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Preface

If the Lord will, this is the third of four volumes about the mystery and the covenants. We began in volume 1 with the silence that had been kept in OT times regarding the mystery of Christ and the church, then the objections of covenant theology, claiming that the silence was only partial, and why this objection is made. After that, we considered the covenant made with Noah and one of the “covenants of promise” (the Abrahamic covenant), which is said in Scripture to belong to Paul’s kinsmen according to the flesh (Rom. 9:3-5). Of course, in the ways of God, it will be made good to the new Israel under the new covenant. In this volume we will particularly consider the bearing of the Mosaic covenant, which is not a covenant of promise at all.

The three covenants of the law that God made with Israel by the hand of Moses were all conditional covenants, but the covenant that God made with Abraham was an unconditional covenant. It is not possible, of course, to add additional terms to an unconditional covenant: especially wrong would be the addition of any conditions that could lead to the loss of what were originally unconditional covenanted blessings! Therefore, the relationship between the Abrahamic and the Mosaic covenants will need to be looked at carefully. We will find that the Abrahamic covenant has been set aside for a time, the Mosaic covenant coming in to test the first man up to the cross of Christ. Moreover, God added additional conditional terms to the first Mosaic covenant (using the same restrictions and conditions) when He added the role of a mediator in the second giving of the law. And God has introduced additional unconditional terms with limited scope and application when He made a covenant of priesthood with Phineas. This covenant is not a part of the Mosaic covenant, but stands on its own. Lastly, the giving of the kingdom to David involved a Davidic covenant that had both characters: it was unconditional in promising a throne for ever to the Messiah, but conditional in application to David’s immediate descendants.

Attentive readers will note that the covenants are not, in and of themselves, the organizing principle around which the OT is written, but that they are intimately connected with God’s relationships with men.

The manuscript for this book was found among the papers of the late R. A. Huebner and has been prepared for publication without his guidance. Except where noted in the text, the changes made to his manuscript were confined to editorial changes for grammar, spelling, reference checking, rearrangements of some of the topics as seemed needed, and mostly minor adjustments of wording for clarity’s sake.

The editor is very conscious that the author would not have wanted this book to appear in public without its being accompanied by prayer for the blessing of the

Lord Jesus upon it to the good of the souls that read it.

D. Ryan, editor

Scripture quotations are from the translation by J. N. Darby, unless otherwise indicated, but the KJV may be found in many of the quotations from other authors. Since there is much quoted material from JND, these quotations will be left in 10 point type but each will be marked at the start and at the end in this manner:

❖ Quoted material from J. N. Darby. ❖

Other quotations will be in 9 point type, and offset, as usual.

Volume 3, Chapter 1

The Nation of Israel: Government, Calling, and Law Combined in the Trial of the First Man

God's Preparation of Israel for the Law: The Exodus

Jacob had gone down into Egypt with his household; there they multiplied and under a Pharaoh that knew not Joseph: they came under the rigor of the taskmaster. Jehovah in His purpose to bring them out of Egypt, to execute judgment on the gods of Egypt, to leave Egypt a wreck, and to introduce something new in His ways with the first man, brought Moses forward. After 40 years in Egypt, Moses must spend 40 years in the desert where he learned what suited Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The only point I would touch on regarding his personal, instructive (for us), spiritual education is the incident regarding the circumcision of his sons (Ex. 4:24-26). Was he to go before Pharaoh and to pronounce judgment without the mark of God's judgment on the flesh characterizing his own house? Cp. Gen. 17:12, 23-27. Is there no lesson in that for us?

The Passover time came and Israel was sheltered from the destroyer by the blood. They were *safe* from judgment but not yet *delivered* from the power of the taskmaster. They were to go three days march into the wilderness to hold a feast to Jehovah (Ex. 5:3). For that they must needs be not only *safe*, but experience the *salvation* of Jehovah (Ex. 14:13; 15:2), His *deliverance* from the power of the taskmaster. Having crossed the Red Sea on dry ground, and the waters through which they passed having become death to the Egyptians, they sang the song of redemption (Ex. 15), the first recorded song in Scripture. We bear in mind that redemption *in type* was accomplished. Singing and redemption realized go together. Who but the redeemed have a valid and proper theme? May the Spirit control and energize the songs that come out of our hearts and mouths.¹

Accordingly, Pharaoh had been told by Moses that not a hoof was going to be left behind, nor any of their little ones. Surely that is meant to speak to us concerning our business, our work, and our families. Everything is for our Lord, and nothing for Egypt -- the world (cp. 1 John 2:15-17).

Jehovah did not bring in the law immediately after their deliverance but dealt with them in grace that they might know His grace before they undertook to secure the promises on the basis of human effort.

1. The typology of the Passover and the deliverance through the Red Sea is considered in detail in my *From New Birth to New Creation*, available from the publisher.

At First, Israel Was Dealt with in Grace Only

The following is from "Wilderness Grace, Exodus 17," by J. N. Darby.²

❖ Those who are familiar with the study of this part of scripture will remember that the history of Israel from the Red Sea to Sinai (that is, from the time of their deliverance out of Egypt until they placed themselves under law) contains an exceedingly remarkable testimony to the grace of God.

At Sinai Israel took up the promises of God on the condition of their own obedience, and then their entire failure was manifested. But up to that moment all God's dealings with them had been in grace. Though there was continual murmuring and unbelief and disobedience, He did not chasten for these things as afterwards, when they had taken a stand before Him on the ground of obedience. It was an immense transition in their history.

The law "came in" as it were (though of course it was perfect in itself) "by the bye," between the promises and the accomplishment of the promises, to show what the condition of man would be if he stood on his own ground before God. The law was not before the promises, the apostle argues (Gal. 3), "that it should make the promise of none effect." Promise was given first. And "He to whom the promises were made" came after the law. Meanwhile the law entered in order to manifest what man was, and the effect that would be produced on man when placed on the ground of obedience to the known will of God.³ It was needful to do this, because of the constant tendency of the heart to put itself under law, in spite of repeated failures; not that God's promises of grace were not simple and clear, but because of this natural tendency of the heart of man.

Supposing my conscience to be awakened, I must know that it is my duty (that I ought) to please and obey God. The effect of this naturally is that I expect God would accept me on this condition. Till a man is brought to feel his really lost state, this is very natural. It is quite too late to talk of pleasing and obeying God when we know ourselves to be lost sinners.

Now God, who is wonderfully painstaking with us for our blessing, sent the law, in order that this tendency of man's heart, and his utter worthlessness, might be shown out, and proved to man (see Rom. 3:19). But before He did this, He had made known abounding grace, pure grace, flowing from His own thoughts and purposes, without any reference to the feelings of man about Him, or any condition of man's obedience.

2. *Collected Writings*, 12:276-277, 281-286.

3. "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." These words (the response of the people with one voice, when Moses had taken the book of the covenant and read in their audience, Ex. 24) were the complete confounding of two very distinct principles, which man has been continually mistaking and confounding since the fall of Adam -- responsibility and power. Man is responsible to keep the law perfectly, but by the fall he has lost the power. This the natural heart cannot understand. One man denies his responsibility, and another assumes his power; grace, and this only, puts a man right on both points.

So that those whose hearts were opened to believe the promises could rest in peace upon them all the while they were learning more of their own sinfulness through the law. The very starting point of all God's dealings with us is pure grace, suitable to sinners, whose state He knows, and therefore knows how to meet . . .

What was the effect of deliverance to Israel? and what is the effect of our deliverance from the bondage of Pharaoh (Satan looked at as such)? To bring into the wilderness, and not at once into Canaan. Being in the wilderness implies all sorts of trials. It may seem strange to sight, that they who had just been singing the song of triumph and deliverance (ch. 15) should be allowed to be three days in the wilderness without water {Ex. 15:22}; and then, when they came to water, should find it so bitter that they could not drink of it {Ex. 15:23}. But God permits these trials, in order that we may see our own need and prove His faithfulness. From the Red Sea to Sinai Israel proved the grace which belongs to us now. Let us ever remember, when speaking of the wilderness, that though there is trial in it, and plenty of trial, it is the place of the ministration of grace. The Lord's previous dealings were, as I may say, preliminary: He brought Israel into the wilderness in order to have them quite alone with Himself, that He might teach them what He was; as He said afterwards,

Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself (Ex. 19:4).

He lets us pass through these trials that we may thoroughly understand that all is from God there. The eagle's wing never tires or fails. It is either the most blessed triumph, security, and victory, that we enjoy, or it is nothing. It is wonderful how our hearts cling, not only to the thought of our own righteousness, but to the practical denial of our not having any strength in ourselves. Many have peace in Jesus, who do not see so entirely that they have no strength, either for service or conflict. Well, they learn it in the wilderness. Our journey through the wilderness is the weaning us from trusting in ourselves, in order that we may trust only in God.

The first thing God taught Israel in the wilderness was, that they could not get a drop of water except He gave it to them. They were kept without it three days; and when they came to water at last (when there was something within reach that man seemed able to grasp), they could not drink of it, it was so bitter; until the Lord shewed Moses a tree to cast into the waters, which made them sweet. The Lord causes that which was death to become the means of life, as Hezekiah says,

O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit (Isa. 38).
In death to the flesh there is life to the spirit.

In Ex. 16 the Israelites want bread and begin to murmur again. The Lord deals with them in grace and gives them bread. But it was such bread as showed them, morning by morning, that they must depend on Him. Had He withheld the manna one day, they would have had nothing to eat, for they could not keep it till the morrow; "it bred worms, and stank." The Lord will not allow us to lay up anything (no, not even grace) in store that would tend to lead us into independence of Himself: it will turn to evil if we do. He showed His people perpetual grace in His dealings towards them; but He

never took them, nor can He ever take us, out of the condition of dependence on Himself. The manna was the type of Christ; as the water was of the Spirit.

Soon after (Ex. 17), in journeying from the wilderness of Sin, we find the Israelites murmuring again because they had no water.

Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink {Ex. 17:2}.

But new murmurings only bring out fresh grace (for they had not yet come to Sinai): God gave them water. His grace abounded where their sin abounded. The more they murmured, the more in one sense they got.

I would just remark in passing, that it is sin not to have confidence in the Lord, not to be quite sure that He will help us, whatever the need may be, when we are walking in His ways. It is recorded of the children of Israel as sin, that they tempted the Lord in that which they said here,

Is the Lord among us, or not? (v. 7).

When we are going on wickedly and wilfully, and say,

is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us (Micah 3:11),

this is quite a different thing. Our God will indeed be with us, if His children, even then; but to chasten us. Whenever there is real need in the wilderness, it is sin to doubt whether God will help us or not. If we are not as sure of water in the midst of the sandy desert as though we saw rivers of water running through the country, we are tempting God.

This is the force of that expression of our Lord to Satan,

It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Satan wanted Jesus to try by an experiment whether God would be as good as His word. Had He done so, it would have implied a doubt. His answer was,

It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Tempting the Lord is doubting the supply of His goodness in giving us all that we need.

The supply of water and of manna to the Israelites did not take them out of trouble. They drank and were refreshed: there was the gathering up a little strength, and then Amalek comes and fights against them. It was but the preparation for conflict. So those who feed on Christ as the manna, and have in their souls the well of water springing up into everlasting life, have still the wilderness and conflict with Amalek.

In that sense we have to do with Satan, though we are entirely delivered from his bondage. We are never more under the power of Satan, as Israel was under the power of Pharaoh. (If Israel binds itself to Amalek, it is its own fault.) It is said to us,

Sin shall not have the dominion over you; for ye are not under law, but under grace {Rom. 6:14}.

But we have to fight with Amalek though delivered from Pharaoh. When we have been brought into the wilderness, and fed and refreshed through this grace, Christian conflict begins. We are called, like the Lord Jesus, never to doubt the Father's love; but was He out of conflict? No, it was just the very thing that set Him in it. The being delivered from the bondage of Satan, and the being ranged on the Lord's side, is that which brings

us into conflict; and in this the Lord never lets us be taken out of dependence on Himself. The moment we forget this we shall be overcome. Satan can never make us his slaves again, but we may be beaten and wounded by him. In every detail of our lives there is no blessing but in dependence on God. Whenever self-dependence comes in, whenever our own wills are working, there is failure. If in speaking to you now I were to cease from depending on the Lord in doing it, all blessing to my own soul would cease.

Without me ye can do nothing (John 15:5).

Neither can I speak, nor you hear, to profit without dependence on Him. If a Christian gets out of dependence on the Lord, he will be beaten by Satan in conflict. Yet we ought not merely not to be beaten by Satan, but ever to be gaining ground upon him. Whether it be in winning souls to Christ, or whether it be in making progress truly ourselves in knowledge, or in holiness, or in love, we are gaining ground on Satan's possessions. We have been delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. As Satan takes possession of my heart by ignorance, then every step I make in the knowledge of God is gain on the possession of Satan. He uses our flesh too; so that to mortify and keep the flesh in death is gaining ground upon him. But every inch must be won, every bit of knowledge gained, by conflict. In this conflict we are directly and hourly cast in dependence upon God.

God did not put Amalek out of the way of Israel -- they must fight with him: and it is just so with us.

And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek; tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand (v. 9).

This is very different from what we get in ch. 14, "The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace."

See what the Lord had said to Moses concerning Israel (Ex. 3:8); that He would bring them up out of the land of Egypt unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.

Now where are they brought? Into the wilderness, to thirst for water, and to fight with Amalek! They had not reckoned on this (v. 3). And thus it is often with the saints of God; when they have had joy, and have sung the song of triumph, in being delivered from the power of Satan, they are afterwards astonished at finding themselves *not* in Canaan but in the wilderness. Jeremiah found the Lord's word the joy and rejoicing of his heart (Jer. 15:16), yet afterwards he was so discouraged that he says, "O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived": of course this is only a strong expression of sorrow,

thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, everyone mocketh me. For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name," etc. (Jer. 20).

When the saint finds what the road is, he is apt to forget the end, where there will be fullness of joy and blessing. The Lord desires to purge out that which would hinder our

blessing and keep us from having our hearts and hopes set upon the end, and to humble us.

Moses,⁴ Aaron, and Hur go up to the top of the hill, and Israel under Joshua fights in the plain below with Amalek (v. 10). They fought the Lord's battle: but it is not sufficient even to be fighting the Lord's battle unless the Lord stretches forth His hand to help them. Otherwise "Amalek prevailed." Israel might have reasoned on the manner of their fighting, on the strength of the enemy, and on ten thousand things; but after all, their success depended on Moses' hands being stretched out. It is very hard for us to see ourselves and Satan to be as nothing, and God to be everything. The moment we get out of dependence on God, we find out our own weakness; though we have this comfort, that under whatever circumstances, through the priesthood and the righteousness of the Lord Jesus, our blessing is substantially maintained for us, and this until the going down of the sun.

And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun (vv. 11, 12).

Enemies were as nothing when Israel had the power of God with them. The day is won -- "Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword."

And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi (i.e., Jehovah my banner): for he said, Because the Lord hath sworn that Jehovah will have war with Amalek from generation to generation, (vv. 14-16).

I dare say many of us have thought, when we have seen the necessity of dependence on the Lord, that one good battle with Satan, and all will be over; but no such thing, we have security and the certainty of victory, but no promise of cessation from conflict while in the wilderness. God has promised that He

will bruise Satan under our feet shortly {Rom. 16:21};

as He said to Israel that He would "utterly put out the name of Amalek from under heaven"; but still "Jehovah will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." Till Christ comes, and Satan will be bound, and we shall have the full result of victory, we must reckon on conflict (not on slavery to Pharaoh, but on war with Amalek), but with the comfort of knowing that it is Jehovah who makes war, though it is through Israel, and Israel therefore has to fight. It is the Lord's battle against Satan: there is our comfort, but still a battle which we have to carry on; hence we are kept in an unceasing state of dependence. The moment it was not so, Israel were put to the worse.

As it regards the accusations of Satan, the blood on the doorposts is the eternal

4. Moses held in his hand "the rod of God" -- the symbol of the power of God, that which had worked the defeat and destruction of Pharaoh.

answer to that. As to slavery to Satan, the Lord Jesus has delivered us from that; we have stood, the living ones, on the other side of the Red Sea; and we “shall see” Pharaoh and his host “no more again for ever.” What we find in the desert is grace, conflict and the *Lord* having war with Amalek from generation to generation. We are to be kept, moment by moment, in a state of dependence, yet reckoning on the constant grace and help of God. There is not blessing and joy and comfort where there is not dependence on the Lord exercised. It is not enough for victory that in the battle we have ranged ourselves on the Lord's side. You will find the tendency of the flesh, whether in praying or preaching or anything else, is to get out of dependence on God. We may be saying true things in prayer or in testimony; but if we are not realizing our dependence on the Lord, we shall not have His strength in the battle; and the Lord must make us learn our dependence on Him, through weakness, and failure, and defeat, because we have refused to learn it in the joy and confidence of communion with Himself.

Victory is turned to worship in the scene before us. “And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi -- the Lord is my banner.” When victory does not tend to worship, we and God part company as soon as the victory is achieved. How sad to see victory often leading to mere joy, instead of still greater dependence on, and delight in, God! May we trace out, in all these paths of His wondrous ways, still more and more of the depths of His divine love! ❖

The Introduction of Law as the Basis of Relationship

Subsequent to Jehovah's dealing with Israel on the basis of grace, the law was given. We shall consider this in detail in the following chapters. It must be borne in mind that the law did not address the children of God, as such. It was given to the first, fallen man, in responsibility, in the persons composing the nation, i.e., to the nation, as such. This nation was a mixture of quickened souls and unquickened souls, the latter predominating.

As if to anticipate Covenant Theology and its mythical Covenant of Grace, the law was given twice. First, “pure law,” meaning law given without the mediation that accompanied the second giving of the law, formed the first covenant (conditional) with the nation (Ex. 19:8). This shows clearly that law is not gracious nor an expression of a covenant of grace. The two tables of the law were broken when Moses saw the golden calf. The covenant was broken and the state of Israel stood exposed.

That might have been the end. But Moses interceded for the people and the law was given the second time, but accompanied by mediation (Ex. 34:1). The sacrificial system was established so that God could go on with failing Israel. Still, the breaking of the two tables told the story of what the result would be for Israel under law. Israel's state, as manifested by the breaking of the law given the first time, did not change on account of the law being given the second time.

We must, then, keep clearly in mind that the first time the law was given, there was no grace or mediation accompanying it. In the first giving of the law the character of law, as such, as a principle of God's dealing with man, is clearly brought before us: there is *no grace in the law of the 10 commandments*. Israel already had broken the covenant of the law while the two tables of the law were being brought by Moses into the camp of Israel. His breaking the two tables of the law expressed the fact that Israel had broken the covenant.

Law is not grace and grace is not law. That the first giving of the law, the first covenant, was an expression of a covenant of grace is absurd, both on the face of the matter and in the depth of the matter. Why should that not be understood in itself regarding these two opposite principles of dealing with persons? Moreover, the fact that mediation accompanied the second giving of the law again shows the same truth that law is not grace and grace is not law.

The second giving of the law, i.e., **the second covenant**, *accompanied by mediation*, is the covenant which we call the Mosaic Covenant. The system of mediation that accompanied the second giving of the law is rich in types of Christ. Indeed, the tabernacle itself is a figure of heavenly things (Heb. 9:24). It was gracious of God to bring in the system of mediation, and the types, but that does not, and cannot, change the character of the law itself. It is not grace, nor an expression of a covenant of grace.

The third covenant (Deut. 29) with the nation was the covenant of the land. The land was given to Abraham by promise -- unconditional grace. But man in the flesh, man fallen, man in (fallen) Adamic responsibility, must needs be tested to show that he could not obtain the promised land on the basis of performance and merit. Thus, this third covenant regarding the land was also a conditional covenant. The closest approach to possessing the whole land (but not fully) was under Solomon, a type of the reign of Christ, the greater than Solomon. However, the time came when Israel was expelled from the land.

Before continuing, we might note that the circumcision of Israel bore the same character as being also a part of the trial of the first man. Would Israel answer to the meaning of circumcision? No, they never did. Meanwhile, we Christians are the circumcision (Phil. 3:3) made without hands. Under the New Covenant, Israel will be circumcised both in the flesh and in the heart. But sovereign grace will undertake to bring them into the bond of the covenant (Ezek. 20:37; Rom. 11:26).

In Israel, under the Mosaic Covenant, God brought out other things connected with His purpose to glorify Himself in Christ in the earthly sphere, such as the gracious covenants: the Covenant of the priesthood with Phinehas, the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant. Moreover, Israel's history is rich in types. Yet, the time came when Israel as a people acknowledged by God, with His government among them, had to be declared Lo-ammi (Hos. 1), i.e., not my people. However, God saw to it that they were there in Jerusalem when the Son came manifesting the Father. It was the final,

concluding test of the state of the first man (in the persons of those to whom the Son was presented): and the result was:

... they have both seen and hated both me and my Father (John 15:24).

After the present heavenly work is concluded God will take up with Israel again but this time on the basis of sovereign grace, for there is no other way that fallen man can be spiritually blessed. Of course, any souls that ever were quickened by God were quickened by sovereign grace, but that was not the basis of His dealing with Israel, *as a nation*, in the past. Sovereign grace will be the basis on which God will deal with the nation of Israel under the New Covenant.

The Combination of Government and Calling in Israel

Another matter of great importance to understanding dispensational truth and God's purpose to glorify Himself in Christ in the earthly sphere is the development of His ways in government in the earth. Government had first been introduced through Noah, consequent upon man's behavior manifested before the flood of judgment. Man left to the knowledge of good and evil that he had acquired by his sinful act of selfwill, left to the conscience thus acquired, showed:

every imagination of the thoughts of his heart only evil continually (Gen. 6:5).

The placing of government in man's hands, with the entailed death penalty for murder, marked the introduction of the first dispensation, or administration. God had not dispensed innocence to man; He created man innocent. God did not dispense the knowledge of good and evil to man; man acquired it as a result of his sin. God did not dispense conscience to man; he acquired conscience as a result of sin. But God did dispense government to man. This is the first dispensation, to use the common term, though I shall use administration, for it is the administration of government in the earth.

The call of Abraham into a path of separation did not introduce a new administration but it introduced something new in the ways of God -- ultimately for His glory in Christ, Who will make good all wherein man has failed. In the call of Abraham God had the nation of Israel in view in which He would combine government and calling, along with His holy law for man in the flesh. This would form part of the trial of the first man, in the form of the nation, under a conditional covenant, regarding the carrying out of God's will thus expressed. Of course, this has God's glory in Christ in view. Christ will make good these things in His millennial reign. But the first man, in his fallen Adamic responsibility, must be put under trial to show his incapability to carry out these things to God's glory:

But that which is spiritual [was] not first, but that which is natural (1 Cor. 15: 46).

That is the grand principle of God's operations regarding the first man and the Second Man. The principle of the trial is that man is viewed as standing in responsibility, i.e., a standing in Adam-fallen, and thus all depends on what man is. The principle of God operating in sovereign, unconditional grace, has in view, and depends on, what Christ

is. Nothing could be more opposite in character, performance, and result.

Concerning government and calling, J. N. Darby remarked:

With the Jews these principles were united; but Israel failed, and ceased thenceforward to be capable of manifesting the principle of the government of God, because God in Israel acted in righteousness; and unrighteous Israel could no longer be the depository of the power of God. God, then, quitted His terrestrial throne in Israel. Notwithstanding this, as to the earthly calling, Israel continued to be the called people: "for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" {Rom. 11:29}. As to government, God transports it where He will; and it went to the Gentiles. There are, indeed, the called from among the nations (namely, the church), but it is for the heavens they are called. The calling of God for the earth is never transferred to the nations; it remains with the Jews.⁵

Connected with the separation of calling and government was Israel's new status as Lo-ammi (Hos. 1), i.e., not-my-people. This is connected with the introduction of "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24), which was marked by the transfer of government to the Gentile. This is a period of, let us call it, *a Gentile parenthesis of government in Israel's history* -- lasting until Christ comes in power and smites the nations, then setting up the millennial reign. In that reign Israel will be sovereignly brought into the good of the four gracious covenants we have listed earlier. At that time government and calling will be combined in Israel and the law will be written in the heart of that people under the New Covenant (Jer. 31; Heb. 8).

Note that calling was not given over to the Gentiles. Moreover, though Israel was declared to be Lo-ammi (not-my-people), the Mosaic system continued up to the cross, at which time it spiritually ended -- signified by the rending of the veil from the top to the bottom (God did it, of course). God in His disciplinary ways subsequently struck down the outward form of the Mosaic system in AD 70 through the Roman army -- the fourth power in the image of Dan. 2, which image depicts the forms of the Gentile power during "the times of the Gentiles."

Survey of Israel's History Under Government, Calling, and Law

Let us now, with the help of J. N. Darby, briefly trace the history of Israel under the combination of government, calling, and the law. He has written on this in a number of places, but the following is selected.

❖ . . . We have seen the principle of judgment and daily retribution introduced under Noah, as a constituent of the new world. This is the principle of government. We have also seen the principle of the calling of God marked out in the history of Abraham. This is the principle of grace, holiness, and the supremacy of God. But the union of these two principles is also presented to our view in the Scriptures; a union very remarkable

5. *Collected Writings*, 2:377, 378.

for a time, as a new trial of the faithfulness of man under responsibility, and in circumstances altogether singular, and accompanied by a still more astonishing display of patience on the part of God, which will furnish the subject of that solemn praise in the latter times: "His mercy endureth for ever." As to the future, the union of these two principles is the source of a state of things which will be the manifestation of the incomparable wisdom and power of God, when He takes the government into His own hands.

The history of the union of these two principles, whether under the responsibility of man or in the efficacy of the supremacy of God, is the history of the Jewish people. The law is the directing principle of it, as being the expression of the actual terms of God's government. It is consequently in the history of this people that we must look for the center of the administration of the government of the world; containing (as it does) in its past history, on the one hand, the witness given by a people called to the knowledge of the only true God against the false gods of the Gentiles ("Hear O Israel, the Lord thy God is *one* Lord!"), and, on the other hand, the witness afforded to the principles of the government of the true God by *His* conduct towards His chosen people, blessing or punishing them openly according to their proceedings: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities," Amos 3:2 . . .

But if the responsibility of man gave mediately an opportunity for the display of the whole character of God on the one hand, the weakness of man on the other made it necessary for God to establish the hope of all His promises on some other basis than this responsibility. And, in fact, we see, in the history we are examining, that Israel receives the promises in Abraham, according to the calling of God absolutely and unconditionally. Under the law, Israel takes these promises on the responsibility of their own obedience . . .

Let us pause for a moment at this important juncture, and consider the unfolding of the relationship of God with the world, and with men, in this people: after that we will return to their history. From this time we see the three great instruments of these relations, holding their place in the midst of them: Moses was the representative of royalty among the people of God.

Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. And he was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together {Deut. 33:5}.

Aaron held the place of the great high priest; and Miriam as the prophetess:

For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam (Mic. 6: 4).

See also Exod. 15; Num. 13.

Thus we see in the wilderness the model of the three mediatorial instruments of the power of God -- one, the communication of His will; the second, the means of our approach to Him; and the third, the instrument of His government, the recipient of His power.

Moses at different periods filled all these three functions. Thus also in the plagues inflicted on the proud Egyptians, Aaron acted as prophet, Moses as God to Pharaoh, but that changes nothing in the main. During the union of the two principles of government and calling, these things were fully developed. But under responsibility in these things, the Jewish people corrupted themselves in each one of them.

Under the priesthood (when God was their King, and there were only judges raised up from time to time to preserve them in their inheritance from the occasions of misery produced by their unbelief), they were connected with God through the medium of the priest. Shiloh was the place where God had put His name; but what was the end of it? A witness of judgment to all generations.

Go ye now [saith the Lord] to my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel . . . I will do unto this house . . . as I have done to Shiloh (Jer. 7:12).

Under the priesthood there was complete corruption, even in the priests; as we see in 1 Sam. 2, and in the touching scene described in ch. 3, which marked *Ichabod* on the people of God. I say not that the priesthood was abolished; far from it: it was, on the contrary, to be an example of the patience of God, until He came who could efficiently fill all its functions.

Samuel was the representative of the prophetic line, a *judge* also, governing the people by the witness of God -- a witness given, as we have seen, against the actual state of the priesthood. It is for this reason Peter says, in Acts 3, "*All* the prophets *from* Samuel and those that follow after." This then was God's government by prophets; yet the people were not yet satisfied with it, but desired a king: and God gave them "a king in his anger, and took him away in his wrath" (Hos. 13:11). A king chosen according to the flesh, when God was their King, served only to show the weakness of all that man did, the folly of all he desired. Nevertheless, the kingship of Christ over His people was ever in God's designs. And He gave them a king after His own heart, and David and Solomon furnished the type of the kingship of Christ: one, in suffering and overcoming all his enemies, after complete obedience; the other, as reigning in peace and glory over a happy, obedient, and prosperous people. There the picture ended! Man may furnish types, but can never fill the functions of that which is true, and which shall be fulfilled in Christ. The repose and glory which Solomon enjoyed were the cause of his fall. He kept not his uprightness in the midst of the gifts of God, but, drawn aside by his wives, he followed other gods. Kingship, the last resource of God for maintaining His relationship with His people, was corrupted, just in that particular in which Israel should have been His witness . . . ♦⁶

More will be considered later concerning Saul, David, and Solomon, as well as the introduction of the times of the Gentiles with the consequent separation of government and calling.

6. "Divine Mercy in the Church and Towards Israel," *Collected Writings*, 2: 135-140.

We should note that government in Israel took the form of the law. Thus, there is a combination of calling, governmental power, and law. This law was external to the people; i.e., it was not written in the heart. The nation was a mixture of unbelievers (mostly) and some quickened ones. It is only under the New Covenant that the law will be written in their hearts (Heb. 8:10; Jer. 31:33). Then shall they all be righteous (Isa. 60:21; Rom. 11:26). That is how calling, government, and law will be combined in the new Israel under the New Covenant.

The law is not written in the Christian's heart. If it were, he must necessarily be a Sabbath-keeper, which he is not, though Reformed Theology attempts to make a Sabbath out of the Lord's day. The Christian day is the Lord's day, the first day of the week, which is not *the* or *a* Sabbath, which is the seventh-day. Christ is written in the heart of a Christian {2 Cor. 3:3}. A Christian, as such, desires to devote the Lord's day to the things of the Lord, including the Lord's Supper. Do you?

Chapter 2

The First Covenant of the Law

Introduction

Let it be noted that the Mosaic Covenant placed the Abrahamic Covenant into suspension. Scripture states:

Brethren, (I speak according to man,) even man's covenant no one sets aside, or adds other dispositions to (Gal. 3:15).

Adding dispositions is not done *even* regarding man's covenant, and certainly God did not add the *conditional* Mosaic Covenant to the *unconditional* Abrahamic Covenant, placing Israel under both simultaneously. We may be sure that it is evidence of an agenda when that is done, as Messianic Jews do, for it forms a justification to continue with Jewish observances and distinctives now -- the idea being that the Abrahamic Covenant was always, and is now, in force. Do that with your children: unconditionally promise them something, then later tell them they must meet certain conditions to receive what you promised. See if they complain.

The warning in Gal. 3:15 is about adding law to the promises. The word for "adds" in Gal. 3:15 is *ἐπιδιατάσσεται*, meaning "to arrange in addition."⁷

Concerning Gal. 3:19:

Why then the law? It was added for the sake of transgressions . . .

"Added" is *προσέτεθη*, and this word means "to add, or to place beside (the primary meaning)".⁸

The fact is that in the ways of God regarding dealing with the first man as under trial to see if he was recoverable, God brought in the law. The law came in to make sin come out in the form of transgression of prohibitions. It was something that God was doing additionally, but not simultaneously with the Abrahamic Covenant. Moreover, Gal. 3:15 says that you do not *even* set aside man's covenant. Thus, though the Abrahamic Covenant was placed into suspension, it is not set aside. God will sovereignly make it good in His perfect time.

Concerning the law, J. N. Darby wrote extensively regarding Israel and the Christian, showing the position of each with respect to the law. The giving of the law was part of the trial of the first, fallen man to show that he was not recoverable from the fall. The Christian is dead to the law and he is not under it for sanctification nor as a rule of life. In effect, in the 1800s, he refuted Covenant Theology. In dealing with the subject of the covenant of law, I will mainly quote from his writings to show how he

7. W. E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, London: Oliphants, p. 29 (1952).

8. W. E. Vine, *ibid.*, p. 29.

exposed Covenantism as a false system regarding the law.

We will observe the two givings of the covenant of law to Israel. In considering the first giving of the law we will examine in some detail the character of the law under which Israel stood as a nation before Jehovah. After that we will look at the second giving of the law with mediation added. It is that second giving of the law, with mediation, that we call the Mosaic Covenant.

The First Giving of the Law No Grace or Mercy Associated with It

When the law was first given, Moses came down from the mountain with the two tables of the law, written in stone {Ex. 32:15}. This is pure law -- a redundant expression, for what God says is always pure. The point meant is that the first giving of the law of 10 commandments excluded the provisions of mercy and mediation. When Moses came down from Sinai he found Israel with the golden calf (Ex. 32:19). It is necessary to recognize that God could not go on with Israel on the basis of the law of 10 commandments for it said 'thou shalt have no other gods before me.' The law was already broken by the people and all was over with Israel on the ground of pure law. Moses broke the tables. There was not an atom of grace in the covenant of law as first given. ***It could hardly be an administration of the Covenantist covenant of grace.*** J. N. Darby wrote about this first covenant of the law thus:

❖ The law simply by itself never even reached man as a covenant of works. The tables never entered into the camp (the golden calf was there), they were broken at the foot of the Mount. Moses interceded, and the people were for the occasion as to God's dealings forgiven. But Moses could not make atonement, and with the revelation of goodness the people were put back under law.

The soul that sinneth I will blot out of my book {Ex. 32:33}.

But God makes all His goodness pass before Moses. The Lord passed before Moses and proclaimed the Lord --

the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear (the guilty), visiting, etc. {Ex. 34:6-7}.

Now, here we have provisional grace. They are the terms of God's government of Israel, but, in fact, grace which spares and forgives past sin; but no atonement effectual, final, and conclusive, perfecting for ever them that are sanctified {Heb. 10:14}, was made, as indeed there was no one there to make it. They were consequently replaced under legal obligation and the man that sinned was to be blotted out of God's book. It was grace and forgiveness, and law after.⁹ ❖

Who Were Under the Law?

