of sanctified sarcasm is the Lord speaking to Israel: "Go to Bethel and sin; go to Gilgal and sin yet more. Bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three years. ... Brag about your freewill offerings - boast about them, you Israelites, for this is what you love to do," declares the sovereign Lord" (4:4, 5, NIV).

Jesus often used irony. One example is His remarks on the eve of His crucifixion as He speaks to His disciples. The NEB captures it: "He said to them, "When I sent you out barefoot without purse or pack, were you ever short of anything?" "No," they answered. "It is different now," He said; "whoever has a purse had better take it with him, and his pack too; and if he has no sword, let him sell his cloak to -buy one. ... Look, Lord," they said, "we have two swords here." "Enough, enough!" He replied (Luke 22:35-38). It's unthinkable that our Lord was being serious. (in a few minutes He rebuked Peter for using a sword.) For God to commend the Israelites' unbelief at Sinai is equally unthinkable. The alterna-

tive is to view Him through the eyes of the Dispensationalists as experimenting with different methods of saving His people.

D. “Ellen white urges us to make old covenant promises to God as the basis of denominational revival and reformation.”

In *Patriarchs and Prophets* (1890) she had upheld the Waggoner view (pp.370-373), as well as writing enthusiastic endorsements of it in her letters to Uriah Smith the same year (Letters 30, 59, 1890). When we find 14 years later what appears on the surface to be an about—face on her part, we need to examine the contextual evidence closely.

Her 1904 statements are as follows:

(1) “The covenant that God made with His people at Sinai is to be our refuge and defense ... And all the people answered together and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.” This covenant is of just as much force today as it was when the Lord made it with ancient Israel” (Southern Watchman, March 1, 1904).

This seems indeed to indicate that the Lord wants us to join ancient Israel at Sinai in renewing the old covenant! But let us consider her context. She is quoting Exodus 19:4-6 which indicates God’s purpose to renew with Israel the same new covenant which He made with Abraham—His promises. If Israel will respond as he did, then all these blessings will be theirs to enjoy as a people. Our “refuge and defense” in these last days must be His promises to us, says Ellen White, not our promises to Him.

(2) In another statement quoting verses 7, 8 which contain the people’s promise, Ellen White said: “This is the pledge that God’s people are to make in these last days. Their acceptance with God depends on a faithful fulfillment of the terms of their agreement with Him. God includes in his covenant all who will obey Him” (R.H. June 23, 1904).

A careful reading of the entire article reveals that Ellen White was by no means pleading for a return to an old covenant relationship with God, even though it may superficially appear as though she is. The over—all thrust of the article is an appeal to dedicate ourselves to our work” of proclaiming the gospel in all the world. “Christ call upon the members of His church to cherish the true, genuine hope of the gospel,” she adds; nothing in the article suggests she wants to disparage righteousness by faith or to retract what she endorsed 14 years earlier, or what she said in *Steps to Christ* regarding our “promises” to God (p.47). All perplexity is removed if one will understand her use of the word “pledge” to mean commitment, dedication, choice. “What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can choose to serve Him.

You can give Him your will.” This is what Ellen White in 1904 is urging the church to do.

References:

(1) Handwritten letter, March 11, 1891.

(2) Daniells said of this book: “It leads us to the very heart of the great gospel of Christ;” “shows the weakness and folly of the covenant of works;” “deals with the great question that so agitated our people at Minneapolis, and so far as I know is the only masterpiece that has been written on this subject since the Minneapolis meeting;” “something ought to be done to place a flood of light in the homes of our people. I know of no better book to do this, outside of the Bible” (letter to W. C. White, May 12, 1902).

(3) Waggoner cites the “covenant the Lord made” after the Flood of Noah with “every living creature, ... the fowl, cattle, and every beast of the earth” with the wry remark that they made no promises in return. (Gen. 9:9, 10; G.T. p.71).

(4) To avoid misunderstanding, we must note that Jones’ and Waggoner’s understanding of faith was not the egocentric “insurance policy” idea of “accept Christ.” “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness” (Rom. 10:10)-a heart-melting, ego-subduing appreciation for what God has promised by His much more abounding grace.

(5) According to the view of the opponents, “on God’s part He promised to give to them life provided that they would obey; and on their part they promised to obey so that they could have that life. ... Then when they did do it and so got the life, how was it... that they got the life? ... They got life by their own works.... Their hope of life rested only on their obedience.... It follows that their hope of obedience rested only on the virtue of their own promise to obey.

God’s everlasting covenant is made to rest on the promise of His creatures.

They agreed to keep the law in order to have righteousness and life. Their righteousness, therefore, could be nothing else than righteousness by the works of the law. .. Their own promise was entirely their own righteousness and not the righteousness of God at all” (A.T. Jones, *The Everlasting Covenant of God’s Everlasting Righteousness*, pp.4, 5, 6, emphasis original).

