

HIS LAST WILL

A Revelation of Our Inheritances
in Christ Jesus,
being also a scriptural answer to
the error of Seventh Day worship.

By

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PREFACE

It is a real pleasure for me to write a brief prefatory note to this splendid exposition of a great theme by my friend, Dr. James A. Sutherland. I have frequently heard him present it from the teacher's rostrum and always with fresh interest and enjoyment, for I could not but realize that souls were being helped, and those who had been puzzled by conflicting views cleared and established in the truth. It is not easy in attempting to steer clear of the Scylla of legalism to keep from running into the Charybdis of license. In the effort to avoid Jewish legality, it is most natural to fall into antinomianism. But Dr. Sutherland has steered a careful course between the two extremes and shows in a most scriptural way how the believer is delivered from the law and yet enlaved to Christ.

I hope that every one who is seeking light in regard to the Sabbath question will read these pages thoughtfully and prayerfully, with an open Bible close at hand, looking up every reference and thus getting the exact connection. If so, I feel sure this exposition will be blessed of God to setting the soul at liberty and bringing it into the conscious enjoyment of the hallowed privileges of the New Covenant.

This Covenant is yet to be confirmed to restored

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Israel and Judah in the latter days, but Christians now get into the good of it in all the value of the Blood of the Covenant already shed on Calvary's tree.

May I add that I was not asked to write this introductory note. It was my own desire to do so, and I requested the privilege of linking my name and testimony in this way with that of the beloved author.

H. A. Ironside

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FOREWORD: A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

To every Christian there comes, sooner or later, the question of obedience to the will of God in holy living and Christian service. If one is not well established in the Grace of God, his very zeal may easily lead him astray into false sects or "isms." Thus it was that soon after I surrendered my life to the Lord to become a minister of the Gospel, I fell into the terrible bondage of legalism. My attention was called, through some Seventh Day Adventist literature, to the keeping of the fourth commandment, "Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy." This literature assured me that that commandment was as binding on Christians today as ever it was upon the Jews, and that, if I rejected the "truth" of the Seventh Day after it was once presented to me, my faith in Christ would avail me nothing—I would be a lost soul!

I had been raised in a good, Christian, Scotch home, where salvation was taught to be partly by grace and partly by works, (as it is still taught, alas, in so many Christian homes). So it was an easy matter for me to fall a prey to this unscriptural Seventh Day Adventist teaching. I came under bondage to

the law, and a period of great darkness and distress followed.

"Obey" became the keynote of the wilderness journey upon which I entered. How I searched the Bible to find out what I must obey! I read the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me," and away I would go to keep the law as a means of pleasing Him and proving my love for Him. How I sought by my good works to win merit with God, ignoring the teaching of our Lord, "This is the work of God, that ye BELIEVE on Him whom He hath sent." I read of the blessings that were to be conferred on those who were faithful in obeying the Ten Commandments, and into what turmoil and agony of soul I was thrown when I found that, according to the Seventh Day adventist teaching, I was worshiping on a man-made Sunday, instead of the God-given day! According to their teaching, I, who wanted to be pleasing unto God, was linked up with those who, by their presumptuous changing of the day of rest from the seventh to the first, had dared to add to the words of this Book, and I, with them, was in danger of all the plagues of the Book! Though a "born-again" believer, I was in danger of having my part taken away out of the Book of Life and out of the Holy City!

How the solemn challenge of the Lord would ring

in my soul, as though with the thunderings and fires of Mount Sinai, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away." "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till ALL be fulfilled." That was final. Heaven and earth had not yet passed away, and so the Seventh Day was still binding upon all Christians. How tragic that no one showed me that ALL law had been fulfilled in One and by One, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, on the cross, "abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the LAW OF COMMANDMENTS contained in ordinances" (Ephesians 2:15), "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Colossians 2:14).

Along with my efforts to please God by recognizing the obligation to keep the Jewish Sabbath and the other nine Commandments as a means of salvation, came renewed activities in the way of self-righteous works as a means of acceptance with God. I was as foolish as the Galatians: I had begun in the Spirit, but I was determined to be made perfect by the flesh. Never will I forget those days of fasting and prayer into which I entered to obtain holiness, but which only resulted in a wasted body and more self-complacency! Though it was a terrible cross to my proud soul, I forced myself to do personal work

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on the trains and ferry boats, and even in the city jail. I never knew of any fruit from these efforts done in the energy of the flesh. How could there be, when my motive was all wrong? I bow my head in humiliation as I see how my spiritual pride was being bolstered up, and a "holier-than-thou" attitude engendered!

But I must not dwell on the painful picture longer. Suffice it to say that I became so in bondage to every whim or impulse that might be a possible leading of the Lord, that my longsuffering mother and father actually feared for my reason. But through it all my loving, heavenly Father was working, for, after months and even years of failure and disappointment, I came to realize that I could never be holy enough to satisfy God, nor could I please Him by my self-righteous works.

"And none, O Lord, have perfect rest,
For none are wholly free from sin:
And they who fain would serve Thee best,
Are conscious most of wrong within."

This was my despairing conclusion, and with the Apostle Paul I cried out, "O, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? O God, save me! I cannot keep Thy law!"

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And He heard my prayer, for into the darkness of my struggles for peace, by keeping the Seventh Day, by performing good works, by zealous obedience to every detail of the law, by remorse over my continual failures, into this blackness shone the light of the glorious Gospel of the New Covenant, provided for by Christ through His death on the cross.

"If the Son therefore shall make you
free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

By the diligent study of His Word, and the illumination of the Holy Spirit, I learned that not only had my sins been put away by Christ's sacrificial death, but that that sacrifice opened up an entirely new economy, or dispensation, by which the Saviour had provided for me and for every believer a new life, a new nature, through which he Himself would live out His own life in us! Thus was I saved from the God-dishonoring doctrine that salvation is by faith in Christ plus works of the law. I learned to rest in His plain statement, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: *not of works*, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8, 9).

It is in gratitude to God for this revelation of His full and free salvation by grace through faith alone,

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that I pass on to others, in this written message, the blessed truths that have brought peace and joy to my own heart and to countless others in the length and breadth of the land to whom I have given the message on Bible Conference programs.

"Weary of earth, and laden with my sin,
I look at Heaven, and long to enter in:
But there no evil thing may find a home,
And yet I hear a voice that bids me come.

"So vile I am, how dare I hope to stand
In the pure glory of that holy land,
Before the whiteness of that throne appear?
Yet there are hands stretched out to draw me near.

"The while I fain would tread the heavenly way,
Evil is ever with me day by day:
Yet on mine ears the gracious tidings fall,
'Repent, believe, thou shalt be loosed from all.'

"It is the voice of Jesus that I hear:
His are the hands stretched out to draw me near:
And His the blood that can for all atone,
And set me faultless there before the throne.

"O great Absolver, grant my soul may wear
The lowliest garb of penitence and prayer,
That in the Father's courts, my glorious dress
May be the garment of Thy righteousness.

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"Yea, Thou wilt answer for me, righteous Lord:
Thine all the merit, mine the great reward:
Thine the sharp thorns, and mine the golden crown:
Mine the life won, and Thine the life laid down!"

—Stone

CHAPTER I

THE OLD COVENANT

The Meaning of the Word Covenant

First, we must understand that the two words, "covenant" and "testament," are identical in the Greek; they are used interchangeably throughout the New Testament as translations without exception of the one word, "diatheke." This word comes from a root, "diatithamai," which means, to assign, to dispose, to bequeath; so "diatheke," whether translated covenant or testament, has the meaning of "will and testament," just as we use that phrase today, to indicate the document by which a person disposes of or bequeaths his estate after his death.

The Content of the Old Covenant

We find the material for our study of "His Last Will," the last will and testament of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the book of Hebrews, whose theme is the superiority of the Christian faith over the Jewish. The contrast starts in the very first chapter and runs through the tenth. In the following majestic words, contrasting the Old Testament prophets with God's own glorious Son, the book opens:

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

The writer then develops his theme, showing that Christ is better than angels, better than Moses, better than the Aaronic priesthood, better than the Old Testament sacrifices, and also, that the New Covenant is better than the Old Covenant.

It is this last great message that will be the subject of our study. We will find the discussion of the Two Covenants in the eighth, ninth and tenth chapters of this epistle to the Hebrews. From time to time we will corroborate these teachings by other portions of Scripture. A clear understanding of the relation of the two Covenants is essential if one is to be freed from bondage to the law.

Let us read carefully all of the eighth chapter of Hebrews and portions of chapters nine and ten.

Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest,

who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount. But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God,

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

"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he 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 eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Hebrews 9:13-17).

"Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt-offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo,

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I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Hebrews 10:8-22).

From these passages we see very clearly that the Word of God draws a sharp contrast between the

First or Old Covenant, and the Second or New Covenant.

We know that God made several Covenants with His people in olden times—with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David. We ask at once, "To which of the various Covenants is reference made;" The answer is given by God Himself in Hebrews 8:9. He does not leave us in doubt, for He locates it as "the Covenant that I made when I took them by the hand, to lead them out of the land of Egypt." It is the one made at Sinai.

"In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai. For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount. And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; 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. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

"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" (Exodus 19:1-8).

After this promise by the people to keep the Covenant that the Lord is about to make with them, comes the camp's two day preparation for the great revelation of the Covenant, and on the third morning, we read:

"There were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. And the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mount; . . .

"And God spake all these words" (Exodus 19:16-20; 20:1).

Then follow the Ten Commandments, with which we are so familiar that it is unnecessary to quote them here; but we should note carefully that Israel actually heard God's voice, speaking the Commandments:

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven" (Exodus 20:22).

If the "first covenant" of Hebrews 8:7 was the one made at Mount Sinai—and we have God's word that it was—then it follows that the Ten Commandments were the first Covenant. Indeed we do not need to exercise human reasoning to deduce this conclusion, for again and again, the Ten Commandments and the Covenant are spoken of as identical; and, significantly, the ark which contained the two tables of the law was named according to its contents, the "ark of the covenant." Note carefully the wording of the passages where the expressions "covenant" and "ten commandments" are used interchangeably.

The account of the writing of the second tables of the Covenant, after the first had been destroyed because the people had broken their solemn pledge and indulged in gross idolatry, occurs in Exodus 34:27, 28, and is reviewed in Deuteronomy 10:4.

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Write these words; for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the word of the COVENANT, the TEN COMMANDMENTS" (Exodus 34:27, 28).

"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" (Deuteronomy 10:4).

Many years later, when the children of Israel were about to enter the land of Canaan, Moses reviewed the solemn occasion of the making of the Covenant in these words:

"And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, *even* TEN COMMANDMENTS; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone" (Deuteronomy 4:12, 13).

"And the Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words,

which the Lord spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly. And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the Lord gave me the two tables of stone, *even* the TABLES OF THE COVENANT" (Deuteronomy 9:10, 11).