9. *Collected Writings*, 31:334, 335.

We must be clear that the *nation* of Israel, *as such*, was under the covenant of the law. The nation was not a community of believers. The law was not given to Israel as if they were a nation of righteous persons, but rather they were in the flesh concerning their position, or standing, before God. Certainly there were righteous persons in the nation, but the nation, as such, was not under the covenant as if it were a righteous nation. Indeed, it was a mixed multitude (Ex. 12:38). Heb. 4:2 says:

For indeed we have had glad tidings presented to us, even as they also; but the word of the report did not *profit* them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard.

The glad tidings *they* had received were about the land promised to the fathers. As there are many professed Christians now whom the gospel has not profited, not being mixed with faith, so was the case of the nation of Israel regarding the report they received. As this is an ongoing situation in the Christian profession, so was it an ongoing situation in that nation.

The nation was placed under trial by the covenant of law. The nation was representative of the first, fallen man, with a standing in the flesh, under trial to show that he was not recoverable from the fall. The final issue of this trial was that the first man put the second Man on the cross. This closed the first man's standing as under trial -- closed his history -- though man remains incorrigible subsequently to the close of the trial. The trial of Israel under law closed with the cross. That ended the Mosaic Covenant spiritually, as signified by the rending of the veil from the top to the bottom. The old, natural Israel is set aside. When God completes His present, heavenly work of forming a heavenly Bride for Christ, He will work to establish the new Israel, all saved, under the New Covenant.

Concerning the ways of God in giving the promise, then man seeking -- but failing -- to gain it as in the flesh, under law, and then God sovereignly making good the promise, the reader should review the comments on Genesis 16 in vol. 2.

The Character of the Law

Law is the Measure of the

Responsibility of the First, Fallen Man

"Law is the measure of the responsibility of the first man." This is the relationship in which God placed Himself, by a conditional covenant, with the first, fallen man, under probation, in the persons of Israel, to show he was not recoverable from the fall. It would be well to review what we have been considering in this book, with the following from J. N. Darby.

❖ But Adam was never given a promise of life conditioned on his doing anything; was never put on this ground by God; but had a warning of death, he being alive, if he disobeyed. What is said on this subject is a mischievous, fatal, and anti-scriptural statement. Not only is it not found in scripture . . . but scripture puts Adam on wholly different ground. There was nothing he was set to do, there is no promise of life in doing it. He was alive and threatened with death. This false doctrine subverts the whole

truth of the fall, and of our condition as fallen. Adam fell from what *he was* in -- did not lose a promise, for none was made to him. All the revealed principles of God's dealings are falsified by this system.

We have seen man on the ground of responsibility, and failing; and the tree of life, otherwise free to him without any doing or condition, untouched. Man was now fallen and sinful; separated from God, and sinful in nature. I pass over the great and solemn judgment, executed on earth as the result of this state, because it was a judicial act.

The next thing¹⁰ God does is to give a promise, not of life, but of the *Seed*, of Christ (an unconditional promise that all nations should be blessed in Abraham), and this subsequently is confirmed to the Seed. No promise of life was given to Adam, fallen or unfallen. It was declared in the judgment on Satan, that the Seed of the woman should bruise his head {Gen. 3:15}. But the Seed of the woman -- the first Adam was not; but the Second {"last" Adam}. This seed is now promised to Abraham without any condition as to its gift. Up to this {point in time}, the one only law, and which in its nature (as a covenant on express terms) excludes all other as ground and measure of responsibility, was the prohibition of eating the forbidden fruit. Man's heart and nature had departed from God before even he outwardly broke through the prohibition; but this is another matter. The spiritual man may perceive this, but this has nothing to do with a law or the terms of a covenant.

After this promise, made unconditionally to Abraham (not of life, but of the Seed), came the law. Not that it could touch that promise or the covenant -- impossible, as the apostle shows us in the Galatians; but it was added that there might be transgressions till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made. Up to this there had been no promise of life at all. There had been the legal covenant made with Adam, the transgression of which involved death; and the promise of the Seed, without any condition at all -- as to its principle, an unconditional promise. Such unquestionably are the scriptural facts as to this, and the statement, in fact, of the Galatians. When the law came, there was a promise of life, a conditional promise: "he that doeth them shall live in them" (Lev. 18:5), quoted by Paul in Rom. 10:5, as the expression of the law's principle as to the way of righteousness, although it remains still and infallibly true, that life and incorruptibility were brought to light by the gospel {2 Tim. 1:10}: it is not said first given.

But thus far we have found -- that the statement as to Adam, that he was put under the terms "Do this and live," is not found in scripture; but that, on the contrary, he was set in a quite different condition, and on other terms. It is a subversion of scripture instruction to place him under the law as subsequently given {to Moses}. He was under a covenant; but, as living, threatened with falling under the power of death. We have found that Abraham, the next remarkable dealing and revelation of God, was not placed under any law at all as the ground of righteousness -- he was justified by faith {Gen.

10. {That is, passing over Noah and the Noahic Covenant because it was of a different character.}

15:6}; and that the promise was given to him without any condition whatever, and that that promise was not of life, but of the Seed, Christ. These cases show that this general putting under law, from Adam onwards, is an effacing of the clear positive instruction of scripture as to the various positions in which men were set. The notion that the law was {originally} written in Adam's heart is equally unfounded. He had not yet acquired the knowledge of good and evil necessary to the application of the law, and it is yet more evident, for he had another formal law to test obedience; and, certainly, that was not written on his heart.

But we are arrived, in the progress of God's dealings, at the giving of the law. The question of righteousness, which the unconditional promise {to Abraham} had not raised, is now raised. Righteousness is required from man. But we must notice this a little more particularly.

We find, again, the two great principles of paradise, responsibility and life; but life dependent on man's satisfying his responsibility, "This do, and thou shalt live." No doubt the literal statement in Leviticus refers to their enjoying life, under God's blessing, in this world {i.e., not to eternal life}; still the great principle is laid down, and hopes beyond this world gleamed through the darkness by the inspired cravings of men's hearts, and the prophetic testimony of the word. If a man kept God's commandments, he would live. But, as the apostle says,

that which was ordained for life, I found to be unto death {Rom. 7:10}.

If there had been a law given, which could have given life, righteousness should have been by the law {Gal. 3:21}.

But there was not.

The law was a special system introduced to test man when he was really a sinner under death, yet pretending to power and free will, and to bring to light what he really was. It was found to be a ministration of death and condemnation {2 Cor. 3:7, 8}, the strength of sin {1 Cor. 15:56}, making sin exceeding sinful {Rom. 7:13}; and, though not by any fault of the law, provoking the action of sin. But it was only added till the Seed should come {Gal. 3:19}, to whom the promise was made. It was the exact rule of what God required from man, but man was a sinner. It did not give life, did not lead into righteousness before God. The keeping of it would make a man find life {i.e., continue living in natural life}. But this, Christ excepted, no man ever did. It prohibited, necessarily and rightly, what man did and was and felt; and commanded what was contrary to his state and feelings, according to the nature of the old man.¹¹ It was a process, a dealing with man, of the weightiest character, because its contents were the perfection of man as such; but it was a testing process, it did not give life. It could not do so in itself, even if it were kept. It resulted in sin's becoming exceeding sinful, not in righteousness . . .

Law never was the means of obtaining righteousness, or giving life, and was never

11. {"The old man" is an expression speaking of our standing in Adam fallen.}

meant to be. It {a law} was given to Adam in a way not involving the knowledge of good and evil, but testing obedience under the penalty of death. On failure the Seed of the woman was announced in the judgment on the serpent, but no promise was given to Adam {Gen. 3:15}. Promise of the blessing of all nations is given to Abraham, and confirmed to the Seed, Christ {Gen. 22:18}. Then the question of acquiring righteousness before God is raised (which, yet in principle, was already settled in Abraham) in the giving of the law, and divine favor on obedience. The result, and necessarily so to a sinful nature, is that law works wrath by transgression {Rom. 4:15}. We may add, man's state is then fully tested by God's manifestation in grace on the earth, and judgment pronounced on the world: "Now is the judgment of this world" {John 12:31}. But thus God is perfectly glorified by the Second {i.e., "last"} Adam's work; and He the author of divine life and eternal salvation {Heb. 5:9}.¹² ❖

❖ Paul uses a remarkable expression as to himself when speaking of his elevation to the third heaven:

I know a man in Christ {2 Cor. 12:2}.

A few preliminary thoughts as to the law will facilitate our understanding this expression. The law gave to man a perfect and divine rule for his conduct upon the earth. But it never took him up into heaven. Heavenly beings, indeed, such as the angels, act upon the abstract perfection of this divine rule as it is stated by the Lord Himself: they love God with all their heart and their neighbor as themselves. This is creature perfection. But that is their nature in which God has maintained them. To prescribe feelings and conduct by law is another thing. Christians often forget this. The contents of the law are perfect in their place and for their objects. It tells us what the right state of a creature is, and it forbids the wrong that flesh is inclined to. But why *prescribe* this? No doubt obedience is a part of perfection in a creature. Mere doing right would not suffice for a being subject to God to walk righteously, because God has absolute authority over him. Thus God can, and we know does, prescribe certain particular acts of service to angels; and they obey.

But when a state of soul is prescribed -- why is that? Because it is needed. It becomes necessary because of the state of the person to whom the command is addressed. He is otherwise inclined, in danger from other dispositions of doing otherwise. To command a person to do a thing supposes that he is not doing it, nor about to do it if without a command. If we add to this that nine of the ten commandments forbid positive sins and evil dispositions, because men are disposed to them (or there were no need to prohibit them), we shall find that the very nature and existence of a law which prescribes the good on God's authority supposes the evil in man's nature which is opposed to it. This is a deplorable truth, take either aspect of the case. You cannot command love (that is, produce it by commanding it), and you cannot put out lusts by forbidding them to a nature which has them as nature. Yet this is what

12. *Collected Writings*, 10:150-153.

the law does, and must do if God give one. It proves that what is forbidden is sin, and that it is in man to be forbidden; but law never takes it away. It prescribes good in the creature but does not produce it. It shows what is right on earth in the creature, but how far is it from taking man into heavenly places! Law can have no pretension to it. Man has now *by the fall* the knowledge of good and evil. The law acts on this amazing faculty, of which God could say, "The man is become as one of us, to know good and evil" {Gen. 3:22}. But how? Man is under the evil; and it requires good in him which is not, and shows him all the evil which is in him. It presses the evil on him, and its consequences in judgment; and, as to the good it requires *in* him, it only gives the consciousness that it is not there.

Further, it shows no good to him as an object before his soul. I repeat, to make the distinction clear -- it requires good in him, loving God and his neighbor for example; but it presents no good to him. There is no revealed object to produce good nor be man's good in him in living power. It works therefore wrath. Where no law is, there is no transgression.

Now, grace works quite otherwise; it does not require good where it is not, though it may *produce* it. It does not condemn the wicked, but forgives and puts away their sin; it presents to us an object, God Himself, but God come near to us in love. It does more, it communicates what is good. It is not a law. It does not require good where it is not, but produces it. It does not condemn the wicked, but it forgives and puts away their wickedness. It does not lead us to carry on the conflict between good and evil by pressing the evil on us, and making us feel it a burden not to be got rid of, and ourselves slaves to it, which the law does, making us feel "this body of death" as that *under whose power we are*, sold to sin, and, supposing we are regenerate, making us only feel more truly and deeply that even this does not make us meet its requirements, so that we should be righteous by it, however much "to will is present with us," but the contrary. In a word, grace does not, in the knowledge of good and evil with which it deals, lead us to carry on the conflict by the sense of the power and dreadfulness of evil to which we are subject, and its consequences, but by the possession of perfect and divine good through which we judge the evil as raised above it, by the possession of an object perfectly good and which is our delight as well as our life, by the possession of Christ (being in Him and He in us). "I know," says the apostle, "*a man in Christ*."¹³ ❖

The Law is a Rule of Death

❖ If I speak of *moral law*¹⁴ (which scripture does not), I make it, by the very

13. *Collected Writings*, 7:239-241.

14. {If a servant of God merely sought to insist on the danger of what is vulgarly called Antinomianism -- that is, the wickedness of making liberty a cloak for maliciousness (and we know from scripture that flesh is perfectly capable of doing so), certainly he would not have me for an adversary. If they called this the
(continued...)

expression, a fatal thing to be delivered from it. Yet Paul says the Christian is delivered from the law. If I make of the law a moral law (including therein the precepts of the New Testament, and all morality in heart and life), to say a Christian is delivered from it is nonsense or utterly monstrous wickedness; certainly it is not Christianity. Conformity to the divine will, and that, as obedience to commandments, is alike the joy and the duty of the renewed mind. I say, "obedience to commandments." Some are afraid of the word, as if it would weaken love and the idea of a new creation; scripture is not {afraid}. Obedience and keeping the commandments of one we love is the proof of that love, and the delight of the new nature. Did I do all right and not do it in obedience, I should do nothing right, because my true relationship and heart-reference to God would be left out. This is love, that we keep His commandments {1 Jn. 5:3}. We are sanctified to the obedience of Christ {1 Pet. 1:2}. Christ Himself says,

The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me; but that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given me commandment, so I do {John 14:30,31}.

His highest act of love is His highest act of obedience.

But this it is that just makes it so mischievous to put the Christian under the law, and change the scripture phraseology to another, and speak of the moral law being given as a rule of life; and having no passage in which "moral law" is used, quoting Paul's statements as to "law," from which he says, and insists on it as one of the chief topics of his teaching, we are delivered. Not merely that we are not justified by its works (*yet we should be if the moral law were kept*, and so he declares, "the doer of the law shall be justified" {Rom. 2:13}); but that we are *delivered from it*. A Christian is delivered from it, because it is ruinous in its effect, whenever applied to men who are fallen. Not, clearly, the ceremonial law -- that he could fulfil, however burdensome it might be. It is the moral law which is ruinous in its effect to every fallen son of Adam. Is it morality that is ruinous, or obedience to Christ's precepts? That were a blasphemy to say, and shocking to every christian mind. But it is of law the apostle declares, what was ordained to life he found to be to death (Rom. 7). It is a ministration of death, and

14. (...continued)

moral law, in urging godliness as the necessary fruit of a living faith, I might have regretted the vagueness of an unscriptural phraseology -- the want of spiritual point and power in not making Christ the substance of moral teaching, as of doctrinal, as the scripture surely and blessedly does; but, in the root of the matter, I think I may say I should have cordially joined with what was intended. Such exhortations have their place and their necessity. That a Christian should walk according to the precepts of the New Testament, and all the divine light he can gather for his walk from the Old, be it the Ten Commandments or anything else, no consistent or rightminded Christian could for a moment deny. I could not own as being on christian ground one who would {maintain the law to be the Christian's rule of life}. I may not be his judge, but I am bound to judge the principles he professes. But I suppose such are rare, if such are to be found. At any rate he would receive no support from me or from you. I need hardly dwell on it otherwise than to reject it as utterly evil and unchristian. "Law", *Collected Writings*, 10:2.}

See also "Review of the Revelation of Law" in *Notes and Comments*, 5.

ministration of condemnation (2 Cor. 3:7-9). As *many* as are of its works -- on the principle of it -- its works are not bad ones -- are under a curse (Gal. 3:10). That is, law means, in the apostle's teaching, something else than a rule or measure of conduct. It is a principle of dealing with men which necessarily destroys and condemns them. This is the way the Spirit of God uses law in contrast with Christ, and never in christian teaching puts men under it; but carefully shows how they are delivered from it -- are no longer under it.

Nor does scripture ever think of saying, You are not under the law in one way, but you are in another; you are not for justification, but you are as a rule of life. It declares you are not under law, but under grace {Rom. 6:14}; and if you are under law, you are condemned and under a curse {Gal. 3:10}. It must have its own proper force and effect. Remark, it puts it as a principle contrasted with grace. But will a man say, You wrong us in saying we hold that a Christian is under law? I ask, How is that obligatory which a man is not under -- from which he is delivered? No; the apostle carefully insists that the law is good, that it is not the fault of the law that we are condemned, if we have to say to it (but he as carefully declares we are if we have); and that, in fact, we are delivered from it; that if led of the Spirit, we are not under law {Gal. 5:18}. He uses it to express a principle, a manner of dealing on the part of God, contrasted with grace. That is the way he speaks of law. I repeat it, scripture speaks elaborately of being delivered from the law as ministering death and a curse, declaring that we are not under it. Use the term moral law, and say so, and see where you bring us.

But that this may be before our eyes, I will quote some scriptures, that we may see that this is no light subject nor strained assertion:

As many as are of the works of the law are under a curse {Gal. 3:10}.

The law entered that the offence might abound {Rom. 5:20}.

Mark the word entered (*παρεῖσθαι*). It was a principle, a system, a way of dealing that came in.

Sin shall not have dominion over you, *because* ye are *not* under the law, but under grace {Rom. 6:14}.

The sting of death is sin; the *strength of sin* is the law {1 Cor. 15:56}.

I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died {Rom. 7:9}.

Is the apostle speaking of the ceremonial law? Far from it; he is speaking of the law in its moral nature and essence. He says,

I had not known lust except the law had said, "Thou shalt not covet (lust)" {Rom. 7:7}.

And when he had said that sin should not have dominion over us, because we are not under the law, he immediately adds,

What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? {Rom. 6:15}

showing that the introduction of the notion of the ceremonial law has no place at all here. Nor is it justification he is speaking of here; but serving sin, or the contrary. No; he treats the whole question of law in a way totally different, and contrary to that in

which it is treated in much evangelical teaching. I continue:

Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence {Rom. 7:8}.

Sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good, that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful {Rom. 7:13}.

Is this ceremonial law? It is a principle on which God placed man “four hundred and thirty years after the promise,” {Gal. 3:17} which

was *added* because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made {Gal. 3:19}.

But now the seed is come to whom the promise was made, and

now we are delivered from the law {Rom. 7:6}.

What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh {Rom. 8:3}, God has done in another way.

How we are delivered from the law, so as not to allow sin, I shall speak of presently . . .

Law has its own proper effect. This leads me to the text constantly quoted:

Yea, we establish the law {Rom. 3:31}.

And here I would pray you to weigh what I say. I declare, according to scripture, that law must always have its effect as declared in the word of God, always necessarily upon whoever is under it; but that that effect is always, according to scripture, condemnation and death, and nothing else, upon a being who has in him a lust or a fault; that it knows no mercy, but that it pronounces a curse upon every one who does not continue in all things written in it; and that whosoever is of the works of the law is under a curse. Now, in fact, the Christian has sin in him as a human being, and alas! fails; and if law applies to him, *he* is under the curse; for it brings a curse on everyone who sins. Do I enfeeble its authority? I maintain it, and establish it in the fullest way. I ask, Have you to say to the law? Then you are under a curse. No escaping, no exemption. Its authority and claim must be maintained -- its righteous exactions made good. Have you failed? Yes, you have. You are under the curse. No, you say, but I am a Christian; the law is still binding upon me, but I am not under a curse. Has not the law pronounced a curse on one who fails? Yes. You are under it. You have failed, and are not cursed after all! Its authority is *not* maintained {by you}; for you are under it; it has cursed you, and you are not cursed. If you had said, I *was* under it and failed, and Christ died and bore its curse; and now, as redeemed, I am on another footing, and not under law, but under grace, its authority *is* maintained; but if you are put *back again* under law, after Christ has died and risen again, and you are in Christ, and you fail and come under no curse, its authority is destroyed; for it pronounces a curse, and you are not cursed at all. The man who puts a Christian under law destroys the authority of the law, or puts a Christian under the curse -- “for in many things we all offend.” He fancies he establishes law: he destroys its authority. He only establishes the full immutable authority of law who declares that a Christian is not under it at all, and therefore cannot

be cursed by its just and holy curse.¹⁵ ♦

God’s Intention in Giving the Law

♦ We must distinguish between the outward public effect of the law, and the intention of God in giving it. There may be a general providential effect of light being sent into the world, while the divine purpose of that light in its spiritual and everlasting bearing may be quite distinct. No one can doubt that the introduction of Christianity has largely modified the general state of society. Men do not do in the light what they do in the dark. Natural conscience, operating in the way of shame, will hinder them, without the least inward moral change. Public opinion is elevated, and it is a great providential mercy. Men are more or less governed by that opinion, and an outward effect is produced. There is, I think, something more -- When the word of God is received, the natural conscience is brought into immediate relationship with God. This itself elevates morally. Hence in protestant countries there is a most undeniably higher moral tone than in papal countries. Conscience has to answer for itself to God. Wretched man is not between conscience and God; his being so always morally degrades. Man is in his place, though he may fail in it. He is at least consciously responsible in it. Further, when men are not exercised in direct responsibility to one true revealed God, but have men between them and God (in which case, wherever it is fully developed, the true God is lost in a multitude of intermediate powers, be they called demons or saints); that is, wherever there is a priesthood, a direct power or influence of Satan can and does come in; not merely in the way of acting by temptation on evil lusts, but in the way of religious or spiritual influence and power. But this is the rule of the darkness of this world. When the word of God has direct authority, this is not the case. Men may be more culpable individually for neglecting the light, but there is not the same influence and power of Satan.

Now all this connects itself with the public moral government of this world. When the authority of the word of God is over man’s conscience, that of Satan is not; where it is not, the god of this world exercises his sway. But the proper and eternal purpose of God in the gift of the word goes farther. Men are quickened to eternal life by it.

So in its measure is it with the law. It gives a true measure of what men ought to do, and, in its highest character, what they ought to feel, and claims direct authority for God over the conscience, and puts man, as far as claim on his conscience goes, under immediate responsibility to God and the consciousness of it. Hence it elevated the position of man immensely above the heathen who worshiped demons, and as helps to their passions, not God as a holy one for their conscience. Conscience could not be destroyed: God had put it in man by the fall, but it was buried as much as possible among the heathen, and religion helped through Satanic influence to do so.

15. “Law,” *Collected Writings*, 10:3-5, 6-7.

This the law did away, and so far tended to present blessing; but if I be asked, What is the divine intention in the law, its spiritual purpose as judged of by the perfect light of the New Testament, in which man was looked at as an already lost sinner, and heavenly and eternal blessings are revealed? then I say that God's intention in the law was not and could not be temporal welfare of man by restraining evil. I may look at the whole law given to Israel in this light as a civil code incomparably beyond all that was known among heathens; but it has no such place, now Christianity is come. Farther, the law besides this contained a deeper element -- its nucleus was the divine judgment of right and wrong in the creature. The ten commandments forbade the evils which destroyed the relationship between man and God and man and his neighbor. What the Lord drew out of the law is the essential element of blessedness even in heaven as far as the creature element of that happiness goes -- loving God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. Next, in Israel's case, to whom the law was given, there was by the law no revelation at all of another world or its blessings; and so far as Israel was concerned, the law was given for temporal blessings -- blessings in basket and in store, in the field and in the winepress; and these as signs of divine favor showing its governmental approval of righteousness and obedience.

But if it be asked, what was the intention of law by the light -- the true light which now shines {1 Jn. 2:8}, the whole aspect is changed, because the truth, grace and truth, are come {John 1:17}. In the first, {i.e., grace, } law has no place at all. The second {i.e., truth,} gives to law (not the law merely) the necessary and inevitable character of condemnation and death; because men have to say to God, not in governmental relationship in the earth, but as personally responsible to God according to the requirements of His revealed nature. As viewed thus in the light of Christianity then it takes a double character. First, as the law dispensationally given to Israel, it was after an unconditional promise which it could not disannul {Gal. 3:17} and was the schoolmaster until the Seed came to whom the promise was made {Gal. 3:19}. This ceased when faith came {Gal. 3:25}. As law spiritually known, it aggravated sin and brought death and condemnation on the sinner. The welfare of man it has nothing to do with, for man is lost and a sinner; and the law was never given to men in general dispensationally. If I argue religiously on law (not the law), the scripture affords an immediate and very clear answer:

Law entered that the offence might abound {Rom. 5:20}
 -- not that sin might, but that offence might. Its effect is
 sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the
 commandment might become exceeding sinful {Rom. 7:13}.
 The motions of sins which were by the law {Rom. 7:5}.
 The strength of sin is the law {1 Cor. 15:56}.

It is so doubly. It condemns the sinner and brings in death. Sin is provoked by it. So perverse are we, that prohibitions set will and lusts in activity.

A passage I have not yet quoted requires to be noticed.

The law was added, because of transgressions {Gal. 3:19}.

This is constantly cited as if it meant to restrain them. But it really means, I have not the least doubt, to introduce them -- thus convincing man of his perverse and wicked will. The law could not be added to restrain them {i.e., to restrain transgressions}, because there were none until it {the law} came; for where no law is, there is no transgression {Rom. 4:15}. It was added to turn evil in man's heart into transgression by positive commandment, and give the knowledge of sin to the easy conscience of man. It is important to distinguish between the law as a dispensed government of a single people, and law, the effect of law, on the human heart. The English Authorized Version will help us little as to this, though the great body of the Apostle's argument is founded on the nature and effect of law on the human heart.

God's intention then in law was as to spiritual things to bring in transgression and convict of sin -- man being already and hopelessly lost. As an outward dispensation for the Jews, it doubtless tended as a civil system to repress grosser evils: but then God was king of the country and people, and the people governed by it, and that in early times, emerging out of heathenism, before Christ came and was rejected. The Gentiles have nothing to say to it in this sense. It was a schoolmaster up to the time of Christ; then faith came and Judaism ceased {Gal. 3:22-25}. The only way a Gentile can be under law is as a principle of personal responsibility, in which he has to answer for himself, and on which ground it is a ministry of death and condemnation (2 Cor. 3:7, 8), the strength of sin, and useful only to bring guilt on his conscience, and the sense that he has no power to free himself, or any possibility of his being freed from the power of sin while on this ground. The law does not manifest God's moral perfections, or pretend to do it. Christ does that. The law tells us perfectly what the creature ought to be and feel, not what God is and feels.¹⁶ Hence it is not the adequate direction of a Christian's faith. There were two parts of Christ's life: He was born under law {Gal. 4:4}; but He was also the manifestation of God {John 14:9}. Now surely He kept the law, and died under its curse for them who were under it, who were thus delivered from the law, which could only condemn them, or lose its authority if it did not. But the manifestation of God is our pattern.

Be ye therefore perfect as your Father which is in heaven is perfect {Matt. 5:48}. He acts in grace, sends rain on just and unjust, loves His enemies. This, law cannot admit. "Be ye imitators of God as dear children," as Christ has loved us. He laid down His life for us. We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren {1 John 3:16}. In a word Christ, as revealing the Father, is the model for our walk;¹⁷ and the fruits of the

16. {This bears on the false notion that the law is a transcript of the mind of God, which will be considered below.}

17. {See *Collected Writings*, 10:11, 12, 81, 96, 102, 103 -- His walk was higher and went further than the law; p. 29, Christ's obedience was not legal obedience; pp. 102, 103, His service was according to His love to the Father; p. 289, love in the law and Christ's love compared; and 7:134 for the mistake of making
 (continued...)

Spirit, who refers the heart wholly to Him, are what are looked for in him who has the Spirit. Law is inadequate as a rule; it is unchristian in principle to be under it, for I am not under law but under grace {Rom. 6:14}. It is always in connection with man in the flesh and cannot be with redemption, and as many as are of the works of it are accursed {Gal. 3:10}. It is not what I can look to as an object, for Christ is that; and I cannot serve two masters, or, to use the figure of Rom. 7:1-4 on this point, have two husbands at one time -- law and Christ risen. Whoever sets himself under law in any way destroys its authority, because he has not kept it, yet hopes not to be under its curse; and he uses Christ, not for redemption and power of deliverance, but to make allowance for failure in us and make void the law which would condemn us. If He has delivered me from it, bearing its curse, He has glorified its authority and delivered me by power from sin in the flesh, that I may bring forth fruit unto God. If I am put under it after redemption, it must either condemn me or its authority be set aside. As a rule of life it is inadequate, because grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and this is my rule of life -- not the law which was given by Moses, and which is not grace. To say that it is a transcript of, or manifests, God's moral perfections is nonsense. Is He, speaking with reverence, to love His neighbor as Himself? A creature ought -- doubtless unfallen creatures as angels do; but as to man, he is a fallen one and does not, and when raised with Christ has the activity of grace and forbearing love as his rule, as shown in God manifest in the flesh; and the Christian led of the Spirit is not under law {Gal. 5:18}.

The subject is too vast to enter into in answering a question, or it would be important to notice that law is a principle of relationship as well as a rule, and to show how we are delivered from law, and that this is the only means of sin not having dominion over us. Those who would place the Christian under law do not believe that in us, that is, in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing {Rom. 7:18}, nor ever will; or they do not know what they are saying or insisting on. It were well they should weigh the force of this:

when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin which were by the law {Rom. 7:5};
and

sin shall not have dominion over you, because ye are not under law, but under grace {Rom. 6:14}.

The law was then for Israel connected with God's direct government as its sanction, a means of temporal blessing. But this has ceased. All divine light tends to strengthen and elevate conscience when it rules public opinion; but God's spiritual intention in the law was to make offence abound {Rom. 5:20}. It does not manifest God's moral

17. (...continued)

Christ a law; Synopsis, 3:370, for the difference between law and the command of Christ; and see also Collected Writings, 4:370; 7:137; 10:89; 17:315.

See *Collected Writings*, 10:21, 102, 160; 7:331, for how the Christian fulfills the law, but not as under it.}

perfections, but in its nature claims, and is the rule of, man's duties. The ten commandments do not give the instruction needed by a redeemed people: a redeemed people cannot now be rightly under the law. Sin has dominion over those that are under it {Rom. 6:14}. Christ alone is the rule, pattern, light, and instruction of the redeemed Christian.¹⁸ ❖

Must There Be The Same Rule of Conduct at All Times?

If there must be the same rule of conduct at all times, all Covenantists should necessarily assert that Adam had the law of ten commandments (though we know he did not; he had *a* law). Moreover, this appears to limit what God can do, for He must always relate to man, in one way or another, according to this rule. Moreover, it would limit Him in what He is in His moral nature. At any rate, J. N. Darby objected to this Covenantist notion.

❖ I now turn to another point, that the same rule of conduct must be given of God at all times. It is a theory founded on a theory. No doubt God's nature is immutable, and certain principles are immutably true in one who is a partaker of the divine nature; but to say that the law is this, or that the rule given to us to follow is the same, is false. This is the effect of an unscriptural use of the term "moral law." God did give another rule to His creatures for their obedience. Did He not give the law of Moses? -- the only law, remark, He ever gave (save the prohibition to eat the forbidden fruit). That is, the only law God ever gave to His creatures for their obedience was another from the present rule of walk. It had commandments given, because of the hardness of their hearts, which Christ abrogated. "The law made nothing perfect" (Heb. 7:19); and therefore "there is a disannulling of the commandment going before" {Heb. 7:18} It was said of old, so and so, "but (says the Lord) I say unto you" {Matt. 5:32, etc.}¹⁹ ❖

Speaking of Transcripts: The Law not a Transcript of the Character of God

J. N. Darby showed the obvious fallacy of the notion that the law is a transcript of the character of (or, the mind of) God, apparently bred of making the law the measure of everything, including God Himself.

❖ To allege that it is impossible that a holy, just, good, and perfect God can give us any rule but one, is contrary to the plain facts and declarations of scripture. God did give

18. *Collected Writings*, 13:382-387. See also William Kelly, "Sinai and Its Terrors," *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 6:154-157, 170-173.

19. *Collected Writings*, 10:16.

another, which He has disannulled because it made nothing perfect; and there is the bringing in of a better hope, by which we draw nigh to God {Heb. 7:19}. Christ knew how to draw out from the inner chambers of this law the two great principles on which all hung, and these do present the perfection of the creature -- supreme love to God, and loving our neighbor as oneself. But even this is not in any way “the transcript of the divine character”; and it is a mere fallacy to talk in an abstract way of love, as commanded in it. I deny altogether that the law is a transcript of the divine character. It is the absolutely perfect expression of what the *creature* ought to be; and that is evidently what ought to be given as a law to the creature. I believe the angels in heaven fulfil it, and are blessed and happy in fulfilling it. But because it is the perfection of a creature, it is not the transcript of the *divine* character. Can God -- I would speak with reverence -- love His neighbor as Himself, or even (in the sense here used rightly of a creature) Himself with all His heart, and all His mind, and all His strength? These two commandments are the perfection of a creature in blessedness, and not the transcript of the character of God. The idea is fundamentally false.²⁰ ♦

The Sinner Under the Law is Shown to be a Transcript of the Flesh; The Christian is a Transcript of Christ

The law is not a transcript of the mind, or character, of God. Saying so makes the law the moral measure of God’s mind. Christ is the moral transcript of the mind of God. He, of course, answered in His life perfectly to what God is. The Christian, as such, is a moral transcript of Christ, an epistle of Christ {2 Cor. 3:2}. That is his position, though answering to it poorly in practice.

The law was addressed to man in the flesh. It was perfectly suitable for such a one, perfectly addressing his condition as a sinner. It brought into bold relief what man in the flesh is. It brought not one atom of power to him to enable him to respond. It did not give a new nature from God, no eternal life. It brought nothing but a curse. J. N. Darby wrote:

♦ Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them (Gal 3:10).

Suppose I bring a right and true measure to a man who is in the habit of using a wrong measure, what do I do it for? Not to make him honest, but to prove his dishonesty. It is in vain for him to say, I will change my character; the thing is already done. The question is, has he a character? and he is proved to be a dishonest man. Now the law was given:

that the offence might abound (Rom. 5:20).

20. From “Law,” *Collected Writings*, 10:16, 17; see also p. 280, 285. See also 13:280; 27:380; 31:330; 32:48; *Synopsis*, 3:298.

The right, perfect, holy law of God was given as a rule; but if that rule be given to a sinner who cannot keep it, and if it be applied with all the searching power of the holiness of God, he is a judged person, and brought in under its curse. He hopes perhaps to be better; he has some vague thoughts about the mercy of God; but it is no use to talk about what he will be: judgment is already pronounced against him.

But more than this, as a matter of fact the law tells man not so much what he is to do, as what he is not to do. If we look at the ten commandments we shall find that they do not tell him to do anything, except to honor his father and his mother. That is the only positive precept. All the rest are, “Thou shalt not” do this, and “thou shalt not” do that. How comes it then that such a form is employed? This of itself is a sufficient proof of evil tendencies in those addressed. Men care not to make laws for a country to prohibit that which nobody thinks of doing; and so God’s law forbids people to do certain things because they have a tendency to do those very things; it touches the motives and dispositions of men’s hearts as they are known by God.