(6) In a graduate thesis on the two covenants (Loma Linda University, 1985) Robert Van Ornam suggests that Jones’ and Waggoner’s view of the covenants developed in their minds as a result of the cleansing of the sanctuary doctrine (*The Doctrine of the Everlasting Covenant in the Writings of Ellet J. Waggoner* pp.12, 38).

(7) This is not to criticize the beloved author of the Bible Dictionary passage who tried valiantly to emphasize the orthodox doctrine of obedience. He is not to be blamed for what he could not know inasmuch as the 1888 message had been

“in a great degree kept away from the world” and “from our people, in a great measure” (ISM 234, 235; 1896). Very likely he had never had the opportunity to read the Jones/Waggoner material on the covenants. Due apparently to prejudice against them, their view was publicly rejected in 1907 and “kept away” from publication thereafter.

(8) In Hebrew: “The basic idea is that of perceiving a message or merely a sound... “to hear,” ... “listen to,” “pay attention” (Theological Wordbook of the old Testament, Vol.11, p. 2411). Likewise the root meaning of the Greek word often translated “obey” (hupakouoo) is bend the ear down and listen.

(9) This meaning of the verb is evident in many old Testament passages.

(10) As the SDA Bible Commentary makes clear, the reformation under Ezra and Nehemiah was old covenant (3:78, 433-437). The same could be said for the reformations under kings such as Hezekiah and Josiah (2:921; 3:248-249, 273, 309). Almost the entire history of Israel was old covenant, leading to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, the captivity, a works-oriented restoration, and eventually the murder of their Messiah. It all began in Exodus 19 with the faith-plus-works idea of the people.

(11) A few sample statements by Waggoner which he wrote for the Sabbath School lessons for 1889-1890. It will be seen how his ideas are virtually identical to what he wrote later in *The Glad Tidings*:

Let the student note that the promises in the old covenant were really on the part of the people. ... The first covenant was a promise on the part of the people that they would make themselves holy. But this they could not do (January 18, 1890).

Hebrews 9:1 is a text that hinders many from seeing that all of God’s blessings to man are gained by virtue of the second [new] covenant, and not by the first [the old] ... The fact that when men complied with these ordinances of divine service, they were forgiven (Leviticus 4) seems to some conclusive evidence that the old covenant contained the gospel and its blessings. But forgiveness of sins was not secured by virtue of those offerings; “for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.” Heb. 10:4. Forgiveness was obtained only by virtue of the promised sacrifice of Christ (Heb. 9:15), the mediator of the new covenant, their faith in whom was shown by their offerings. So it was by virtue of the second or new covenant that pardon was secured to those who offered the sacrifices provided for in the ordinances of divine service connected with the old or first covenant.

Moreover, these “ordinances of divine service” formed no part of the first [new] covenant. if they had, they must have been mentioned in the making of that covenant; but they were not. ... They were simply the means by which the people acknowledged the justice of their condemnation to death for the violation of the law which they had covenanted to keep, and their faith in the Mediator of the new

covenant (February 8, 1890).

A few sample statements from the Third Quarter Sabbath School Lessons, 1907, re the new covenant:

The angels must have lived under the same covenant as man, namely, “obey and Live” (Lesson 1). Since harmony can exist only when all wills, all choices are in accord with one supreme will, it is apparent that death must be the result to the one who persists in wrong choosing. Hence, the covenant is “obey and Live” (Lesson 2).

We have found the condition of the covenant between God and His creatures to be “obey and Live” (Lesson 3). The compact, or covenant, under which Adam began his existence was that God promised life only on condition of Adam’s obedience (Lesson 1).

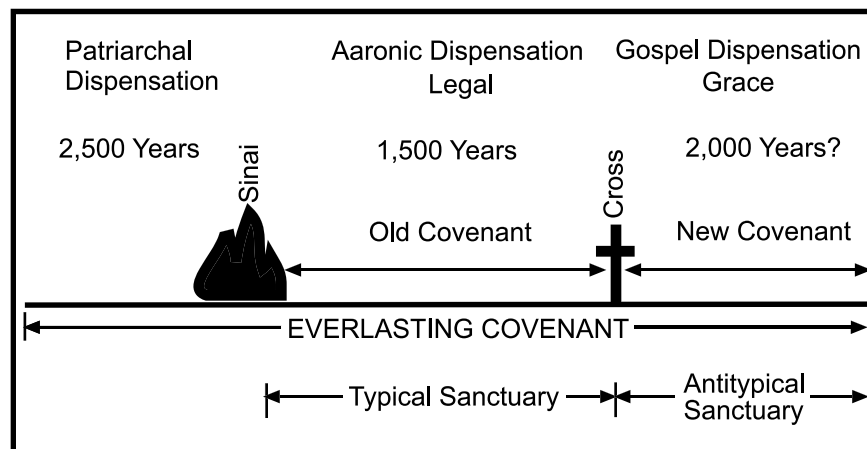
(12) Ellen White did not intend in 1904 to contradict what she had published in *Patriarchs and Prophets* in 1890 when she said that the old covenant is based on the principle of “obey and live.” See Section VI.