Could words be plainer? The Sinaitic Covenant and the Ten Commandments are one. But someone is sure to say right here, "Oh, no! The Ceremonial Law, not the Ten Commandments, was the Old Covenant; I've been taught that all my life!" Well, what say the Scriptures? There is not one verse or passage anywhere that will support that commonly accepted theory. True, the ceremonial law grew out of a certain part of the Old Covenant, as we shall see, and so did the judgments or civil laws; but it is not proper to call either of them the Covenant itself. All three, the Covenant, the civil, and the ceremonial law, together, make up the Mosaic economy, and are called "The Law" in New Testament usage, which term we will meet many times in our study. The precise relation of the ceremonial law to the Old Covenant is clearly demonstrated in Hebrews 9:1, where we read:

"Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary."

That little word "had" settles for all who believe

God's Word that the Covenant was not the ordinances.

As we go on in our study we shall spend some time on the relation of the ceremonial laws to the Covenant, but at this point the important thing is to get clearly in our minds and hearts just what God means when He speaks of the Old or First Covenant. Two more verses will suffice, taken from the account of the dedication of the temple, some five hundred years after the making of the Covenant at Mount Sinai.

"There was nothing in the ark save the *two tables* of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt" (1 Kings 8:9).

"And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein is the *covenant* of the Lord, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt" (1 Kings 8:21).

Also the dispensation of Grace as given in the New Testament one thousand years after Solomon's words, we read:

"And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was

the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant" (Hebrews 9:3, 4).

No matter what one's previous idea has been, one must admit that here again the Covenant and the Ten Commandments are referred to as identical. It is impossible logically to hold any other view in the light of these plain declarations of the Holy Spirit in His Word.

The Purpose of the Old Covenant

We have seen that the Old Covenant was the Ten Commandments. It becomes pertinent to ask now, "What was God's purpose in making this Covenant with Israel, and why does He intimate, as He does in Hebrews, that this Old Covenant was not faultless?"

"For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second" (Hebrews 8:7).

We are all willing to recognize the faults of humanity and most of us have thought that the law—the Ten Commandments—was given to correct this faulty human nature, to improve and make men good. But God had another and an entirely different reason in giving the law, namely, to reveal to man the baseness of human nature—to show how evil it is:

"That sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful" (Romans 7:13).

The law indeed becomes a mirror in which man sees himself as God sees him:

"The wickedness of man was great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5).

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jeremiah 17:9).

"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and that all the world may become guilty before God" (Romans 3:19).

So the Ten Commandments were not given to make us acceptable to God by our efforts to keep those commandments; but were given on purpose to show up our sinfulness and make us realize our desperate need of a Saviour. The following Scriptures bring out these points very graphically, so that the most unlearned Christian can understand them.

"Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound" (Romans 5:20).

"What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the

law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, *that it might appear sin*, working death in me by that which is good; that sin *by the commandment* might become exceeding sinful" (Romans 7:7-13).

"The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7).

"But if the ministration of death, *written and engraven in stones*, was glorious . . . how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory" (II Corinthians 3:7-9).

"Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, *till* the seed should come" (Galatians 3:19).

To sum up: The Old Covenant, the Ten Commandments, written and graven on stones, was established on purpose to make us see, by its very prohibitions, how sinful are our hearts and how incapable we are of measuring up to its requirements, because of the deep-seated corruption and wickedness inherited by natural birth. It was given to make us realize our imperative need of a new nature, if ever we are to please God. Since Christ alone can effect such a change, the law becomes "our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (Galatians 3:24).

The experience of the converted Mohammedan, Sadhu Sundar Singh is a striking illustration of the character and purpose of that Covenant: he says,

"I had been taught from childhood according to the Law and Commandments of God, and, though I really wanted to live up to the Law, I found that I failed so often that at last I became hopeless. I knew that God was the Merciful and Compassionate, but I got no peace. I saw clearly, whenever I thought of my sinful state, that God and heaven are holy, and that even if my sins were forgiven, I could never enter the presence of the Holy God so long as my sinful nature remained unchanged and unpurified. For years I studied the Quran, Hadis, and the other holy books, that I might find how to get rid of the old nature and how to obtain salvation and new life, but all my efforts

were vain. I thank the God of Love that, even before I had begun to search for Him, He was already seeking for me. Even when I had found Him, and He had found me, I did not fully know Him till I was born again. Now I know Him whose likeness is in me, and who, since the foundation of the world, has been mine and I His. My heart is now full of peace, for I have found the real Islam, which is Jesus Christ, who was crucified and now lives forever. Now I am spending the rest of my life in His service."

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CHAPTER II

THE NEW COVENANT

The Content of the New Covenant

We now turn to the next important question: What is the New Covenant? Just as God clearly specifies what the Old Covenant was, in like manner He designates the New.

"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; (1) I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: (2) 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. (3) For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 8:10-12).

Three things are included in this New Covenant: (1) the writing of God's laws in our *hearts and minds*, instead of on tables of stone, which is a graphic way of describing a new nature; (2) the privilege of intimate, personal fellowship with God, as a result of this new nature; and, as a basis for both these

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blessings, (3) the complete, eternal putting away of our sins.

At once our thoughts turn to Paul's contrast of the Covenants, found in his message to the church at Corinth.

"Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with *the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart.* And such trust have we through Christ to Godward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones was glorious, . . . How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.

"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same

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image from glory to glory, by the same Spirit"
(II Corinthians 3:3-11, 17, 18).

Here we find corroborated what we have already seen, that the Old Covenant was the ministration of death—the Ten Commandments written and engraved upon stones; and we learn that the New Covenant, in contrast, is the ministration of life, a life of righteousness, written in human hearts by the Holy Spirit; that the culmination of the Spirit's work is the complete development of that life into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

Other passages bring out other phases of the New Covenant, the blessings which are ours by reason of our redemption by Christ.

"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin" (Hebrews 10:14-17).

"That he would 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 might be filled with all the fulness of God.

“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen” (Ephesians 3:16-21).

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (II Corinthians 5:17, R. V.).

These various Scriptures show us that the New Covenant is really the full Gospel of Grace—the salvation that follows Christ’s one offering of Himself for us. It is the good news of sins forever forgiven, of blessed fellowship with God, of a new disposition—the new birth, imparted to us, whereby the laws of God are implanted in our inmost being. And not

His laws only, but Christ Jesus Himself dwells in our hearts by faith, and thus the very impulses which govern the Eternal God, in love and holiness, become our new life, for the “love of Christ constraineth us,” love which regulates all our relations both with God and man.

Is it any wonder, then, that the New Covenant, the

ministration of the blessed Holy Spirit, completely overshadows the Old Covenant, and that the reflected moonlight glory of that Covenant is completely eclipsed by the sunlight of the New Covenant? We will learn more of the marvels of this Covenant of Grace as we follow it through the Word; but we will never fathom all of its blessedness until the Sun of Righteousness shall arise, when “the day break, and the shadows flee away!”

The Better Promises of the New Covenant

Having learned that the Old Covenant was the Ten Commandments, and that the New Covenant is salvation by grace, let us go back to the first statement which is made in Hebrews 8:6 regarding the relative merits of the two Covenants, and we find that the New Covenant is better because it is established upon better promises.

“But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises” (Heb. 8:6).

Let us examine these promises. Within the Old Covenant there were two promises given to Israel, which sum up all other promises made by God to His people. At the end of the second commandment we read:

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“Shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments” (Exodus 20:6).

while at the end of the fifth commandment we hear God say,

“ . . . That thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee” (Exodus 20:12).

Both of these promises are but shadows of the fulness of the blessings which are ours in Christ, and which are given through the New Covenant.

The “mercy” promised under the Old Covenant was granted to the covenant-breakers on the basis of the animal sacrifices, which God ordained to be offered in the ceremonial system. Knowing full well that they never could keep the Commandments, He in His mercy provided a means of atonement for the sinner—an atonement which was only a “covering” for sins, as the Hebrew word “kaphar” indicates. These sacrifices, as we know from the teaching of Hebrews 10, could never put away sin: they were only efficacious in that they pointed forward to the Divine sacrifice, the Lamb of God, who some day would appear, to take away the sin of the world. So the ceremonial law was the fulfillment of God’s promise of mercy to those who loved Him.

“For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things,

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can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered, because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. *But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance made again of sins*

every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt-offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10:1-10).

“But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, . . . neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the

blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he 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 eternal inheritance" (Hebrews 9:11-15).

"Now once in the end of the world (age) hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Hebrews 9:26).

"And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 10:17).

This, then, was the best that God could do, under the Old Covenant; the people's sins were remembered again every year, on the great Day of Atonement, but were "covered" by the offering of the animal sacrifices that God Himself commanded them to make. He had no pleasure in these sacrifices, we read, but inasmuch as they were all a *shadow* of the "good things to come," the sacrifice of Christ, who, by His death, would redeem the transgressions that had accumulated under the Old Covenant, He accepted them and extended His mercy to the offenders.

But what is done with our sins under the New Covenant? By that marvelous sacrifice of the God-man, they are completely put away—they sink into oblivion, so far as God is concerned, and our con-

sciences are purged from dead works to serve the living God, which is another way of describing the new nature which becomes ours when we believe. Many other passages elaborate these promises of forgiveness and cleansing.

"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: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being *justified freely* by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:21-24).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be *made the righteousness of God in him*" (II Corinthians 5:21).

Not only is pardon obtained for the guilty sinner; but by that same divine sacrifice, the righteousness of God is put upon him. This is the meaning of "*justified freely*": God's righteousness is both imputed and imparted to us. How vastly superior is the New Covenant to the Old, in its treatment of the sin question! Well may we join in McCheyne's beautiful hymn, "Jehovah Tsidkenu," in praise of the Lord, who becomes our righteousness.

"I once was a stranger to grace and to God,
I knew not my danger, and felt not my load;

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Though friends spoke in rapture of Christ on the tree,
Jehovah Tsidkenu was nothing to me.

"I oft read with pleasure, to soothe or engage,
Isaiah's wild measure and John's simple page;
But e'en when they pictured the blood-sprinkled tree,
Jehovah Tsidkenu seemed nothing to me.

"Like tears from the daughters of Zion that roll,
I wept when the waters went over his soul;
Yet thought not that my sins had nail'd to the tree
Jehovah Tsidkenu — 'twas nothing to me.

"When free grace awoke me, by light from on high,
Then legal fears shook me, I trembled to die;
No refuge, no safety in self could I see—
Jehovah Tsidkenu my Saviour must be.

"My terrors all vanished before the sweet name;
My guilty fears banished, with boldness I came
To drink at the fountain, life-giving and free,
Jehovah Tsidkenu is all things to me."

So much for the first promise of the Old Covenant;
what about the second promise? It assured long life
in the land of Palestine: and it, too, was amplified
and emphasized by later messages of God to Israel.
If they obeyed His Covenant, not only would they
dwell in the land, but they would prosper greatly
in material things, and be a blessing to all the fam-
ilies of the earth by their testimony. But how miser-
ably they failed, in spite of the pleadings of the

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prophets, to keep God's law; until at last God could
endure it no longer and cast them out.