The law is given most surely as a rule; but it is given to a sinner who already needs amendment. The first thing it does therefore is to prove sin, condemning the inward disposition as well as the outward evil. Paul’s experience of it (Rom. 7) is proof enough of this. He could say he was pure so far as concerned outward compliance with its requirements,

touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless (Phil. 3:6),
alive without the law once {Rom. 7:9},

when the commandment came, sin revived {Rom. 7:9},

and he died. “I had not known sin,” he says,

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 {Rom. 7:7-8}.

“When the commandment came,” he found he was a condemned sinner. The law, being the righteous demand of God from man, and applying itself to those who are already sinners, must necessarily work condemnation and death. It is “the ministration of death” (2 Cor. 3:7), and of “condemnation” (2 Cor. 3:9).

But, again, there are not only wrong motives in man, but a very strong independent will. Man likes to have his own way. Now what is the effect of putting anything in the way of a person who wants to go his own road? That he will push it out of the way if he can. Thus the will of man, if the man be resting on the law as such, and yet liking to have his own way in a single thing, proves him to be a breaker of all the commandments. The will of the man, being contrary to God, if opposed, would push aside the whole law. This is what is meant by

whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty
of all, etc. (James 2:10, 11).

The authority of God is attached to His law; and therefore, if, when the authority of God meets the lusts of man, he is guilty of the breach of that law in one thing, he has overthrown the claim of the authority of God, and thus broken the whole law. If he

commit not adultery, yet if he kill, he sets aside the authority of Him who made the law that says, “Thou shalt not commit adultery”; for He that said, “Do not commit adultery,” said also, “Do not kill.” Suppose you had forbidden your child to do three things, and he was not disposed to do two of the three, or lacked the opportunity, would his not having done two of these three things make you hold him guiltless? No; you would say that he was not disposed to do them, or he would have done them had he found the occasion. Having set aside your authority in the one instance, your authority was not his restraint.

How hard it is, you may be ready to say, that man when a sinner should have a law given him to keep, which he cannot keep, and which therefore, after all, instead of helping him, only works death and condemnation. These are man's thoughts and not God's. ***God never intended to save man by the law: that was not His purpose in giving it. He never meant to save any other way than by Christ*** {emphasis added}. Bounds were set about the mount (Ex. 19:12, 13) -- it is a barrier from God; and Moses required to have a veil put on his face when he spoke to the people (Ex. 34:33-35).

People have taken the idea of heaven from the Scriptures, and then they have taken their own way to it. But they are trying to go to heaven by the very thing God has given as the ministration of death and condemnation; and they expect to get there by the very thing God says pronounces them “cursed.”

The first principle of Christianity, whilst recognizing in the most solemn manner man's responsibility to answer for himself, puts the Christian on other and entirely different ground. This is the first principle and basis of all Christian truth, that there is a Mediator -- a third person, between man and God. Another has implicated Himself, and, because man could not come to God, has taken up the cause of man, and worked out an acceptance for him.

Two things (already noticed) are brought out here, as the result of this.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty {2 Cor. 3:17}, the liberty of grace. And we become the “epistles of Christ” (blotted ones, no doubt, in ourselves, but we are not epistles of ourselves), transcripts of Christ “written . . . with the Spirit of the living God” {2 Cor. 3:3}. This we “are,” not merely we ought to be. Though in ourselves most imperfect and failing, the definition given by the Spirit of God of a Christian is that he is a transcript of Christ.

Now the natural thought of many a soul is this, Well, if that be true, I do not know what to think of myself; I do not see this transcript in myself! No, and you ought not to see it. Moses did not see his own face shine. Moses saw God's face shine, and others saw Moses' face shine. The glory of the Lord, as seen in Moses' face, alarmed the people. They could not bear that glory. But we see it now with “open,” unveiled “face” in Christ (2 Cor. 3:18), and yet are not in the least afraid; we find liberty, comfort, and joy in looking at it; we gaze on it, and, instead of fearing, rejoice. How comes this immense difference? It is “the ministration of the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:8), and “of righteousness” (2 Cor. 3:9).

It is Christ alive in the glory that I see; not Christ down here (sweet as that was), but Christ at the right hand of God. Yet though that glory is in the heavens, I can steadfastly behold it. All that glory (and He is in the midst of the glory and majesty of the throne of God itself) does not affright me, because this wonderful truth comes in, that that glory of God is in the face of a man who has put away my sins, and who is there in proof of it (Heb. 1:3). I should have been afraid to hear His voice, and have said with the children of Israel (Ex. 20:19), “Let not God speak with us”; or, like Adam with a guilty conscience, have sought to hide myself away (Gen. 3:8). But I do not say so now; no, let me hear His voice. I cannot see the glory of Christ now without knowing that I am saved. How comes He there? He is a man who has been down here mixing with publicans and sinners, the friend of such, choosing such as His companions. He is a man who has borne the wrath of God on account of sin; He is a man who has borne my sins in His own body on the tree (I speak the language of faith); He is there, as having been down here amidst the circumstances, and under the imputation of sin; and yet it is in His face I see the glory of God. I see Him there consequent upon the putting away of my sin, because He has accomplished my redemption. I could not see Christ in the glory if there was one spot or stain of sin not put away. The more I see of the glory, the more I see the perfectness of the work that Christ has wrought, and of the righteousness wherein I am accepted. Every ray of that glory is seen in the face of One who has confessed my sins as His own, and died for them on the cross; of One who has glorified God in the earth, and finished the work that the Father had given Him to do. The glory that I see is the glory of redemption. Having glorified God about the sin -- “I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do” {John 17:4} -- God has glorified Him with Himself there; John 17.

When I see Him in that glory, instead of seeing my sins, I see that they are gone. I have seen my sins laid on the Mediator. I have seen my sins confessed on the head of the scapegoat, and they have been borne away (Lev. 16). So much has God been glorified about my sins (that is, in respect of what Christ has done on account of my sins), that this is the title of Christ to be there, at the right hand of God. I am not afraid to look at Christ there. Where are my sins now? where are they to be found in heaven or on earth? I see Christ in the glory. Once they were found upon the head of that blessed One; but they are gone, never more to be found. Were it a dead Christ, so to speak, that I saw, I might fear that my sins would be found again; but with Christ alive in the glory the search is in vain. He who bore them all has been received up to the throne of God, and no sin can be there.

As a practical consequence of this I am changed into His likeness --

We all, with open face beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord {2 Cor. 3:18}.

It is the Holy Ghost taking of the things of Christ, and revealing them to the soul, that is the power of present practical conformity to Christ. I delight in Christ, I feast upon Christ, I love Christ. It is the very model and forming of my soul according to Christ,

by the Holy Ghost -- this His revelation of Christ. I not only get to love the glory, it is Christ Himself that I love; Christ, that I admire; Christ, that I care for; Christ, whose flesh I eat, and whose blood I drink -- what wonder if I am like Christ? The Christian thus becomes the epistle of Christ; he speaks for Christ, owns Christ, acts for Christ. He does not want to be rich, he has riches in Christ -- unsearchable riches. He does not want the pleasures of the world, he has pleasures at God's right hand for evermore.²¹ ❖

When the Law Was Added, and Why?

Now I say this, A covenant confirmed beforehand by God, the law, which took place four hundred and thirty years after, does not annul, so as to make the promise of no effect (Gal. 3:17).

❖ But now comes the question. Man being a sinner, utterly departed from God, and if under law a law-breaker -- is the law a way of justifying him, or the rule according to which he is justified? Ah, if he has kept it all right, he shall surely have righteousness by it and life.²² But we have supposed with scripture that man is a sinner, and under law a law-breaker, so that he has not righteousness by it. How then does scripture bring in righteousness and salvation? Is it by law? Is it founded on its rules and claims? or is it, while surely maintaining the excellency and authority of the law fully, in some other way? Upon the ground of the first Adam in law, it is all over with us -- the way to the tree of life shut and all access forbidden. But from the outset what hope is given? It is another Adam, the seed of the woman, not a restoration of the first on any old principle. The seed of the woman is to bruise the serpent's head. The destruction of evil is by Christ's coming in as a deliverer.

Next (and mark, for this is important and insisted on by the apostle -- the special thesis of his epistle to the Galatians, which is really a treatise on this point) a promise without any condition comes, contrary in its nature to law. Promise may be attached to law; it was in Sinai, but then it depends on a condition; there are two parties, and man must be faithful to his or it fails.

Simply, promise is of one, God, and then is infallible; and this promise was to the seed, Christ {Gal. 3:17}. The promise is made to Him, simply, absolutely, unconditionally; but we may add, Abraham gives up all the promises as given to Isaac in flesh, sacrifices him, and the promise is confirmed to one risen in figure {Gen. 22}. This on every ground never can be annulled. The law comes in 430 years after, let man say what he will in dreaming about law, but it cannot touch the unconditional promise. So says the apostle; "it came in by the by," *pareiselthe*. Was it, then, immaterial that man was a sinner, that there was no righteousness? Was he to be blessed in his sin, and human righteousness or unrighteousness not to be considered? That would not do, and hence human righteousness -- righteousness in flesh -- of man, as a child of Adam, is

21. From "The Accepted Man, 2 Corinthians 3," *Collected Writings*, 12:334-338.

22. The scripture takes care never to say eternal life; for this is a gift of God, it is Christ Himself.

proposed and required in the law, with promise of life by it, and a curse attached to its breach, and given with every help and advantage to a chosen people. The result was simple. Flesh was not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, and those that are in flesh cannot please Him. The law convinced of sin, but did not touch and could not touch God's unconditional promise. Was it, then, the ground of righteousness so that man should have the promise? If it were, he must fail of the promise, for flesh could not keep it {Rom. 8:7}.²³ ❖

The Inheritance Only Obtained by Grace and Promise

Is the inheritance on the principle of law? See Gal. 3:18-19. The law was part of the probation of the first, fallen man to show that he was not recoverable. Man in his youth-time, left to the conscience he acquired by the fall, filled the earth with violence and corruption. The description of man's heart is given in Gen. 6:5. That describes the state of the first man under trial as left to himself. Israel was no different in heart. Such was the material upon which the law worked. Yet, the law is the measure of what man ought to be, but the law gives no power to carry out God's holy will. What the law exposed is given in Rom. 8:7.

In the course of time, God brought in unconditional promise. At Sinai the time had come to put the first man to the test if he could obtain the promise conditionally -- by his effort -- rather than by sovereign grace undertaking to make good the divine promises. Trial was begun and immediately when the law was given, the golden calf was set up and the covenant was broken. God then gave the law again, with mediation brought in so that He could go on with the people -- resulting in more unfolding of the ways of God, for He ever makes the wrath of man to praise Him and what would not do so He restrains {Ps. 76:10}.

The Covenantist system has Israel inheriting the land promises, some saying under Joshua, some saying in Solomon's day. The importance to the Covenantist scheme is not so much exactly *when* Israel inherited as the idea that Israel *did* inherit the land promises -- which gets the matter of the land promise out of the way for the system. But this means, of course, that Israel inherited under the conditional covenant of law, the Mosaic Covenant. As far as this goes, it means that Israel did not inherit on the principle of promise (Gal. 3:17). Scripture opposes mixing law and promise. There is no such thing as inheriting on the basis of both principles simultaneously (Gal. 3:18).

The fact is that Israel did not inherit the land on the principle of law because "God gave it in grace to Abraham by promise." The result of Covenantism is that God set aside giving it in grace by promise and instead gives it to Abraham's seed -- while that nation was a mixture of children of promise and children of the flesh -- on the principle of law, and while under the conditional covenant, which means they had to earn it.

23. *Collected Writings*, 7:320-321.

The alleged ‘covenant of grace’ is at war with the distinction made in Scripture between law and grace.

Israel will inherit when they are all righteous (Isa. 60:21; Rom. 11:25-32). They will then be under the New Covenant which is a gracious covenant -- in contrast to the law which is a legal covenant.

The Law Was Added for the Sake of Transgressions

Why then the law? It was added for the sake of transgressions (Gal. 3:19).

The giving of the law was a part of God’s ways in bringing out the state of the fallen, first man to show that he was not recoverable from the fall. In the development of God’s ways, He added the law to the trial of the first man, the first man being tried in a representative way in the persons of Israel. The fact that the law was “added” shows that it was not there before. The law came by Moses (John 1:17). Yet, sin was in the world before the law was given {Rom. 5:13}. The essence of sin is self-will -- acting without reference to the will of God, lawlessness. The world was filled with sin before the law was given. The law of stated prohibition gave sin a new character of being transgression against an expressly stated command.

❖ “The law was added, because of transgressions.” This is constantly cited as if it meant to restrain them. But it really means, I have not the least doubt, to introduce them -- thus convincing man of his perverse and wicked will. The law could not be added to restrain them because there were none until it came; for where no law is, there is no transgression {Rom. 4:15}. It was added to turn evil in man's heart into transgression by positive commandment, and give the knowledge of sin to the easy conscience of man. It is important to distinguish between the law as a dispensed government of a single people, and law, the effect of law, on the human heart. The English Authorized Version will help us little as to this, though the great body of the Apostle’s argument is founded on the nature and effect of law on the human heart.²⁴ ❖

The Law Was Added Until the Seed Came to Whom the Promise Was Made

The seed is, of course, Christ. We saw from Gen. 22, where Isaac is a type of Christ sacrificed and received back in resurrection, that the great Seed of Abraham is spoken of in Gen. 22:18. It is by Christ in resurrection that the promises will be made good. In fact, all the promises of God are yea and amen in Him (2 Cor. 1:20), whether they be for the earth or for those “in Christ Jesus.”

The crucifixion of Christ was the final act of the first man while as yet he had a standing in the flesh, as represented in the persons of Israel:

But now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father (John 15:24).

24. *Synopsis*, 4:269, 270.

The revelation of the Father in the Son was rejected with hate. The Lord of glory was put to the cross and gave Himself in sufferings and death. From His side came the water and the blood. Then the veil of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom. The Mosaic Covenant was ended.

Gal. 3:19 tells us that there was a terminal point for the law. This does not mean that the law died -- it did not die, but the Christian has died with Christ and is dead to the law (Rom. 7:6). *The law as addressed to man in responsibility, under probation, to perform accordingly, ended.* Standing in responsibility under the law as the rule of life ended. Man was proven to be incorrigible. So, the law itself is not gone (1 Tim. 1:9), but its function²⁵ during the first man’s probation, as the rule of life for those who stood in conditional-covenant relationship to God, was completed.

There is now no such thing as Christian standing in relationship to God in which the law is the rule of life.

The Law Was Added to Show That Law-keeping Was not the Basis for Righteousness

This is considered in Volume 3, ch. 3.

The Law a Tutor Up to Christ

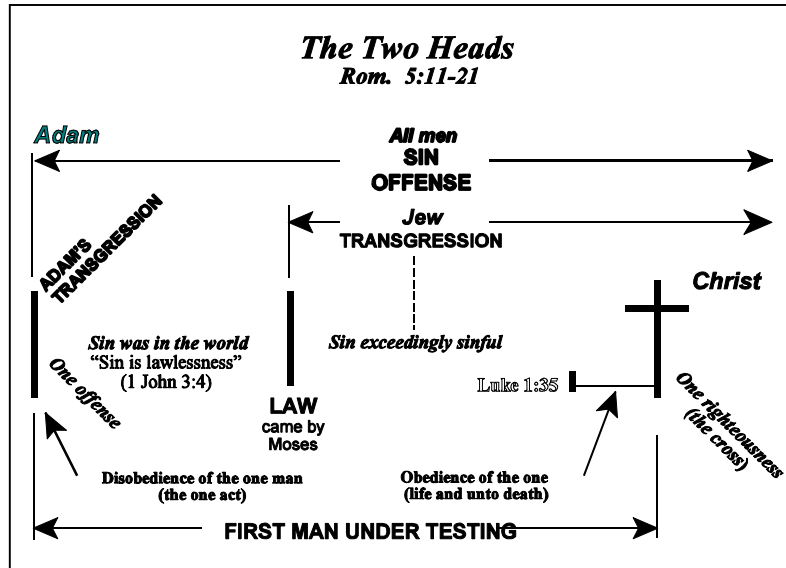
Gal. 3:21-26 have been commented on in various quotations above. Here we shall look at them again under the following sub-headings.

The Law is not Against the Promises (Gal. 3:21)

❖ The law intervened between the promise and its fulfilment to put man to the proof, in order that the weakness and iniquity of the flesh might be manifested. It was not against the promises of God, but it showed that man could not secure the accomplishment of those promises by his own faithfulness and his own works. For if the law could have given life, the new life given by the law would naturally keep its commandments; this would have been human and legal righteousness, and although human yet pleasing to God. But sinful flesh was detected, not righteousness accomplished. If they had kept the law, under which they had placed themselves at Sinai in order that they might enjoy the promises, they would have enjoyed that which was promised: but they did not keep it. All -- Jews as well as Gentiles, those who had the privileges as well as those who had them not -- were concluded under sin, so that the promise made to Abraham might be fulfilled to all believers through faith in Jesus

25. Regarding the function and effect of the law, see *Collected Writings*, 7:324, 357; 10:8; 16:43, 366; 12:153; 13:382; *Notes and Jottings*, pp. 265, 267; *The Bible Treasury*, 16:318; New Series 6:173.

Christ.²⁶



Scripture Has Shut Up All Things Under Sin (Gal. 3:22)

Instructively, v. 22 does not say that *law* has shut up all things under sin. That way of stating the matter is in accord with the fact that the Gentiles never were under the law; but, of course, it does not follow that the Gentiles did not sin. They did sin, acting without reference to the will of God -- the very essence of sin. It is doing one's own will. They acted in a lawless fashion. Israel did so also, but as having the law, sin took the form of transgression. The correct translation of 1 John 3:4 is "sin is lawlessness." That includes Gentiles -- who never had the law. Scripture shows that those without law and those with law are all guilty.

❖ The Gentiles, not having law, are a law unto themselves {Rom. 2:14}. All this is nothing for the legalist -- he must have his theory, and know better than God how to deal with man.²⁷ ❖

26. *Collected Writings*, 34:78, 79. See also 21:303; *Synopsis*, 4:274.

27. *Notes and Comments*, 5:48.

❖ The introduction of sin and conscience came together. God did not allow man to go out as a sinner from Paradise to commence this world without carrying a conscience with him. It may have been corrupted -- hardened; but it is there to be corrupted and hardened. Hence the apostle reasons as to the Gentiles on the ground of conscience, though not on that only; but he speaks of no law written on the Gentiles' heart. If that were so, they would be under the new covenant. It is not the law, but the particular work which their natural conscience approves or reproves, that is written on their hearts {see Rom. 2:14, 15}, a work found in the law too.²⁸ ❖

❖ . . . Rom. 2:12,

they that have sinned *without law*, shall also perish *without law*; which is in contrast with them that have sinned under law. It is clear contrast there and that in the English translation itself. But they {i.e., translators of the KJV} had a doctrine which was that the transgression of the law was sin, and so in 1 John {3:4} they put it,

sin is the transgression of the law;

but where their doctrine {of the law} was not in question, they translated it as "lawless." In John it is positively contrary to scripture; for when it says "they that have sinned without law," how can this be if sin is the transgression of the law? And again, how then could sin by the commandment become exceedingly sinful? And again,

for until the law sin was in the world {Rom. 5:13};

how could that be if sin was but the transgression of the law?

Sin is not imputed when there is no law {Rom. 5:13},

it is true. But this is not the word elsewhere rendered "impute"; it means the particular sin is not put to account. You are a sinner and lawless when you have no law, but I cannot say to you, Such and such a thing is forbidden. As if my child runs into the street, instead of doing its lessons, I cannot say in a particular sense, "You have been disobedient"; but if I have told him not to go out into the street, then it is not a general question of his idleness, but I say I am going to whip you for that particular thing. In Rom. 5:13, what the apostle is reasoning on is that death was a proof that sin was there before there was law. You cannot confine grace to the Jews, for then you make it narrower than sin; for death and sin were there, and all had sinned, and if you shut up grace to those under law and do not let in the Gentiles, you are making sin a more powerful thing than the grace of God. Death was reigning there before ever Moses' law came in, and that is the meaning of the expression

who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression,

a quotation from Hos. 6:7,

but they like men -- Adam -- have transgressed the covenant.

These Gentiles never did that, the Jews did. They transgressed it, and Adam too transgressed the commandment he had; yet these Gentiles were under sin and death,

28. *Collected Writings*, 10:18.

though they had no law at all. You must now take up Christ as answering to Adam in headship, though first he adds more, that the law entered that the offence might abound, but where sin -- not offence -- abounded, grace did much more abound {Rom. 5:20}. The difference between “impute” in Rom. 4 and 5, is that in ch. 4 it is reckoning a man to be something; in ch. 5 it is putting so much to his account. It occurs again in Philemon, “put that to my account.”

In reading the verse in 1 John 3:4, “Sin is lawlessness,” it would not have the same effect if you reversed the words as they stand as in our {KJV} version; but as in the Greek with the two articles, it is a reciprocal proposition. ‘A blow is sin’; but you could not say, ‘sin is a blow.’ But ‘lawlessness is sin’; and ‘sin is lawlessness’; and he who practices sin also practices lawlessness {1 John 3:4}. It is *kai* (and) that is used to connect the sentence, which I think brings it back to an abstract proposition. In Rom. 5:5, Adam had a law and Moses had a law, and sin was in between and death too. I think you see at once that a law is in contemplation; not so lawlessness, which is expressed by an abstract word.

Sin, I believe, is a man having a will of his own. It so far takes in law that, the moment you have got a creature of God, there was some rule or will of God that that creature ought to obey, but if he does not, he is lawless. To sin, in Greek, is to err, to miss anything, as, not to hit when shooting at a mark, or to reel off when you ought to keep on; to leave a straight right path is the etymological meaning of this word. But it is a very different thing to bring in the thought of law. If I say, “them that have sinned without law,” it makes me think of a law though they have had none. You cannot in the abstract sense think of a creature that has to say to God, without thinking of God’s authority expressed somehow, and this would be a law to him, which also was true in the garden of Eden. But when a fruit was particularly forbidden, it was a legal covenant; “if you eat that, you shall die” -- a positive rule. Well man eats it and gets a conscience, and so on. Afterwards Moses’ law was a perfect rule for man in that state, for a child of Adam that had got away from God. There is no means in it of bringing him back to God, and therefore it says,

the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be {Rom. 8:7}: it has got a will of its own. That state we have brought out in our chapter where we were reading {in 1 Cor.}, in which Paul is said to be under law *to Christ* {1 Cor. 9:21}, and yet not himself under law. It is the abstract idea of being subject to the rule of Christ, and so on; yet he states at the same time that he is not under law, he will not hear of that in any way: but he adds “not without law to God” {1 Cor. 9:21}, nor lawless therefore as regards God, and yet he is not under law, while he is rightly subject to Christ.

The mischief of maintaining law is that it sets up flesh, treating man as alive. Now the doctrine of Christianity is that man {i.e., the Christian} is not alive {Col. 2:20}. The law has power over a man so long as he lives. Well, if I am alive, I am a responsible man in the flesh, and lost and condemned. But now we are delivered from the law,

having died in that in which we were held {Rom. 7:6}, and that is where there is no allowance of sin; and he brings in a {new} nature to which the power of Christ is added. He does not set about to leave the man alive and then bring the law to a man that will not bow to it. He did that once of old, but now in Christ we have a new life with power in it, and in that respect the Christian scheme is as plain as possible. It is not bringing a law to a nature that cannot be subject to it, but the bringing in a new nature that delights to do the will of God. You contrast the new nature with will, and then add the Holy Ghost for power.²⁹ ♦

♦ That law is not the way of righteousness or sanctification, nor of obedience. Paul does not even say *the* law. Law came in by the by (νόμος παρεισήλθε), that system and way of dealing on God’s part. He carefully distinguishes men under law, and men not under law -- without it; he alludes to Adam as under a law, Israel also; whereas people between them are on a different ground: so all Gentiles, having no law (νόμον); so Christians. I know that great pains are taken to undo his words, and show they must have had some law, though the apostle declares they have none, and perish without it, instead of being judged by the one which was given. I know that it is urged they were a law to themselves where they had none, because they had a conscience; but this is only to prove that actual righteousness by conscience is better than the having a law and breaking it; that working good was better than having a law, if it was broken. Scripture contrasts being under law and being without law, and does not know these speculations on it. What it calls law as absolutely as words can make it, it declares the Gentiles to be without (μὴ ἔχοντες νόμον), having no law at all {Rom. 2:12}. It does say everyone has a conscience which tells him of right and wrong. They are without law -- χωρὶς νόμου. They are inexcusable, from natural proofs of God, and as giving up God when they knew Him {Rom. 1:18-21}. But they are not proved guilty by any law they were under; but it is declared, having sinned without law (ἀνόμως), they will perish without law -- while others have sinned under law, and will be judged by it. The sense in which scripture says they were without law and had none, in that sense I believe and say it. Nothing can be more absolute. The reasonings of men as to it are all inventions not found in scripture. What scripture calls law, Gentiles and Christians are not under. I know passages are quoted to show that they *must* be, in spite of what scripture says. I shall refer to these. Ignorance of Greek can hardly excuse the use of some of them, where positive scriptures are so plain.

Sin, we are told, is the transgression of the law {1 John 3:4}. Now, no one knowing Greek could cite this theological, but fatally unscriptural, translation. It is simply, Sin is lawlessness, ἀνομία, not παράβασις. Another passage quoted is, “under the law to Christ” {1 Cor. 9:21}; but neither here is the law spoken of at all; it is, not as lawless in respect of God, but rightly subject to Christ -- ἐννομος Χριστῷ. It is in contrast with

29. *Collected Writings*, 26:239-241. See also *Synopsis*, 4:92, 94, 269.

having to say to the law. But there is another passage which is reckoned on to prove that all men are under law, Rom. 3:19. It is astonishing how anyone could so little see the force of the apostle's argument. I am aware that Dr. O'Brien refers to this; but I am only so much the more astonished. The apostle had proved Jews and Greeks all under sin, and then turns back to the many advantages the Jews had. He was not derogating from them. Well, he says, you have the oracles of God {Rom. 3:3}. Let us hear them. Are we better than Gentiles? You are as much under sin as the Gentiles. Read your own books, from which he then cites passages, and, relying on the claim of the Jews that the law belonged to them, that the law spoke to those who were under it, applies these denunciations to the Jews who were; thus stopping their mouths by their own oracles, which they claimed as belonging exclusively to them. There you are then, says Paul. You say the scriptures apply to you, and that is what they say; and then every mouth is stopped. That the Gentile was a sinner was admitted; they were not Jews by nature. But their own oracles brought in the Jews too; and every mouth was stopped. How anyone could think that the statement that the law spoke to those who were under it, meant that it spoke to all, when the subject is the Jews alone possessing it and its advantages, would be hard to think, but for the prejudices of a system. I do not go on to insist on what follows, that the righteousness of God is manifested (χωρὶς νόμου) absolutely apart from law, because I have done it elsewhere.³⁰ ❖

❖ If the Apostle had told the Jews that the Gentiles had the Law, and so were proved guilty, they would have laughed in his face, so much the rather that he had just been insisting on their privileges, and the chief, the oracles of God, and shown the Gentiles sinning without law, and so perishing, while those under it would be judged by it -- a distinction without a difference, and all labor in vain on Dr. F.'s theory. How easy, if only this theory had been set up, to convince the Gentiles and prove them without excuse! But God was too wise and holy to convict them by that which they had not got. God may use it now in wielding it as a sword to the conscience, but not hold guilty under it those that had not got it.³¹ ❖

Law Shut Up to Faith

[which was] About to be Revealed (Gal. 3:23)

r the law,' though that is the specific instrument God used. "We," i.e., Israel, were under law as the principle of the guarding. Law here is a principle of God's dealing with persons in contrast to faith. The passage does not say there was no faith in the OT, but means that now faith is a revealed basis of what God is doing in contrast with His dealing with Israel by law. If Israel stood before God on the basis, on the principle, of law, they did not stand before God on the basis of faith. Law is not faith and faith is not

30. *Collected Writings*, 10:98, 99.

31. *Notes and Comments*, 5:49.

law.

When the Apostle said "we" in v. 23 he refers to the Jews; when he said "ye" in v. 26, he referred to all believers, Jew and Gentile. Thus, when he said "we are no longer under a tutor", he is saying that we Jewish believers are no longer under a tutor (the Gentiles *never* were). Earlier, we had considered how Covenantists try to get Hagar back in the house to keep order there. There is not a Hagar for justification which is rejected and kept outside, however a Hagar for sanctification, or as providing a rule of life, kept inside. There is not a tutor for justification which is rejected and kept outside, however a tutor for sanctification, or as providing a rule of life, kept inside. Such is not Christianity. Such a distinction regarding the law, not for justification but yet for a rule of life, is not made in the NT.

Rom. 7:1-4 shows that we Christians "have been made dead to the law by the body of Christ, to be to another" {to Christ}. We are not taught that we are dead to the law for justification but not for sanctification, or as a rule of life.

❖ Now before faith came (that is, christian faith, as the principle of relationship with God, before the existence of the positive {and revealed} objects of faith in the Person, the work, and the glory of Christ as man, had become the means of establishing the faith of the gospel), the Jews were kept under the law, shut up with a view to the enjoyment of this privilege which was to come. Thus the law had been to the Jews as a child's conductor up to Christ, in order that they might be justified on the principle of faith. Meanwhile they were not without restraint; they were kept apart from the nations, not less guilty than they, but kept separate for a justification, the necessity of which was made more evident by the law which they did not fulfil, but which demanded righteousness from man; thus showing that God required this righteousness. But when once faith had come, those until then subject to the law were no longer under the tutelage of this law, which only bound them until faith was come. For this faith, placing man immediately in the presence of God, and making the believer a son of the Father of glory, left no more place for the guidance of the tutor employed during the nonage of one who was now set free and in direct relationship with the Father.³² ❖

The Law Has Been Our {Israel's} Tutor

Up to Christ, That We Might Be

Justified on the Principle of Faith (Gal. 3:24)

❖ Let the reader remember that the apostle is writing to Christians, and reasoning against a tendency and an effort which beset Christians everywhere to bring in the obligation of the law *after Christ*. And he shows the working of the law for any that took it up to bring its obligations upon them when they were Christians, and declares that he who had been under law was delivered from it, and that it was a schoolmaster

32. *Synopsis*, 4:269, 270.

up to faith; but that when faith came men were no longer under it. The subject he is everywhere treating is law in its nature,³³ or specifically an attempt to place men under its obligation *after* they had received the faith.³⁴ ❖

***But Faith Having Come, We Are No Longer
under a Tutor; for Ye Are All God's Sons
by Faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:25)***

Covenant Theology means that we *are, in fact*, under the tutor, the schoolmaster -- as a rule of life. It is like saying that Hagar as the instrument of justification must be put out of the house, but Hagar as a rule of life must be in the house. It is like saying that the tutor must be rejected for justification, but the tutor must be maintained as a tutor for sanctification -- for the rule of life. Referring to Rom. 1-4, it is as if one is under the second husband for salvation but under the first for sanctification. It is as if one were under the Last Adam for Justification but under the first for sanctification. It is, in fact, placing oneself under law as a principle of standing before God. Scripture knows no such distinctions any more than it knows the covenants created by Covenantists.

❖ But once faith -- that is, Christ and the system of faith had come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. What was only for the time of expectation lost the whole ground of its existence when the object of expectation had come. It had been useful for preserving them until the appointed time; but once that which was waited for had come, to preserve the schoolmaster had no longer any motive -- it belonged to the time of waiting. This would, in reality, have denied His coming and His work. Those who had not kept the law, when they were bound to do it, desired, from pride, to keep it, when every motive for having it was entirely passed. Such is man!³⁵ ❖

❖ I am not astonished that you forsake truth here; that you do not know what you are doing in placing yourself under law. It is a very ordinary case. That the will of God, wherever it is expressed in the word, ought to govern the Christian, is what every truly converted soul acknowledges. But, sir, the word of God is wiser than you are; it never places the Christian under law, nor under the obligation of the law after the death of Jesus. It was a schoolmaster to bring us to {up to} Christ. It speaks of commands: they are dear and precious and not painful to the real Christian. But the word never places a Christian under law; and I repeat, the word comes from a God who knows the heart of man, and who knows what is necessary for him and what is hurtful or impossible for him. He employed the law to convince of sin. The word expressly says that the law is

33. The reader who understands Greek will see that, in a multitude of instances, where "the" law would seem to refer to Jewish law, the apostle is speaking of law as a principle. In fact, Judaism was the only case where God had tried this principle, so that it comes in the main to the same thing.

34. *Synopsis*, 4:140.

35. *Collected Writings*, 34:79.

not for the righteous {1 Tim. 1:9}; you say that it is. I believe in the word and in the wisdom of my God more than in you. I believe that He knows how to preserve holiness, without which no man shall see Him {Heb. 12:14}, better than you do, better than human wisdom does. He knows; and whoever is taught of Him and knows his own heart knows that the law, every law, is a minister of death and condemnation {2 Cor. 3:7-9}, and it is impossible that it should be anything else; and that if man is placed under a law in what way soever, either it must condemn him, or *the obligation of the law must be weakened*. I see plainly that you are ignorant of this. You speak of the idea of obligation to the law, of the idea of law. Now if, being under obligation, you are bound by the law, you have certainly not truly kept it (though your new nature loves it, and love is the fulfilment of it); and if you have not kept it, and you are under obligation to do so, it condemns you, it justly drives you from the presence of God. If you are bound by the law, and have failed in its obligations (and such is the case), you must either weaken it and annul its obligations, or perish. Obligation to a law requires either that it should be kept, or that one should be condemned by it: there is nothing else. It knows nothing of grace. It could know nothing of it. You have not kept it. Are you bound to do so? You must wipe off this obligation in order to escape. Faith and the grace of God alone maintain the authority of the law, because I acknowledge myself lost if I am under the law, and I see that Christ has undergone its curse, and has placed me in an entirely new position which unites two things: perfect righteousness before God, because it is the righteousness of God accomplished in Christ; and life, the participation of the divine nature according to the power of resurrection. I cannot have the two husbands {Rom. 7:1-4}, two obligations at the same time, the law and Christ. In Christ I am dead {Gal. 2:19}. Now the law has authority and is binding as long as we live {Rom. 7:1}; but being dead (because Christ died for me) I am delivered from the law that I may belong *to another* (this is the plain language of the word), to Him who is raised again from the dead *that we may bring forth fruit unto God* {Rom. 7:4}. Are you bound by the law? The law will strictly maintain its authority and this obligation; it must do so, and will condemn you as surely as you are a sinner. If I am dead, it has no more authority over me, for it cannot cross that barrier; I belong to Another. Through the law I am dead to the law, that I might live unto God {Gal. 2:19}; it is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me {Gal. 2:20}.³⁶ ❖

❖ I reject the altering, modifying, the law. I reject christianizing in it; that is, weakening its legal character by an admixture of grace that is neither law nor gospel. I maintain its whole absolute authority. Those who have sinned under it will be judged by it. It will have its own authority (that is, God's) according to its own terms in the day of judgment; but I am not under it but under grace, not under the schoolmaster but a son, because faith is come, and I have the Spirit of adoption. I am on another footing and in

36. *Collected Writings*, 4:133, 134.

another relationship with God; I am not in the flesh, not in the place of a child of Adam at all, but delivered out of it by redemption. I have died and risen again; I am in Christ.³⁷



Chapter 3

The Second Covenant of the Law -- With the Mediation of Moses Mediation Added to the Law So that God Could Go On with Israel

The law was hardly given to Israel when they broke it by having another god, the golden calf. So immediately was the state of man exposed. They went quickly out of the way {Ex. 32:8}. The giving the law the second time in connection with mediation did not, of course, change the state of the fallen, first man. Under every mercy and under everything the Lord gave Israel, the same incorrigibility was manifested. Yet, in all the things given to Israel there are many types for our learning, as well as types seen in the behavior of Israel (see 1 Cor. 10).