(13) See the 1907 Third Quarter Sabbath School Lessons on the covenants where the “obey and live” principle occurs repeatedly.

(14) The general absence of the 1888 concepts is sad. Failing to grasp that the new covenant has always been made with believers (promised to them), the new covenant is said to have been made dispensationally with “the Christian church.” The old covenant is represented as initiated by God, rather than prompted by the initiative of unbelieving Israel. “The chief difference is that the “old” covenant was made with Israel as a nation, whereas the “new” is made with individual believers in Christ.” In truth, “the chief difference” is between righteousness by faith and righteousness by works. “The old covenant was in fact, a temporary arrangement designed to enable those bound by its provisions to enter into the privileges and responsibilities of the “new or everlasting” covenant.” No recognition is given to the fact that from the beginning the new covenant was God’s unilateral promise “designed” to be received by faith by “all families of the earth.” Rather, says the article, God “designed” the old covenant as “a temporary arrangement.” The timeless application of the two covenants is not recognized, rather the “dispensational” view (now capitalized by Dale Ratzlaff and the current Pope) is left on the horizon as logical and reasonable. In numerous references to the covenants in the seven-volume *Commentary* the essential 1888 idea seldom gets through. It’s as if the authors had not read the Jones/Waggoner view which Ellen White had been shown in vision is the true one. The author of the *Genesis* comments rightly says, “A correct understanding of the terms of this covenant [with Abram] will go far toward maintaining a right relationship between God and the believer today, “but then proceeds to represent it as a covenant based legalistically on the contract” model (1:322). Thus the impact is Galatians faith-plus-work. The comments on Exodus 19:4-8 assume that God imposed on Israel

a covenant of works (1:594). These authors valiantly try to avoid legalism and are genuinely Christian, sincere to the utmost; but lacking the sunlit 1888 insights they inevitably leave a murky impression. The comments on Jeremiah 7:22 again leave confusion (4:389), as the author is sincerely unable to grasp what Jeremiah meant by the Lord's original intentions at Sinai. The eloquent comments on Ezekiel 16:59, 60 (4:632, 633) treat Israel's sad history of failure as virtually inexplicable, not seeing the true cause in the salvation-by-works principle embedded in the promise of the people in Exodus 19:8. This failure to recognize the significance of the old covenant leaves old Testament history implying ineptness in God's leading of Israel, whereas the old Testament history is entirely the result of old covenant "hardness of heart," unbelief—a profound lesson to modern Laodicea in the light of our 1888 history. Ratzlaff claims that he went all the way through the Adventist system of education from kindergarten to seminary; yet it seems certain he was never exposed to the 1888 message of the covenants. However, the comments on the covenants in Galatians are a refreshing change. This author saw in Paul some of the truths that Jones and Waggoner saw. But a tinge of the 1888 confusion lingers about "the law in Galatians" in the comments on chapter 4:4, 5 where Christ is represented as redeeming only Jews who were born "under" the ceremonial law.

Chart, *The Covenants*, by Edwin Reiner
(Southern Publishing Association, 1967, p.19.)



This Chart is a Clear Illustration of the Error of Dispensationalism

Theme Songs

Put Thou Thy Trust In God

Put thou thy trust in God,
In duty's path go on;
Walk in His strength with faith and hope,
So shall thy work be done.

Commit thy ways to Him,
Thy works into His hands,
And rest on His unchanging word
Who heav'n and earth commands.

Though years on years roll on,
His cov'nant shall endure;
Though clouds and darkness hide His path,
The promised grace is sure.

Give to the winds Thy fears,
Hope, and be undismay'd;
God hears thy sighs and counts thy tears,
God shall lift up thy head.

Through waves, and clouds, and storms,
His power will clear thy way:
Wait thou His time, the darkest night
Shall end in brightest day.

Leave to His sovereign sway
To choose and to command;
So shalt thou, wond'ring, own His way
How wise, how strong His hand.

by J. Wesley

Faith Is The Victory

Encamped along the hills of light,
Ye Christian soldiers, rise,
And press the battle ere the night
Shall veil the glowing skies.
Against the foe in vales below
Let all our strength be hurled;
Faith is the victory, we know,
That overcomes the world.

Refrain

Faith is the victory! Faith is the victory!
O, glorious victory, That overcomes the world.

On every, hand the foe we find
Drawn up in dread array;
Let tents of ease be left behind,
And onward to the fray;
Salvation's helmet on each head,
With truth all girt about,
The earth shall tremble 'neath our tread,
And echo with our shout.

To him that us overcomes the foe,
White raiment shall be giv'n;
Before the angels he shall know
His name confessed in heav'n.
Then onward from the hills of light.
Our hearts with love aflame,
We'll vanquish all the hosts of night.
In Jesus' conquering name.

by John H. Yates