In contrast to this promise of physical life with
material blessings in an earthly land, the New Cove-
nant promises eternal life in Heaven itself! The new
nature that is imparted under the New Covenant is
a new life, one that will live forever, for we saw
in Hebrews 9:12 that Christ "obtained *eternal re-
demption* for us." Other passages elaborate and em-
phasize this wonderful fact, that, under the New
Covenant, a new life, spiritual in character and
everlasting in duration, is for all those who believe.

"He that believeth on the Son hath *everlast-
ing life*" (John 3:36).

"And this is the promise that he hath prom-
ised us, even *eternal life*" (I John 2:25).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his
only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth
in him should not perish, but have *everlasting
life*" (John 3:16).

* "And this is life eternal that they might know
thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom
thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

"In my Father's house are many mansions:
if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to
prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare

(*) Cf. Heb. 8:11. "For all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

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a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3).

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am: that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, *and that fadeth not away*, reserved in heaven for you" (I Peter 1:3, 4).

Note the most striking difference between the promises of the Old and New Covenants. The first promises were all conditional on man's obedience, so we find God prefacing the Old Covenant with the significant words, "If ye will." But in all the wonderful promises of the New Covenant, there is not a single "if." They are all absolutely unconditional, because they depend, not on man's obedience, but on the obedience of the Spotless Son of God, and so we find the New Covenant beginning with the emphatic declaration, "I will." One has only to believe God, and all the blessings of this Covenant are his.

In keeping with the conditional character of the Old Covenant, its keyword was "Obey." Over and

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over in the Old Testament Scriptures we find the words, "Obey!" "Do!" "Do!"

"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" (Exodus 19:5).

"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" (Jeremiah 11:3, 4).

But the keyword of the New Covenant is "Believe!"

"This is the work of God, that ye *believe* on him whom he hath sent" (John 6:29).

"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that *believe on his name*" (John 1:12).

"*Believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31).

"With the heart man *believeth* unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:10).

In concluding our study of the better promises of the New Covenant, we must call attention to another phase of the marvelous promise to write God's laws in the heart and mind. We have already seen that this means a new nature, a new life dominated by the indwelling Christ. But that is not all. God goes even further and declares that by virtue of that new nature and the indwelling Holy Spirit, believers actually become members of the heavenly family, sons of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ! What infinite love and grace, to lift sinful humanity to such a height!

"But when the fulness 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" (Galatians 4:4-7).

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself (Himself) beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ" (Romans 8: 14-17).

Yes, it is the New Covenant that raises believers from the Old Testament status of servants, to the blessed position of sons and heirs.

"He owns me for His child,
We now are reconciled;
God's pardoning voice I hear;
I can no longer fear;
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And 'Father, Abba, Father' cry."

How different this cry from that of the children of Israel, who, when they heard God's voice from the mount, begged Moses to mediate between them and God, as His presence filled them with the utmost fear! This brings to mind that magnificent passage in Hebrews 12:18-24, where Mount Sinai with its awe-inspiring terror is contrasted with the mount of the New Covenant, Mount Sion, or the heavenly Jerusalem. Those who are saved by faith do not come to Mount Sinai—that is, to the Ten Commandments—but come to the New Jerusalem, symbol of God's free grace.

"For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded. And if so much as a beast

touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to *Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant*, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Hebrews 12:18-24).

Having once come to the New Covenant, the heavenly Jerusalem, how can any true believer ever turn back to the Old Covenant, the earthly, Mount Sinai?

"When on Sinai's top I see
God descend in majesty,
To proclaim His holy law,
All my spirit sinks with awe.

"When on Calvary I rest,
God, in flesh made manifest,
Shines in my Redeemer's face,
Full of beauty, truth, and grace.

"Here I would for ever stay,
Weep and gaze my soul away:
Thou art heaven on earth to me,
Lovely, mournful Calvary!"
—Montgomery

The Recipients of the New Covenant

Some at this point will say, "That indeed is very beautiful. Undoubtedly, the New Covenant is vastly superior to the Old, but what has that to do with us? Both Covenants were given by God to Israel and since we are not Jews, why concern us with a covenant of blessing which belongs only to them?"

A very reasonable question, for there have been too many promises given by God to Israel which have been misappropriated by the Church. But in this instance we should note from our previous discussion of the New Covenant, that while the Old was given from Mount Sinai, the New Covenant *was given to Israel from Mount Calvary*, that is, *when Jesus poured out His soul unto death on the cross*. How important it is to notice this; for we know that something of peculiar interest to both Jew and Gentile happened at that very moment.

"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and *strangers from the covenants* of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: *But now in Christ Jesus* ye who sometimes were far off are *made nigh* by the blood of Christ. For he is our

peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace . . . For through him we both (Jew and Gentile) have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Ephesians 2:11-18.).

"There is neither Jew nor Greek . . . for ye are all one in Christ" (Galatians 3:28).

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (Hebrews 10:19-22).

The first of the great truths emphasized in these passages which is of peculiar interest to both Jew and Gentile is that the middle wall of partition between them is broken down, and both are now made one in Christ Jesus. The Covenant, given to Israel at Calvary, broke down the wall of separation that for centuries had set the Jew apart, and from that moment the blessings of the New Covenant have been for all mankind.

The other fact of interest to both Jew and Gentile is that the veil into the holiest place, which had al-

ways shut out the Jew from access to God's presence, has likewise, through the death of our Lord, been torn asunder; and now, hand in hand, both Jew and Gentile "Have access, by one Spirit, unto the Father."

How beautifully the Holy Spirit recognizes this unity! In the tenth of Hebrews, where He elaborates the provisions of the New Covenant and shows this access into the holiest by the blood of Christ, He reviews the promised New Covenant, but in this instance, while reiterating all its provisions as given in chapter eight, He omits any reference to the Israelites as beneficiaries of the Covenant, and shows that it is for all the sanctified in Christ. "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14).

Surely our Lord had this very idea in mind when He said,

"Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:16).

This, He said, was to take place when He laid down His life for the sheep (John 10:17), when the wall of separation was obliterated between Jew and Gentile.

In fact, this inclusion of Gentiles with Jews in Christ's redeeming work was prophesied by Isaiah

in a passage in which the Father is speaking to the Son, and says,

“It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth” (Isaiah 49:6).

“Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. *He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied*” (Isaiah 53:10, 11).

These words of prophetic forecast, given seven hundred and fifty years before His work on Calvary's cross, bring out the satisfaction that was Christ's as He looked forward, past the garden, past the judgment hall, past the cross itself, and saw “His seed,” that vast throng of justified ones who, all down the ages, would believe on Him and be saved!

We also believe that this was what He saw that night when He instituted His Memorial Supper, as, looking into the cup, He gave thanks—thanks for that vast company which are to surround the throne,

“Which no man can number, of all nations kindreds, and people, and tongues . . . who have

washed their robes, and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (Revelation 7:9, 14).

So we see from God's own Word that the New Covenant, with all of its marvelous provisions of Grace, is for Jew and Gentile—for all, of whatever race, who accept it by faith, for

“WHOSOEVER WILL, MAY COME.”

The Results of the New Covenant

Having seen that the New Covenant made at Calvary is for all who will receive it, let us refresh our minds as to its provision—the riches which God has for us in Christ. An illustration may help us here.

Albert Berti, a waiter in a San Francisco restaurant, recently received notification that he was heir to a dukedom in England and a fortune of \$35,000,000 left by the late Bordie Berti.

We are thrilled when we hear of a humble waiter lifted to the high position of an English peerage—the owner of an estate—the heir to millions—the associate of the Prince of Wales and the King of England! Anyone with imagination can picture the English barrister, with authority from the King's Court, arriving at San Francisco and, in conference with his client, instructing him about his inheritance. How much must be done—the transfer from the

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humble, odorous restaurant to a palatial hotel room becoming to a duke with a vast English estate; the change from the garb of a restaurant waiter to garments in which he is fit to meet the King; the purchase of transportation, the finest to be procured; lastly, the training in speech and deportment—an imparting by word and example of instruction on Court etiquette, so that in no way shall the heir bring discredit to his testator and legacy.

Can we imagine the heir—the young duke—not interested in the vast estate, the broad acres, the palatial home, the new obligations and the new privileges?

How quickly the days of the journey with his instructor slip by, and with what a thrill he reaches his homeland and begins his strange, new life, in fellowship with royalty!

All this is very wonderful, we say, but how much more our amazement to see Him who inhabiteth eternity, exalting sinful man to a place of fellowship with Himself!

“He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; that he may set him with the princes of his people” (Psalms 113:7, 8).

We, too, on our long journey to our royal, heavenly home, need an instructor, a guide, to fit us for life

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in that new environment, and we have One, in the person of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete. It is He, who in justification, strips us of our old garments of sin, and robes us with the garments of righteousness; in sanctification lifts us from the old environment of sin, and fits us for daily life and conduct becoming to sons of God. It is He who whispers the words of assurance and promise which enable us to sing:

My Father is rich in houses and lands,
He holdeth the wealth of the world in His hands,
Of rubies and diamonds, of silver and gold,
His coffers are full—He has riches untold.

“I’m a child of the King, a child of the King,
With Jesus my Saviour, I’m a child of the King.”

Poor, bankrupt humanity was raised out of moral insolvency, lifted by the great inheritance gained for us by Jesus Christ on the cross, not merely to the par value of creation, but far above par, to the status of sons of God, members of His household, to spend the long eternities, flawless and perfect, in His blessed presence!

“Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life?” (I Corinthians 6:3)

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren” (Romans 8:29).

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"Estranged in sin was I, nor thought, nor way, was right;
But now in Christ I stand, unblemished in His sight.
By faith complete in Christ, my sin is put away;
By faith in Him I died, and rose to live alway;
And now the things above grow dearer and more clear,
And glory only waits till Jesus shall appear."

—James M. Gray.

What a foretaste of the fulfillment of the last promise of the New Covenant, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people," we find in John's vision in the Revelation:

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, *and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.* And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away . . . He that overcometh shall inherit all things: *and I will be his God, and he shall be my son*" (Revelation 21:1-4, 7).

In this, God's last message to man, we have His own word as to when the New Covenant shall be

consummated. When our earthly journey is over, and the former things have passed away, then, throughout the eternal ages, He will be our God and we shall be His people.

Oh! that we had ability to apprehend the glories of the New Jerusalem, the heavenly life in fellowship with God Himself—the goal of our faith in Christ—where all tears are wiped away and where we shall serve Him forever, realizing the intimacy of our relation as sons! Sufficient is it to note that even this is foreshadowed, even though dimly, in the Old Covenant, for we read:

"Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary . . . Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience.

"It was therefore necessary that the *patterns* of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the *heavenly things themselves* with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Hebrews 9:1, 9, 23, 24).