In order for God to go on with Israel, mediation and grace had to come in. Thus Moses received the two tables of the law the second time, but this time with provision so that God could go on with Israel. This is another, a second covenant, i.e., a covenant that replaced the first covenant of law, which was without mediation, so that God could go on in grace with Israel (Ex. 34). Observe that the second covenant does not change the law, change its character, from the first covenant at Sinai. Law is not grace and grace is not law. This second covenant of law, with mediation, shows that what is brought in, mediation, is not part of law. Law, as law, knows no mercy. Law is not redemptive.

The second covenant, which we call the Mosaic Covenant, with mediation included, shows that Israel was thus not under the law without God bearing with them in mercy for the remainder of the time that they were under trial -- up to the cross. Yet, the fact that mediation came in shows that the covenant of the law as first given was not in one iota an expression of the grace of God.³⁸

And that gives us the character of law,

38. Viewing the Adamic covenant as “a covenant of works,” Peter Golding said, “the covenant of works is not the old covenant {meaning, the Mosaic Covenant}, and it is not redemptive, as the Mosaic Covenant was” (*Covenant Theology*, Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications, p. 113, 2004). This alleges that the Mosaic Covenant is “redemptive.” The first time the law was given, what was redemptive in it? Of course, the second covenant -- with mediation -- is not redemptive any more than was the first time the law was given, regarding which the two tables were broken. How could anyone suppose the first legal covenant was redemptive in character or effect, or tendency? Do Covenantists really face the difference between the two legal covenants, one without mediation and the other with mediation? Actually, concerning the law itself, as law, in both cases, there is no difference. The law is the law; and mediation having been brought in changes that not one iota.

37. *Collected Writings*, 10:284.

as such, for the first, fallen man:

NO MERCY, NO GRACE.

Note very carefully the point in the next quotation concerning those who are of the works of the law. Their being under the curse does not refer to their conduct, but to the principle they stand on -- namely, *they stand on the principle of works of the law* as their standing.

❖ As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse {Gal. 3:10}.

This expression does not contemplate the conduct, but the principle on which we stand before God. Those who are *of faith* are linked with faithful Abraham; those that are of the works of the law are under the curse, for the law saith, "Cursed," etc.³⁹❖

❖ Thus God made Himself "*the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob*" -- heirs of the promises, and pilgrims upon earth. We shall see that in this name, God, as it were, makes His boast on the earth, and that the faithful in Israel ever find in it the motives of their confidence.

Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations (Ex. 3:15).

But in another point of view, Israel placed themselves in relationship with God, in a way which is opposed to all that; namely, their own righteousness -- the principle of the law by virtue of which, acknowledging that we owe obedience to God, we undertake the doing of it in our own strength; for the history of the people of Israel is, whether in its largeness or details, but the history of our hearts.

Ex. 19. Here was an immense change taking place in the state of Israel: until then the promise made to them had been unconditional. If you cast your eyes over the chapters from 15 to 19 you will find that God had given them all things gratuitously, and even in spite of their murmurings; as the manna, water to drink, the sabbath, etc.; and that He had sustained them in their combat with Amalek at Rephidim. He recalls all this to their memory: "Ye have seen," says He to them, "how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself; now therefore, if . . ." This is the first time, in the relationship between God and Israel, that the little word *if* is introduced.

Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation {Ex. 19:5-6}.

But the moment a condition comes in, our ruin is certain, for we fail the first day; and this was the foolishness of Israel. In vain God gives His law, which is "holy, and just, and good." To a sinner His law is death, because he is a sinner; and from the moment that God gives His law conditionally -- namely, that something is to come to us by keeping it -- He gives it, not because we can obey it, but to make us more clearly comprehend that we are lost because we have violated it.

The Israelites should have said, It is true, most gracious God, we ought to obey Thee; but we have failed so often, that we dare not receive the promises under such a condition. Instead of this, what was their language?

All the words that the Lord hath said, will we do.

They bind themselves to fulfil all that Jehovah had spoken; they take the promises under the condition of perfect obedience. What is the consequence of such rashness? The golden calf was made before Moses had come down from the mount. When we sinners engage ourselves to obey God without any failure (although obedience is always a duty), and to forfeit the blessing if we do not, we are sure to fail. Our answer should always be, "We are lost"; for grace supposes our ruin. It is this entire instability of man under any condition, that the apostle wishes to show (Gal. 3:17-21) when he says, "A mediator is not a mediator of one." That is, from the instant there is a mediator, there are two parties. But God is not two; "God is one." And who is the other party? It is man. Hence the accomplishment depends on the stability of man, as well as of God; and all comes to nothing.

There being nothing stable in man, he has of course sunk under the weight of his engagements; and this is what must always happen. But the law cannot annul the promises made to Abraham; the law, which was 430 years after, cannot abolish the promise {Gal. 3:17}; and the promise was made to Abraham, not only of a blessing to the nations, but also of the land, and of earthly blessings to Israel. The reasoning of the apostle, as to spiritual promises, applies equally to temporal promises made to the Jews. We see that Israel could not enjoy them under the law. In fact, all was lost as soon as the golden calf was made. Yet the covenant at Sinai was founded on the principle of obedience (Ex. 24:7):

And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood

...

Here is a covenant ratified by blood -- and upon this foundation -- 'We will do all that the Lord hath said.' You know that the people made the golden calf, and that Moses in consequence destroyed the tables of the law.

In Ex. 32 we see how the promises made before the law were the resource of faith. It was this which sustained the people by the intercession of Moses, even in ruin itself: and by means of a mediator, God returned to man after his failure (Ex. 32:9, 10).

It is a stiffnecked people: now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them; and I will make of thee a great nation.

Then Moses besought the Lord:

Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever. And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.

Thus, after the fall of Israel, Moses beseeches God, for His own glory, to remember the

39. *Synopsis*, 1:286 on Deut. 27.

promises made to Abraham; and God repents of the evil which He had thought to do.

Turn to Lev. 26. This chapter is the threat of all the chastisements which were to follow the unfaithfulness of Israel. Lev. 26:42:

Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham; . . . and I will remember the land.⁴⁰

God returns to His promises made unconditionally long before the law; and this is applicable to the last time, as we shall presently see. There are two more covenants made with Israel during their wanderings in the wilderness. That under the law having been broken, the intercession of Moses made way for another (Ex. 33:14, 19), of which we have the basis in Ex. 34:27:

And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words; for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.

Observe, *with thee*; for there is a remarkable change in the language of God. In Egypt, God had always said, “My people, my people.” But when the golden calf was made, He uses the word which they had used --

Thy people which thou broughtest up out of the land of Egypt; for Israel had said,

This Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt (Ex. 32:1).

God takes them up in their own words. What happened? Moses interceded, and, so to speak, he would not permit God to say, “Thy people,” as of him; but he insisted upon *Thy people*, as of God’s people.

Now then, it is a covenant made with Moses, as mediator. Here comes in the sovereignty of grace, introduced indeed when all was lost (the condition of the law having been violated). If God had not been sovereign, what would have been the consequence of this infraction? The destruction of all the people. That is, though the sovereignty of God is eternal, it is revealed when it becomes the only resource of a people lost by their own ways: and this sovereignty manifests itself through the means of a mediator.

There is still another covenant in Deut. 29:1:

These are the words of the covenant, which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.

And the subject of this third covenant with the Israelites is this: God makes it with them, in order that under it they, being obedient, might be able to continue to enjoy the land. They did not keep it, and so they were expelled from the territory. They were installed in it at the epoch of this third covenant, and by the keeping of it they would have been maintained there. See vv. 9, 12, 19.

40. See also, for this appeal to promises apart from conditions, Deut. 9:5, 27; 10:15. In Mic. 7:19, 20, these same promises made to Abraham constitute the prophetic hope. And the faithful Israelite, Simeon (Luke 2:25, etc.), recalls them as the ground of confidence to Israel, who, in these promises, might rest on the faithfulness of God.

Thus we get the principle on which they entered at all into the land of Canaan. But we have also seen that before the law God had promised them the land for a perpetual possession, by covenants and promises made without condition; and it is owing to these promises, by the mediation of Moses, that Israel was spared, and at last enjoyed the land -- enjoyed it, we say, on the terms of the third covenant, made in the plains of Moab.

After the fall of the Israelites in this promised land, there remains still to be applied to them, as to their re-establishment, all the promises made to Abraham. After this people had failed in every possible way towards God, the prophets show us clearly, that God has promised again to restore them and to establish them in their land, under the Lord Jesus Christ as their king, to receive in Him the full accomplishment of every temporal promise.⁴¹ ❖

Moses’ Face Shined With the Giving of the Second Covenant of Law

It has been observed that Moses’ face did not shine when receiving the law the first time. There was something connected with the giving of the two tables a second time that *the flesh* cannot bear looking at. Keep in mind that the law deals with the nation, as such, in a standing of the first, fallen man -- man in the flesh -- as under trial to show that he was not recoverable. For man in such a position there is something the light of which cannot be looked upon. J. N. Darby explained it.

❖ When Moses came down from the mount the first time and broke the tables (Ex. 32), there was no veil. That was all on the supposition of there being the possibility of relationship between the people and God on the ground of law. He had nothing to do but to break the tables, since all relationship on that ground was gone. He could not give them to Israel (they had made the golden calf); so he broke them. He goes up again (v. 30), saying,

Peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin, and says to the Lord,

Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin -- and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book, which thou hast written {Ex. 32:31-32}.

To this the Lord answers,

Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book, etc.

Then (Ex. 33:12-23), we find Moses, emboldened by his knowledge of the exceeding lovingkindness of God, interceding again. He beseeches God to show him His glory; and God (in answer to Moses’ prayer), says,

I will make all my goodness pass before thee, etc.

This is not merely law. Moses hidden in a cleft of the rock (Ex. 34), the Lord passes by

41. *Collected Writings*, 2:349-352.

before him, and proclaims,

The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children unto the third and fourth generation {Ex. 34:6-7}.

In a certain sense, that was grace; not the sovereign grace of God which we know in Christ, but His "goodness." It is well to observe, in passing (this being often quoted, as a general statement of what God is), that it is not a revelation of what God is in grace, as now presented to sinners. There are certain things in it, in which there is a partial revelation of grace; but it is not a statement of the mode in which God now deals with sinners; nor a general revelation of God's character, but of the terms on which He governed Israel. He had not taken them from under law; after that He gives the law again. When Moses goes up, saying,

Peradventure I shall make an atonement for you,

No, says the Lord,

whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book;

that is, I will make every one that sinneth responsible for his own sin.

What is the consequence of that? It is quite true that Moses' face reflects the glory of the Lord, which it did not the first time. When Moses had been up in the mount forty days and forty nights, his face did not shine; but when he had been hidden in the rock, and the goodness of Jehovah had passed before him, he comes down with his face shining. The law never made a man's face shine. Yet, with all this reflection of the goodness of God -- of His glory, if you please, but of His goodness ("I will make all my goodness," etc.), the law is given again. Two more tables of stone are hewn (Ex. 34:1), and God says,

Make thee an ark of wood, and I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark (Deut. 10:1-5).

It was broken the first time: how could he go and put the tables of the law by the golden calf -- the ten commandments in the camp along with the sin which had already violated the law, the very first word of which was,

I am Jehovah thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; thou shalt have no other gods before me?

The law set up again, Moses comes down from the mount with his face shining (himself unconscious of all this shining), and the people, when they see it, afraid to come nigh, are obliged to ask him to put a veil over his face. The sight of the glory brought a sense of condemnation, and they prayed that it might be taken from them. This it is that the apostle refers to (2 Cor. 3:7, 13).

When there was a mixture of grace and law, an exhibition of the goodness of God along with the presence of the claims of the law (the law put in the ark, its holiness still insisted on), the consequence was, that Moses must hide the glory: they could not bear to look upon his face. It was only condemnation and death to them. And it is always so, when there is a question of seeking fruit from man. If the Son Himself comes and looks

for fruit, the end of that will be, He will send His armies and destroy the husbandmen (Matt. 21, 22). A mixture of law and grace ends in greater disaster than law; man is more guilty than if there had been no goodness at all. That is the thing that was, says the apostle, and it was the ministration of death, and of condemnation {2 Cor. 3:7-9}. When the veil was put upon Moses' face, it was not pure law, but grace and law; and it ended in the rejection of Israel.

Their minds were blinded, for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it⁴² shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away {2 Cor. 3:14-16}.

It is related in the history, that, when Moses went into the holy place, he took the veil off; when he came out unto the people, he put the veil on (Ex. 34:34, 35). So in the end with Israel.

Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, 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 by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, etc. (Jer. 31:31-34).

In the end the veil shall be taken away.

Not only, as it regards the law, is there conviction of sin through it, and thus not any possibility of relationship between man and God on the ground of it, where it is simply law, but there is an impossibility of man's being in connection with God as the source of happiness, save on the ground of pure grace that sets aside altogether what the sinner is. There is often more difficulty in seeing this. Unless it be pure simple grace, the only other idea we can have is that God requires something; and if God requires anything, the more the grace and the goodness shown, the more guilty and failing are we, and the greater our condemnation; it only increases responsibility. If it is a mixture of law with goodness, man cannot bear to look at it.

But then we come to another thing. What we find here is not law, though the holiness of the law is maintained and secured. The veil is taken off. There is no veil at all: "We all with open face, beholding the glory of the Lord" {2 Cor. 3:18}, etc. And what is the consequence? Boldness, where there is faith. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" {2 Cor. 3:17}⁴³ ♦

♦ Even though a great deal of grace accompanied the law, so long as the law was such as it was, it was necessarily obscure in its revelation of God; the blending of the two, the exhibition of the goodness of God with the presence of the claims of the law (that is, with the question of what man was), could only lead to misery, wretchedness, and darkness of soul. So long as the question remained, 'What are you for God? are you

42. {"It" refers to the nation of Israel. Israel shall turn to the Lord by the action of sovereign grace when the Deliverer turns away ungodliness from Jacob (Rom. 11:25-32; etc.).}

43. From, "Moses Veiled, and the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ," *Collected Writings*, 12:343-345.

what you ought to be?' so long as it was not a revelation of unmingled grace -- of that which did not, and would not, and could not, mingle itself with anything else, it could only condemn. The revelation of God's demands on man must condemn. No matter how much grace mingles itself with it -- nay, the more the kindness and goodness of God -- the greater the obligation of man to answer to it, and the greater the sense of the sin of man in not meeting the character of God thus revealed. If it is not all grace, you must be condemned; if it is anything but pure simple grace, you must take up the question of what man is, that God is dealing with; and then it is all over with you, for God cannot depart from what He ought to be, as holy.

Man has failed in everything. But that disarms not grace. It is the occasion of grace, not the source but the occasion of grace. Now, God says, I must act for myself, I must manifest what I am. Grace has this character; it is not simply love (it is perfectly love, but it is not simply love); it is love acting where evil already is, and towards that which is evil. There is perfect love between the Father and the Son, but that is not grace. God loves the angels, but you cannot call that grace. Grace is the exercise of this same perfect holy love towards that which is totally unworthy of it. It is this new wonder come out -- love acting when the occasion for it was in the faults and sins of those towards whom it acts. This evidently sets aside the question of what the sinner is (save indeed as the need for, and enhancing, the grace); but grace does not set aside the holiness of the law, it exalts the law. The revelation of grace in a measure (that is, unless it be in the fulness and perfectness of its own glory -- God's love to the sinner in Christ) only enhances the sin of man, and makes his responsibility and condemnation the greater. And this is not mere abstract reasoning: God has brought it all out in His dealings. When Moses put a veil over his face, as referred to by the apostle here, it was not when it was pure law.⁴⁴ ❖

Mediation and Grace Do not Change the Law's Character

The character of the law was seen in Moses' act of breaking the two tables when he came down from Sinai the first time, upon seeing the golden calf. It is futile to say that the character of the law was changed when given the second time, and/or by putting the second tables into the ark. Its character is fixed. Referring to 2 Cor. 3, J. N. Darby pointed this out.

❖ Besides the contrast of law and gospel, I have two things collaterally here. The separation of the tables of stone, the ten commandments, *as a dealing of God*, from all the rest that Moses gave, is negated. The apostle speaks of the tables of stone as a ministration of death, and of the whole system received by Moses, and which the glory on his face accompanied, as one whole. Any distinction made between the first tables broken and the second placed in the ark is futile. It was when Moses came down the

44. *Ibid.*, pp. 342-343.

second time that his face shone, not the first. The first time Israel never got the tables of stone. That is, what is abolished, because it was deathful, is that which was put in the ark. Let the reader consult 2 Cor. 3. And the fact here referred to is one of no small importance. For, though the apostle distinctly refers to law, yet the ministration of grace does not help out the case if man be put under law afterwards. God had revealed grace (I do not say redemption) when Moses went up the second time, but put Israel back under law because Moses could not make atonement. (See Ex. 32:32, 33.) And it is this putting man under law after grace, when the law was in the ark, that the apostle says is condemnation and death. For Israel was only thus definitely put under law (gracious forbearance in sovereign mercy), and life consequent on obedience or blotting out of God's book -- this was condemnation and death. Israel never received the tables the first time: they never came into the camp. After God had spoken to them out of the midst of the fire, Israel had made the golden calf; and Moses' face did not shine at all the first time he came down. Law after grace and provisional forgiveness is death and condemnation.⁴⁵ ❖

Provision Made by What Typified the Sacrifice of Christ

The tabernacle system was a provision of God in order to go on with Israel. Concerning this, J. N. Darby wrote as follows.

❖ God must deal with us as sinners, for the simplest of reasons, namely, that we are sinners. But how? That is another question.

Let us not deceive ourselves by fancying that the thought of right and wrong remained with man from the time when he was innocent. He did then know that he had to say to God, that is true; but he obtained the knowledge of good and evil by eating the forbidden fruit. In a certain sense, it is a mercy he did, if he ate at all. But a bad conscience is a terrible companion; and, if not purged, it is an everlasting bad companion. It says, "The man is *become* as one of us" {Gen. 3:22}, not, that man has retained this from his former state after his fall. Conscience is there, then, but it is when man is under sin, and though it is a mercy now to have conscience, yet it is a terrible thing, too, because it is either hardened by depravity, or else it is present to distress. Better to have a bad conscience than a hard one, but one or the other we must have. Now having a conscience, there is a sense in man, when not reckless in sin, that he ought to be righteous; and so he sets about to get righteousness.

Quite right is he in thinking he ought to have it, though he will fail to get it. He may take the law for his guide; but what God did in the law of Moses was, to give, not the image of heavenly things actually, but only the shadow of them {Heb. 10:1}. Looked at apart from its ceremonials, the law, as a moral law, was marked by two things; it came to man fallen from God, i.e., after the promise and when God was testing man in

45. *Collected Writings*, 10:20.

this way, to give a perfect rule of righteousness to man as he was, if he was to have human righteousness. He was not to covet, not to lust, not to lie, etc. Besides containing a complete epitome of national rules for Israel, the law told man first, what he ought not to do, and second, how he ought to feel towards God and towards his neighbor. Now man takes the outside of the law, not the real kernel of it; and so he tries to make out righteousness which, says he, 'I must have, or else, in the day of judgment, I shall fail.' He is so far right in taking the law as a rule, though he will not succeed.

Along with that, there is in man the constant tendency to make out a righteousness for himself, for he knows he needs it. If you will try to make out righteousness for yourself, well, here is the rule: "This do, and thou shalt live."

Man -- Israel -- had thus the law; but with it, God gave that which was the pattern of things in the heavens; not the very image, but the shadow of them.

And then we have the whole system of the tabernacle, and of the ordinances which referred to sin, etc.

It is true that the giving of the law was followed by the immediate breaking of it; but, to begin with, we have a moral rule, and then, in the tabernacle, the development of God's ways and purposes towards the sinner.

Although it was but a figure, a shadow, it contained another element which comes out in Hebrews, and that is, that until the work of redemption was wrought by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, there must be a separation between God and man. Under the law, there were hopes seen afar off by men of faith, and, of course, such were saved, but as to their then present condition, they "searched." Peter tells of those who wrote,

What, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto *us* they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you {1 Pet. 1:11-12}.

These things had not then come, but though they had believed on them as coming, there was no present access to God. When a man failed and sinned through ignorance, there was a provision made, figure of Christ's sacrifice, which restored him to present communion with God by providing a relative purifying before God. This kept up the notion that sin must be put away, and it maintained intercourse with God, so far as God had revealed Himself; but along with that, there was this testimony, that man cannot draw near to God. There was always the holding out the hope of the brighter and better things that were to come; but the veil was still there.

The more we read the Old and New Testaments, the more we shall see that of old there was on the part of God the gracious condescension of communication with man, but always with this,

The Holy Ghost this signifying that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest {Heb. 9:8},

i.e., that man could not draw near to God. The more we take notice of the difference between then, and now, the more striking does it appear.

There are two passages often quoted, as applicable to us, which bring out this

difference; both of them have just the opposite force to that for which they are quoted.

Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him {1 Cor. 2:9},

and there the quotation is stopped, as if the things were so glorious and so great, that our hearts could not know about them; but the Apostle adds,

God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit {1 Cor. 2:10}.

This shows that we can know them now. Then again, in the same chapter, we read,

Who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? {1 Cor. 2:16}.

Nobody, of course. But the former part is used to show that we cannot now know God's mind; whereas it continues,

But we have the mind of Christ {1 Cor. 2:16}.

Both of these are quotations from Isaiah, but with distinct additions, showing the exact contrast between the condition into which we are brought by grace and the condition in which those were under law. There were wonderful thoughts in the Psalms, and gleaming through the prophets, but with it all there was still the testimony that man could not draw near to God. It was to us, Christians, that they ministered these things. We are not yet in the glory, of course, and therefore he says, "to whom they have been *reported*," not brought. We are still in this poor world which is under the bondage of corruption, though the work has been accomplished by which the veil has been rent and the foundation of the glory laid. And whilst waiting for the redemption of the body, we have distinct entrance into the holiest, boldness by the blood of Jesus. The veil is rent from top to bottom, i.e., the introduction of an entirely different thing.⁴⁶ ❖

Ordained Through Angels in [the] Hand of a Mediator

❖ Gal. 3: 20. The law, says the apostle, was ordained by angels⁴⁷ in the hand of a Mediator. We here find a new and important principle. It is plain that a mediator is not a mediator of one; but God is one.⁴⁸ There was then another party between whom and God the Mediator fulfilled His mediatorship; in fact, there was {another party, namely} Israel, that is, man. The enjoyment of the results of the covenant, depended on the faithfulness of both parties; for since God had upon Mount Sinai promised blessing on

46. *Notes and Jottings*, pp. 265-267.

47. {Gal. 3:19 is, in sense, being enjoined through angels by the hand of a mediator. Εἰς διαταγὰς, in Acts 7:53, is "at," "by occasion of"; as, "they repented *at* the preaching of Jonas," by occasion of, through the means of. The passages quoted from the Old Testament make the character of their intervention pretty plain. The whole of the first two chapters of Hebrews is to show the superiority of the Christian revelation to Judaism by that of Christ to angels, first, as a divine person, and, secondly, in the counsels of God as to the exaltation of man (*Collected Writings*, 13:371).}

48. {"God is one" refers to the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant of promise. There was only one party to this unconditional covenant: God.}

His part, if Israel were faithful to His will, so Israel was bound to be obedient, in order to enjoy the privileges granted under the law. That which had been promised unconditionally to Abraham, was accepted at Sinai under condition of the people's 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 (Ex. 19:5).

Moses (the mediator) therefore came and proposed to them all these words, and all the people answered together:

all that the Lord hath spoken we will do {Ex. 24:3},

and Moses brought back to the Lord the words of the people. Thus the covenant was made. Then they made a molten calf before Moses had come down from the mount. The covenant was broken in its primary obligation,

thou shalt have none other gods before me {Ex. 20:3},

and Moses broke the tables at the foot of the mount, and they never came into the camp. Mercy spared them, but the covenant had been broken, and a new one had to be afterwards established. It had no more stability than the faithfulness of man in the flesh. The fulfilment of God's unconditional promise to Abraham, depended only on the faithfulness of the God who had made it; it could not therefore fail. And remark here, that it is not a question of Christ the Mediator to bear our sins and save us, but of the promised seed. With that a mediator had nothing to do. It was simply a promise that the seed should come, and it came. The law intervened between the promise and its fulfilment to put man to the proof, in order that the weakness and iniquity of the flesh might be manifested. It was not against the promises of God {Gal. 3:21}, but it showed that man could not secure the accomplishment of those promises by his own faithfulness and his own works. For if the law could have given life, the new life given by the law would naturally keep its commandments; this would have been human and legal righteousness, and although human yet pleasing to God. But sinful flesh was detected, not righteousness accomplished. If they had kept the law, under which they had placed themselves at Sinai in order that they might enjoy the promises, they would have enjoyed that which was promised: but they did not keep it. All -- Jews as well as Gentiles, those who had the privileges as well as those who had them not -- were concluded under sin, so that the promise made to Abraham might be fulfilled to all believers through faith in Jesus Christ.⁴⁹ ❖

Law and Grace

Ex. 34; 2 Cor. 3

{Article by William Kelly}

It is important to see that there were two different distinct occasions in which we find tables of stone, according to God's command, committed, though in a different way, to

man. On the first occasion, as we know, there was total ruin; and when God uttered His commands then, afterwards written down, there was no shining of the face whatever; there was no Moses transfigured by the power of glory. Law, pure and simple, never made the face of man to shine; it is not the intention of law; nor is it the result of law. Law, simply as such, is characterized by darkness and tempest, by thunder and lightning, by the voice of God dealing with the guilty -- more tremendous than all together. And so it was on the first occasion when the law was announced by God Himself, and the tables were broken (before ever they reached man) by the indignant law-giver.

On the second occasion what a difference! The lawgiver was called into the presence of God, who thereon was pleased to give a mingling of mercy along with law. There was a covenant expressly made of this combined composite character. It was not law alone, and not grace alone, but rather the mingling of grace along with law. For it would have been perfectly impossible for God to have carried on dealings with Israel, or to have brought them even into the land, unless there had been this mingling of grace and mercy with law. Consequently on this occasion the law was still committed to man; but it was shut up in the ark, not displayed with all its terrors before the eyes of men; it was enclosed, as we know, in the testimony.

Now, there are many even of God's children who think that such is exactly the tenor of the dealings of God with us now; that is, law and grace mingled -- grace hindering the action of law; the law bringing us in guilty, but grace interposing to screen the guilty according to the words we read in the early part of Ex. 34. There Jehovah proclaims Himself in the character of lawgiver, though he declares His longsuffering and mercy, as it is said,

Jehovah, Jehovah God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.

But it is also added,

And that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

Now you will observe that while such is the principle of God's dealings -- that it is not law alone, nor grace alone, but the two together -- while this is the case, whenever the mediator comes forward to speak to the people he has to put a veil upon his face. When he goes into the presence of God, the veil was taken off; in glory, in the presence of glory, there is no veil. But as long as man had to do with the law, even though there was mercy and grace mingled with it, the veil must be put on when he spoke with the people.

Now, the remarkable thing that I would call your attention to is this, that our position is in contrast with both. Our position is neither having to do with law alone, nor with law mingled with grace; we are in presence of grace and glory without the law at all. This is precisely what the apostle shows in 2 Cor. 3. Here he does not refer to the contrast of Ex. 19 or 20, but solely to the occasion of mingled law and grace in Ex. 34; and he lets us see that the ministration on that day was one of death and condemnation.

49. *Collected Writings*, 34:78, 79. See also 21:297.

The reason is this, that if the law enters at all, if I have to do with it as that which governs me, and under which I am, the more mercy that is shown, the more guilty am I, and He will by no means clear the guilty.

Now, that all-condemning character did not come out while God was dealing with men before Christ; but when Christ came, God stood to His principles with the utmost nicety and all His authority. The reason is, that there was One come who could solve all difficulties, meet all need, and deliver from all distress and danger. It was because the Son of God was now become the Son of man, and the Son of man was willing to suffer on the cross, not yet about to administer the glory.

Hence it is that our position is put in distinct and positive contrast. The apostle says, 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 {2 Cor. 3:7-9}.

He does not put us in the place of the children of Israel, but takes care to show that it is after the type of Moses drawing near into the presence of God, where he takes off the veil. This is the sign of our position now, and not the children of Israel. In short it is not the man veiled, and the children of Israel afraid of him because of the glory of his countenance, which they could not look upon; but the man unveiled in the presence of God, when he turns, not to the people with a veil upon his face, but to God in glory without the veil.

Such is our position now; such the position of all Christians, if they only knew it. This comes out fully in the last verse. He says,

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord {2 Cor. 3:18}.

“We all” is in contrast with the one man Moses. The position of the Christian is typified by Moses in the presence of God, and not by the children of Israel in the presence of Moses veiled. “We all,” for God makes not the smallest difference in this respect; the weakest Christian has exactly the same position before God. Whenever it is a question of position, of the simple effect or result of what the Lord Jesus has accomplished and given to us by grace, there is no difference whatever. When it is a question of spiritual power, there is a difference, and all possible room for variety. Just as in the first Adam there is no difference in the general fact that all have sinned; yet, when you come to look at the extent to which people have gone in sin, there are degrees of difference.

Precisely so with the Second man, the last Adam. He has brought all who belong to Him now into this common place of blessing. We all with open, or *unveiled*, face (for this is the true force of it) beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord. This was what Moses saw, and only Moses, and he merely for a moment; whereas it is *our* constant position. A Christian, all the time he is here below, is, as far as the work of Christ is concerned, one entitled to draw near to God, to look up into the glory, and to be there himself; the veil gone, Christ without a veil. There was a veil but it is rent. Now there

is none -- none on the heart of the believer, none on the face of Christ or on ours; it is completely gone.

We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

What the Holy Ghost now ministers to us is not merely a Saviour who came down into our woe and misery to bear our iniquities and sins, but that same Saviour after the work of grace is done when He is gone up as the witness of its perfectness into the presence of God; and we are invited by the Holy Ghost to keep our eye fixed upon Him there, glorified according to the excellency of redemption. That will not make His grace in coming down here to be less precious; nor will it make redemption to be less prized, but much more. It will also imprint a heavenly character upon all our ways; and this, and nothing less, is our place.

As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly {1 Cor. 15:48}; and,

As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly {1 Cor. 15:49}.

Then it will be perfect; now it is only partial, and according to the measure in which self is judged.

What hinders the practical effect, the heavenly power being reflected from us, is the unjudged activity of our nature. Do we not know it? When is it we do wrong? When is it we form mistaken judgments, and become careless and worldly? Just in proportion as our eye is off Christ as He is now in glory. I grant you that Christ anywhere before the soul is a preserving means. Nevertheless, there is no such power for overcoming the seductions of the world, and that which looks fair and religious in the world; nothing will do it thoroughly but Christ in glory. As far as leading out our souls in love and devotedness is concerned, Christ here below will do it. But Christ in glory puts out the light of earth's best religion, and makes it appear pale and tawdry by the side of its surpassing brightness. We are invited, we are called upon as Christians, to behold Him in that glory continually now. The Lord give us so to walk, and we shall find the fruit of it, “changed into the same image from glory to glory.”

One word more. There is nothing so dangerous as to trifle with the truth; nothing more ruinous than for men to use the brightest truth, and to be careless about the matters of every-day life. I beseech of you to remember this. There is something even of a disgusting character about it when we fail in ordinary duties, and yet are at the same time talking about resurrection and glory -- life and all the special blessedness of the Christian position. I beseech you, my brethren and sisters, especially those of you who are young (though indeed it is a snare for old as well as young), think seriously of this. It is the natural snare of those who are accustomed to an atmosphere of truth, where the words of God are, so to speak, a common household bread. None are in such danger; but it is a danger because the eye and heart are not on Jesus. There will be power where

there is simplicity with self-judgment; nowhere else.⁵⁰

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Chapter 4

A Christian is not Made Righteous by Christ's Righteous Law-keeping

Righteousness Does Not Come by the Law

The common Covenantist notion is that Christ kept the law for us. If a Christian is made righteous through Christ's righteous law-keeping, his righteousness does, in fact, come by the law. Here, by J. N. Darby, is an examination of Scriptures regarding what our righteousness is:

❖ Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified before God {Rom. 3:20}.

He does not say merely by my doing it, but not by deeds of law; no one is justified in that way.

For by the law is the knowledge of sin {Rom. 3:10}.

As Luther argues, "That was its use; other use of it was a misuse." (Miszbrauch.)

But now the righteousness of God without the law [*choris nomou* -- *wholly* apart from 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 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; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus {Rom. 3:21-26}.

Now here we have the words "just and justifier," but not one word of bearing the curse of the law, nor of keeping its precepts. "Redemption through his blood" is spoken of, and we are justified by that.