There shall we be some day with Him, in actual, personal presence! In the meantime, we have the great privilege of entering into the holiest by the

blood of Jesus. And all along the way we are to enjoy the pledge of the riches which are to be fully realized when He shall come. Till then,

“I have a never failing bank,
My more than golden store;
No earthly bank is half so rich,
How then can I be poor?

“Sure all the wealth this world contains,
May never be compared
With what the grace of God’s dear Son
Hath for our souls prepared.

“Sometimes my banker smiling says,
‘Why don’t you often come?’
And when I draw a little check,
‘Why not a larger one?’

“ ‘Why live forever in such want,
When I in wealth abound?
Why come and take a dollar note
When you may have a pound?’

“Should all the bankers close their doors,
My bank stands open wide
To all the chosen of the Lord,
For whom the Saviour died.

“Richer and richer still I grow
As poorer I become,

And thus continually will it be
Till I arrive at home.

“Then will I praise my Banker’s grace
And sound His fame abroad,
Make heaven echo with my voice
Before the throne of God.”

The Better Token or Sign of the New Covenant

We could not complete our study of the New Testament without noting its token, or sign, for it is an interesting feature of God’s dealings with men that with each of the great Covenants He gives an accompanying sign which expresses the essence of that Covenant. To Noah He gave the rainbow:

“And God said, This is the *token* of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a *token* of a covenant . . . and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh” (Genesis 9:12, 13, 15).

To Abraham was given the sign of circumcision, indicating Israel’s separation from all the rest of the nations.

“As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations . . . And 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. And I will give unto thee . . . all the land of Canaan,

for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God . . . And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a *token* of the covenant betwixt me and you" (Genesis 17:4, 7, 8, 11).

In like manner the Sabbath was given to Israel as a sign of their Covenant with God.

"Speak thou also unto the children of Israel saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a *sign* between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: . . . Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a *sign* between me and the children of Israel forever" (Exodus 31:13-17).

How well this sign of the Seventh Day symbolized the spirit of the Old Covenant! We have seen that the keyword for this Covenant was "obey," and it is quite fitting that its sign should be the observance of a day of rest which was only *earned* after six days of constant toil. They must go out and work, work, work, work, work before they had the right to rest. Most graphically does the Jewish Sabbath epit-

omize the genius of the Old Covenant, and an old hymn expresses that spirit:

"Our six days' work and toil are done
The Sabbath draweth nigh,
With joy we reach the rest we've earned,
And praise our God on high."

But this Old Covenant Sabbath can never be fitted into, or properly represent the New Covenant, for the rest of the Christian is not *earned*. On the contrary, it is a gift of God received by faith. Our rest, in the finished work of Christ's redemption, comes first; and then, in the peace derived therefrom, we go out to work for the Christ who gave His all for us.

"I would not work my soul to save:
For that's already done;
But I would work like any slave,
For love of God's dear Son."

The "new wine" needs a "new bottle," and the new economy a new day. You cannot pour the blessings of the New Covenant into the parched, shriveled, dried-up forms of a religion which gives blessings as a reward for works, when the New Covenant reverses the order and gives new life out of which good works naturally spring. It was most natural, therefore, that under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the first day of the week should be set aside

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as the day for worship, as it not only commemorates the resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the grave, and the advent of the Holy Spirit into the world; but it aptly symbolizes the chief fact of the New Covenant, that our entrance into rest comes first—rest from our own efforts to save ourselves and rest in what God has done to save us. As a result of that life of rest through faith, we go out to work, work, work, for our Lord.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, *created in Christ Jesus unto good works*, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:8-10).

Good works are very definitely in God’s plan for us, but they come as a *result* of salvation, not as a *means*. We are created in Christ Jesus on purpose that we may do good works—the works flow out of the new life which God has imparted. In fact, He Himself is the inspiration for the good works.

“It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13).

“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

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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 for ever and ever. Amen” (Heb. 13:20-21).

Yet the Lord’s day, the first day of the week, precious as it is to every believer, is not the token of the New Covenant. It was never commanded by our Lord, but was left to be voluntarily observed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

“One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord, and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it” (Romans 14:5, 6).

To the true child of God every day is a holy day!

Do we, then, have any token to represent this final covenant of the Lord Jesus Christ? Yes, indeed! It is the Memorial Supper of our Lord, instituted by Him on the last night before His death on the cross, when He was to inaugurate the New Covenant. He enjoined this ordinance on his followers as a sacred obligation and privilege.

“The Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread; And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this

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do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the NEW TESTAMENT in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (I Corinthians 11:23-26).

The Old Covenant was sealed with the blood of the innocent sacrifice, and so must the New be sealed with the precious blood of Christ, "as of a lamb without blemish and without spot!"

"Thus we remember Thee, and take this bread and wine, As Thine own dying *legacy*, and our redemption's sign."

And what a wonderful sign this is which the Lord has given us! How much more it commemorates than does the Sabbath Day, and how much richer its spiritual content! It points us ever backward to His death on the cross, where, by virtue of His sinless life, His perfect keeping of the law, He was able to make atonement for us and so to usher in the New Covenant; and it ever points forward to His glorious coming again, when He shall receive us unto Himself and the New Covenant will be consummated! In the meantime it ever points inward, and constantly reminds us that the new nature of the believer must be sustained by heavenly food—by Christ, the Bread of Heaven, sent down from

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God. Indeed, what depths of meaning this beautiful ordinance reveals to the one who recognizes it as Christ's own seal of His New Covenant!

"His body broken in our stead
Is seen in this memorial bread,
And so our feeble love is fed
Until He come.

"The drops of His dread agony,
His life-blood, shed for us, we see;
The wine shall tell the mystery
Until He come.

"O blessed hope! with this elate,
Let not our hearts be desolate,
But, strong in faith, in patience wait
Until He come."

—Rawson

CHAPTER III

THE NEW COVENANT IS THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

The Old Covenant Annulled by It

Thus far, we have considered the words "covenant" and "testament" according to ordinary usage, as agreements, or compacts, and such they are. But there is another meaning to the words, a beautiful meaning which the Holy Spirit Himself employs to convey some of the richest truths about the New Covenant. He brings out the truth that the New Testament is Christ's will, in which He makes disposition of an eternal inheritance:

"And for this cause he 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 *eternal inheritance*. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Hebrews 9:15-17).

In other words, no human being could ever come into the heavenly inheritance except through the death of Him who made the will providing that inheritance.

Looking at the New Covenant, then, as the Last Will and Testament of Christ, it does not surprise us to learn that the former "Will," the Old Covenant, is "taken away," "vanished," "done away," "disannulled," for that is what always happens to a former will when a subsequent testament is executed. And note that these are the very words that the Spirit uses to show the present status of the Old Covenant.

"Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second" (Hebrews 10:9).

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

"For there is verily a *disannuling* of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God. And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest: (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec;) By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament" (Hebrews 7:18-22).

It is hard for some of God's earnest people to grasp

this fact that the Old Covenant, the old "will," is done away, but it was never intended to be permanent! Such is the plain teaching of the Word. We know that for twenty-five hundred years of God's dealings with men prior to Sinai, there were no Ten Commandments. Long before the law was given, God dealt with His chosen people through the Covenant of Promise, made to Abraham and his descendants. The law did not disannul that Covenant, as we read in Galatians 3:16, 17:

"Now to Abraham and to his seed were the promises made . . . And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."

It could not disannul the preceding covenant, nor can it co-exist with the succeeding covenant. When first quoting the verses in the third chapter of Galatians, we emphasized the purpose of the giving of the law, which was, "because of transgressions;" but we learn also in this passage that the Law Covenant was to obtain for a limited time only—"until the seed" (that is, Christ) should come. In fact, the 29th verse links the New Covenant with the Abrahamic Covenant of Promise, treating the Old Covenant of Law as only a temporary dispensation in between.

"Wherefore then serveth the law? It was add-

ed because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid; for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

“But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 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. And if ye be Christ's, *then are ye Abraham's seed*, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:19-29).

So then we have God's Word for it that the Old Covenant served *only* until Christ came and fulfilled His redemptive mission. The Old Covenant ceased to function the moment that the New became operative. Just when that was will be shown later.

At the close of one of our Bible Conferences, where I had given this address, a very loyal Seventh Day Adventist came up to me and said, “I want to ask you just *one* question—Did God give the Ten Commandments, or did He not?”

“He most certainly did,” I replied.

“Well, then, that settles it for me; if God gave them, I for one am going to keep them!” And away she went in righteous triumph.

You will agree with me that her ultimatum sounded very pious but it really was “zeal without knowledge,” an ignorant discrediting of God's own Word and a belittling of the blessed Person and Work of our Lord Jesus Christ. This woman failed to recognize the principle that God deals differently with men in the different stages of His revelation of Himself to them, which dealings are called dispensations. The fact of the two dispensations of Law and Grace should be recognized by every Christian for the New Testament abounds in references to them; such as that in John 1:17: “For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” The passage in Galatians 3, quoted above, contrasts the law dispensation with that of *faith*, which is just another aspect of the dispensation of grace.

The transitory character of the legal dispensation, or the ministration of death, and its displacement

by the grace dispensation, or ministry of life, is brought out in II Corinthians 3:5-11, which we have already studied in another connection:

“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able *ministers of the new testament*; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if *that which is done away* was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.”

Here the Ten Commandments, “Written and engraven in stones,” are called the “ministration of death” and “of condemnation,” and their glory, “which was to be done away” (verse 7) is contrasted with the glory of the “ministration of the spirit, and of righteousness” (verses 8, 9, 11), which so excels the former in glory as almost to dim it completely. Then in verse 11, these Ten Commandments are very

explicitly referred to as “that which is done away,” so there is nothing for us but to believe that God means what He says, and that the Old Covenant of the Ten Commandments, *including the fourth*, has really been done away by *God Himself*, and a far more glorious Covenant substituted for it.

This fact of the temporary duration of the law given by God Himself may be illustrated by an incident in the life of a woman I know, who, when a two-year-old child, was found by her mother trying to slip some matches out of the house to give to some older children to start a bonfire. The little child, when she found that she was going to be discovered by her mother, quickly sat down on the floor with the matches under her. But it was too late—her mother investigated, and then followed a very serious and solemn “giving of the law” that matches must never, never, under any circumstances, be touched, under penalty of the severest kind of *old-fashioned* punishment. The instruction went to the child’s heart, and, so far as she can remember, that commandment was never disobeyed—while a *child*.

But the scene changes—that little child, grown to womanhood, became my wife. Imagine, when our honeymoon was over, I would come down to breakfast on the first morning, only to find a beautifully set table with nothing on it but cold food. In re-

sponse to my questioning glance, imagine my wife saying, "I am sorry, dear, not to have piping hot coffee and golden brown toast, and the Scotch oatmeal that you enjoy so much, but you see, years and years ago my mother made a law that I must *never* touch matches and I cannot disobey my mother."