But this is not all. Not only is the justifying ascribed to the blood only, but we are told negatively that it is not by deeds of law. And further (to make the matter clear, as that which the apostle insisted upon, that it was not law, whoever fulfilled it) it is said, "But now, apart from law." Now, to quote this text, or allude to it, to prove that the righteousness by which God is just and a justifier is righteousness by law, is a monstrous and direct contradiction of scripture -- a denial of the apostle's doctrine.

"We are, in Christ," not only pardoned but justified men; we are righteous in Him. All true, but *how?* is the question. The "Record" {a periodical} tells us that the essence of the gospel lies in this, that the Lord not only bore our penalty, but did our work, and that this is called in the scriptures, and proclaimed in the gospel, as the righteousness of God. Where? I challenge the "Record" to produce a passage. The passages I have

50. *Bible Treasury*, New Series 8:177-179.

already quoted in the *Bible Treasury* {ed. by W. Kelly}. But such subjects as these can only be judged of by scripture, and I shall quote all the passages in which the righteousness of God is spoken of besides Rom. 3, already commented on, and itself sufficient to prove the contrary. They are the following: Matt. 6:33; Rom. 1:17; Rom. 3:5; Rom. 10:3; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9. Now, in which of these is the keeping of the law called the righteousness of God? Not such a thought is found in them. The first is, "Seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness." The second is, "The righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith: as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith'" -- a passage quoted by the apostle to show it is not by law.

But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for the just shall live by faith: and the law is not of faith, but the man that doeth them shall live in them (Gal. 3:11, 12).

Now, remark, it is not here the question who fulfils it, but that it is not by law because it is by faith, and the law is not of faith,

but the man that doeth these things shall live in them:

and not then that another does it in order to justify, but that another way of justification is brought in. It is not by doing, let the doer be Christ or another. It is not by law. The principle of keeping law to justify, says the apostle, "is not of faith." If the "Record" added, "Surely the man cannot be justified by his doing them, because he has not done them; but he is justified by doing them, because Christ has done them for him," what would come of the apostle's argument, "A man is not justified by works of law"? But it is added,

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us -- and kept it for us besides, says the "Record." But the Holy Ghost says not a word of the kind, though it was just the opportunity to bring it in.

If my unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God (Rom. 3:5).

This has nothing to say to the matter; only we may remark, to exclude all controversy, that here it is God's being justified in His ways and vengeance: hence His own righteousness in Himself.

The next is Rom. 10:3:

They, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.

Thus far does not help us, but the words following do:

Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth {Rom. 10:4}.

He is the end of it, not the fulfiller of it for me because I am under it now. If I am, He is not the end of it. This passage Luther uses in the sense I give to it, and insists largely on the truth. But the apostle does go on to say what the righteousness which is of faith is, and never says one word of the law, and could not if Christ was the end of it.

We are the righteousness of God in him (2 Cor. 5:21).

There is the sinless One made sin that we might be the righteousness of God in Him -- not keeping the law, that we might be. Being made sin is not keeping the law.

And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith (Phil. 3:

9).

There is never the trace of an idea of a righteousness of God by Christ's keeping the law. All these passages refute entirely the assertion and condemn the doctrine of the "Record."

One passage may be attempted to be cited, though the "Record" has not done so -- To them who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and our Saviour Jesus Christ {2 Pet. 1:1}.

I am quite willing to take it as others desire, through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ. But there is not a word of the law. I am perfectly satisfied that righteousness of our God and Savior does not mean here justifying righteousness, but the faithfulness of God to His promises. They have obtained the precious faith of Christ as God had surely promised to His people -- for He writes to Jews. They have obtained it through the righteousness of God. At any rate, law does not enter in any way into the verse.

Such are the passages which speak of the righteousness of God; but I go farther, and take the passages which speak of righteousness, and challenge the "Record" to produce one which speaks of its being by law, or Christ's fulfilling the law for us. I read of "righteousness, because I go to the Father" {John 16:10}. God was righteous in glorifying Him. Law does not come in question; yet the demonstration of righteousness was here -- lay in this -- that Christ went to the Father, and men saw Him no more. In Rom. 4:3, faith is counted to Abraham for righteousness. He believed God. Not a word of law; only care taken to exclude works which were under the law.

God imputeth righteousness without works (Rom. 4:6), not imputeth works for righteousness. And, at the close of his argument, the apostle takes care to add,

for the promise that he should be heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through law, but through the righteousness of faith {Rom. 4:13}.

The inheritance of promise is not by law at all, neither for Abraham nor for his seed. Rom. 5:17-21 afford us in themselves no word upon it, only it is a gift; but it is added afterwards that the law entered by the by, as a distinct thing. Of this more farther on.

Christ is made unto us righteousness (1 Cor. 1:30). The blessed fact is there, but no word of law; He Himself is it, not His keeping the law.

In Gal. 2:21, we have an important verse,

For if righteousness come by the law, Christ is dead in vain.

Now here Christ's death and righteousness by law are contrasted. We are told pardon comes by death, righteousness by law, Christ fulfilling it. But the apostle declares that it does not come by law; that if it did, Christ is dead in vain. Indeed, why should He die, if I was righteous without it? And note here, the apostle has no thought of a being righteous and unpardoned. Yet if Christ's life was there for us -- not His death -- a man were righteous and a guilty sinner at the same time. What an unscriptural notion! They do not put it in this way, I know, but they do the converse -- pardoned but not righteous. Hence, it is equally certain, he might be righteous, but not pardoned! The whole system

is false.

Gal. 3:21: If a law had been given which could have given life, righteousness should have been by the law: but it was not so. And then the apostle pursues the reasoning which Luther so insists upon. The law was our schoolmaster unto Christ; but after that faith came, we are no longer under the schoolmaster; before it came, we {meaning Jews} were under the law. If I am not under it,⁵¹ Christ clearly has not to fulfil it for me, for I am not under it to call for it.

Christ is become of no effect to you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace (Gal. 5:4).

It is not Christ must keep it for you to be justified by it, because you have not; but you are fallen from grace if you are justified on this principle. The "Record" says, We are pardoned by Christ's death, but must be justified by law; the scripture {says}, that we are fallen from grace, and Christ of no effect to us if we are. Titus 3:5 speaks of it -- not a word of law. I had omitted one passage where righteousness of God is mentioned, James 1:20; but it does not touch our present subject.

Again, Abel obtained witness that he was righteous by the offering of Christ (typically), not by his keeping the law.

To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly (Rom. 4:5).

It is not by another's works.

He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, etc. {Rom. 4:25-5:1}.

No thought of law or Christ's law-fulfilling for it. It is His death and resurrection (Rom. 4:9).

Being justified by his blood {Rom. 5:9}.

A man is not justified by works of law {Gal. 2:16}.

But he is, if he be justified by Christ's doing them.

That we might be justified by the faith of Christ, not by works of law; for by works of law shall no flesh be justified {Gal. 2:16}.

It is not merely he has not done them, but it is another way of being justified, not the Christian one. I have already quoted Rom 3:17-24. Now, what I find here is, the positive assertion of justification in another way than law; the rejection of the principle the "Record" insists on, and the declaration of the incompatibility of the two. If the "Record" has a text or a testimony of scripture which teaches that a man is justified by Christ's keeping the law, let it be produced.

There is a text referred to,

By one man's disobedience, many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, many shall be made righteous {Rom. 5:19}.

But so far from there being a word of law or obedience to law here, it is in express contrast. "Moreover the law entered," *pareiselthe*, was no part of this great scheme in the two Adams, only {the law} came in by the by that the offence might abound. Mark,

51. {Gentiles never were under the law -- Rom. 2.}

no word about keeping it. It had an object; it was to convict -- bring in offence -- make sin sinful. So Luther, *passim*. The obedience of Christ is in contrast with law. It is a monstrous idea to make Christ's obedience merely legal. He kept the law, surely; He was born under it, though as Son of man above it in title. But His obedience was absolute. What righteousness of the law called upon Him to give His life for sinners? But that He did as obedience. What, to bear the law's curse for another? All His life was obedience, but far beyond law; He laid down His life so, not according to law. And here it is obedience as a principle contrasted with disobedience, and no thought of law. There was a disobedient man and an obedient one -- Adam and Christ. The law came in by the by. He learned obedience by the things which He suffered {Heb. 5:8}. Did the law make a righteous man suffer? Christ's obedience was perfect and absolute. To reduce it to fulfilling the law is horrible, though He fulfilled the highest requirement of the law. The law was suited to the first man, Christ's obedience to the glory of God, into which He is entered because He finished the work His Father gave Him to do. So in Phil. 2, He was obedient unto death (*mechri thanatou*). It is the character and extreme possible limit of a principle of obedience -- He was obedient even to death. Think of saying, He fulfilled the precepts of the law even to death! What precept commanded a person to die? No; His obedience was the principle of perfect submission to His Father's will, whatever the cost might be.⁵² ❖

Christ Did Not Fulfill the Law For Our Righteousness

❖ Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died {Rom. 8:33-34}.

Not a word of law-fulfilling. Again,

Being justified freely by his grace {Rom. 3:24}.

Is there anything about law-fulfilling?

The righteousness of God, without the law, is manifested {Rom. 3:21}.

Well, let us turn to Rom. 5. God commends His own love to us,

in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him {Rom. 5:8-9}.

Again, How do I get my conscience purged? for another important epistle speaks of this.

How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience? {Heb. 9:14}.

52. From, "A Letter on the Righteousness of God," *Collected Writings*, 7:312-314. The whole article should be read. Also, read "The Pauline Doctrine of Righteousness," *Collected Writings*, 7; "Further Remarks Upon Righteousness and Law: Answers to Different Objections," *Collected Writings*, 10:95-146; "Divine Righteousness," *Collected Writings*, 10:147-168; "Brethren and Their Reviewers," *Collected Writings*, 10:43-90; "Law," *Collected Writings*, 10:1-30. See also "Blessed Through Faith," *Collected Writings*, 21:294.

He appeared once to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself {Heb. 9:26}. Again, by the which will we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all {Heb. 10:10}.

And,

By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified {Heb. 10:14}.

So

Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by the which he received testimony that he was righteous {Heb. 11:4}.

The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin {1 Jn. 1:7}.

Let us hear Peter: we are redeemed by

the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot {1 Pet. 1:19}.

Christ has suffered for us,

the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh {1 Pet. 3:18}.

Christ, "who knew no sin," has been made sin for us, "that we might be made the righteousness of God" {2 Cor. 5:21}.

Such is the testimony of the word: justifying, cleansing, purging the conscience, perfecting for ever, boldness to enter into the holiest, redemption, bringing to God, are all attributed to the precious blood of Christ and His sacrifice.

Now, I ask my opponents for one text which teaches that the fulfilling of the law is the way of having righteousness. I cite these:

By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified {Gal. 2:16}.

If righteousness come by law, Christ is dead in vain {Gal. 2:21}.

The righteousness of God without law is manifested {Rom. 3:21}.

I know they tell me this is our keeping it. No; it is stated absolutely. But if it be, let them produce a text which teaches us that Christ's keeping the law was a different thing, and that that is the way of righteousness -- a passage which refers to the value of His keeping the law for righteousness for us. The curse of a broken law, omission or commission, is spoken of. As many as are of its works are under the curse. Well, we are theologically told that His keeping it is needed. Paul says,

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree {Gal. 3:13}.

Is it not singular we should get righteousness or justifying treated of in various shapes, and never once the thing mentioned which alone can give us righteousness? that it is *never mentioned in the word of God*? If it is, let us have it. I must have divine testimony for what is to make me righteous in God's sight. It is alleged that pardon and righteousness are distinct. Now, in the way they put it, this (which there is a certain truth in, rightly understood) they are wholly wrong in. David describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness without works, saying,

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin {Rom. 4:7-8}.

Now, as far as it has the character of what they call innocence (that is, for holding a

man as without sin) it is the same as pardon. In that sense, justifying and pardon, clearing, no sin being charged, is all the same.

There is another truth connected with it, a ground on which they never enter, which does not leave us simply here negatively. He was raised again for our justification. He has perfectly glorified God in His work on the cross, and now, according to the perfection of it, appears in the presence of God for us. There is more than bearing our sins, glorifying God in His holy and glorious nature, and that about sin, and we are before God according to that in Him.⁵³ ♦

♦ "The man that doeth them shall live in them" {Gal. 3:12}. The very essence of it is that the man himself does it, that he is obedient; not he disobedient, and another obedient for him. The man that does them is justified. But the law had raised the question of righteousness. The knowledge of good and evil was come in, sin and conscience together, and for peace and divine acceptance there must be righteousness. The law had put it on the ground of man's doing, as alive and responsible to God in this world. It could only have done it thus. No doubt faith looked beyond, but man on earth had to be righteous according to his state on earth. That was the way, the only way, on the ground of man's responsibility, and as God, in giving the rule of this in the law (though its highest requirements were, so to speak, hidden in it), gave a perfect rule for man as His creature down here, man has applied it to all times, and as eternal, necessary, and the only ground of righteousness, the only one for all times. So it would be, if man was to have his own righteousness. But is that so? And if eternal life, promised in grace before the world was, is to be conferred, is that to be found by earning it under law? Or, has not God some other way, and man another need? Man's conscience tells him he ought to be what the law requires; his pride tells him he may be; and theologians, feeling they cannot, seek to meet it by making it up some other way, but keep it as the measure.

This, then, is the question: the law being the perfect rule of man's conduct as a creature, is it the one ever true abiding way of life and righteousness to him, or has God another? That which makes it difficult to man to get out of this thought that the law has this eternal place is that it is the measure of righteousness for man, the true perfect rule of it, and his conscience owns it. My adversaries say it is the one abiding way of righteousness, and that what God has done is to fulfil it for man, maintaining it, not merely as right, and as the rule of righteousness for man, but as that by the fulfilling of which righteousness is to be obtained and life eternal. I affirm that it is the perfect rule of human or creature righteousness; but that it is not, and never has been, the way of obtaining righteousness before God; the way of God's righteousness; that God's ways have shewn it; and that, though it be in itself a perfect, and therefore, immutable rule for creature righteousness, God, who did not mean us to have righteousness that way,

53. *Collected Writings*, 10:132, 133.

brought it in by the by. I go farther, and say, it was never meant to be, and never could be, that by which righteousness was established for us, but that God has shown the weakness of the creature, and the impossibility of his attaining to righteousness as such, and has condemned and set aside the whole nature and state of things in which the law has its operation, in view of our introduction into heavenly places.⁵⁴

In the first place, our salvation and calling was given us, not according to any works at all, but in Christ Jesus before the world began. There was the promise of eternal life. It is the sovereign gift of God. The Son quickens whom He will. No law has been given which could give life. As regards righteousness, the law could do nothing in it. Adam, innocent, had no need to acquire any righteousness. As I have said, he was what God had made him; the law, as God has given it, could have no application to him; stealing, lust, and loving his neighbour, had no force for him. In no way could the principle of law, as requiring righteousness, be applied to an innocent person. An imposed rule does not suit such a one; nor a law which supposes evil, one who is ignorant of it. When he had fallen, it is quite clear the law could not justify or give righteousness. It was applicable then, but could only condemn. By it was the knowledge of sin. Neither the purpose nor the ways of God give righteousness by any law. The law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. In Him was life, and

he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life {1 John 5:12} --

the eternal source of it, He that hath

brought life and incorruptibility to light by the gospel {2 Tim. 1:10}.⁵⁵❖

Christ is the End of the Law for Righteousness

The object of the law is not the Christian's righteousness or obedience. The effort of Israel under the law was to obtain righteousness by obedience to the commands. That basis of obtaining righteousness, by the covenant of the law, was brought to an end as signified by the rending of the veil. The blood of Christ has brought to an end, a termination, the obtaining righteousness as proposed on the basis of law under the conditional Mosaic Covenant. That "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness" is not a valid basis for claiming that Christ fulfilled the law for us and that His righteous law-keeping is credited to us as our righteousness. That would be making the law the basis for our righteousness. J. N. Darby wrote:

❖ As to establish the law as a system, Christ clearly did not.

He taketh away the first that he may establish the second {Heb. 10:9}.

He is the end of the law for righteousness. We establish law, for that is the real force of the word, in the highest and only scriptural way. They that have sinned under it will

54. The law will be written in men's hearts for the establishment of government and righteousness on earth under Christ. But even that is founded on the work by which divine righteousness is established.

55. *Collected Writings*, 10:155, 156.

be judged by it, unless indeed redeemed out of that state. Christ's bearing the curse of the law established its authority, as nought else could do, but did not leave the guilty under it.

The mistake made is this. Many things contained in the law, all in the moral law as usually understood -- say Christ's two great commandments, and the ten commandments (not now discussing the sabbath which belonged to the old creation, the Lord's day to the new) -- were obligations before the law and are obligations under Christ. But from the law, that is, the enforcement of these obligations by the authority of God binding them on man as his righteousness by a rule of life (and that only is law), or pronouncing a curse on them if they did not keep it, from that (that is, from law) we are wholly and in every shape and way delivered, dead to it. It is adultery, to use the image of Rom. 7, to have to say to it, to call ourselves Christians, if we are not absolutely from under its authority. I learn how God viewed evil and good from it, I can learn to support true ministers from what is said of oxen, but the law is not binding on me. I learn more of Christ's sacrifice in detail from Leviticus and other places than from the Gospels; yet I have nothing whatever to say to the law as to them, I am not under it. So of moral obligations -- I learn in the law that God abhorred stealing, but it is not because under the law that I do not steal. All the word of God is mine and written for my instruction, yet for all that I am not under law, but a Christian who has died with Christ on the cross and am not in the flesh to which law applied, I am dead to the law by the body of Christ.⁵⁶ ❖

❖ The law gave the intelligible principle -- "do and live"; but after having done that, and shown ruin and judgment on failure, it speaks of the return of the heart to God, when under the effects of the judgment, and when the plainly revealed ground of legal righteousness was over (Deut. 30). And the apostle then introduces Christ, as the true object, when once this was the case; the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth. Just as all hope of righteousness by doing was over in the case put in Deuteronomy, so in every heart, when honestly given up, as it must be by everyone that knows himself, instead of judgment, we have in grace, on the part of God, Christ for righteousness, and the law done with, an end to it; while its judgment was sanctioned, righteousness introduced by grace, on another ground, and as to this, an end of the law. And in fact, Christ is the end of the law, and another ground of relationship with God.⁵⁷ ❖

❖ The Lord Jesus Christ is and has done all that was needed to save a sinner. The law was not given, it did not come by Him. He owned all its authority; He fulfilled it morally in His life; as to its typical meaning, for example the sacrifices, the priestly office, and in many other points, it has been fulfilled in what He has done, or in what

56. *Collected Writings*, 31:339.

57. *Collected Writings*, 26:108.

He is now doing, or even in what He will do in time to come. But the grace that saves and quickens, and the truth that gives light and makes all things seen as they are, came by Jesus Christ.

The law can neither save nor quicken; it cannot take away sins; it can impute them and it brings a curse, but Christ has been made a curse for us, and grace flows freely according to the righteousness of God: we share in this righteousness, we are made the righteousness of God in Him. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." We are "set free from the law, being dead to that in which we were held." The authority of the law is not weakened, but we have died in the death of Christ, and the law has dominion over a man as long as he is alive. But we are dead and the law cannot apply to a dead man: we have been crucified with Christ. The death of Christ confirms the law as nothing else does since it announces its curse, but we believers are set free from the law because we have died with Christ; we are dead to sin as to the law and alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord {Rom. 6:11}. Grace and truth have in no way come by the law, but by Jesus Christ the Son of God {John 1:17}. The law was not annulled by His coming, but fulfilled: we are not under law but under grace. We do not sin because we have died with Christ; we have died to sin, to the law, by the body of Christ {Rom. 7:4}. This is true liberty, being made free from sin that we may live unto God in the new life which we have received from Christ, strengthened by the power of the Holy Ghost, Christ being the only object of our life.⁵⁸ ❖

58. *Letters*, 2:108.

Chapter 5

The Sabbath: or, Is the Law Dead, or Am I?

This chapter heading is the title of an article by that name found in *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby*, 10:271-303.

❖ The rest of God seems to me a question of paramount importance. A part in it distinguishes the saint both from the wicked and from the unintelligent creation. Entrance into God's rest is perhaps the highest form in which we can conceive blessing; for the rest of God is not mere relief from labor, as it is with man, but peaceful complacency in what is perfect and good. It is cessation from work, if not from weariness -- cessation even from holy labor. But it is more; it is enjoyment in the completeness of that as to which we have labored, and in the proper perfectness of that in which we are -- for us, in God Himself. The nature of God rests in that which is perfectly good. The promise is left us of entering into His rest {see Heb. 4:1}; not merely into rest, though rest it will be, and blessedly so, but His rest -- the perfect satisfaction God has in all brought into perfectness before Him. Holy affections have rest in what is good; as also the laborer has gladsome rest from his labor. The rest of God is the portion of God's people. When God had created all (and behold it was very good), He rested. He ceased to create, and He was well pleased in what was created. It answered His mind. Better still the eternal rest of God in perfect good, the effect of redemption, and the work which has brought us into glory, and heaven and earth into holy order, the rest of God in Himself in love, and in the blessing of all around Him answering in its place to what He is.

I have sometimes felt on the Lord's day the utter poverty of the creation, beautiful perhaps in itself, that had no link with God in rest, and pursued its search of food, or its instinct, one day like another, on none the expression of relationship with God.

There remaineth a rest to the people of God {Heb. 4:9}.

It is distinctive of them, though they have it not yet. It cannot therefore be of small importance to know on what ground, in what way, and how far they have part in it now consequently as Christians. I think we shall find how prominent a place it holds in the thoughts of God, the moment we examine the records He has given us of His ways.

But another question, as we are all aware, connects itself with it -- the place the law holds in the ways of God. This connects itself, or rather identifies itself, with the question -- Is the purpose, which is inseparable from the grace of God, the first thing in His ways, or the responsibility of man, that is, grace or law; in fact, the first Adam or the Second {last Adam}? Here the old Aristotelian adage becomes true -- *Ἀρχὴ τῆς θεωρίας τέλος τῆς πράξεως*. That law in principle, and ultimately the law as given in fact,

identifies itself with, and is the measure of, responsibility in the first Adam, will hardly be questioned. That it is not in itself grace is evident. It requires from man, and does not give to him sovereignly or contrary to what he has deserved. Yet both are divine and true in their place. It is because the relative place of each of these is not seen that the difficulty has, I believe, been insoluble. If both be of God, both must be maintained: His authority in respect of man's responsibility; sovereign grace abounding over all. God's title in both must be maintained. The difficulty lies in this, that while God's title is involved in both, in their *nature* they contradict one another. To require and to give are necessarily opposed to one another. If a thousand pounds be due, it is very just to require it, but it is not grace. If I pay it so as to free the debtor, when he has no claim on me, it is pure kindness and grace; only righteousness is satisfied by the payment.

But we shall find that this is not all. I affirm, then, that purpose and the Second man and eternal life in Him came before the question of responsibility in the first, but that responsibility and law came actually first in the history of man and of this world; that both meet in Christ, and in Him only the difficulty is solved -- a difficulty which heathens have reasoned on as well as Christians, because it lies in the nature and state of man. When I have unfolded this from scripture, I will apply it to our question and to the rest of God.

The truth that the purpose and full promise and grace of God was before the world, and in the last Adam, the Second man, not in the first, involves this additional truth -- that, whatever its collateral blessings for the world (and they are many), it is not of the world, not directly part of its history and government, though it be developed and find its place in it, and God's *secret* and overruling government orders all things for good to those who are faithful to Him in it. As was true of Christ, so of Christians,

Ye are not of the world, . . . as I am not of the world {Jn. 15:19, 17:14}.

But I will proceed to the scripture proof of my proposition, that the purpose of grace, though revealed after, came before the responsibility of man (I do not say the predestination of persons here, but the purposes of grace); while the bringing in of the accomplishment of that purpose came after the question of responsibility was settled as to the first Adam. Thus 2 Tim. 1:9,

Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works --

in which clearly our responsibility is engaged, and to which judgment is applied -- but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death -- the fruit of failure in responsibility --

and brought life and incorruptibility to light by the gospel.

Works according to which responsibility is judged of are not that according to which God has saved us; death, which failure in responsibility brought in, is abolished, rendered void. That is, the principle on which responsibility is tried, and with which

judgment deals (for He will judge every man according to his works), is not that according to which we are saved. The purpose of grace goes on another principle; and, further, positive power is come in, in which Christ has risen above and annulled the effect of failure, and which has besides acted in producing its own effects. But the purpose of grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Nor was it brought to light till He came.

So Titus 1:1-3,

The truth which is after godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; but hath in due times manifested his word by preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour.

This is very plain, only we have to remark that it is eternal life which is promised. So our election leads to the same truth. If God were to choose a part of the world now, it would be as sovereign as doing so before the world: I know in His holy wisdom He does not, but it would be as *sovereign* as doing it before the world. But He has chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world; and the effect is, He has chosen us for what is not of the world, but far above the world and all consequences of our responsibility, even if we had fulfilled it; namely, to be before Him as sons, like Christ Himself, according to the *good pleasure of His will*. This was sovereign goodness, giving us a place according to His own counsels.

The whole of that first chapter of Ephesians (be it calling, be it inheritance, and indeed the whole of the epistle) goes on this ground. Our place with the Father, our place with Christ as His body, is not grounded on responsibility in the first Adam, but on purpose accomplished in and through the Second {Last}. Romans meets man's responsibility and sin; Ephesians unfolds God's purpose. Hence our part in it is by a new creation {Eph. 3:9, 10}. Is the Christian then beyond responsibility? In nowise; but his responsibility is according to his new place, not according to the one he has failed in and been *saved out of*. I will, with the Lord's help, touch on this before I close.

The purpose in the Last {Second} Man is before and beyond responsibility in the first.

Let us now examine the development of the two principles of gift and responsibility in the history of the first, for it is full of interest.

The two great principles stood side by side in the garden of Eden. There was the tree of life, of which, as we find afterwards, if a man ate, he would live for ever; and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, to which responsibility was attached, and a law, and judgment on failure. Life was there independent of responsibility or works, and a prohibition which involved responsibility. Neither supposed sin in man; for that which was prohibited was perfectly innocent, but that it was prohibited. I do not enter into the details of the fall. It is evident to me that departure from God in distrust of heart, introduced by Satan's wiles, came before lust; and when the heart had departed from God, lust and disobedience came in. The blessed Savior came to win man's confidence

back to God, sinner as man was -- no doubt to do a great deal more, but to do that: God was in Christ reconciling, not imputing; and the history of this is of the most affecting grace; but I cannot enter on it here. But the first Adam had taken the path of responsibility, broken through the hedge of the law, was lost; afraid of God, when there, calling him in gracious familiarity, bringing his state home to him; convicted and excluded from God's presence. And the *world* began. It was so filled with violence and corruption, that it was necessarily judged by a present judgment. On this I do not dwell.

In the new world, after it had been set on foot by the formation of nations, by the judgment of man at the tower of Babel, promises came first without condition,⁵⁹ as the apostle reasons in Galatians. The question of responsibility and righteousness was not raised at all. But still righteousness must be; and the question is raised in the law, and founded entirely on man's responsibility; life is brought in, but made, not the fruit of gift, but of man's satisfying his responsibility.

This do, and thou shalt live {Lk. 10:28}.

Life was to be had as the consequence of doing what the law required. But man was a sinner, and, if he knew himself, had only to say, the law,

which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death {Rom. 7:10}.

But this responsibility of man had a further trial in the way of grace. Not only God sent His prophets to recall Israel to the paths of peace and obedience, but He of whom they had testified came. This was the activity of God's love when man was already a sinner, when he had already broken the law, when his responsibility had had its full result without law and under law, and every mouth was stopped, and all the world guilty before God. But God was active in goodness. He sent the prophets, and at last He sent His Son, saying, I have yet one Son: it may be they will reverence my Son {see Lk. 20:13}.

This was voluntary goodness when sin and guilt were complete as to human responsibility. To the Jew this had even a double character: a message to them as responsible, seeking for fruit; and pure grace as such making a marriage for the King's Son. But they refused alike the fruit and the invitation. This (although the patience of God even yet visited them in Christ's intercession,

Father forgive them, for they know not what they do {Lk. 23:34})

completed the sin of man. "Now," said the Lord (John 12:31), "is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out."

Man's history was complete⁶⁰ -- the world judged, Satan its prince; the result of responsibility fully brought out. The world was judged. It had, without law, produced

59. It is a mistake to suppose that there was any promise to Adam at the fall. In the judgment on the serpent the revelation of the Last Adam, the Seed of the woman, was given, and of His destroying the serpent's power utterly. But the Seed of the woman is just what the first Adam was not. It is the revelation and promise of the Second {Last}.

60. {By "Man's history was complete" is meant that the probation of the first man to show that he was not recoverable from the fall was complete.}

intolerable sin; under law, transgression; and when, being such, it was visited in grace, it refused grace that recalled to law, and grace that invited to blessing. It had proved, not only that it naturally produced sin, and could not be subject to law, but that the mind of the flesh was enmity against God, not only as a Judge, but enmity against God when in ineffable grace He visited the world in mercy, reconciling it to Himself. For His love He had hatred, hatred without a cause. Satan they had, and could not help it; God, when He was there in the power of divine help and goodness, they would not have. Such was sin; such was man. Self-will that would always have itself, and hence not God nor law, which, both of them, will meet with a claim of subjection; self, which cannot be satisfied with self, and hence turns to unsatisfying lusts of things beneath itself; for it has not God, for whom, and to enjoy whom, man was created. Man has not only sinned, he is a sinner.

Neither life nor righteousness was to be had by the law.

If there had been a law which could have given life, 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 {Gal. 3:21-22}.

Hence the Lord adds in the passage just quoted,

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me {John 12:32}.

It is as rejected by the world, not continuing in it (for they had heard out of the law that Christ should abide for ever), that He becomes, as rejected, the attracting center to draw men to Him, delivering them from this present evil world. Hence it is too that it is said,

but now once *in the end of the world* (or the consummation of ages) hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself {Heb. 9:26};

that is, it was morally the end of the world. All the ages, all the phases of man's probation had been gone through -- without law, under law, prophets, and the only-begotten Son having come, and in vain tested by grace presented to his responsibility, showing not only that he sinned by his will, but that he was irrecoverable if it was to depend on his nature and will, even with all God could bring forward to try to reclaim it. A new creation, being born again, is not reclaiming the old thing; it is substituting a new. Man is not recoverable as such, but he can be redeemed by, and created anew in, Christ Jesus. Such is the testimony of God.

Man is preached to as lost; Christ (when the full truth came out, man having been tested by grace as well as law) came to seek and to save that which was *lost*. The law may be presented to a man now to prove it. It is made for the unrighteous, as the enlightened saint taught by the word knows. Christ may be presented to the sinner too; but if grace works not, he will none of Him; he will prove in his particular case -- what the word has proved of the world in its history -- he is a wilful doer of his own lawless (*ἄνομος*) will, and a hater of God, even if He come in grace. And if God gives every evidence,

Ye will not come to me that ye might have life (John 5:40).

Thus the principle of man's responsibility was fully tested in every way.

And now comes God's part. Is it mixing up the new thing He brings in with the old,

as a principle to recover and rectify it? Is it digging about and dunging and pruning the old tree that He may have good fruit? He has done it, and done it in vain. His word is -- cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground? {Lk. 13:7}

and this was the meaning of Christ's cursing the fig tree. Israel, even with all the appliances at God's disposal, bore no fruit; it was to bear none for ever. Flesh may remain in us, as the old stock in the grafted tree, as a thing hostile to the Spirit, for exercises and humbling profit, so that we may overcome, and have our senses exercised to discern good and evil; but it is never formed into a new (till glory changes all); it is as a nature hostile and condemned, and only that; not subject to the law of God, nor can be; enmity against God, where it has a mind at all. The second Adam is, morally and spiritually speaking, substituted for the first, does not restore and recover it. Without law it is lawless; with law it transgresses; with Christ it rejects and slays Him, and in him even who has the Spirit as a believer, lusts against it. What is Christ then, if we have followed the effect of responsibility out to "the end of the world," to the full effects of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? Can I give up the knowledge of good and evil and go back innocent to the tree of life? Impossible; not meant to be. Christ, the Second man, the Last Adam, meets the case wholly. How? He bears atoningly the effect of our responsibility. It is wholly, fully met, and not only so, but God Himself glorified in that by which He met it. He died, having been made sin. He is the source of life to us, a new life, and life in the power of resurrection, clean out of the whole scene in which the first Adam fell, for He has died in that and is risen. The whole case resting on the two trees in Paradise, in the law founded on satisfying the responsibility so as to have life, is completely met, by Christ being the source and power of a wholly new life, having perfectly met the responsibility we were lying under in guilt; and done more -- glorified God so as to enter as man into God's glory. Redemption and eternal life, promised before the world began, the glory of God and conformity to Christ's image in it -- such are the terms of divine grace and the condition of the believer in Jesus; but by death, not by the restoration of the first Adam, but by his death and condemnation, and a new creation in Christ Jesus. This is Christianity in its true power.

Is responsibility enfeebled or weakened? No; met, wonderfully and gloriously met. Is the law set aside, or law made void? No; both the principle of law and the authority of the law are established. Its principle is the authority of God justly requiring from the creature what he ought to be, and, when man was fallen, the true measure of his conduct as in flesh, and its authority is made good for ever. It will be good in the day of judgment, for they that have sinned under it shall be judged by it. Am I then under it? In no sense. Why? Because I have died {see Gal. 2:19-20} and the law has authority over a man as long as he lives {Rom. 7:1}. Israel, who was formally under law, has been set aside, as we know, for the present time, and is (till grace, blessed grace, restore them) without law, without idols, but without God, though loved for the fathers' sake; and the Gentile has his place in Christ after He has died and risen again, and takes his

place on this new ground, when his guilt and the result of his responsibility have been borne by another, and that same One the life in which he lives to God, and in which he is responsible on a wholly new ground.

It is because men have believed in a recovery of man in flesh -- and so a continuance of law, which applies to men alive in flesh, only spiritualized and suffused into a new system of grace -- that they have argued for the maintenance of law; while others have sought to prove that the law was dead, and did not bind, Christ having abrogated it and introduced something more suited to man. Both are alike wrong. It may seem presumptuous to say so; but the word of God has authority above all men, as I am sure the great body of those I refer to would cordially acknowledge. I avow, since I have spoken of it, that of the two parties who have discussed the matter in Glasgow I should prefer those who maintain the authority of the Sabbath. I do not agree with them; but they stand up for the authority of God, supposing it to be such for themselves: that I respect. It seems to me that the adverse party stand up for man, alienated as he is from God. This may be wise in these days when man is exalted, and I have no doubt will be; but I have no respect for this.