And I would say, "But, my dear, that was only a law for you when you were a child and might hurt yourself with matches. It does not apply to you now that you are grown up."

Then suppose she would answer, "No, I can't feel that way; nothing can change my mother's law. She gave it, and I intend to keep it."

Patiently I would explain, "But that was a law for the time that you were under your mother's care. You are now my wife, and your relation to your mother is not what it was before. You are now freed from bondage to her because of your marriage to me; through the law of love for me, written and engraven on your heart, you will be led to do the things that please me, and I very much want my hot coffee and toast!"

Being a reasonable soul, my wife would rejoice in her freedom from the old law, and her privileges under the new covenant of wifeness. That is just what God wants every child of His to do—come out

from under the yoke of bondage to the Old Covenant and rejoice in the privileges of the new relationship to Himself, which His sacrificial love has made possible in the New Covenant, members of the Bride of the Eternal Heavenly Bridegroom.

In the second place, that seemingly pious utterance of the Seventh Day Adventist belittles the glorious Person and Priestly work of our Lord. For when one undertakes to work out his own salvation by keeping the Ten Commandments, (and without this the Seventh Day Adventists claim that there is no salvation), he testifies that he does not consider Christ's sacrifice sufficient, that he must do something himself toward his salvation. This is the doctrine of these misled people: one does his best to keep the Old Covenant, and wherein he fails, Christ's sacrifice "makes up the deficit." But this teaching is absolutely untrue to Scripture, and shows a very meager understanding and appreciation of the wonderful work of our Saviour on Calvary. Let us read what the inspired writer says of our Saviour in this book that we are studying, and we will get a better understanding of the supreme worth of the Person who accomplished our redemption on the cross:

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken

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unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, *when he had by himself purged our sins*, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:1-3).

"But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also *to save them to the uttermost* that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself" (Hebrews 7:24-27).

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, *who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens*; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Hebrews 8:1, 2).

"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once

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into the holy place, *having obtained eternal redemption for us*. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Hebrews 9:11-14)

"By the which will *we are sanctified* through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:10-14).

Here is no mixture of works with grace. He does not perfect forever them that keep the law! He alone, by virtue of His deity and sinless humanity, obtained eternal redemption for us by His dying on the cross in our stead. We have nothing to do now but to accept His gift. It is because of the power of His divine, endless life (Hebrews 7:16), and His human perfection (Hebrews 7:26-28), that His sacrifice is so all-sufficient and that He is able to save to the uttermost, not those who "keep the Ten Commandments,"

but those who "come unto God by Him." A clear vision of the majesty of the One who "His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (I Peter 2:24), and who is now set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, will cure any of us from thinking that we, in our puny righteousness, can do anything to add to His finished atonement.

Of the other almost countless passages that might be quoted to show the error of this doctrine of faith plus works, a few only will suffice:

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36).

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

"Then said they unto him, What shall we do that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye *believe* on him whom he hath sent" (John 6:28, 29).

"He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written

for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also to whom it shall be imputed, *if we believe* on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:20-25).

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, who-soever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith" (Galatians 5:4, 5).

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And 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.

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (I John 5:10-13).

I realize that it is extremely hard, when all one's teaching has been that the way to gain God's favor is to be "good and kind," and to keep His laws, especially when this teaching follows the natural tendency of fallen human nature to seek to win salvation

by works of the flesh, it is hard, I repeat, to grasp the fact that the Old Covenant of works has finally been annulled by the New, and that salvation is *all* of grace. This has already been definitely proved by the many quotations given, but we can close this exposition with nothing so strong as the picture which God gives us in the letter to the Galatians. After Paul shows in the third chapter that the law was a temporary expedient to show men their need of Christ, and so was to be in force only until Christ should come, he tells us that since we are now "children of God through faith," we are no longer under the schoolmaster, the law. But in the closing part of the fourth chapter he goes further yet, and, by the Spirit, admonishes us to cast out the Old Covenant, as a means of sanctification, and to rejoice in the freedom of the New.

"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 Hagar. For this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia . . . and is in bondage with her children . . . Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecut-

ed 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 freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free" (Galatians 4:22-25, 28-31).

Since God Himself, through the pen of the inspired apostle, commands us to cast out "Hagar," the Old Covenant, who are we to dare to disobey Him and try to keep her in the home on the same footing as "Sarah," The New Covenant? But no; there is not room for both, so let us most gladly obey Him, putting away from us forever all efforts to win peace with God by our good works, and let us sing with the poet Toplady:

"Could my tears forever flow,
 Could my zeal no languor know,
 These for sin could not atone,
 Thou must save, and Thou alone;
 In my hand no price I bring:
 Simply to Thy cross I cling."

A word of explanation is necessary here. The Old Covenant of Ten Commandments is annulled, and done away, as a *Covenant— as a basis of fellowship* between God and man; the commandments themselves as moral precepts are not destroyed. The law

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is still "good," as Paul declared in I Timothy 1:8, "if a man use it lawfully;" it still brings conviction and stops the mouths of sinners, for it is

"made . . . for . . . the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine" (I Timothy 1:9, 10).

But as a *Covenant* the Commandments are no longer in force; man could not live up to their requirement of perfect obedience *as the condition of fellowship with God*. In Exodus 6:7 we have God's clear statement of the fellowship He desired to enjoy with man:

"I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God."

and in chapter 19:5, He states the "if," the condition, which is *obedience*.

"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."

In the New Covenant, the goal of divine-human fellowship is the same:

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"I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people" (Hebrews 8:10).

But the basis for this fellowship is on an entirely different plane. The Law Covenant failed because it depended on what man could do, so it was set aside, displaced by the New Covenant which depends on what *God* does *for* man, thus providing a satisfactory basis for fellowship.

To one who has been born and raised in a log cabin, or some humble home, it is a heart-breaking experience to see the old homestead demolished, even though it is to be replaced by a more commodious and attractive residence. All of the associations of childhood hover around the old fireside, and it causes keen regret to see the old place torn down, as I know from my own boyhood experience. Quite similar feelings may well be roused in one whose first experience of longing for God has been associated with earnest efforts to keep the Ten Commandments, when he finds this house of good works tumbling down around him! He may even be thrown for a time into spiritual chaos; but when he comes to realize that the Old Covenant was done away on purpose to erect in its stead the beautiful New Covenant, which covers far more ground than the Old, then he will take joyfully "the spoiling of his goods" of self-righteousness, and will glory in the new

building, which is to be the tabernacled place of the Lord God Himself.

“Free from the Law, oh! happy condition,
Jesus hath bled; and there is remission:
Curs'd by the Law and bruised by the fall,
Grace hath redeemed us once for all.

“Now we are free—there's no condemnation,
Jesus provides a perfect salvation;
'Come unto Me,' oh! hear His sweet call,
Come, and He saves us, once for all.

“Once for all, O sinner, receive it;
Once for all, O brother, believe it;
Cling to the Cross, the burden will fall,
Christ hath redeemed us once for all!”

—Bliss

The Time of the Annuling of the Old Covenant

Someone will surely say here, “Your arguments and your array of Scripture quotations sound very plausible, but there is one thing you have evidently overlooked. Why, if the Seventh Day was done away, along with the Old Covenant, did Jesus Himself keep that Day? For that He did keep it, no one can deny.”

The answer is very simple. Jesus was “made of a woman, made *under the law*” (Galatians 4:4), so that during all His earthly life, He, like every other

devout Israelite of His day, was under the Old Covenant, for the New Covenant had not yet been given. In fact, He was the only Hebrew who ever kept the law, and having in His own blessed, sinless life fulfilled every jot and tittle of it, He “took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us,” so that never again could that old law of Commandments trouble the believer, the new creation in Christ Jesus (Colossians 2:14). Note that in this passage it is not our sins that were nailed to the tree, but the ordinances that were against us. Hear the shout of exultation in Galatians 3:13, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us!”

There is, therefore, no point in quoting Jesus' keeping of the law as proof that we must do so too, for He *had* to live *under* the law, in order to redeem us *from* the law, and to give us the blessing of Sonship, which is one of the provisions of His Covenant. A thoughtful reading of Galatians 4:4, 5 will impress this truth forever on our hearts:

“But when the fulness 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.”

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This brings us to the next question: If Jesus was under the Old Covenant, when did the New Covenant start? And here again we are not left in doubt, for we have the time set forth very clearly in Hebrews 9:16, 17:

“For where a testament is there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.”

We are all familiar with the law regarding a person's last will and testament, which annuls and supersedes all former wills; and we understand perfectly that even the last will is not in force until the death of the testator.

So the New Covenant began to operate when our blessed Lord and Saviour, after crying, “It is finished!” gave up His Spirit on the cross. The great Testator is dead—His last will and testament is now in force!

“Hark! the voice of love and mercy
Sounds aloud from Calvary;
See, it rends the rocks asunder,
Shakes the earth and veils the sky;
‘It is finished! It is finished!’
Hear the dying Saviour cry!

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“ ‘Finished!’ All the types and shadows
Of the Sinaitic law;
‘Finished!’ All that God had promised;
Death and hell no more shall awe;
‘It is finished! It is finished!’
Saints, from hence your comfort draw.”

—Adapted

CHAPTER IV

CHANGE OF ECONOMY DEMANDS A NEW WILL

Increase of Wealth

In the preceding chapter we learned that Christ's Last Will and Testament annulled the former Will, the Old Covenant, and that this last Will came into effect only after His death. A survey of the reasons why this new Will became necessary will prove illuminating and will fill our hearts, I trust, with a new appreciation of the wonderful legacy that has been left to us by our Saviour.

We shall find that this divine Will and Testament is quite like human wills in several points. In the first place, we all know that a great increase in a man's earthly estate demands the making of a new, up-to-date will on his part. Let me use an illustration that has proved helpful. Imagine, if you can, that I am a successful business man and have acquired wealth to the extent of \$16,000.00. I make a will, leaving to my wife, say, \$8,000.00, and to each of my four children, \$2,000.00. But after making that will, I do not die but continue investing my money, until, after ten years, my \$16,000.00 has grown to \$200,000.00. What do I do now? You say at once,

“Make a new will.” But I reply, “Why make a new one? Was not the former one legally correct? Was it not adequate and good?” You answer, “Certainly, it was adequate and good for the time and conditions that obtained when you made it, but conditions are changed now and they demand a new will and testament.” Would it not be supreme folly for me to declare, “Well, since that first one is legally correct and perfectly expressed my will when I made it, I will abide by that will and make no other!”

But no—I see the force of your contention that new conditions demand a new testament, and so I draw up another document, disposing of my “more glorious” estate, giving to my wife her share and to each child its portion. This new will and testament *automatically sets aside and annuls the former will* which I wrote ten years before. But this new will is not in force until I die!

In like manner,—I say it reverently—God, at Mount Sinai, made a testament, a covenant, which adequately expressed His will for His people at that time; but even that Will, good and holy and spiritual as it was, could not meet the new conditions of the Gospel of the Grace of God. A new will became an absolute necessity after the incarnation and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, for He made in that incarna-

tion and death a complete investment of all of His resources for man’s welfare, in time and eternity, and secured for us treasures and blessings which the Old Covenant or Testament could not possibly give.