I love the poor, I have no distrust of them; I live by far the most of my time amongst them, and gladly. When first I began such a life, I as to nature felt a certain satisfaction in the intercourse of educated persons: it was natural. I avow that, if I find a person spiritually minded and full of Christ, from habit as well as principle, I had rather have him than the most elevated or the most educated: the rest is all alike to me. The latter are apt to spare themselves, to screen themselves, to get on in society; they want a fence round them. I would rather, in general, have a poor man's judgment of right and wrong than another's; only I think they are, from being thrown more together and the importance of character, apt to be a little hard on each other as to conduct, and jealous of favors conferred, but often very kind and considerate one towards another.

After all, we are all one in Christ Jesus {Gal. 3:28}, and the word of God is to guide and lead us withal. I am sure that, while every Christian will readily give honor where honor is due, God loves and cares for the poor. I confess that I have no sympathy with the sentiment that, because the spirit of radicalism is to be feared, we must suit God's authority, if it be such, to man's wishes. This is all morally very low ground. If I had been in Parliament when a proposition was made to shut up the London parks on Sunday (that is, the foot gates, leaving the carriage gates perhaps open for the sick) I should have moved as an amendment (did I meddle with such things) to shut the carriage gates and open the foot ones -- the rich could go out every day, and if sick could drive elsewhere. That a poor man, the one day he has with his family, should be able to breathe, I delight in; I rejoice to see the affections of a father cultivated in kindness to his children, and both happy together; and if the Lord's day gives him the opportunity, the Lord's day is a true blessing.

The poor, everyone laboring during the week, should insist on the Sabbath: it is essentially his own day. For the same reason I avow, if my vote decided it, and happily

for me I have none, and would not have or use one, not a train should run on the Lord's day. As to excursions, they are a thorough curse to all engaged in them. I cannot help them; I leave them there. But as to Sunday trains, I do not believe they are for sober reasons to meet cases of necessity and mercy, as men speak; they are to make money. If it be alleged that the requirements of society oblige it, what are the requirements of society but haste to be rich, and an imperious claiming of the right to have one's own way? I understand very well that railroads, monopolizing the roads, there is a kind of supposed obligation to meet the case of those who could have traveled at any rate. But if obliged, they can hire something to go. No. It is facility, cheapness they want -- it is money and will. They are as free to travel as they were before. I have nothing to do with these things, and never intend to have to do with them. The world goes its way; and I am not of it {John 17:16}. The allegations of Christians about it I have to say to, and I do not accept them, or the accommodating Christianity to what is called progress; only I think the Christian has to form his own ways, and not to expect to mend the world. I see no moral gain in its progress. I have telegraphs and railways -- very convenient, no doubt; but are children more obedient, men happier, servants more faithful and devoted, homes and families happier and more cherished? Is there more trust and genial confidence among men, more honesty in business, more kindly feelings between master and men, employers and employed? Let everyone answer in his own heart. You have more facilities in money making, but more anxiety and restlessness in making it; more luxury and show, but not more affection or peace.

But I confess I have got away from my subject. I return to it, and produce from Scripture the testimonies which show that we are not under the law; yet not because the decalogue or law is abolished or buried, but because *we* are dead, buried, and risen again in Christ; because we are a new creation, redeemed out of the position we were in in flesh. That we are redeemed from its curse no one denies, so that I do not argue that point, all important as it is: that we are not justified by it is admitted in terms, but I think not really known and held, and is closely connected with our argument: still it is admitted in terms, and hence I do not argue it here. The point insisted on is, that it is the rule of life, and this point I shall here take up. And I begin by stating, that on the ground of man's responsibility as a child of Adam, it clearly is so; I believe it to be a -- the -- perfect rule of life for man as he is. Had Adam not eaten, he would have lived; had man kept the law, he would have lived. Only, it must be remembered, that we know what the mind of the flesh is, that it

is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God {Rom. 8:7}.

The law was a test, but never to a sinner meant to be the way of life, which yet are its express terms -- Do this and live.

And here I must distinguish between law and the law, not as men do between an essential law and the decalogue, but between its principle and its enactments. Law is practically the principle of requiring from one, subject to the lawgiver, a certain line of

conduct which he imposes by authority. So that we have the two principles: requirement, which may take the form of prohibition; and authority. There may be a sanction withal, a motive acting on fears or hopes, as is usual in laws applied to men's conduct. This modifies the character, but hardly enters, I think, into its essence; still it does characterize law as we have to say to it. Adam was under a law: something was prohibited by authority. Men were living without law then till Moses, and Israel was put under law at Sinai -- positive requirement by authority. Now this clearly goes on the principle of the responsibility of Adam or his children, men in the flesh. There was no giving of life. Life might be kept or had by fulfilment, it was not given. We have, as to what is required, three cases of law. The law given to Adam was a simple test of obedience. It implied no sin, no lust; but authority and obedience. But if man is put on the ground of responsibility as to right and wrong, I must expect a perfect rule to be given to him, and so there was; but it must not go beyond the duty of the being in the position in which he stood, or it would not be a test of his responsibility. The law given to Adam was perfect in this way. It was a simple test of obedience; perhaps, I might add, of confidence.

Secondly, the essence of the law, that on which law and prophets hung, as presented by the Lord, was the abstract rule of perfectness in a creature, loving God with all the heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. This, in a creature, would be human perfection. Doubtless the angels do it, if even a commandment be not needed for them. It is folly to talk of a transcript of God's own mind, unless it be His mind as to what the creature ought to be, which, of course, His law must be; but it cannot be the perfection of God's mind in Himself, because it is of what man's ought to be. God cannot love His neighbor as Himself, nor any other being with all His heart, as owing it to him. It is, what it professes to be, a perfect rule for man as such. It condemns him as he is, because it tells what he ought to be; nor, if he were what he ought to be, would he want it. A command to do it, to feel right, supposes the need of it -- liability to fail in doing so.⁶¹ But in itself it is a perfect positive rule for man as a child of Adam.

The third form of law is the Decalogue, equally perfect, fourth commandment and all, in its place -- perfect for man, but here openly contemplating man as a sinner -- a perfect rule till man was fully made known as having no good thing in him; and a means, when spiritually understood, of showing it; and hence known to be given in result, with a totally different idea on the part of God than that of man's keeping it. No doubt man ought to have done so, but to give to a being who lusted in his nature, a commandment not to lust, could not be with the idea of its being kept, as spiritually known by fallen man, however right it might be to keep it. A man might be blameless as regards his righteousness externally according to it, and the greatest enemy of God in the world. Hence, I say, it served as a rule to be kept till the truth came out, while

61. How unsuited we should feel a command to Christ to love us or to love His Father! There were commands which tested the perfectness of His love, but none to love.

man was under probation tested as to his state. A rule perfectly right for a being perfectly wrong in will may convict, but cannot actually guide. How guide a wrong will, a being who in his mind is not subject to the rule nor indeed can be? I speak of the law when the law was given as a law. It was a perfect rule, but only applicable when man did not know himself, unless to convict and condemn.

But, as thus given to man as an external system, it was clearly (and that is admitted on all hands) set aside. There was an annulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof (for the law made nothing perfect), and the bringing in of a better hope by the which we draw nigh to God {Heb. 7:19}. God was not to be tempted by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither the Jewish disciples nor their fathers had been able to bear {Acts 15:10}. The whole system, as a system, was declaredly and unquestionably set aside, and Christianity, the faith, not law, came in. After that faith came, that is, Christianity, the system of faith, we were no longer under the schoolmaster {Gal. 3:23, 24}. I make a difference as to the ten words, of which I will speak. God spoke them out of the midst of the fire, and added no more. They were laid up in the ark. All this made a difference, but as terms of a covenant, they are clearly set aside with the rest, supposing them for a moment written on our hearts, and we the objects of the new covenant; if that were so, still, as engraved in stones as legal conditions of blessing in the old covenant, all is done away together. What waxed old was ready to vanish away. The old covenant we are not under, and surely the commandments formed the basis of that.

But it will be said, everyone admits that: but you must distinguish between the principle of the old covenant and the contents of that which constitutes its main terms, though there may be other details. Precisely so. There is a principle in law, as well as contents. Now I am not in relationship with God on that principle at all; that is, I am not under law at all before Him. Such is the constant testimony of the apostle: it is not merely that I am not justified by it. If it is the measure of my righteousness, and I am under it as such, I must be justified on that principle in some way. Works of law must be my justification. The apostle tells me it is not so.

But I leave this part of the question, because, as I said, in terms, at least, it is admitted, and I do not seek to raise questions; but I am not under law -- not in relationship with God on that principle in any respect. I am not under it for sanctification, or anything else whatever. I am not under law, but under grace {Rom. 6:14}. I may get great instruction from it: so I do from every part of the Old Testament. I get the deepest and most precious instruction from the sacrifices, as to what Christ's sacrifice is, nothing more precious; I get its various aspects more developed there, than in the New; but I am not under them. Something else has been substituted for them. I am not, as to anything, on the principle of law in relationship with God. I will speak of its contents. They are given on this principle, with a curse attached to them; the principle is really involved, but I confine myself to that now. I am not under law at all in my relationship with God.

We need power for sanctification, but law gives no power. I speak of the principle of relationship. It is requirement, righteous requirement; and I read,

Sin shall not have dominion over you, because ye are *not* under law but under grace {Rom. 6:14}.

That is no question of justification, but of the dominion of sin. So the strength of sin is the law {1 Cor. 15:56}.

Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence; for without the law sin was dead, but when the commandment came in, sin revived, and I died {Rom. 7:8-9}.

Now all this applies, not to justification, but to the power and working of sin in us. Law (not that it is the fault of law, as the apostle is careful to say) is only an occasion to the power of sin. It is so for us, and that is the case we have to deal with. Now this depends on the principle of law in our case, requiring from a sinner with a perverse will obedience to that which is contrary to his will (as a claim of authority over him) and to his lusts as being in sinful flesh. The principle of law is ruinous to us alike for condemnation and the power of sin. It is in vain to say I am under law with a new motive. I must be *not* under law not to be under the dominion of sin.

But it is alleged -- Yes, but the contents of the law are good. Undoubtedly, they are holy, just, and good. But if I take the contents, I am no better off, if they are a law, because I am in sinful flesh when the contents are brought before me. I cannot take the law to an innocent man. The forbidden tree *man has* eaten of. There is an end of that law. Well, let us take the commandments. *They suppose sin*, for they condemn it; they suppose lust, for they forbid it. The commandment even to love would not be addressed to a perfect being. It supposes him, as I have said, unloving or capable of being so. Hence no such precept was addressed to Adam. Besides, "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" would not do for Adam. What could stealing mean for him? what lust? The law, the apostle tells us, is not for a righteous man, *οὐ χεῖται*, does not apply to -- suit -- belong to -- such. But if it applies to the unrighteous, what can it do for them? It is clear a prohibition to lust cannot even be understood personally by one who has no lusts -- can have, at any rate, no application to him; but if he has lusts in his nature, this nature cannot be subject to it. I am now speaking of the contents of it. The law supposes sin, and rightly so; because, when it was given, sin was there.

But we are told that that is true in its present form, but that there is an essential truth in it, which was for Adam and given to Adam, though the shape it took afterwards supposed sin. Well, what is this essential truth? That the law is holy, just, and good, I admit as fully as possible; but how can stealing and lust apply to Adam, or anything but a formed state of proprietary possession and sinful flesh? Perfectly right to condemn them when they were there, but certainly not adapted to an unfallen state. Adam had no such law, and could not in fact or in essence. The best proof is that God did not give him such. Conscience of lust or stealing he certainly had not. God gave him another which perfectly suited his state and supposed no sin. To say he was under *this*, when God put him formally under another, seems to impugn the wisdom of God for a theory.

It is not that the commandments are anything but perfect, when man is in the state and relationships to which they apply. But Adam was not in that state, and those relationships; and God wisely gave him one suited to the state he was in, which maintained His authority and tested his obedience, but supposed no sin nor implied its existence.

I believe the law to be the perfect rule of life for man in the flesh, but it supposes sin, and applies to sinful flesh, to man in the flesh; and, being on the principle of requirement, and rightly so (for it is a very important principle and maintains God's rights), it condemns me as to righteousness, and is no help to me, but the contrary, as to sanctification. If then the law be holy, just, and good in its contents, why not be under it? why not maintain it? Because I am then in a relationship with God which involves condemnation and the power of sin. Law is law, not grace, and the strength of sin is the law. Maintain the law as law and you destroy its authority if it be not law to you; and if it be law to you, it is the strength of sin, and sin will have dominion over you. It must, as law, have external authority, God's authority as such. If you weaken that, you have destroyed it as a law. And here I separate from both parties who have discussed it. They both, in my judgment, really destroy its authority, one unintentionally, the other declaring it is abrogated, buried, and the like. The former are obliged to yield a great deal, desiring to maintain its authority, because they cannot help it; the latter destroy its authority and make it to be abrogated. I do not abate one jot or one tittle. I do not raise the question of Gentiles not being under it, though historically true; because, if not, they are lawless, and I admit the law to be a perfect rule for man in the flesh. I say I am not on Gentile ground, though a Gentile; not *ἄνομος Θεῷ* lawless in respect to God, but *ἔννομος Χριστῷ*, I do not say under the law to Christ (that is an utterly false translation), but duly subject to Christ {1 Cor. 9:21}. Yet I do not say the authority of the law is weakened or done away, but that I AM DEAD TO IT. The law has power over a man as long as he lives -- and can have it no longer; and I am no longer alive in the flesh.

I reject the altering, modifying, the law. I reject christianizing in it; that is, weakening its legal character by an admixture of grace that is neither law nor gospel. I maintain its whole absolute authority. Those who have sinned under it will be judged by it. It will have its own authority (that is, God's) according to its own terms in the day of judgment; but I am not under it but under grace, not under the schoolmaster but a son, because faith is come, and I have the Spirit of adoption. I am on another footing and in another relationship with God; I am not in the flesh, not in the place of a child of Adam at all, but delivered out of it by redemption. I have died and risen again; I am in Christ.

Let us see what scripture teaches on this point. Positive transgressions are blotted out by the blood of Christ. The law, we are told, as a covenant of works is gone in Christ's death. Now I say that scripture teaches more than that, teaches what applies to the old man as regards our standing before God, and that we have, for faith, died out of

the place and nature in which we were under the law. Take the fullest and clearest case -- a Jew actually under it: I do not doubt it will be practically realized by a Gentile as a principle. What is the judgment of law on my old man, my being as in flesh? Condemnation only as a covenant? No, death. It is not merely a new motive, a new spring of conduct afforded, by which, law being maintained as law, I keep it. Law is (2 Cor. 3:7-9) a ministration of death as well as of condemnation. But what then?

I through the law am dead to the law {Gal. 2:19}.

It has killed me,

that I might live to God {Gal. 2:19}.

Add not to his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar {Prov. 30:6}.

You might say it is abrogated as a covenant of works but not as a rule of life, though scripture does not say so: it is a mere human invention. But you cannot say I am *dead* to it, but it is to be my rule of *life*. That is nonsense.

I am dead to the law by the law.⁶² It has done its work and killed me as regards itself; I do not exist as regards the law, or it has failed in its power. And I am dead to the law that I might live to God {Gal. 2:19}. If I have not done with it, I cannot live to Him. And how?

I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me {Gal. 2:20}.

That is not law. When faith came, says the apostle, we were no longer under a schoolmaster {Gal. 3:23, 24}, that is, under law. Note here: It is not Christ bearing our sins that delivers from law at all. True deliverance is wrought there as regards our sins. But, in freeing me from law, God is not delivering me, a living child of Adam, from the dread consequences of my sins. He is doing another work. It is I who have died with Christ {Rom. 6:8}. Nor is it forgiveness of sin which is spoken of in such case, although through this death of Christ it is not imputed. We die *to* sin {Rom. 6:2-11} -- not sins, not for sins, but to sin.

He that is dead is justified from sin {Rom. 6:7}.

If the obedience of one has constituted me righteous {Rom. 5:19}, why cannot I say then I may live in sin? How can we that are *dead* to sin *live* any longer therein {Rom. 6:2}? The reasoning of the apostle in the end of Rom. 6 is fatal to the use of law as a rule of life. We have nothing to do here with a question of a covenant of works. It is a question of life, living in sin, obedience, holiness, -- what the principle and rule of it is. Am I going to sin, to be what is called an Antinomian,⁶³ because I am not under law? No. What principle, what rule of life, have I? Reckon yourself to be dead to sin and alive to God {Rom. 6:11}. As alive in Christ, I am to yield my members as instruments

62. {See also *Collected Writings*, 4:367; 7:329, 382; 10:8, 65, 108, 111; 16:149; 31:232. The law itself is not dead, 10:22, 23, 279; *Notes and Comments*, 5:35.}

63. {See ch. 6 and ch. 7 for more on the Christian's obedience.}

of righteousness unto God {Rom. 6:13}. I can do it, obey, not a law, but a person, God Himself absolutely. Why? I am not under law but under grace {Rom. 6:15}. *I yield myself*. What an occasion to explain that we were not under it as a covenant of works but that we were as a rule of life! But now living rules of life are treated of; how we arrive, and on what principle, at sin not having dominion over us {Rom. 6:14}. It is this (not justification) which is arrived at by not being under the law. Will that lead us to sin? Again what an occasion to tell us, No, you know it is still a rule of life. But no. Silence, ominous silence. They had been the servants of sin, and what now? They had obeyed from the heart the law from having new motives? No; the form of doctrine which had been delivered to them {Rom. 6:17}. They were not under law: if they were, sin would have dominion over them. But they had obeyed the new form of doctrine. They were slaves to righteousness, slaves to God, and had their fruit unto holiness {Rom. 6:22}. Sin's wages were death, God's gift eternal life. The law does not come in at all, save to show that those who get under it would be under the dominion of sin. Nor does the covenant of works come into the question, but life, walking in sin, its dominion, obedience, holiness -- but we are not under the law. But this must be treated of specifically.

The fifth {of Romans} (from v. 12) had shown that all must be traced for righteousness to the two heads, Adam and Christ, and that the law had only come in by the by to make the offence abound. The sixth {of Romans} that we, having died in Christ, are not under the dominion of that sinful nature, nor under law which applied to it. The seventh {of Romans} will now fully treat the question of position under law itself. The apostle declares the absolute incompatibility of being under the law and Christ at the same time. He states it in the strongest way. We cannot be bound to the law any more than a woman can have two husbands at the same time. Husbands for what? To justify as a covenant of works? No. To obey; to bring forth fruit unto God. You have nothing about works to justify, nor covenant of works, but it is the question of what I am bound to, by what law I am bound.

Is not that it? Read and see. Well, I am become dead to the law by the body of Christ that I may be to Another. And then, mind, I am bound to Another who has authority over me, and I cannot have anything else come in and claim authority. I have seen Moses and Elias disappear, having served God in their generation, and have heard the Father's voice saying, This is my beloved Son, hear Him. I have been prepared by the sixth chapter {Rom. 6} to see that it is not disobedience and living in sin, because, being dead to sin, I live to God through Christ, and am obedient to Him. I now find, in detail, that, thus dead as I am, the obligation to my first husband is closed, become impossible. I am married to Another; I am bound to Him: the bond and obligation is absolute. I can hear only Him. I cannot even say, I go by my second husband to know what my first means and commands. I have but one: His authority is complete and absolute. We have nothing to do here with justification or covenant of works, but to whom am I bound? One paper I looked at tells me the chapter means "The death of

Christ dissolved our old relation to the law as a covenant of works, and left us at liberty to contract a new relation." Did anybody ever read such an effort to elude scripture? -- a new relation with what? With the law over again? What old relation to the law is spoken of in the chapter? We have died, so that there is no more relationship at all, and we are married to *another* -- Christ raised from the dead. Where is a covenant of works spoken of or alluded to in the chapter? Further, what constitutes the whole point of the chapter, *our being dead*, is not alluded to by the author.

Ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ {Rom. 7:4}.

If I wanted a proof that I have to do with a writer who had a system which hindered him from daring to look scripture in the face, this sentence would be it. But I do not seek controversy, so I take no further notice of it. I add here it is well known that in v. 6 we should read as in the margin:

having died in that in which --

ἀποθανόντες not *ἀποθανόντος*. Else those who say the law was abrogated and buried would have this text to lean upon. If we have then died with Christ, we can also say, we have been quickened together with Him, and raised up together, and made sit together in heavenly places {Eph. 2:6}.

The Christian is a heavenly person {1 Cor. 15:48; Heb. 3:1} though walking through the wilderness, and he is the epistle of Christ in it {2 Cor. 3:3}. What is his rule? To walk as Christ walked. Every part of scripture, law and all, may furnish him light, and he may use it to convict of sin, for natural conscience owns the righteousness of it. Paul governed his conduct by a prophecy of Isa. 49. And thank God the New Testament abounds in precepts to guide us. Nor are we to let slip the word commandment. Because if we did everything right, nothing would be right if it were not obedience, and command expresses authority. Still we ought to be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. The spiritual man judges all things. I can only speak of the principle and standard here. I may surprise perhaps my readers when I say that the conduct of *God* is made our standard, as being made partakers of the divine nature. It is not the perfect rule for man in the flesh, but the divine conduct for man in the Spirit. The apostle can say,

When we were in the flesh {Rom. 7:5},

and describe in the seventh of Romans the conflicts of a renewed man who is not set free by known redemption, but is still under his first husband the law, knowing it is spiritual, consenting to it, delighting in it, but never keeping it. But he can, when he has known deliverance, say,

The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath set me free {Rom. 8:2},

knowing that God has not forgiven but condemned sin in the flesh, but in Christ a sacrifice for sin, and that, now a Christian, not in the flesh but in the Spirit, his place and standing are changed -- alive thus in Christ, created again in Christ Jesus unto preordained good works that he may walk in them {Eph. 2:10}, renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him {Col. 3:10}. What are these good works? I have

said, scripture has said, he, perfect before God in Christ, is to imitate God {Eph. 5:1, JND transl.}. Where to find the image of this in a man? Christ is the image of the invisible God. United with Him in heaven, the Christian is to walk like Him on earth, in grace as manifesting God, looking to Him above, and so changed into His image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord {2 Cor. 3:18}.

Let us see the scripture account of this. First, the Father's⁶⁴ name being revealed, not the legal name of Jehovah, we are to be perfect as our Father which is in heaven is perfect. He loves them that do not love Him, He is kind to the unthankful, and to the evil. But more precisely in Eph. 4, 5, this is fully developed. We have subjectively and objectively the pre-ordained walk of the Christian: subjectively -- the putting off the old man, and putting on the new, and, secondly, our bodies being the temple of the Holy Ghost, the not grieving the Spirit of God by which we are sealed to the day of redemption; then the objective rule -- Be ye kind, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ hath forgiven you. We have then the two essential names of God, given as that to be realized, and Christ presents the realization of them in man:

Be ye imitators of God as dear children, and walk in love as Christ hath loved us, and given himself for us, a sacrifice and an offering to God for a sweet smelling savour {Eph. 5:1-2}.

We are to be imitators of God, His love in Christ being our pattern. And here we find the superiority of the christian principle to law in its very nature. Law taught me to love my neighbor as myself -- made my love to self the measure of my duty to my neighbor.⁶⁵ Christianity looks for having no self at all, but giving up ourselves for our neighbor. Two principles form the perfectness of this: He gave Himself *for* others and *to* God. This last is needed that the principle may be perfect. The affection must have a perfect object as well as be perfectly, and in order to be perfectly, free from self, and perfect in itself. For affections have their character and value from their object. But the principle of legal perfection is another, and wholly short of this. The rule was not what a man ought to be as such, but to be an imitator of God as a dear child of his Father, Christ being the manifestation of love in this and the measure of it. To compare the mutual love of oneself and another, and make it the same as the absolute self-devotedness of Christ, is a mere abuse of terms, because the word love is used in both. The other name of God is Light {1 Jn. 1:5}. We are light in the Lord: we are to walk as children of light {Eph. 5:8}. Again Christ is referred to: "Christ shall give thee light" {Eph. 5:14}. Thus perfect love in self-sacrifice, imitating God therein, walking as being in Christ, in and of the light which manifests everything, Christ being the model of it. Such is the rule of life of the Christian. He is dead, and his life hid with Christ in God.

64. This is the name of christian relationship in eternal life, and was revealed by Christ even when here. Jehovah was the name of relationship for Israel, Almighty (El Shaddai) for the Patriarchs. The Most High will be God's millennial name.

65. {Law gives self-love as the measure; for the Christian, God is the source of love (Rom. 5:6). See *Collected Writings*, 10:17, 160, 168; *Notes and Comments*, 5:14; *Synopsis*, 5:51 note.}

If he believes, it is Christ lives in him, he is not living (alive) in this world. People may resist such views, but, if they do, they must resist scripture.

The great secret of all is, that we are not, as before God, and responsible to Him, alive in the Adam life at all. Christ is our life {Col. 3:4} -- Christ who is risen. I am dead, have been crucified with Christ {Gal. 2:20}, to sin or the flesh and the lusts thereof, to the law by the body of Christ {Rom. 7:4}, to the world, and the world to me. The whole scene of a living man, this world in which the life of Adam develops itself, and of which the law is the moral rule, I do not belong to, before God, more than a man who died ten years ago out of it. I come, having the life of Christ, having the Son and so have life, into the midst of it, to walk in the path which He has traced through it. And now, what is the sabbath the rest of? This creation. I am not of it. It is a new creation I am of, old things are passed away {2 Cor. 5:17}. If I had known Christ after the flesh, as belonging to this world, down here and under the law, I know Him no more {2 Cor. 5:16}. And what is the rest of the new creation to which I belong as having died and risen, Christ being my life? The heavenly rest of which the Lord's day is the intimation, the day of Christ's resurrection.

Let us see what scripture says directly on the subject; and first of all Gen. 2. Here God rested on the seventh day and sanctified it, because He rested on it. I do not think Paley's argument right, or of any value if it be right. In any case the seventh day is recognized by God as consecrated when He did give a law, as sanctified and blessed because He rested on that day. But it was the rest of creation, of the first creation as God made it, very good. Nobody says it was observed all along from that to Israel's departure from Egypt. There may have been traditions of it, clearer or more obscure. It seems there were, both scriptural and heathen, but they are obscure. But that creation fell at once, and the very thing we have heard in Christianity is, that man never did keep it, never could, nor ever can be subject to it, or have rest on that footing. It may be a mercy to his body (I believe it is): his body is part of the old creation. But I speak of relationship with God. Religiously the rest of the old creation is impossible to him.

In the law God took up man in the flesh and the creation, to test the possibility of man's living in relationship with God in them; and it was proved impossible there. But the sabbath was the sign then of relationship with God. It was not *a* seventh day, but the seventh, not of the six, on those God was working, they were not His rest. It is all very well to talk of a seventh day. *A* seventh day may be good for man, but shuts out God, leaves His rest aside, and gives man his rest as a physical rest without Him, rests when He was working, and works when He was resting, slights God, if it reposes man. It was *the* seventh day was blessed because God rested on it. Man did not want rest from toil in Paradise. Was he not to keep the seventh day if he had not fallen? Would he keep a seventh day as the essence of it, or the seventh because God rested on it? No, *the* seventh day alone is the religious character of it, because man's blessing is in God's rest. He is man all the six days as to his path according to God's will, with God the seventh. But he fell directly, never entered into God's rest.

And here I would note in passing, a very material point noticed in Dr. Cairn's speech at Berwick, that the argument against the sabbath, because man was fallen and could not have part in the original institution, would be valid if man were not recoverable.

Now I affirm, that exactly what scripture teaches is that man is not recoverable. Men are recoverable; but it is by being born again, by dying and rising, putting off the old man and putting on the new. The law, and even Christ's coming, as addressed to man's responsibility, was the proof that man was irrecoverable, that there must be a Second man instead of the first, and that death and resurrection must come in to found a place for man with God, that there must be a putting off the old man and a putting on the new man. The character of infidelity in the present day is, that man can be improved and recovered -- does not want a new man to be born again. It will just lead to Antichrist. It is antichristianity unawares, the denial of the fundamental principles of Christianity -- being born again, and the cross. Man is not recoverable as in flesh, he must be born again, *ἀνωθεν* entirely anew, from the origin of his nature, and redeemed. The sabbath is the rest of man in flesh. Religiously there is no rest for man in the flesh, as there is no recovery for man in the flesh. The law tried it, and set up the sabbath as a sign consequently of the covenant; but the flesh was not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be {Rom. 8:7}.

And see the blessed and touching way in which Christ consequently met the stupid accusation of breaking the sabbath, when He made the man carry his bed, proving the life giving God and Lord of the sabbath was there. They charged Him with it. What is His answer?

My Father *worketh* hitherto, and I *work* {Jn. 5:17}.

Unspeakably blessed! Can the Father and the Son -- God in grace (for so in John God is ever spoken of, in grace as contrasted with responsibility to God as God), the God of love, rest where misery and ruin is? Can the holy God of love rest where sin is? God might have destroyed in judgment; but in goodness He cannot rest in sin. He works where sin and misery are. Can there be a more touching, wonderful answer of divine wisdom, making, as every word of that blessed one did, Himself more precious, and giving a proof that the all-wise God of grace was there? God has no sabbath really in a world of sin and misery.

We find this character in Christ. He was subject to the system He was in, while in it; but another truth, which came fully out after His resurrection, continually shines through. Does not your Master pay tribute (to the temple)? Yes, says Peter, He is a good Jew. When he goes in, the Lord prevents {anticipates} him, and shows that, as a divine person, He knew what was passing, away from His bodily presence. Divine knowledge was there, but He associates Peter with Himself -- we are "children" of the temple, and therefore free; but "lest we should offend." Then we have divine power over creation -- He makes a fish bring the needed money; but again He associates Peter with Himself --

That take and give for me and thee {Matt. 17:27}.

Subject to, but above all, around Him, He associates us with Himself in the place He has now taken as Son above, even as man.

But as Christ in reply to the Jewish charge declares He was divinely working as Son, not resting, so the apostles treat this subject of the Jewish sabbath. Heb. 4 does so fully. The objection that we who believe do enter into rest means present rest of conscience as a believer, I reject utterly as entire insensibility to the whole purpose of the argument, which is, that we must *labour* to *enter* into that rest, and that there remains a rest (that is, that it is not come). The conscience does enter into rest by faith, and man has ceased from resting in his works as being a sinner. As an accommodation, it may be all very well; but he has not ceased from his works as a Christian *as God did from His*. The passage merely states who are the enterers. Believers enter, unbelievers do not; as if I should say, There is the door -- only peers -- only men enter. It is the present of title or habit, not of time. I dismiss this.

But there is important instruction in the chapter. Man has never yet entered into the rest of God; he did not in creation, although his works were finished from the foundation of the world; for God says, "if they shall enter" {Heb. 4:3}. But, said the Jew, *we* have entered -- Caleb, Joshua, the children -- they did not fall through unbelief. No, says our chapter, "if they shall enter" comes after Joshua; and if he had given them rest, He would not so long after in the Psalms have spoken of another day. There remains a rest for God's people. Into God's rest man has not entered. He did not on its first institution in paradise. Well, promises of the Seed came. There was no promise to the first Adam; but in the judgment on the serpent the victory of the Seed of the woman, of the Second Adam (just *not* the first, who was no seed of the woman), was promised. Then when God called Abraham, the nations having turned to idolatry, came first the promise before legal responsibility, and the law 430 years after, which could neither annul nor *add to the unconditional promise*, and the law was blessing conditional on man's obedience. *After* the promise that is, comes the law, with the blessing founded on man's responsibility identified with the first creation, promises referring to it given as the blessing; and the sabbath -- the rest of God -- is immediately set up, of course on the principle of the institution (that is, legally).

I will show how very much was made of it, but first a few words on moral law and the decalogue. By moral law I understand the duty of maintaining the relationship in which we stand. But they {the commandments} acquire their obligation from their institution by God, and the first relationship of all is relationship with God -- hence the first of all moralities -- and which casts its light and character on all the rest, because, in whatever God has instituted or commanded, I am bound to obedience; and obedience itself is morality in its highest form. It is maintaining relationship with God. Hence, before sin came in, the test was abstract pure obedience -- "thou shalt not eat." Well, man disobeyed and fell -- got wholly away from God; but he got a conscience in and by his fall -- the knowledge of good and evil, that is, the sense of good and evil in itself

without a commandment or law which made it obedience, which would have supposed his being still with God. Such was the wisdom of God. But this natural conscience enforced the obligation of these relationships in which God had placed man. Man's institutions might deface and obscure them: still the internal obligation was there. A wife was owned as a wife, though divorce might come in; parents as parents, though the state might claim rights over that tie; violence and robbery were known to be violence, though they might gloriously plunder enemies, and so on. And the blessed Lord would restore the testimony, "from the beginning it was not so." Thus, though there was no commandment, no law, there was morality, and the Gentile would do by nature the things contained in the law and be a law to himself {Rom. 2:14}, an expression which peremptorily excludes the having a law of God which made it obedience, and rests it on conscience acquired in the fall, when man left God and was turned out from Him.

After the promise which showed that grace and the Seed could alone bring blessing {cp. Gen. 22:18}, God's authority was set up in a revealed way, and after an external and typical redemption {Ex. 14, 15} the law promulgated. This, while based on God's authority, established of course by its sanction all the relationships God had instituted, only chiefly by prohibitions of the breach of them; that is, where those relationships constituted a distinctive right against others, divine or human. The sabbath and parental authority are alone positive, though the former be negative in detailed directions. And here I avow, though it be not properly a relationship properly speaking, nor hence a morality independent of the knowledge of God, a matter of conscience when man was away from God and so *a law to himself*, e.g. without God's authority, yet the moment God was brought in and that first of all relationships set up, a part of that, yea its essence, was the recognition of absolute obedience to Him and His sovereignty in commanding; and the sabbath, like the prohibition in paradise, became, as a *positive* command, a more absolute test of relationship with God than all the rest. Gentiles might be moral by conscience without God, as men may now; they might see the folly of idols, as Isaiah reasons, find out they had a lie in their right hand; but the sabbath was a sign of *relationship* with God, as a people known to Him and under His authority (as all men ought to have been). It was wisely so ordered as a sign of the covenant, it was arbitrary: God commanded it, and that was its authority; but with the knowledge Genesis gave, it was not absolutely so. The Jehovah of Israel was the Creator of heaven and earth. It might have been in one sense arbitrary, though I am sure perfectly wise, to create in six days or seven; but, if He created in six, to have the sabbath on the seventh day was to have a part in the rest of God. It was the very essence of blessing; it was having to say to God, and as God's people; it was not arbitrary in this, but it was special; not natural conscience, but eminently blessed association with God. *But* it was the rest of the first creation, and rest according to law (i.e., conditional blessing, on obedience), and that in fact in a fallen being, who could not have it in that way. That godly Jews found the sabbath a delight, when they were in relationship with God, I

cannot doubt. God would be true to His own relationship. But the Maccabees, when Lommi was written on the people {Hos. 1:9}, only found it a source of disaster, though their conscience might be good. Now the sabbath will be found to be a distinctive sign, *the* seventh day. One day in seven destroys the very idea of God's rest.