Jesus Himself foretold that the Old Covenant could not function for the new dispensation, when in Matthew 9:17 He gave the parable of the bottles:

“Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.”

The new wine of the New Covenant, wherein salvation is wholly by faith, cannot possibly be squeezed into the old bottles of hopeless human efforts to keep the law; it must have entirely new bottles; and these it has, in the provisions of the New Covenant.

There is one striking difference between a man-made will and the Lord’s last will, and that is, in the former’s limitations. How many a father, writing out his last will and testament, assigning to each of his loved ones his share of the estate, has paused in the midst of the writing to wish, in heart-longing and sorrow, “Oh, that I might leave to my wayward boy a new nature, a new disposition, a new character, so that he would make the right use of this legacy!”

But no human document ever written has been able to change the nature of a sinning loved one. How marvelous, in contrast, is this last will and testament of our Lord Jesus Christ, which does provide for its "beneficiaries" a new nature! For we are not only made "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ," of the eternal riches in glory, but we are made, here and now, partakers of the divine nature, with God's laws written on our hearts and minds, as we have seen.

A new nature, to enjoy the new relationship and the new "wealth"—could Infinite Love do more than this?

How the Inheritance Was Increased

One may well ask, "How did Christ gain this great increase of wealth which He put at our disposal by His Last Will and Testament?" And again the analogy of the man-made will holds good, for an advance in the values of an estate usually comes as the result of thrift, economy and, often, of real sacrifice. No less is this true of the Eternal Christ who practised the most astonishing thrift, exercised the most rigid economy, and made the most amazing sacrifices in order to pile up for us the great treasures of the New Covenant. Paul in Philipians gives us a little

inkling of what He sacrificed in His investment of Himself for us:

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not a thing to be tenaciously held, to be equal with God; But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Philipians 2:5-8).

"Oh, who like Thee, so calm, so bright,
So pure, so made to live in light?
Oh, who like Thee did ever go
So patient through a world of woe?

"Oh, who like Thee, so humbly bore
The scorn, the scoffs of men, before?
So meek, forgiving, Godlike, high,
So glorious in humility!"

Let us trace the path of the Lord of Heaven as He emptied Himself of His glory for our sake, and came to Bethlehem as a little Babe to begin His investment. No kingly cradle for His precious baby body—no soft, luxurious robe for His undefiled flesh—not even a pillow for the head that had known Heaven's crown! And then, during the long, painful journey toward the cross, what economy of power for Himself, what lavish bestowal of it upon all those who

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needed it! No bread for His exhausted body, after the strain of the wilderness temptation, though the divine power was His, and the stones lay ready for His hand! But bread and to spare for the hungry multitudes and the bread of life itself for all who would partake! No home, not even a place to lay His head, on His weary journeyings to and fro; but for us, an eternal Home among the many mansions!

“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich” (II Corinthians 8:9).

Poor for our sakes that we might become rich—was there ever a more amazing investment?

But that is not all. Where, in any other life, was there so much of service crowded into three short years as in His? Always time for every needy sinner or sufferer, yet no time for Himself so much as to eat or to drink. Always pouring strength and life upon others, and then, while they sought their rest in refreshing sleep, how often He devoted all the long night hours to pray to His Father, that He might bring down to lost mankind the spiritual resources of Heaven!

“My Father’s house of light,
My glory circled throne,
I left for earthly night,
For wand’rings sad and lone;

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I left, I left it all for thee,
Hast thou left aught for Me?

“I suffered much for thee,
More than thy tongue can tell,
Of bitt’rest agony
To rescue thee from hell;
I’ve borne, I’ve borne it all for thee,
What hast thou borne for Me?

“And I have brought to thee
Down from My home above,
Salvation full and free,
My pardon and My love;
I bring, I bring rich gifts to thee,
What hast thou brought to Me?

Nothing, nothing for Himself—all, all for others!

And, oh! the sacrifices our Royal Saviour made in order to win for us the glorious treasures of the New Covenant! We all like to hear of royalty sacrificing for “common humanity.” How our hearts rejoiced at the story of the former Chinese Emperor who, when a small boy, was deposed from the throne of the Mandarins. In order to help alleviate the terrible famine conditions among his countrymen, he gave to the rescue workers vast treasures from the fast diminishing store, including eight hundred beautiful pearls. This was a very real sacrifice on his part.

But who ever heard of Royalty sacrificing honor

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itself in order to help his subjects? Yet this is what our Saviour did! The dark, lonely path He chose to follow for our sakes led to Calvary, where He, the sinless One, *was made sin* for us, taking His place as a common malefactor, he there endured the scoffings and railings of the people, though it was their sins as well as ours that He was bearing!

"From Calvary a cry was heard—
A bitter and heart-rending cry;
My Saviour! ev'ry mournful word
Bespoke Thy soul's deep agony.

"The scourge, the thorns, the deep disgrace—
These Thou could'st bear, nor once repine;
But when Jehovah veiled His face,
Unutterable pangs were Thine."

Yes, He must be forsaken by God while He wears our garments of filthy unrighteousness, for these garments of ours will never do for the courts of Heaven. And so, as He pours out His soul an offering for sin, He wins the right to clothe us in His own robes of glorious righteousness. Now He can present the church unto Himself, as a bride "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing!"

"Jesus, the Lord, our righteousness!
Our beauty Thou, our glorious dress!
Before the throne, in this arrayed,
With joy shall we lift up the head.

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"This spotless robe the same appears
In new creation's endless years,
No age can dim its glorious hue,
The robe of Christ is ever new.

"Till we behold Thee on Thy throne,
In Thee we boast, in Thee alone.
Our beauty this, our glorious dress—
'Jesus, the Lord, our righteousness'."

Increase in the Family Circle

An increase in wealth is not the only thing that necessitates a change in wills; there is another condition which is recognized by civil law as demanding a new testament and that is, an increase in the family circle. I well remember the case of a Christian father whose wife died, leaving a will which bequeathed everything to him; but between the making of that will and the death of the wife, there had been born into the home a beautiful baby girl. Because of the failure of the mother to mention the child in her will since she counted wholly on the father's love to administer properly the estate to the good of the little one the courts tied up the inheritance for years in a way that greatly embarrassed the father and really frustrated the mother's desires.

There has indeed been an increase in the household of God as many passages plainly declare; but, unlike

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erring man, God makes no mistakes, and has adequately provided, both in time and in eternity, for the new children born into His family since the cross.

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the *sons of God*” (I John 3:1).

Away back in the prophecy of Isaiah is an early intimation of the increase in the heavenly family through the death of Christ:

“When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed . . . He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied” (Isaiah 53:10, 11).

The passage in the third chapter of Galatians, which we have studied before, is interesting in this connection also:

“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:24-26).

Here we find that two things happen when we come to Christ in faith: we are delivered from the law, the Old Covenant, and we become sons of God.

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Already we have seen that Jew and Gentile were made one in Christ through His death on Calvary—that the middle wall of partition was broken down. In the context and continuation of the passages in Ephesians, which reveals this truth, we have this same thought as that in Galatians quoted above; we learn that we are made members of the household of God—brought right into the family circle!

“That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: . . . Now therefore (that is, after Christ’s death) ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:12, 19).

And this sonship is not merely something to be enjoyed in the distant future, when we reach heaven, no, it is a blessed reality here and now, for we read:

“The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the sons of God” (Romans 8:16).

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:6).

Marvelous redemption. Not only delivered from the bondage of the Old Covenant of law, but by

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virtue of the great sacrifice of our Saviour, whereby our sins are forgiven and a new nature imparted to us we are taken right into the family of the infinite, holy God!

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!” (Romans 11:33)

This sonship involves another marvelous blessing—the right to an inheritance from the Father:

“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ” (Romans 8:17).

If we are heirs of God, how shall we receive our heritage unless the Infinite One remembers us in His will? That is just what He has done, as we have seen, in His Last Will and Testament, bestowing upon us all spiritual blessings in this life and in the ages to come, a “far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory!”

Not the least of the marvels of this gift of sonship is the fact that it carries with it the promise that we shall some day, when He comes, actually be like our Lord and Saviour, in outward form.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we

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know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is” (I John 3:2).

“We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change this body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body” (Philippians 3:20, 21 R. V.).

“Behold! What wondrous grace
The Father hath bestowed
On sinners of a mortal race
To call them sons of God!

“Nor doth it yet appear
How great we must be made;
But when we see our Saviour here,
We shall be like our Head.”

Change Necessitated by Taking a Bride

Another change in human relations which demands a change of wills is that which occurs when the owner of an estate takes to himself a bride. One cannot conceive of a husband who truly loves his wife, who would fail to make adequate provision for her in his will. All the wealth at his disposal has been lavished upon her in his lifetime, and love finds a way to perpetuate this wealth when death calls him hence.

“All the world loves a lover,” we say, but what

special interest always attaches to royal alliances! What excitement prevails throughout the whole kingdom when the news is noised abroad that the king's son has betrothed to himself one who will share with him all the honors of royalty! How much more the joy when the message is heralded abroad that the Prince of Glory has purchased to Himself a bride—purchased, we say, for He had to pay the price of death on the cross in order to redeem her from bondage unto Himself; and having thus redeemed her, He made her by His will the recipient of all the treasures of His heavenly inheritance. And here the figure breaks down, for while the earthly bride receives her legacy only upon her bridegroom's death, and must enter into it in sorrow and loneliness, the heavenly Bride receives not only her legacy, but her risen Lord, her Bridegroom, to share its glories with her forever!

The Holy Spirit gives a graphic picture of the wonderful change that comes to the servant who is made the Bride of Christ, in Romans 7:2-6. It is the illustration of a woman bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives, but free to marry another upon the death of that husband. Just so, we are told, we who once were in bondage to the *law* are now delivered from that bondage, since "by the body of Christ," (that is, by His death,) we have died to that wherein

we were held, and we are now married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God.

"For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now *we are delivered from the law*, having died to that wherein we were held, that we we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

Who, that has once known the unspeakable joy of this intimate, vital relationship, "married to Christ," can ever be satisfied to go back again to the bondage of the law, the "first husband?" And how can anyone, in the face of such plain teaching, insist that we must be in bondage to the first husband and married to the second at the same time? And yet, this

is exactly what is done by Seventh Day Adventist teaching, and all other teaching of salvation by works!

An illustration is in point here which emphasizes the change that takes place when one is released from bondage to the law and "married" to Christ. I had as a classmate in my school days a fine girl of English parentage, who was a splendid scholar and very ambitious for a college education. But to her keen disappointment, her father lost his health, with the result that she had not only to give up her studies, but to find work to help keep the family from distress. She was fortunate in obtaining a good position as private secretary with our local multimillionaire's wife. In this office, she made herself quite valuable to her employer and was treated with every consideration; but while other young girls entered the home as relatives, friends or proteges of the philanthropist, her place was always that of the servant in the background. Certain hours every day she must be on duty, rain or shine, sick or well; she must earn her salary, no matter what sacrifice of pleasure or what inconvenience it might entail. Other young women received college scholarships, training in the arts, or professional educations, but no such fortune was hers; she was only the wage-earner in that home, always under laws, rules, and regulations.

Years passed in this way until her employer, the wife of the multimillionaire, died. To the secretary's very genuine sorrow was added the fear that now she would lose her position and the income that she so very much needed. But to her great relief, the secretary was kept on as an employee by the husband, who appreciated her worth and depended on her help in carrying out his wife's last wishes.

How the whole state of California was electrified, a couple of years later, when the news was flashed out over the wires and printed in glaring headlines in all the newspapers, that the great financier had chosen for his bride, out of all the many possibilities, this lowly secretary! It read like a fairy tale, and all who knew the young woman rejoiced in her good fortune. No longer a servant to receive orders from others—hers it was to give them. No longer working for the pay-check—all the wealth of her millionaire husband was now at her command. No longer working from sheer necessity—she now delighted to carry on the management of the great house, far more taxing than her former work, but made easy by the love for her husband, in whose new-found fellowship she deeply rejoiced. For her, old things had passed away indeed, and all things had become new!

This is just a faint picture of the far more wonderful exaltation that has come to us, who, having been

freed from bondage to our old Master, the law, by the sacrificial death of our Saviour, are now "married" to Him, our heavenly Bridegroom. No longer are we under stern commands: "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not!" We are now in love with the Lawgiver Himself and delight to carry out His every desire. No longer do we obey through fear of the judgment—now, His perfect love casts out fear. No longer anxiously working to obtain merit with God—now, all the merit of our Divine Bridegroom is put to our account! No longer doing good works from a sense of duty—being made, under the New Covenant, a new creation in Christ, His *love now constrains* us to pour out our lives in constant and earnest service for Him, "whom having not seen we love; in whom, though now we see Him not, yet believing we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (I Peter 1:8).

"The Church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ, her Lord;
She is His new creation
By water and the word;
From heaven He came and sought her
To be His holy bride;
With His own blood He bought her,
And for her life He died."

The New Will Includes and Transcends the Old

One last analogy will conclude this portion of our study. Referring again to the illustration of my sup-

positious increase in wealth, you will recall that my last will annulled my first, and that it would come into force only upon my decease. But you will readily see another point; my last will, while disposing of much greater inheritance, yet really included all the wealth represented by the first document. In other words, the \$200,000 of my final estate included the \$16,000 of my earlier estate, though perhaps in different form.

In the same way the essence of the Old Covenant is included in the New; all its moral precepts are taken over, in one form or another, into the New Economy, only greatly enhanced in scope and value. Jesus gave a number of illustrations of the wider scope of His law of love over the Old Covenant commands, in His Sermon on the Mount, and later He summed up all the law and the prophets in His command to *Love*. How love fulfills all the law is explained by Paul in his letter to the Romans.

"Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour:

therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:8-10).

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment.

"Ye have heard that it was said by 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 already in his heart.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father, which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:21, 22, 27, 28, 43-45).

It is this law of love written in our hearts and minds by the Holy Spirit, under the New Covenant, that makes it a delight to do the will of God, not because of threat or promise of reward, but because of the compelling power which operates from within. In his new gratitude and love to Christ for saving him the child of God is filled with the desire to please Him in everything that he does or thinks.

The experience in the life of a Christian brother whom I know illustrates this truth. One day a relative gave him a beautiful gold bracelet for his little daughter, stating that he had found it. This Christian, noticing as he received it that it bore on the inside the name of a little girl, was constrained to find the original owner. Judging by the Ten Commandments, he was under no obligation to seek her; he had not stolen the bracelet. But the higher law written in his heart impelled him to restore the bracelet to its rightful owner. This was far more than the Old Covenant demanded of its followers.

I recall an amusing incident in this connection. A friend had once in her Sunday-school class a young woman who came under the influence of a Seventh Day Adventist lecturer, who mightily upset her peace of mind by telling her that she had the "mark of the beast" upon her, since she was worshiping on the "Popemade Sunday" instead of the God-given Sabbath. The troubled young woman appealed to her Sunday-school teacher for the true doctrine of Scripture on the subject, and after studying some of the passages that have been claiming our attention, she came to see the blessed truth that freedom from the Old Covenant is ours, because of the establishment of the New. In the course of their discussion, the Sunday-school teacher made the remark; "I have

never once, in all my Christian life, performed an act or refrained from an act because of the Ten Commandments; they never so much as enter my mind! But my greatest aim and joy in life is to do the things which will please my blessed Lord."

In her new-found joy, the young woman went at once to the lecturer, showing her Bible verses and repeating her teacher's comment on the Ten Commandments. The former's reply reveals how little the Seventh Day Adventists grasp the divine principle of grace, for the lecturer replied, "Well, all I can say is, I would hate to live next door to a woman who wouldn't even *try* to keep the Ten Commandments!"

She need not have worried, for all consecrated Christians go far beyond the mere keeping of the Commandments in their dealings with others. Church history proves this, for the Church's missionary and philanthropic activities transcend anything that was known under the Old Covenant and are but the out-working of the "inwrought" salvation of the New. For instance, not content with keeping the first Commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," true Christians do much more: by sacrificial prayer, giving, and going to the ends of the earth, they strive earnestly to win idolators from the sin of breaking that Commandment, and to lead

them to the worship of the true God. With the other commands it is the same; the law of *love* includes and transcends the law of Commandments.

Someone will say, "I can see how this is true of the moral precepts of the Old Covenant, but how can the fourth commandment, the hallowing of the Seventh Day, be included and transcended in the New Covenant?" The answer to this important question is also given in the Word. You will remember that the Sabbath with its complete cessation from work was a sign between God and Israel, commemorating the long rest of God after His work of creation was finished.

"It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed" (Exodus 31:17).

The very word "Sabbath" is from a Hebrew root meaning to rest, to be in repose, to desist from exertion. So in its meaning, as well as in its observance, the Sabbath symbolized God's rest, after He finished His work of creation.

But in the New Testament we learn that the Sabbath is something else; it is a shadow, or type.

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the

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new moon, or of the sabbath (days): Which are a *shadow of things to come*: but the *body* is Christ" (Colossians 2:16, 17).

As a sign, the Sabbath, the complete cessation from work, looked back to the rest that followed the first creation. It symbolizes the fundamental truth of the New Covenant, the absolute cessation from our own exertions to save ourselves, and our repose in Christ's completed salvation.

"For we which have believed do enter into rest; . . . For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his" (Hebrews 4:3, 10).

The Old Covenant had one day of rest after six days of toil; the New Covenant has a perpetual state of rest, typified by that Old Covenant Sabbath, called a shadow.

But there is another thing about this shadow that we should notice, and that is, its impermanence. We are given a definite example of the way the Lord does away with shadows when the reality comes, in the case of the earthly tabernacle and its ordinances of worship.

"We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched,

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and not man . . . For . . . there are priests that offer gifts according to the law; Who serve unto the example and *shadow* of heavenly things" (Hebrews 8:1, 2, 4, 5).

"For the law having a *shadow of good things to come*, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices . . . make the comers thereunto perfect" (Hebrews 10:1).

The shadow pictured graphically the way of access to the presence of God in the holiest place, from which all were shut out by the veil except the High Priest, who could enter only with the blood of the sacrifice. This was the shadow of Heaven, God's dwelling place, from which sinners were all shut out. But when Christ made a way of access into the true, the heavenly tabernacle by His death on the cross, at that very moment the veil in the earthly sanctuary was rent in twain, showing that God had no further use for the shadow now that the reality had come. It had served its purpose and was cast aside.

In like manner, after the true rest in Christ has become ours, we no longer need the shadow, the Seventh Day; it too, as part of the Old Covenant, passes away. How greatly the New Covenant's spiritual and eternal rest transcends the Old Covenant's temporal and physical rest! To the Jew, one day in seven was holy; to the child of God, living up to the

privileges of the New Covenant, all days are holy, for they are all a part of that blessed rest which becomes his when he trusts in the Saviour's glorious redemption. His great desire and purpose now is to please and honor Him every hour of every day.

"How blessed, from the bonds of sin
And earthly fetters free,
In singleness of heart and aim,
Thy servant Lord, to be;
The hardest toil to undertake
With joy at Thy command,
The meanest office to receive
With meekness at Thy hand.

"Thus may I serve Thee, gracious Lord,
Thus ever Thine alone,
My soul and body given to Thee,
The purchase Thou hast won;
Through evil or through good report
Still keeping by Thy side,
By life or death, in this poor flesh
Let Christ be magnified."

CHAPTER V

THE NEW COVENANT FINAL BECAUSE ETERNAL

Assured, Procured, and Secured by the Triune God

The superiority of the New Covenant over the Old, the replacement of the Old Testament by the New Will, and the inclusion of the essence of the Old in the New, all these have been verified by the Scriptures.

But I hear someone asking, "What assurance have we that this New Covenant is final? Beautiful as it is, will it succeed any better than did the Old? We read that the first Covenant was glorious, that it was holy and good, and that it was spiritual; yet it was an utter failure, in that it could not make the people righteous. Though accompanied by promises of mercy and glorious blessings in the land of Palestine, if obeyed, and by warnings of certain fearful punishment if disobeyed; still Israel failed miserably to keep that Covenant and had to be set aside. What reason have we for believing that the New Covenant will be any more successful? May it not also fail, and another supersede it?"

God gives the answer. The New Covenant will never fail. It does not depend upon what man has

done or can do but it rests upon what the Infinite God planned to do, has done, and will do. There are two passages which emphasize the finality of the New Covenant because of the character of the work that God does in Christ and through the Holy Spirit.

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him” (Hebrews 7:25).

This passage very clearly teaches that the New Covenant blessings are to reach out into the eternities. This word “uttermost” is a combination of two Greek words, “pan” and “teles,” which mean the termination of all, “pan”—all, and “teles” from “tello” to set out for a goal, the point aimed at as the limit, the conclusion, finality. It means all, right up to finality. The adjective form means complete, entire, finished. It is for this reason that this New Covenant is called the eternal covenant. It includes all that God has for man and all that God Himself can do.

The second passage is in like manner from the book that deals with the subject of the New Covenant, and is at the very end of the book.

“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 for ever and ever” (Hebrews 13:20, 21).

It is final for it is the “everlasting covenant” through which God Himself, by Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit, is working in us “that which is well pleasing in His sight,” by which we are perfected completely, thoroughly.

There is still a third passage which might well be noticed.

He hath perfected forever those who come unto God by Him.

“Perfected *forever*” in Greek, “eis to dienekes,” from two words, “dia,” which means through, and “enegka,” to bear or carry, that is, carried through, not part way, but all the way. It really means perpetually, forever, on to the end without interruption.