I take up the law. I find every distinct ordinance has the sabbath annexed to it, not merely the ten commandments, but all that expressed any form of man's relationship with God. When they had come out of Egypt and manna is given them for daily food, the sabbath is immediately distinguished (Ex. 16). In Ex. 20 we have the commandments, God's relationship with Israel set up, thereupon the sabbath established. The second commandment gives the terms of Jehovah's relationship with Israel, He is here "Jehovah thy God," and the "sabbath of Jehovah thy God"; and it is expressly the rest of this first creation,

therefore Jehovah blessed the seventh day {Ex. 20:11}.

Keeping it holy was the point, though the rest of all was the sign of that. When the tabernacle is to be set up (Ex. 31), and Moses is coming down, having received the pattern, the plan and order of relationship, the sabbath is again ordered; it is a sign between Jehovah and the children of Israel for ever, and emphatically, because it was Jehovah's rest. When Moses gets a new covenant on going up the second time (Ex. 34), the sabbath is introduced. So before the offerings for the tabernacle (Ex. 35). In Lev. 23, the feasts of Jehovah, it is distinctly brought out in the first place by itself. So in Lev. 19, when the people are to sanctify themselves, because Jehovah their God is holy, they are to be obedient to parents, and keep *His* sabbaths. He is Jehovah their God. So in Lev. 26, when the threatenings as to departure are detailed, it begins,

Ye shall keep my sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary: I am Jehovah {Lev. 26:2}.

The very land was to keep a sabbath (Lev. 25:2, 4, 6), a test whether they trusted a covenant God. And in Num. 15, when in the midst of judgment the promises of the Lord and His sure faithfulness come in, gathering sticks on the sabbath is punished with death, as a presumptuous sin.

I turn to the prophets, and cite only Ezekiel saying why Israel was rejected (Ezek. 20:11, 12),

And I gave them my statutes, and showed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am Jehovah who sanctify them.

A concordance will give many other passages, but these give the principal. It is Jehovah, Israel's God (His name with the patriarchs was Almighty; with us, Father through Jesus Christ). It was His sabbath, a sign of relationship with Israel, but founded on the rest of Elohim; but a sign of rest in the first creation, of relationship with God, with Jehovah, in that rest; but given as a law to man in the flesh, and blessing and rest conditional on obedience. Such was the sabbath. The rest of God in the first creation; and then the rest of relationship with God of man in the flesh under condition of obedience.

Now exactly what Christianity teaches us is, that this is impossible. Sin has entered

in; the first Adam is lost by disobedience. The flesh is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be {Rom. 8:7}. And hence He who redeems us was in the grave on the sabbath day, as coming amongst men here the sinless and gracious One, but in the likeness of sinful flesh. Death is the only rest from sin for us, and the covenant of flesh having part in God's rest is buried in His grave, and the sabbath, the sign of it, with it; but, I repeat, not by abrogating law as such for those under it, but by dying to it, having perfectly glorified it and borne its curse -- the highest possible sanction that could be given to it. But Christ's being in the grave was the final and absolute proof that there could be no relationship with God in the flesh of man; the fig tree was cursed, and never to bear fruit for ever.

But, it is said, the sermon on the mount sets up and spiritualizes the law. How long had I accepted the latter as true! But it is not true. It reveals the Father's name as a new title of relationship, as the Lord in John 17 declares He had done; and puts inward truth of heart to God in the place of Pharisaic external observances. It does not contemplate redemption, but personal righteousness, as the ground on which the remnant, poor in spirit, could enter into the kingdom of heaven. Only two commandments are referred to, which raised the question of violence and corruption, the great principles of sin. If it be a spiritualization of the law, the sabbath is left out as having no part in that spiritualization; but I do not admit it is. Whatever rules it gives for our moral walk (for though it does not present the ground of entrance to sinners as given in the gospel, yet it shows us what suits the kingdom in which we are by grace), it does not bring in the sabbath as honoring it as a part of it. The truth is, it refers to inward principle and obedience. As regards the passage, not a jot or tittle will pass from the law till all be fulfilled {see Matt. 5:18}; and I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil {Matt. 5:17}, I receive it surely as a divine sentence to be accepted in its whole force. The most distant thought of His setting aside the law does not enter into my mind -- it would be setting aside God's authority. Christ sealed its authority in His death, but He died out from under it. It has authority over a man as long as he lives. Much of it has been fulfilled; some even of the types are not yet, as the feast of tabernacles; and I am satisfied every bit of it, as well as of the prophets, has been, or will. Christ fully glorified it in His life too. But if I have died, He does not put me under it as risen with Him. Being under it is the way of not fulfilling it to all save Christ Himself -- the way of sin having dominion over us.

In the sermon on the mount Christ was showing the true character of those amongst the Jews who would enter in the kingdom when it was set up; and I therefore fully admit it shows the character we should walk with; but would any man, as preaching the gospel to sinners, present obedience to law and precepts as the way of entrance into the kingdom? Not one word of the glad tidings of Christ's death and resurrection is in it. I believe if a man is born again, in principle, and according to the principle of the sermon on the mount, his righteousness does exceed that of the Pharisees. But there is no thought of being born again, no thought of the cross; personal obedience is (here)

the rock on which we build surely: all well as a guide to a Christian practically; but the terms of the sermon on the mount were addressed not to sinners, but gave the character of Jewish saints who would have part in the kingdom; most instructive to us to shew us what characterizes it, now it is set up, and that he who contradicts it cannot have really a part in the kingdom. I believe Christ came to fulfil the law, I believe it will be all fulfilled; but how can a divine declaration that all will be fulfilled, that it will not pass *till* all be fulfilled, apply to my fulfilling it? It is not spoken of as an obligation, but as certain of fulfilment. Have I fulfilled it so that it can pass? Have you, reader? Right and mercy never can pass. The Lord does affirm its authority, but He cannot speak in this sentence of people's fulfilling its moral obligations so that it should pass. Did this then leave them at liberty to slight them? Surely not. That would be slighting its authority, which the Lord establishes. Whoever did would be guilty under it; and this was true of every jot and tittle even when it was not moral, because authority was involved in it. These ought ye to have done. The least commandment had in its place God's authority attached to it. But I am not under it for quite another reason; I am dead to the law by the body of Christ, that I might be to *another* -- *wholly*, entirely dead to it: the bond is dissolved. Is therefore morality gone? No. But it is not maintained in Christianity by the law.

What the law *could not do*, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin *in the flesh*, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit {Rom. 8:3-4}.

If I walk after the Spirit, I am not under the law; but the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, meekness, temperance, patience; against such there is no law {Gal. 5:22-23}. I keep the law *de facto*, by not being under it *de jure*, because the life and Spirit of Christ make me love my neighbor, and he who does that fulfils the law. It is produced, not imposed. Hence the first table is not alleged, because that was covenant with Jehovah as a people: we are sons of the Father through Christ; *our* duties are in that relationship.

Let us now see what the New Testament directly affords us on the sabbath. Is any hint as to its sacredness to be found? Matt. 12:1 is evidently of great consequence here. The Pharisees complained of the disciples' plucking and rubbing the ears of corn. The Lord's answer is remarkable. It is not to rebuke the Pharisees as He does elsewhere, but to shew that the sabbath and other ceremonial enactments have been set aside for sufficient cause, and that a greater than any obligation of the sabbath was there. Could God say, I am greater than a moral commandment? Would that be a divine way of putting things if it were a question of hating a brother or coveting another man's wife? Such a thought would revolt at once. But that is the Lord's reasoning as to the sabbath. First a rejected Messiah made all common, for another obligatory commandment, the sabbath, gave way under God's own eye. Christ was greater than the temple; and if they knew God's heart, they would not have condemned His disciples. All this proved the Pharisees wrong and unjustifiable. But, besides, the Son of man was Lord of the

sabbath. Surely this could not be said of a commandment as to right and wrong! He had a title to dispose of the sabbath, through the dignity of His person and office. Could all this have been said if the Lord were insisting on the maintenance of its authority? He adds that it is lawful to do well on the sabbath. The parallel passage in Mark adds, The sabbath was made for man.

Matthew's gospel gives us dispensational changes, and, on that ground, Christ's person as divine; and the place He took as Son of man laid the ground for dealing with the sabbath as Lord of it. Here Christ is the servant-prophet, and we have another ground laid: the sabbath was made for man. It was in favor of -- for -- man; and hence He who ordered all for man, as the head of the race according to God, was Lord of it. It was a benefit conferred on man for his advantage, and the Son of man was the competent disposer in the matter. Could this be said of a divinely binding law?

In Mark 3:2; Luke 6:7; 14:1-5; 16:10-16, all are cases where He purposely heals so as to draw attention to it on the sabbath-day, diligently offending their prejudices (to say the least) making their zeal as to it a proof of hypocrisy, without a word to save any legal force. Is not this singular that the Holy Ghost only signalizes His casting a slur on their rigid observance of it? Can anyone find any other testimony as to the sabbath in the New Testament? In the Old I find on every occasion a special insisting on it, as we have seen. In the New only statements which declare His title over it, or upset legal exactness as to it.

I return for a moment to John 5, which I have already noticed. The other gospels teach us how Christ in different characters was presented to the Jews and to the world. In John both are seen as having not received Him, and the Jews are treated all through as reprobates and the systems rejected: man must be born again.

Christ is substituted for the Jews, not presented to them, and brings in of course infinitely greater blessings. Thus the sabbath has a peculiar place here. Christ is not seen as still holding to the system, though going on towards His rejection. He is not traced down from Abraham and David, Emmanuel according to promises, nor up to Adam, the Son of man in grace. He is God in this world, unknown and rejected, the Word made flesh, the Lamb of God; He must make all things new. In person He is the beginning of what is new, though alone as yet in this character till He had died and risen again. Now the sabbath, as we have seen, had been the rest of the first creation; and when man had been taken up in flesh, the sabbath was made a sign of the covenant. A rejected Christ is on new ground, though, as we have seen, while in flesh, outwardly subject to what God had set up in flesh. It is therefore Paul says,

Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we him no more. Therefore *if* any man be in Christ, a new creation {2 Cor. 5:16}.

For us His death and resurrection must come in for this purpose. His divine person was above all dispensations, and this, with His work and the mission of the Comforter, is what we have in John. It is not Christ ascended to bring in the headship, but it is Christ a divine person become man. Purpose and grace therefore come necessarily before us.

The case of the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda shows man incapable of using the

means afforded in blessings which supposed strength and capacity in him to use them, which was the legal system. If it depends on us, sin has taken away the strength needed to use means given to heal sin, even when the will is there. The man is, so to say, in Rom. 7 -- to will {is} present -- {but} no way of performing what must be done. Christ brings -- exercises -- power, instead of requiring it. A word heals the man, but it is the sabbath, the rest of flesh. But there can be none, and having drawn the attention of the Jews to the point by making the man carry his bed, He answers by declaring that His Father was working hitherto, and He was working, not keeping sabbath, having rest in the midst of sin. It was power come in the midst of evil in grace, not rest in evil. Judgment might have been, judgment will be; grace was and yet is. Where can rest be found for us? In the new creation, in resurrection; first for conscience and heart, finally altogether and perfect. Christ as risen has put man in a new place, on a new footing, not back where Adam innocent was, clean out of the place of Adam guilty and the world which has grown up from him in sin and rejected Christ. Having accomplished the work of redemption, destroyed the power of death, made peace by the blood of the cross, Christ has taken the new place, wholly a new place as man, which His work gives a title to, and places man in by resurrection power. We are before God as risen in Him, though we have the treasure in earthen vessels, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. We are in Christ in the new creation. Our sabbath is not the sabbath in flesh (that of the old creation), but of faith by the resurrection of Christ. It is not imposed on us by law, for we are not under law, but dead, out of the place and nature of sin, for faith, and risen in Christ. But the Lord's day, the day of Christ's resurrection, is the happy witness, as far as a day can be, of a better and perfect rest.

I do not enter on the detail of scripture ground for the distinction of this day, which I published many years ago, in reply to the taunt of priests who used it to prove the authority of the Church which had changed the day. I have died with Christ to the old creation, the flesh, and the law; my rest as {in the} flesh is in the grave with Him. I have true rest in the divine complacency in Him risen, His work finished, so that God rests in righteousness and delight, and so we in both rest from labor to attain one, rest in joy in what is good in the other, rest in God's love unhinderedly resting upon us in Christ: the pledge too by the Holy Ghost of the perfect rest which the resurrection of the body will give. Rom. 8:2. See John 20; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Rev. 1:10.

The sabbath is not *a* seventh day. It is significantly *the* seventh day, the rest of God, Jehovah's rest. It is not now the seventh day, the rest of the old creation (to an intelligent Christian⁶⁶ that is impossible), but, as clearly distinguished by scripture, the *first* day of the week in contrast with the seventh, Christ having been unquestionably in the grave during the seventh, and rising (the ground of our rest) the first, not the seventh. Talking about the sabbath being originally the first is slighting the facts, and

66. {By an "intelligent Christian" is meant a Christian rightly instructed in the mind of God.}

ignorance as to the purpose and meaning of the change of day. It is not a Jewish or legal sabbath either, but the christian Lord's day. The only part flesh can have in it now is mercy to man in flesh, and that is a fresh revelation of Christ's. When originally instituted, toil was not man's portion; God's rest he might have enjoyed in a worshipping way, but never did. Now sin is come in, the Lord can tell us the sabbath was made for man. So far therefore as the Lord's day can be made a day of rest for all, grace will do it. I may not be able to impose it as a religious law on unconverted men. I do not know what that means in christianity, in the Church of God. Could the early Church have imposed it on the heathen? I believe it is a great mercy if civil law secure it, or the habits of society, even for the world; only there is the danger of self-righteousness. It is an external mercy, if the morality of the law, sabbath and all, be observed; for sin and contempt of God degrade, harden, and corrupt. As a Christian I rejoice to have one day, and the Lord's day, rescued from the world and the old creation for me a child of God; and I believe and have found that (not for visions, but for blessing and for joy) we may look to be in the Spirit on the Lord's day. But that is not law. Yet I do not accept at all the taunt of those who bury, as they say, or abrogate the sabbath. I say, If I were on board ship, I should be positively sinning not to take due care of it on the sabbath, and give heed to the safety of all. On the other hand I have not a doubt the Christian ought to think of others, and (unless in cases where mercy does require it) not use cabs and the like on the Lord's day; and an easy rule is to be found: if he takes one in the name of the Lord Jesus, let him; if not, let him not take one.

And as to meals, it is not scruple: hot or cold, it is all alike to me as to conscience; but I say, Christians ought to leave full leisure on the Lord's day to those who serve them. On the other hand, instead of law, I would make children as happy as I could on the Lord's day; I would connect it with happiness, but happiness associated with God, not idle pleasure; and so, as far as I had to say to it, to the toiling poor. I believe it is meant to be a rest of happiness, happiness with God, not legal bondage imposed by Him. I do not expect the world to heed me; but I act for myself. I believe serious-minded persons will respect it, and moral restraint, such as godliness always exercises, will operate on all.

I do not go into the history of this question. I have made collections of the kind on it which I have not with me at the moment. But it is certain the early Christians never confounded the Lord's day and the sabbath. Those who were Jews knew both as distinct, and those around them did too. Justin Martyr (in a well known passage of the dialogue with Trypho, who reproaches him with giving up the sabbath) says, How can we keep the sabbath, who rest from sin all the days of the week? If I recollect aright, Clement of Alexandria recommends setting it apart if possible. But I recollect this much, that a council of Orleans, in the sixth century or beginning of the seventh, reproaches Christians with keeping the sabbath, and not carting home their corn, or traveling, and asked them if they had turned Jews. But we must not suppose that this meant Sunday or the Lord's day. Gradually, as Judaism disappeared in the distance, the

Lord's day took its place, but never, I believe, as a legal sabbath till the Reformation. But the history of the case may be found elsewhere: I do not pretend to give it, and speak from memory. My object was to examine scripture on the subject, and that in connection with the law, which is the really important point. The nature of Christianity depends upon it. Local controversy I should have left to those engaged in it. The true nature of Christianity concerns us all.

I do not accept by any means all Luther's statements on the subject. I think he did not see complete deliverance. But what he has written shows clearly that he had come right into the principle I have spoken of: "But if thou wilt speak of the abolishment of the law, talk of it as it is in its own proper use and office, and as it is spiritually taken, and comprehend in that the whole law, making no distinction at all between the judicial, ceremonial, and moral"; "now Paul speaketh here especially of the abolishment of the moral law, which is diligently to be considered." "And here Paul speaketh not of the ceremonial law only (as before we have remarked more at large), but of the whole law, whether it be ceremonial or moral, which to a Christian is utterly abrogated, for he is dead unto it: not that the law is utterly taken away; nay, it remaineth, liveth, and reigneth still in the wicked. But a godly man is dead unto the law, like as he is dead unto sin, the devil, death, and hell: which notwithstanding do still remain, and the world with all the wicked shall still abide in them. Wherefore when the Papist understandeth that the ceremonial law only is abolished, understand thou that Paul and every Christian is dead to the law, and yet the whole law remaineth still. As for example: Christ rising from death is free from the grave, and yet the grave remaineth still." And then he enlarges. "Wherefore these words, I am dead to the law, are very effectual. For he saith not: I am free from the law for a time, or I am lord over the law; but simply, I am dead to the law, that is, I have nothing to do with the law . . . Now to die to the law is not to be bound to the law, but to be free from the law, and not to know it. Therefore let him that will live to God endeavor that he may be found without the law, and let him come out of the grave with Christ."

Now it is perfectly true that the great object of Luther was justification by faith. But in pursuing this object he arrives at our being wholly dead to the law, nothing bound to it, not knowing it. He thought a man might get back under it, because he did himself; I do not. But this is another question. He takes a man as in Christ, wholly out of the law as much as Christ is now out of his grave, and the man from under law as Christ is now. "With this faith thou shalt mount up above and beyond the law, into that heaven of grace where is no law nor sin. And albeit the law and sin do still remain, yet they pertain nothing to thee; for thou art dead to the law and sin." "Now if we be dead unto the law, then hath the law no power over us, like as it hath no power over Christ, who hath delivered us from the law that we might live unto God." It is not all the truth that justification is continually running in his mind. He takes them *wholly* out of the law because it was death and condemnation, and they could not be justified if they were under it at all, because of its necessary character. He says the only thing he requires at

your hands is this, that ye believe in Christ whom He has sent; and thus we are made perfect. “But if . . . ye will add laws, then assure yourself that all laws are comprehended in this commandment -- Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Endeavor yourselves to keep this commandment, which, being kept, ye have fulfilled all law.” I cite from his well known commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians. ❖

Chapter 6

The Christian Rule of Life: What Is It?

Bringing the Handmaid into the House Again

-- or,

Keeping Her There -- to Keep Order in the House

The law was a rule of life for Israel under the covenant of law. The law “has not its application to a righteous person” (1 Tim. 1:9), yet Covenantists apply it to the Christian’s life, putting him under it. Covenantists allow that Christians cannot be justified on the basis of keeping the law, but then claim that the law is the rule of life for the Christian. Denying that the Christian is under the law as the rule of his life results in Covenantists calling such Antinomians -- without law. Now, there may be some who hold wild notions as if Christians may do as they wish, but those taught in the Word of God repudiate such dreams.

The NT states several things regarding the Christian and law. We will now turn to some of them.

Christians Are “Not under Law”

. . . ye are not under law but under grace (Rom. 6:14).

. . . but if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under law (Gal. 5:18).

Note that these texts do not say ‘not under *the* law.’ These texts mean that we are not under law as a standing before God -- we are not on that principle before Him. This is all-inclusive: for justification as well as for sanctification. Moreover, just as one is not standing before God on the principle of law, he *is* standing before God on the principle of grace.⁶⁷ Either law, as a principle, is the basis of the Christian’s standing, or grace

67. Grace was not a revealed ground of standing in the OT. “. . . grace and truth subsists through Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). That does not mean that there was no grace or truth shown in the OT. Of course OT saints were saved by grace. But grace was not a revealed standing in the OT. Note that consistently with this, Titus 2:11 says, “For the grace of God which carries with it salvation for all men has appeared . . .”

Not only was grace not the standing of the OT saints during the trial of the first, fallen man, neither was faith, though, of course OT saints had faith (by grace, how else?). Scripture is clear:

. . . but before faith came, we {Jews -- Israel} were guarded under law, shut up to faith [which was] about to be revealed (Gal. 3:23).

“Guarded under law” means guarded under that principle of God’s dealings, i.e., guarded on the principle of law. Faith came as the revealed basis of God’s dealings. Faith, then, was not the revealed ground of
(continued...)

is the basis of the Christian's standing.

Christians Are Dead to the Law

See ch. 4 where this is dealt with. We are told in Scripture the Christian's position regarding *the* law -- we are dead to *the* law.

So that, my brethren, ye also have been made dead to the law by the body of Christ, to be to another . . . (Rom. 7:4).

It is clear that an opposite is stated: either a) to be to the law, or b) to be to Another. Either one is to *the* law or one is to Another. The question here is if Christians are not to Another for justification but to the law for sanctification.

The answer is that the Christian is dead to Hagar, period. He is not dead to Hagar for justification but alive to Hagar for sanctification. Yet that is just what putting the Christian under the law for the rule of life is: it is treating him practically as if he is alive -- when God says that he is dead with Christ.

Thus we are neither under the principle of law for our standing before God, nor do we have a standing before God by the law of Moses. In a reply to J. S. Teulon's *The History and Teaching of the Brethren*, W. Kelly wrote:

. . . how comes it that we do not find Anglicans, any more than Puritans, dilating (as the apostle does) on the death of the Christian from law, and on his deliverance so as to be under grace, not law? Brethren dwell on it, as believing in its reality and all-importance through redemption; if others do not, it is because, not understanding it, they feel not its comfort.

But it is sought to neutralize the christian's death to law {Rom. 7:4} by reducing it to the relations of law to man unrenewed. Of course this is common ground: all agree

- (1) that the law cannot justify a sinner;
- (2) that it cannot give life or power; and
- (3) that, far from quickening, it provokes by its prohibitions the evils in the flesh it condemns.

But it is wholly false that these cases exhaust or explain the apostle's teaching. Gal. 3:10 is said evidently to mean as many as depend on their works of justification, also Gal. 5:18, and 19. Here we fairly join issue. Our censor maintains that in these passages the apostle is not treating of the law as a rule of life, but of those unrenewed men who looked to the law for justification; we maintain that Scripture embraces both and sets aside all such misuse of the law. In his

67. (...continued)

God's dealings with man in the OT, though, of course, without faith it was impossible to please Him (Heb. 11:6). Man was on trial in the OT to show that he was not recoverable from the fall. That is the key to these matters.

There is a considerable difference between God's grace quickening souls in the OT and implanting faith in them, and that grace and faith were a revealed ground of God's dealings with man. It could not be a revealed ground until the trial of the first man was concluded. God was dealing with man in the flesh, in the fallen Adamic responsibility, as under trial to show that he was not recoverable from the fall.

unconverted state Paul was once alive apart from law; when renewed he through law died to law that he might live to God {Gal. 2:19}. So far from being in this last state, a man seeking justification by law, he is showing the great christian privilege of death with Christ as the one door of deliverance, after realising death in his conscience as the inevitable consequence of being under law. He only when converted owned all its force in death that he might be cleared, not only from sin but from law, and live to God; he could say, I am crucified with Christ, and no longer live I, but Christ liveth in me.

This evidently goes farther than resting on Christ's blood for the remission of sins. It is a person dead with Christ and alive in Him to God, dead to law as well as to sin, but Christ living in him. Paul is explaining the principle of the life of faith right through the course, on the ground of the grace of God in deliverance from law. In Gal. 3 the apostle is avowedly correcting the Galatian error of seeking perfection in flesh by law after receiving the Spirit by the report of faith; which is enough to refute the defective view of Mr. Teulon. This he follows by citing Deut. 27 to show that law has no blessing, nothing but curse for as many as take the principle of works of law. This is not merely justification, but life; and both are by faith, not law. Even as God blessed Abraham before the law {Gen. 15:6}, and has now made good the promise to us, faith having come, and ourselves (even if we had been Jews) no longer under the tutelage of law (Gal. 3:23): a passage which strikes even a prejudiced mind. As to Gal. 5 it is extraordinary how any one could apply the latter half otherwise than to the exclusion of law from being our rule of life. After freedom by and in Christ the Galatian saints were to beware of being again in a yoke of bondage. The whole thing is excluded, not only justification by law, but having it as a rule of life, to which he opposes walking in and by the Spirit as truth and power against fulfilling flesh's lust. The latter verses treat exclusively of life and walk, not under law, but under grace, as opposed to Catholicism as to evangelicalism. No one denies that one so walking can and ought to derive divine guidance from every part of the Old Testament as well as from the New Testament.

With this agrees of course all that the Epistle to the Romans says on the matter, and it is remarkably full as well as precise. Not so Mr. Teulon (p. 127), who from 1 John 3:4 says that as ἀνομία means disregard of law, walking in newness of life must involve the keeping of the law -- as wrong in philology as in doctrine. "Sin is lawlessness," say the Revisers (of 1881) correctly. Mr. Teulon reasons from transgression or disregard of the law, the old error of the Authorised Version {KJV} so fertile in mischief on this head. Lawlessness is that selfwill which sets God's will at nought for one's own, if one never had heard of the Ten Commandments, the open contrast with Christ who came to do, {both then} and ever, the will of God His Father, which went immeasurably beyond the law, even as the Christian's obedience should also. But necessarily the greater includes the less: and if one walks according to the Spirit as we ought, *a fortiori* is the righteous import, the δικαίωμα, of the law fulfilled in such a conversation. Our walk as Christians ought to be by the Spirit the suitable expression of the life we have in Christ, governed by the whole word of God.

The query in Rom. 6 is the usual objection of the flesh, that sovereign grace seems to allow living in sin. This the apostle answers, not by asserting the law as the Christian rule as if we were Jews, but by declaring that in our very baptism we

{figuratively} died with Christ to sin, and therefore buried with Him have now to walk in newness of life. He argues, not from a motive, but from the blessed fact of Christ's death and resurrection in which the baptized profess to have part. But he goes on to declare that by His death we have done not only with sin, but with law and are under grace, and that sin shall not have dominion over us because we are dead: a solemn consideration for those whose teaching keeps them under law.

Even Mr. Teulon confesses that Rom. 7 certainly seems at first sight against his view. If he understood it duly, he would feel that the truth of Christ's death and of ours who believe with Him closes the question of law which has dominion over a man only as long as he lives {Rom. 7:1}. But the Christian as such has died, or become dead, to the law by the body of Christ, to be to another, to Him who was raised from the dead that we should bring forth fruit to God {Rom. 7:4}. To be under the law, when we have thus Christ risen, is in the apostolic doctrine spiritual adultery and exactly the system here commended to us, but rejected by us.⁶⁸

The Christian is Under Rule

Moreover, Christians are not without rule, for we are under law to Christ (see Gal. 5:3), and under the rule of the new creation (Gal. 6:15, 16).⁶⁹ The new creation is on the other side of death, and we have died with Christ. Paul said he was "subject to Christ" (1 Cor. 9:21). He wrote to the Galatians about fulfilling "the law of the Christ" (Gal. 6:2). That is part of the Christian position.

See ch. 7 for the Christian and the moral content of the law.

Christian Obedience is not Legal, but Rather Christ's Obedience

What is the standard of Christian obedience? There is that lovely truth in 1 Pet. 1:2: . . . elect according to the foreknowledge of God [the] Father, by sanctification of [the] Spirit, unto [the] obedience and sprinkling [of] the blood of Jesus Christ . .

68. See *The Bible Treasury*, 14:347-349.

69. The law is *not* written in the heart of the Christian, else he must be a seventh-day Sabbath-keeper. Covenantists know that their system requires Sabbath-keeping because it is one of the 10 commandments, but know that the first day of the week is the Christian day. So they resort to spiritual alchemy and transmute the seventh-day Sabbath into a first-day of the week Sabbath. It is one among many indicators that the system of Covenantism is false. And how do they keep that Sabbath of their own manufacture? as specified in the law of Moses?

Christ dwells in our hearts (Eph. 3:17). Under the New Covenant, God will write the law upon the hearts of Israel (Heb. 8:10; Jer. 31:33). Then Israel will keep the Sabbath -- the seventh day, as every OT Jew would understand (Ezek. 44 - 46). On what basis would any OT Jew have understood anything else than the seventh day? On what basis would a Christian understand anything else than that the Sabbath is the seventh day of the week -- other than the exigencies of a theological system?

Note that 'dispensationalists' who place Christians under the New Covenant involve themselves in this spiritual alchemy.

We are sanctified, set apart, to two things: the obedience of Jesus Christ, and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Here we learn what the Character of a Christian's obedience is. Let us have J. N. Darby explain it to us:

❖ "Jesus Christ" applies to the obedience as well as to the sprinkling of the blood; and both are in contrast with the law, whether regards what the law required, or as regards the sacrifices of the law: the obedience and sacrifice of Jesus Christ are contrasted with both.

As regards our obedience, it is essential for the true character of our path as Christians that we should lay hold of what this obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ was. Legal obedience in us is a different thing. We have got a will of our own: this was not true of Christ. He had a will in one sense, as man, but He said, "Not my will, but thine, be done." But we have got a will of our own; it may be checked and broken down. But if the law is applied to us, it is as stopping this will, but it finds it here, and such is our notion of obedience constantly. Take a child! there is a will of its own; but when the parents' will comes in, and the child yields instantly without a struggle, and either does what it is bid or ceases to do what it is forbidden, you say, This is an obedient child, and it is delightful to see such an obedient spirit. But Christ never obeyed in that way. He never had a will to do things of His own will in which God had to stop Him. It was not the character of His obedience. It is needed with us, and we all know it, if we know anything of ourselves; but it was not the character of His obedience. He could not wish for the wrath of God in the judgment of sin, and He prayed that this cup might pass from Him. But the obedience of Christ had quite another character from legal obedience. His Father's will was His motive for doing everything: "Lo, I come do thy will, O God."

This is the true character of the obedience of Jesus Christ, and of ours as Christians. The other may be needed for us, the stopping us in our own will; but the true character of our obedience, and that which characterizes the whole life of the Christian is this -- that the will of God, of our Father we can say, is with us, as it was with Christ, our reason, our motive, for doing a thing.⁷⁰ ❖

Grace, Not the Law, is the Christian's Teacher

We are not told in the NT that the law is our teacher. Rather, grace is:

For the grace of God which carries with it salvation for all men has appeared, teaching us that, having denied impiety and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and justly, and piously in the present course of things . . . (Titus 2:11, 12).

70. *Collected Writings*, 16:184-185; see also pp. 192, 193, 170ff; 13:354-355; "Obedience the Saints' Liberty," 28:103; "Obedience," 16:1; 31:297; 34:368; 7:252; 10:96; 28:175; 10:293; *Notes and Comments*, p. 104.

NOT “Dead to Hagar for Justification but Alive to Hagar as a Rule of Life”

There is no such NT teaching that we are dead to the law for justification but alive to the law for it to be our rule of life, for our sanctification. No, the cast-out Hagar is not for our rule of life just as she is not for our righteousness. What the Covenantist system is like is Hagar’s being put out of the house for justification, and bringing her in again for our sanctification -- to keep order in the house. Referring to Rom. 7:1-4, it is as if one is under the second husband for salvation but under the first husband for sanctification. It is as if one were dead to Hagar for justification but alive to Hagar for sanctification. It is as if one were under the Last Adam for justification but under the first for sanctification. How utterly contrary to Gal. 4:21-31 and other Scriptures this is.

The NT does not make this Covenantist distinction in the use of the law. We are not under the law, period. We are not under the law in some particular aspect while not being under it in another aspect. The NT does not teach such a thing, but Covenantists do. The cross did not divide the law into two aspects, one of which is set aside and the other is for Christians. Nor did the resurrection of Christ do such a thing. But not only do Covenantists hold what Scripture does not teach, they set aside things that the NT *does* teach concerning Christian position. The result is Judaizing.

We have elsewhere considered the Covenantist falsehood that Adam had the law. Covenantists seek to unify Scripture by law and by redemption, thus placing man under law from the beginning. It is an utterly baseless figment of the theological imagination. . . . for until law sin was in the world . . . (Rom. 5:13).

So, law was not in the world from the very beginning. Law came later, by Moses (John 1:17). The argument in Gal. 3 is based on the law coming after the promise to Abraham. Let us keep Hagar from getting into the house. We are before God on the basis of promise, not of law. You cannot mix them, for one is unconditional and the other is conditional. Moreover, Hagar and Ishmael are together and if Hagar is brought in, Ishmael (the flesh) will have a place also.

Cast out the bondwoman and her son (Gal. 4:30).

❖ If I speak of *moral law* (which scripture does not) I make it by the very expression a fatal thing to be delivered from it. Yet Paul says, the Christian is delivered from the law. If I make of the law a moral law (including therein the principles of the New Testament and all morality in heart and life), to say a Christian is delivered from it is nonsense, or utterly monstrous wickedness; certainly it is not Christianity. Conformity to the divine will, and that as obedience to commandments, is alike the joy and the duty of the renewed mind. I say, obedience to commandments. Some are afraid of the word, as if it would weaken love, and the idea of a new creation; scripture is not. Obedience, and keeping the commandments of one we love, is the proof of that love, and the delight of the new nature. Did I do all right, and not do it in obedience, I should do nothing right, because my true relationship and heart-reference to God would be left

out. This is love, that we keep His commandments. We are sanctified to the obedience of Christ. Christ Himself says, The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me; but that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given me commandment, even so I do. His highest act of love is His highest act of obedience.