A careful study of the teaching concerning the success of this New Covenant, and the ultimate working of the Covenant discloses that God can well speak of its eternity, for it is no longer what man does with God’s help, but it is simply man working out that which God has already accomplished and worked within. It is a revelation of what God can do, and what God purposes to do as man yields to Him.

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:12, 13).

It discloses all three members of the Godhead in active operation; God, the Father, the ultimate source and fountain head, the one who planned the Covenant, and makes full provision: God, the Son, procuring the blessings and becoming surety for its fulfillment: and God, the Holy Spirit, the supernatural and heavenly executor of its various provisions.

The Father's Part

It is quite clear from Scripture that God the Father is the origin, the source of the glorious blessings of the New Covenant.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Ephesians 1:3, 4).

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son" (Romans 8:29).

From the beginning of the eternities this was "his

good pleasure," our ultimate holiness and conformity to Christ, and our presence in fellowship with Him in the heavenlies, in the full glory of Christlikeness forever. It was He, the Eternal Father, who gave His only begotten Son.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

It was He to whom Christ referred when speaking of the Holy Spirit and the necessity of His ministry.

"And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you" (Luke 24:49).

It is the Father's provision that the Holy Spirit be sent from heaven to carry on the work of sanctification in our hearts, day by day, until the glorious hour when Christ shall return for His people and "we shall be like Him," and "God shall be all in all," and the Father's purpose realized by His Son and through His own Holy Spirit, in His children.

The Son's Part

Having given His life to secure the blessings of the New Covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ is going to see it through.

"For the law made nothing perfect, but the

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bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we draw nigh unto God. And inasmuch as not

without an oath he was made priest; . . . by so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament."

The New Covenant will succeed, because Christ, the God-man, is the surety for it. He has made Himself responsible for the keeping of man's part as well as God's part. He does this by taking up His high-priestly work in the Holy of Holies above—that great ministry of intercession, through which He is able to "Make all grace abound" unto us.

"Arise, my soul, arise! Shake off thy guilty fears;
The bleeding sacrifice in my behalf appears;
Before the throne my Surety stands,
My name is written on His hands!"

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us" (Hebrews 7:25).

Moment by moment, hour by hour, never tiring, never growing weary of our failures and shortcomings, our wonderful Saviour pleads for us at the Father's throne; and we know that the Father always hears and answers the Son. Strength for each trial, power to meet every temptation, power also to wit-

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ness for Him, are all there for us if we will but accept them by faith.

"Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able" (I Corinthians 10:13).

"But God hath promised strength for the day,
Rest for the labor, light for the way,
Grace for the trials, help from above,
Unfailing sympathy, undying love."

Just so, there is no need for us to worry. Christ of Calvary is behind the New Covenant now, and what David prayed for, we can now claim as ours.

“Be surety for thy servant oh God” (Psalms 119:122).

How often we have heard that “this *new* was in the *old* concealed.”

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord; I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and

will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

“Rejoice, believer, in the Lord,
Who makes your cause His own;
The hope that’s built upon His word
Can never be overthrown.

“Weak as you are, you shall not faint,
Or fainting, shall not die;
Jesus, the strength of every saint,
Will aid you from on high.

“As surely as He overcame,
And triumphed once for you,
So surely you that love His name
Shall triumph in Him too.”

The Holy Spirit's Part

How many losses, improper adjustments, and unnecessary sufferings have come to beneficiaries of a will by the failure to appoint the right executor. I well remember a young father, planning to go away to the World War, who wanted his motherless child cared for in case he should be stricken down on the battle field. In addition to drawing up a will which

adequately provided for his daughter, he wished to commit the child's interests and the execution of his last will and testament into the hands of one whom he could trust to administer his estate as he himself would do. He became restful when he received the consent of one in whom he had absolute confidence. He felt that he could go away, leaving the helpless daughter in the hands of one who would handle all his affairs as he himself would handle them if he were present.

This was the situation of Christ, the Son of God. He through His great investment, had gathered up vast stores of spiritual wealth for mankind, but His work was done. He must go away; and it was absolutely essential to the ultimate success of His last will and testament that He have a thoroughly reliable executor, to see to the carrying out of all its gracious provisions. Such an One He found in the Person of the Holy Spirit!

Did anyone know better than the Lord Himself the weaknesses and failures of the human heart?

"He needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man."

Had not man failed when given a Covenant that was holy, just and good? Yes, and he will always fail if left to his own unaided wisdom and strength. But

Christ could leave that little group of impotent disciples behind Him, confident that His great Covenant could be carried out, for He *knew* the character of His Executor, and He could "bank" on Him!

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John 16:7-14).

"But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8 R. V.).

"And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

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"Ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise" (Ephesians 1:13).

What a marvelous, efficient Executor He has been! From the day of Pentecost, when He made His formal advent into this world and assumed the grave responsibility, on down to the present day, He has been executing Christ's last will and testament. On that first day He reproved three thousand souls of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; He guided them into truth; and He mightily glorified the risen Saviour. He filled the disciples with supernatural power as Christ had promised He would, and fitted them for the task of witnessing to His resurrection. That was just the beginning. During the centuries that have followed, He has ever been engaged in the blessed work of carrying out the Son's will, bringing the treasures of the New Covenant to all who will receive them. Millions upon millions of redeemed ones in glory will be the proof of the earnest and efficient execution of our Lord's last will and testament by the Holy Spirit. Our glad hearts exclaim, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gifts, the Son and the Spirit; who 'make assurance double sure'."

"FATHER, from whom all blessings flow,
For all we are and have and know
And hope, to Thee be praises given,
Our Father, Thou! Who art in Heaven!

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"JESUS, through whom all blessings flow,
By sacrifice on Cross below
And intercession at the throne,
Our praise be Thine, Eternal Son!

"SPIRIT, by whom all blessings flow,
Into our hearts until they glow
With life and raptures from above,
To Thee be praise, Celestial Dove!

"THRICE-ONE, from whom all blessings flow,
Thy creatures everywhere bestow
Upon Thy name their praise and boast
Thee! Father, Son and Holy Ghost!"

CHAPTER VI

THE BENEFICIARIES OF THE WILL

Now, dear reader, after seeing the glorious provisions of the Last Will and Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ, which the "God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus," planned for us from before the foundation of the world, how can you refuse Him, or hold back from an immediate acceptance of the legacy He has for you? Hear the exclamation of the Apostle Paul, as he contemplates this wonderful salvation:

"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (Hebrews 2:3)

"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the *blood of the covenant*, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Hebrews 10:28, 29)

But, says someone, "Oh! I do not want to neglect this great salvation! I want my heavenly legacy, but how am I to obtain it?"

The answer is, by simple faith. As we review all

God's covenants and dispensational dealings with mankind, we find that, whereas His promised blessings are given freely and gladly, they must likewise be freely and gladly received by man. This mutual giving and receiving springs out of the essential nature of God and man. It is the Creator's nature to bestow; the creature's, to receive. But since God has made man in His own image, with the power of exercising his own will, God leaves the matter of accepting His proffered blessings of the New Covenant wholly to man's voluntary choice. God will not force His gifts upon any of us, but, having made known to us what His marvelous, eternal plan for us is, He leaves it to us to exercise our wills, either to accept or reject, as we choose.

"Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely" (Revelation 22:17).

But if you choose to accept, then there is only one way to enjoy the wonderful legacy Christ has provided for you, and that is, just as you would enjoy any other legacy that was left to you—receive it by faith. Open your heart to the glorious truth that Christ has not only died to save you from sin and death, but has "willed you" a marvelous inheritance which begins in this present life in spiritual riches and power and joy, and extends on into the eternities.

Is it not significant that this epistle to the Hebrews, which so thrills us with its masterful presentation of our inheritance under the New Covenant, is the very book that contains the most striking warning against unbelief, and the most inspiring incentive to faith, that is found in all Scripture? It is as though the Holy Spirit, by double emphasis, would admonish us against failure and encourage us to success by His use of definite illustrations from the history of Israel. In chapters three and four, He reviews the pitiable example of Israel's failure to enter into the land of Palestine through their unbelief in God's oft-repeated promise to give them victory, and warns against a possible failure on our part to enter into our heavenly inheritance through like unbelief. Then, in chapter eleven, immediately upon the close of the treatise on the New Covenant, He piles up the "great cloud of witnesses" to the power of faith to "subdue kingdoms, work righteousness and obtain promises" in order that we, who live under the New Covenant, might be encouraged by this array of Old Covenant worthies to appropriate by the same kind of faith all the great promises that are ours in Christ.

"Faith is the ability to act," as Doctor E. Y. Mullins has said, and as you take God at His word and step out into the current of His divine will for you, as you turn from your old dependence on self-efforts to joyous dependence on the perfect work of Christ, you

have *acted* on the revelation God has given you—you have exercised faith. Such a faith comes as a result of knowing what God offers you in His word, and it *grows* as you learn to know Him better. This knowledge comes only from the study of His self-revealing Word. The heirs of a great estate, if sincere and conscientious, will thoroughly acquaint themselves with every detail of the document that bequeaths the inheritance to them, that nothing be overlooked or omitted; and the heirs of the Kingdom of God will surely be as wise and as trustworthy in the mastery of the details of the rich inheritance willed to them by their Lord.

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17).

“The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits” (Daniel 11:32).

It was because the heroes of faith of Hebrews 11 knew God so well that they were able to accomplish what they did. They had gotten their eyes off self and on Him. Immediately upon the close of the long list of exploits credited to these mighty men of old, we have the application for our lives:

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth

so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race which is set before us, Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:1, 2).

Will you not just now look away to Him? Will you not take Him at His word? He promises you, “Who-soever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” And back of that invitation He has wealth enough, power enough, and love enough to make you His own child and a legatee of His Last Will and Testament.

I read once a striking story of a young woman whom a wealthy gentleman wished to adopt as his own daughter and heir. As she was an orphan and of legal age, the decision was wholly hers to make, whether or not she would accept the offer, giving up her own name and her old life and accepting a place in the home of wealth and influence. She gladly decided to make the great change and soon was a happy member of the rich man’s household, enjoying to the full her new privileges and pleasures.

There were, however, certain steps to be taken before her adoption was legally complete. One of these involved the young woman’s signature to a document, to be signed during the life of the father. This was the final act which would make her the lawfully adopted daughter and heir. So full of social activi-

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ties and engrossing engagements was she that she kept postponing the trivial task until a "more convenient season." One day her new father, without the least premonition, was suddenly stricken down and died in a few hours—and the papers were still unsigned! Alas for the young woman's prospects! Distant relatives hurried to the scene, and because the girl had been too busy to sign the legal papers at the proper time, she was speedily dispossessed of all the wealth which might have been hers, and which the rich man really wanted her to have—lost, through her failure to act!

Reader, will *you* act *today*? The inheritance is yours for the taking!

"Behold, now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation" (II Corinthians 6:2).