But this it is that just makes it so mischievous to put the Christian under the law, and change the scripture phraseology to another, and speak of the moral law being gone as a rule of life; and having no passage in which ‘moral law’ is used, quoting Paul’s statements as to ‘law,’ from which he says, and insists on it as one of the chief topics of his teaching, we are delivered. Not merely that we are not justified by its works (*yet we should be if the moral law were kept*, and so he declares, ‘the doer of the law shall be justified’); but that we are *delivered from it*. A Christian is delivered from it, because it is ruinous in its effect to every fallen son of Adam. Is it morality that is ruinous, or obedience to Christ’s precepts? That were a blasphemy to say, and shocking to every christian mind. But it is of law the apostle declares, what was ordained to life he found to be to death (Rom. 7). It is a ministration of death, and ministration of condemnation (2 Cor.3:7-9). As *many* as are of its works -- on the principle of it -- its works are not bad ones -- are under a curse (Gal. 3:10). That is, law means, in the apostle’s use of it, something else than a rule or measure of conduct. It is a principle of dealing with men which necessarily destroys and condemns them. This is the way the Spirit of God uses law in contrast with Christ; and never, in christian teaching, puts men under it, but carefully shows how they are delivered from it -- are no longer under it.

Nor does Scripture ever think of saying, You are not under the law in one way, but you are in another; you are not for justification, but you are as a rule of life. It declares you are not under law but under grace; and if you are under law, you are condemned and under a curse. It must have its own proper force and effect. Remark, it puts it as a principle contrasted with grace. But will a man say, You wrong us in saying we hold that a Christian is under law? I ask, How is that obligatory which a man is not under? -- from which he is delivered? No; the apostle carefully insists that the law is good, that it is not the fault of the law that we are condemned, if we have to say to it (but he as carefully declares we are if we have); and that in fact we are delivered from it; that if led by the Spirit, we are not under law. He uses it to express a principle, a manner of dealing on the part of God, contrasted with grace. That is the way he speaks of law. I repeat it, scripture speaks elaborately of being delivered from the law as ministering death and a curse, declaring that we are not under it. Use the term ‘moral law,’ and say so, and see where you bring us.⁷¹ ❖

Holding the Law to Be the Christian’s Rule of Life Destroys its Authority

71. *Collected Writings*, 10:3-4.

❖ I declare according to scripture that law must have its effect, as declared in the word of God, always necessarily upon whatever is under it; but that that effect is always, according to scripture, condemnation and death, and nothing else, upon a being who has in him a lust or a fault; that it knows no mercy, but that it pronounces a curse upon every one who does not continue in all things written in it; and that whosoever is of the works of the law is under the curse. Now in fact the Christian has sin in him as a human being, and alas! fails; and if the law applies to him, *he* is under the curse; for it brings a curse on every one who sins. Do I enfeeble its authority? I maintain and establish it in the fullest way. I ask, Have you to say to the law? Then you are under the curse; no escaping, no exemption. Its authority and claims must be maintained, its righteous exactions made good. Have you failed? Yes, you have. Then you are under the curse. No, you say; but I am a Christian: the law is still binding upon me, but I am not under a curse. Has not the law pronounced a curse on one who fails? Yes, you are under it; you have failed; and are not cursed after all! Its authority is not maintained; for you are under it: it has cursed you, and you are *not* cursed! If you had said, I *was* under it, and failed, and Christ died and bore its curse! and now, as redeemed, I am on another footing and not under law but under grace, its authority is maintained. But if you are put *back again* under law after Christ has died and risen again, and you are in Christ, and you fail and come under no curse, its authority is destroyed; for it pronounces a curse, and you are not cursed at all. The man who puts a Christian under law destroys the authority of the law, or puts a Christian under the curse; for in many things we all offend. He fancies he establishes law but destroys its authority. He only establishes the full immutable authority of law, who declares that a Christian is not under it at all, and therefore cannot be cursed by its just and holy curse.⁷² ❖

The Law is Fulfilled in Christians by not Being Under It

❖ In the second part of the epistle (Rom. 5:12 to ch. 8) he turns to the nature that produced the fruit. It is not *guilt*, but *state*. The *guilt* is met by *Christ dying for our sins*, and we have redemption through His blood. The *state* is met by *our being crucified with Him*. Then the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us {see Rom. 8:4}, but it is not bringing back the law to give us a rule for right conduct (it required righteousness, but never produced it), but by our walking in the Spirit. *He* produces the righteousness which the law required. Christ is my righteousness, and the Spirit is the power of life in us, producing righteousness. The law produced nothing but condemnation, provoking the sin. Life and the Spirit of Christ give us the path of godliness in contrast to law, beyond which the epistle does not go as to practical righteousness. Then having been justified by the blood of Christ, and brought to God through Christ, the hope is fully

72. *Collected Writings*, 10:7.

given of being like Christ in glory.⁷³ ❖

❖ The flesh, the law, and the world are gone together for faith through the cross of Christ. (See Rom. 6 : 6; chap. 7: 4; Gal. 2:19, 20; ch. 6:14; ch. 5:24.)

If we walk in the Spirit, we produce fruits, against which there is no law; if we love our neighbor as ourselves, we fulfil the law. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. They only fulfil the law who are not under it, and have nothing to say to it, but who walk after the Spirit which they have received through Christ. The law deals with flesh which is not and cannot be subject to it, and hence righteousness never can be attained. The Christian is dead to sin, having died with Christ on the cross, and does not belong to the scene to which the law applied, is not in the flesh, and is dead to the law and lives in the Spirit, Christ risen from the dead having become his life. The flesh is the life of the sinful Adam, and law belongs to it. We have died to both in the cross of Christ, and are married to another, that we may bring forth fruit unto God.

The great truth is this: we have died on the cross to our whole standing in Adam, and to the law that was the rule for it; and we are risen with Christ into the new creation in Him, alive from the dead to give ourselves to God. We have the treasure in earthen vessels, but our place before God is that in Christ, and Christ in us. We have died from under the law, but therein died to sin, and are alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord. We are in a wholly new position, and, though the righteousness of the law be fulfilled in one whose life Christ is, it is because he walks after the Spirit, and does not put himself under law. He cannot (Rom. 7) have two husbands at a time, Christ and the law. Remark here that I am speaking, as the passages I refer to are, of practical righteousness, a godly life, but if we are under the law for that, the law also curses us. As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse {Gal. 3:10}, and if the curse is not executed, the authority of the law is gone. If we are under law, we are under a curse, or its authority destroyed. If Christ has borne the curse, we have died with Him out of the position in which the law reached us; by the law dead to law, that we might live to God, crucified with Christ, yet living, but not we, but Christ living in us. He will not live wrongly. I do not enter here into failure, or Christ's blessed advocacy if we do fail, but only bring out the principles of the life in which we do live to God.⁷⁴ ❖

Those That Are of the Works of the Law Are Under the Curse

❖ And remark more than this: not only is the blessing by faith, not by law, not on this principle, and the accomplishment by oneself or another of the law, but as many as are on this principle -- as many as stand on the ground of their obligation to keep the law --

73. *Collected Writings*, 34:452.

74. *Collected Writings*, 31:333, 334.

are under the curse.

As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse {Gal. 3:10}.

The works of the law are not bad works; they are right works, loving God and our neighbor, and not breaking the commandments which forbid sin. But they that are of the works of the law (that is, that are placed or place themselves under the obligation of the law, of doing these works) are under the curse. He does not say he who has broken the law, he who sins, he who has done evil, but he who is of the works of the law, who goes upon the principle of being under its obligation, and bound to accomplish it, is under the curse.

Nor is there a hint of any one's keeping it for us, so that we should not be under the curse when we are under the law. All that are of the works of the law ARE under the curse; because, according to its declaration, everyone is so that has not kept it. And no man under it has kept it, for he is in flesh; and this is not subject to it nor can be {Rom. 8:7}. He must get off this ground to escape its curse. But this can be only by death {Rom. 7:4}. The Jew was under it, and all else would have been condemned as lawless had they not come under it then; but, for every one who believed of those who were, Christ took the curse on the cross. It is not pretended that He kept it for them, so that the curse was not needed for their breaking it, because another had kept it for them, for then He had not needed to bear its curse. No: the curse of its head remained there and was borne on the cross; and thus they were redeemed from it, and then, the whole system of God under law being closed and the middle wall of partition broken down, the blessing of Abraham (which was of faith) could flow forth on the Gentiles who had faith. It could not till then. While God maintained the obligation of the law as a dispensed system among men, the Gentile must have submitted to it and become a Jew as to law if not as to race, he must have submitted to its obligation, while God maintained it. But the dispensation of law had now closed by the death of Christ, and the blessing of the promise by faith could flow forth to them who believed. ⁷⁵ ❖

An Article by J. N. Darby on the Christian's Rule of Life

The subject is so important that the paper, "The Rule of Life: What Is It?" *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby*, 10:169-180, is transcribed here.

❖ The rule of life -- what is it?⁷⁶ Of what life? of mere man, or of man partaker of the divine nature? Of man subjectively responsible to meet a claim, or of man displaying the divine character? Are they the same? Was the conduct binding on Adam the same as that which was suitable to the place Christ held in the world? Which is our standard, if they are different? Such are some of the questions which arise when I enquire 'What

75. *Collected Writings*, 21:301-302.

76. {On the rule of life, see *Collected Writings*, 4:18, 370; 7:137; 10:10, 21, 27, 118, 119, 176, 177, 277, 287, 297; 13:385; 14:349, 352; *Letters*, 1:286; 2:108.}

is the rule of life?' It is evident that duties as such flow from the relationship in which I find myself. A child's duties are not a servant's nor a wife's. The duties of each, as of the parent or of the husband, flow from -- and if rightly accomplished are the fulfilment of -- what belongs to the place each is in. It is not a duty if one is not in the place.

It will be alleged, however, that there are certain immutable principles of right and wrong, an eternal law.⁷⁷ But the question presents itself, Do not the duties flow from an ever-subsisting relationship? is not the obligation to love God and our neighbor as ourselves the consequence of our relationship to God and our neighbor? There may be -- creation being assumed -- necessary and constant relationships, or at least such apprehended by reason of it, which are thus always the rule of our duty. The fact of the character of the relationship involves the duty, the name of the relationship is the name of the duty. Conjugal affection, conjugal submission, parental love, filial obedience, all express this great truth. But the relationship and the duty cease together; if the relationship has never existed, the duty cannot. If it ceases for all, the duty ceases in fact absolutely as to the persons. The idea of God, even of Adam, excludes the idea of a neighbor, and makes the duty of love to his neighbor an impossible one, if I think of God or even of Adam; of God absolutely because He is God, of Adam in fact because he was created alone. These obligations or duties may be of inferior to superior, or between equals, or of superior to inferior, but implying (I think) a superior to whom the relative inferior is subject, a created superiority. They may be thus so far complicated that the duty may be to an equal, or to an inferior, or even to a superior, yet the responsibility in the relationship be to another. This results from created relationships which form duties, and a Creator's authority, to whom we are besides responsible to maintain them. This gives in itself a sanction; or a positive sanction, as it is called, may be attached to the law and obligation of the relationship, but the measure of duty depends on the relationship itself. But it becomes obedience, and legal obedience it may be. From a creator to a creature I cannot draw a duty as a necessary result of the relationship as duty or obligation. God's supremacy is the first of all rights. He is in His nature supreme. He will act, if good, according to the relationship.

But another principle as to good and evil presents itself here, the display of a nature or character; and we conclude (not from duty, but) from character to acting in consistency with it. We have no title over any we are in relationship with -- save in the measure and limits of that relationship, as a father, a husband. But a Creator has an absolute title and place, and hence we cannot speak of duty, or it is not absolute. But though imperfect judges, we do judge rightly in principle in another way. There is such a thing as kindness, goodness, which is pleasant to the spirit in itself; and, where this is developed and God has been revealed, we conclude God will be such and consistent

77. {His strictures on the idea of the law being eternal are found in *Collected Writings*, 10:99-101, 156; 7:232.}

with Himself, and this is true, but supposes He is good and righteous. It must be remembered that men never formed for themselves such an idea of God. In extremity of need they might cry out for help and desire it, showing themselves so far cognizant of God by their wants. The idea of love or care for His creatures formed no part of man's mythology nor result of his reasonings. Those who worshiped Him or behaved right were favored. Power was recognized as to be propitiated or won. Goodness in man was liked; in God it was not known. Particular cases of intervention or favor to devotees was. Since revelation, man has had the thought. The Christian who does know God can even say, 'Committing the keeping of our souls to him as to a faithful Creator' {1 Pet. 4:19}. Man may and does make God a debtor to himself in pride; but then he puts God out of His place and himself into it, and judges God. And even when he speaks of love (a word in this sense unknown in classical Greek), he forgets divine claims on himself, and divine supremacy too. Still, when through revelation I have known God, I have a new principle of good and evil, not duty, but the display of good. God is not under law to man, but, assuming man to have continued in natural goodness, God could not have been inconsistent with Himself, or He would not be Himself.

Another element too has come in. Man has been inconsistent with himself, with the relationship in which he was placed. So that, though the nature of duty cannot change, he is in no place at all with God, unless being an outcast and having thrown off God be a place. Still, when the idea of a good God has been re-awakened, we draw conclusions from it, often leaving out other essential parts of His character, and hence reasoning falsely always, unless under grace, forgetting our true place and state, but rightly judging that God cannot be inconsistent with Himself. Such reasoning in man is, however, necessarily to no purpose, though there be abstractedly a true element in it, because the actual state of things is, on his simple supposition of goodness, a perfect riddle. Man must be insensible to what is, to conclude as to what must be; or he would find out that he was a lost sinner separated from God. For the world is a scene of misery and confusion, though goodness be also manifested in it. We have thus right and wrong, good and evil, brought before us in two quite distinct ways: the obligation connected with relationships which were formed by God -- and these relationships, when not with God Himself, yet, in virtue of that with Him and our subjection to Him as creatures, enforced by His authority and it may be with the sanction of reward or threat of the consequences of unfaithfulness to it; secondly, the expression of nature, which may have its display in these relationships when they were formed according to it.

With God the relationship of a creature necessarily took the form of obedience where a will was expressed or even apprehended. When the duties of a relationship are enforced by express command, or any express command is given maintaining or founded on the claim to obedience attached to a relation implying authority, we have a law. If it be accompanied by a threatened or promised consequence, we have a law with a positive sanction. The display of a nature becomes a rule of life, though one of liberty when that nature places in a relationship of which its display is the measure and

duty.

But in fact we have to consider other questions. When one has failed in a relationship and is become an outcast, what is the measure or rule of duty, and how is it to be applied? When tendencies quite contrary to the form and duties of that relationship, as self-will and lust and their fruits, have come in, how is the law of that relationship -- that is, the authoritative assertion of the duty attached to it -- to be applied? A man by his own sin cannot destroy the claim over him which another possesses. He may have lost his own rights or privileges in it, and not even be in a condition to fulfil them, but the claim of him with whom he is in relationship cannot be thus set aside. The duty remains even if the person be incapable of performing it. By my own fault I cannot destroy the title of another. If I owe one thousand pounds, my having by folly ruined myself disables me from paying, but does not destroy the claim of my creditor.

Such are the questions and considerations which an enquiry into 'the rule of life' suggests. We will now look for the answer; and that the dealing of scripture with our conscience will afford. First of all, I look for the rule of christian life -- the rule of the life which the Christian has received from Christ, which Christ is in him. If the christian relationship is that in which I am, the measure and form of my relationship, my rule of life, must be that of Christ in me, of Christ's life here below, and of the relationship in which the possession of that life puts me. But we will consider that which scripture puts before us from the beginning. It may help to clear our minds.

Adam had a double rule of life. He was set in blessing, with a nature suited to it, to dress and keep the garden, and manifest his thankfulness to Him who set him there. The breath of life breathed into his nostrils would naturally have gone up in praise to Him who had breathed it into him. He would have enjoyed with thankfulness the blessings in the midst of which he was placed, and have been the affectionate center of those placed around him, the kind and good head of a subject world. His nature, though our data be small, would have loved and acted suitably in the place of blessing. We can see, from the circumstances of the discovery of his fall, that intercourse with God according to His good pleasure would have been his portion.

But another principle also appears. The condition of the continued enjoyment of this was attached to obedience, and death threatened. Not only was obedience claimed, besides worship and enjoyment and rule, but the threat of death on disobedience was added. He was placed in Paradise to enjoy and manifest the blessing of Him who had conferred it. He was placed under law; not a law supposing lust or sin, but a test of obedience, and the sanction of the threatened consequence of death on its breach.

He lost confidence in the goodness of which he was the earthly intelligent expression. He fell. Lust came in, transgression was accomplished. He was cast out of Paradise, the place of created goodness, and became subject to death as he had been threatened. Return was impossible. He knew good and evil for himself. It was not now a prohibition as a mere test of obedience -- forbidding what there was no moral evil in,

the evil being only disobedience. It was the loss of the simple enjoyment of good in relationship with God in a nature suited to and displayed in it. Man obtained the knowledge of good and evil in his own estimate of things; 'the man is become as one of us, knowing good and evil.' He knew such and such a thing was right or wrong, without a prohibition or a law. By his own internal conscience he knew right from wrong. We have here a most important truth or principle. A being may rise immensely in moral capacity, and fall infinitely in his relationship with God, and the happiness connected with it. His state as to apprehension of good and evil has nothing to do with a consequent enjoyment of good. It may be the loss of what he had before, and an immense increase of capacity for misery in the measure of his subjective change. Happiness is in the enjoyment of right relationships, not incapacity for them -- when the object that forms them is not enjoyed. This is a very solemn truth, were it *only* 'the waste of feelings unemployed.' But it is not so -- far from it; man's unfaithfulness, however, to his relationship to God could not destroy his duty, the duty which attached to the fact of his being His creature. He ought to have retained God in his knowledge, and, whatever humiliation was called for, owned it with God.

As I am occupied with the rule of life, I pass over the blessed intimations of grace which we find in scripture, the judgment of the serpent, the clothing of Adam and Eve, the sacrifice of Abel, the promise to Abraham, and even to Noah, with the too easily forgotten testimony of judgment in the flood.

A formal rule was given when God brought a people to Himself. The law was given by Moses. It put man, externally redeemed (or the idea would have been impossible), into the place of obedience, on the ground of God's claiming the fulfilment by man of the duties of the relationship in which he stood with God and with his neighbor. It was not now one central head of a race in blessing and obedience, tested when in the enjoyment of blessing, but individuals responsible to God and called to act up to that responsibility, and to their duty towards neighbors, or equal companions in a like position, while sanctioning the natural relations in which God had originally placed man, and which He still maintained. As a hidden principle which grace could find there, there was the claim of love to God and our neighbor as ourselves, and an open positive series of commandments maintaining relationships, and positively forbidding the breaches of them to which sin, self-will, independence, and lust, with ignorant subjection to the devil, now disposed man. Except as the redemption of the people displayed goodness, there could be no claim of a conduct according to it. And even as to this, it was not the expression of a new nature in man (though that alone can fulfil it), but the claim of consistency with the relationship they were in as a matter of duty. Thou *shalt* love.

The law, then, supposing Israel's redemption by God, was founded as a system on the duties of the relationship of man as such with God: on Adam's duties modified by the coming in of sin and God's taking up a people for Himself; but taking them up as men on the earth. He could not have taken up the heathen as such -- it is not here a

question how Enoch, Job, and others may have lived to Him, but He could not have taken up the heathen as such, for man was an outcast judicially and alienated from God. But when He had taken up Israel and externally redeemed him, then came a rule of life. A rule of life, now we are fallen, belongs to a redeemed people; i.e., none other can have it dispensationally from God. It would be owning what He had cast out judicially already. But when He had taken up Israel, God placed him on the footing of his original relationship, of his duties as man, only modified by the fact of the entrance of sin and the knowledge of good and evil. It was not the expression of a nature communicated, but the claim of a relationship where duties were to be fulfilled, assuming lusts and independence and self-will. It was a perfect rule for man in the flesh. Sanctions accompanied -- life if obeyed, a curse if disobeyed. It became a perfect expression of claim, relationship, and sin, but not of any nature communicated and displayed in goodness; for man to whom it was addressed had an evil one. In its highest aspects, it was what man ought to be with God and his neighbor, but what responsible man who now knew good and evil ought to be. In the day when God will judge the secrets of men's hearts, He will judge the heathen on their own ground. They that have sinned without law will perish without law,⁷⁸ as they that have sinned under the law will be judged by it. The law then is the rule of life to man in the flesh, alive as a child of Adam; the expression, not of life in him, but of a claim upon him in that natural relationship with God. 'I am the Lord thy God -- *thou shalt*.' There is no *other* for heathen if we suppose a rule, but they were not under it, and will be judged, as God has declared, on another ground {Rom. 2}.

The other kind of rule of life, the expression of a nature like God, failed under the law. I do not mean that no individual had this life, but it was not the ground which the law went upon. It required a living man to live up to the relationship he was in. If he did, he would live. But when man was put to the test, it was found that on this ground there was no hope; that his flesh was not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So that they that were in the flesh could not please God; so that what was ordained for life, what promised it on obedience, was effectually to death, a ministration of death and condemnation. This life, the expression of God's nature and goodness, it is clear the flesh was *NOT*. It was enmity against Him; and if the rule of life came as a claim, it found a rebellious will and corrupt lusts. The law thus became death and condemnation, and Christ could not to any purpose be a model for a nature which was enmity against God. He was a model for man, but in a life which in its nature and character was exactly the opposite of the Adam-nature and life. Love is of course right, but love cannot be a rule for enmity. Holiness is right, but cannot be a guide for corruption; it becomes a condemning light, not exactly a law, but practically, as a model, the same thing. It

78. This is a striking proof of the unsoundness of the translation in 1 John 3, 'Sin is the transgression of the law.' The word so translated there is the same, only a noun, here put in express contrast with transgressing the law; they have sinned without law -- lawlessly; and that is the sense in 1 John 3. Sin is lawlessness.

condemns the conscience, and no more, as such. Thus the law works death and condemnation, and all the effort of a man (once its true claims, its spirituality, are known) only results in the discovery of *this*: --

I found to be unto death,
says the apostle; when the law came,
sin revived and I died {Rom. 7:9}.

But then it produced this:

I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God {Gal. 2:19}.

In a word, brought fully into the conscience, it not only condemns actual sins, but the working (in its first displays, namely, lusts) of the nature that is there. And by it thus the renewed soul learns that in it, that is in the flesh, there is no good thing. In result the nature is judged, death written on it in the conscience and for the spiritual judgment and heart. By the law we are dead to the law. But if this were all, it would evidently be condemnation too, for it shows our guilt. By the law is the knowledge of sin (not merely sins), and sin by the commandment becomes exceeding sinful.

Well, now comes a totally new life connected with redemption, and death to the sinful nature is immense gain.

I through law am *dead* to law, that I *might live* unto God. I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet *not I*, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live &c. {Gal. 2:19-20}.

The soul bows to the just judgment against itself, but through the death of Christ finds its sins blotted out and forgiven, redemption accomplished, and Christ its righteousness before God. It is at peace and accepted in the Beloved. But another truth accompanies this -- Christ is its life. We are made partakers of the divine nature, and this has its full force by the Holy Ghost dwelling in us; by Him we know that we are in Christ and Christ in us. It is for this life we want a rule. It will fully recognize our previous obligations and sinfulness in respect of them. It can understand that the law, even if as a heathen it was never personally under it, is the perfect rule given to man in the flesh; a law violated by all his acts, and to which that flesh was not and could not be subject. But it knows that we are not in the flesh; it says, 'when we were in the flesh' {Rom. 7:5}. But we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, because the Spirit of God dwells in us. Hence it does not look for a rule of life in the law, because that was a rule of life for a man in the flesh, a child of Adam. And we have died to the law -- are delivered from it, if we have been under it, having died in that in which we were held. He is now a child of God, has the life of Jesus, and looks to the word of God for the rule for that life.

We have seen there is another measure or rule of life -- the display of, and consistency with, the life in which we live, and the relationship in which we are placed. Such would have been the abiding rule for created Adam, supposing he had stood the test. Now, though we are yet in the body, Christ risen from the dead is become ours consequent on accomplished redemption; we are reconciled to God, and Christ's relationship is that of Son; was so on earth and ever is. And He has brought us into the same relationship through His work. He is gone to His Father and our Father, His God

and our God. Here then is our measure and rule of right and wrong: the manifestation of the life of Christ and consistency with the relationship of sons as He was in it and walked in it. The rule of life then is Christ's walk, who manifested God in flesh; not what would be claimed from Adam, but what was displayed in Christ; the manifestation of the divine life and nature, not the mere righteous claim of God on man in the flesh, with a test of obedience whose fitness and immense importance we can easily apprehend.

The rule of life for unfallen Adam was consistency with the innocent nature and place of blessing in which God had set him. He should have felt and walked in consistency with this.

To continue man's subsequent history briefly and see what rule of life is before us in scripture -- warnings, we know, were given, as by Enoch and Noah, but the scene after the fall ended in the flood. The power of evil in corruption and violence was judged. For them the knowledge of God (brought with them from the beginning), conscience, the testimony of these prophets, with the witness of God in the creation, was the rule by which they would be judged. So others, as the apostles, teach us after them. It is evident when God was revealed -- as to Enoch -- the true knowledge of God as far as given in grace would guide. So with Abraham: the revelations God made to him of Himself, realized by faith, would form the guide and rule of his conduct.

I am the Almighty God, walk before me and be thou perfect {Gen. 17:1}.

Conscience surely was there, but the original and constant revelations of God impressed their character on his walk by faith. All these are partial revelations. Yet it was thus the elders obtained a good report; they walked by faith.

At length the law was given; and in this was -- a comparatively hidden part which the Lord drew out from its recesses, but on which all hung -- love to God and one's neighbor; and the public and almost entirely prohibitory part which openly supposed sin and forbade it. It referred to obligation and claimed its fulfilment. It took up relationships, assumed their existence and obligation, and pronounced a curse on failure, promising enjoyment of life on obedience. The mass of mankind were hidden in darkness -- the times of ignorance at which God winked. The time was not come for the revelation of the Gentiles (for that is the force of the passage). The law was given to a people placed in relationship by redemption with a God who had revealed Himself to them, and now looked for the maintenance of duty towards God and towards each other. The Gentiles had no place. It supposed and tested whether man was free. Individuals really walked by faith as ever, but of course took the law in obedience as their rule. In fact, as we know, they were by nature children of wrath as others, and the law brought this fully out, in the public judgment of the nation outwardly, and in the conscience when its spirituality was known. But all this went on the ground of man's duties as a living man.

And though from Adam there was new nature in those born of God (and that certainly showed itself), yet the perfection of that nature in a man had never been

displayed. In Christ this was the case. The divine nature and heavenly perfection showed itself in His walk. He was in His path here (and the cavils of objectors make me the rather use these words) a divine and heavenly man. He was essentially and truly that -- the Lord from heaven, and displaying what was divine and heavenly in this world. In Him it flowed from its source; for us it is a perfect example; but it was the display of divine life, of God in man, and the rule of that life for all else. In us this hangs on these points, redemption out of the standing of the old man, and perfect reconciliation with God, our being in Christ, consequent on His having accomplished the work, so that our place is a perfect one before God -- is Christ's place. There is no question between us and God. We are in spirit in our Father's house, created again in Christ Jesus. It is not a question of imposing a claim on one in rebellion, or as a test of obedience for the enjoyment of life. The soul has recognized, as a starting point, entire condemnation on this ground, and no good thing in us. Jew or Gentile, we are by nature children of wrath; but not only so, we have been perfectly redeemed out of that place; we are dead (for faith) to the nature in which we once lived -- by the cross of Christ, crucified with Him, nevertheless we live; yet not we, but Christ lives in us. Our place being before God,

as He is, so are we in the world {1 John 4:17}.

Christ is our life {Col. 3:4}. We are only that, as to what we own, for faith. No doubt we are in weakness and temptation, the flesh lusting against the Spirit; but that has nothing to do with our rule of life, but with our difficulties in carrying it out. Our rule of life is simple: that life in which Christ as a man displayed the character of God; His love, His holiness, is the rule of life to us, because we have the life which was displayed in it. It takes, of course, and necessarily, the relationships in which Christ stood -- a Son and obedience and love to His Father; but while it has love to God and obedience as its secret springs, yet it is not as satisfying a claim, a measured claim -- but it is effectual, has its constant measure and rule in the display of the life which we have, which is a divine one. As to divine claim even, it is not a prescribed measure of conduct; we are not our own at all. The claim is ourselves, not a measure of obedience. If this life subsists in and is characterized by love to God and love to our neighbor as it is in its nature, it clearly does not break the law; but its rule is the display of the divine nature in a man, afforded us in Christ. Hence, while we owe everything and ourselves to God, it is the free and thankful outgoing of our new nature, the life of Christ in us (as would have been the case as to Adam in respect of his life of innocence), not an imposed claim of law, but different in principle and nature, and higher in its measure as in its nature; not what the first man ought to be for God, but what the Second was as displaying Him. We have fruits, the fruit of the light, the fruits of the Spirit, not a necessary and enforced claim -- obedience (for who showed such as Christ did?), love enjoyed and active, holiness, God's holiness, of which He makes us partakers.

Let us see how the scriptures speak of these things. First, Peter tells us we are made partakers of the divine nature {2 Pet. 1:4}; we are born of the Spirit, born through the

word which reveals the divine mind and nature {John 3}. Christ Himself is our life (Col. 3:4). The life of Jesus is to be manifested in our mortal body (2 Cor. 4:10). We are to produce the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), of light (Eph. 5:8-9);⁷⁹ i.e., of that which is our nature as in the Lord. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given us (Rom. 5:5). Hence we dwell in love, that is, in God, and God in us {1 John 4:16}. So we know we are in Christ and Christ in us. The Father and the Son, as to our enjoyment of it, come and make their abode with us {John 14:23}. It is well we should recall these things, that we may cultivate communion and attribute whatever good is wrought in us, or displayed by us, to its true source, and that, not by looking at the good, but at the source of it, so that it should flow forth. And the apostle uses the fact of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost as a motive against common gross sins. What lifts us above saves us from what is below. The divine nature and its manifestation is our model:

Be ye followers of God as dear children, and walk in love as Christ has loved us and given himself for us a sacrifice and an offering to God as a sweet smelling savor {Eph. 5:1-2}.

It does not cease to be obedience. It was such in Him. It does not fail of having consecration to God in heart and ways, even to death if needed; that characterized His life. The love that comes down working in man always goes up first of all to God in self-offering; and in that is love to others, offering oneself for them. This is divine perfection as manifested in Christ. We, as faithful to Him, loving Him, ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. Hereby know we love, that He laid down His life for us, and we shall show His life and spirit in doing it.

The rule of life then is, not a legal claim on man as man, just and right as that was, but the manifestation of divine life and love in the place in which they, and the divine grace which has given us a part in them, have set us (Christ Himself being the pattern and display of this in its own perfection). This will be the relationship in which we are to God in Christ, to a sinful world, and to the brethren, as it was in Him.

He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk as he walked {1 John 2:6}.

God makes us through His discipline partakers of His holiness. We are light in the Lord, and are to walk as children of light {Eph. 5:8}, and Christ gives it to us. Let our light (not our works) so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify the true source of them all {Matt. 5:16}. It is a new nature, the divine nature, the life of Christ, the Holy Ghost dwelling in us as its power, in which, knowing we are in Him before God, and perfect love and acceptance resting upon us, we are set in this world the manifestation of the divine character in man and its ways in Christ, the epistle of Christ {2 Cor. 3:2}. Conflict exercises, that our senses may discern good and evil according to this, always carrying about the dying of the Lord Jesus in our body, that

79. This is the true reading.

nothing may hinder the manifestation of the life of Jesus {2 Cor. 4:10}; death thus works in us as to self {2 Cor 4:12}, and so only life in Christ in others with whom we have to do. All this there will or should be; but the rule and measure of life is Christ, the display of His life, walking as He walked, following His steps in the joy in which the consciousness of being in Him before God places us, in the sorrow that filled His heart in passing through a world of evil. No doubt there has to be growth in us, but God is faithful not to suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear. And a young Christian, a babe in Christ, if devoted in heart and humble, has his place and beauty in Christ as well as the father.

It is a wonderful place, but the place in which God has set us. It has been said, Still Christ kept the law. Surely He did; He was born

under the law {Gal. 4:4},

of course was perfect in it; and in result so does he who walks in love; but He, besides this, manifested God in a man. And we are connected with Him, united to Him when He is no longer under law, having died to it in Him when He died, and risen up from death wholly out of that place. It is this that Paul refers to (i.e., this whole position of Christ in flesh), when he says that he knows Christ no more after the flesh {2 Cor. 5:16}. It is this, I doubt not, which is the true force of Eph. 2:10 -- good works which God hath afore prepared. The kind of work was prepared afore, as well as the place and blessing in Christ -- works suited to this place were afore prepared too. ❖

Chapter 7

The Moral Content of The Ten Commandments and Their Application to the Christian

C. H. Brown gave an address by the above title which appeared in *Christian Truth*, 27:29-36, 57-63 and it is transcribed here.

* * * * *

Beloved Brethren, I have it before me this afternoon to take up the subject of the ten commandments and their moral bearing upon the Christian. But first let us read the following scriptures.

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ (Gal. 2:16).

For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God (Gal. 2:19).

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them (Gal. 3: 10).

But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith (Gal. 3:11).

And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them (Gal. 3:12).

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace {Rom. 6:14}.

Now the reason I have read these verses is this: In taking up the subject of the ten commandments, there might be an inclination on the part of some to think that I was taking them up in a legal way, as though we believers of this present day are under the law. No! we are under grace -- pure sovereign grace -- nothing of legality about it.

Let us turn to the 20th chapter of Exodus where Israel found themselves in the presence of the august law of God, the "ten words" (Ex. 34:28; margin) given to them by Moses at Mount Sinai. Our thought is to trace these "ten words" as we find their corollary in the New Testament. Of the ten commandments, eight are negative; two are positive; nine moral; one ceremonial.

God's nature is not subject to change; thus we shall find that the nine commandments that are essentially moral in character have their replica in Christianity. Let us seek to trace them. The first commandment is found in the third verse of Ex. 20,

Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

This stands at the head of the list. It is fundamental. It is an essential part of the Jewish economy. So also the Christian revelation preserves this truth inviolate. Let us turn to

1 Cor. 8, the end of verse 4,

There is none other God but one.

How clear and unequivocal is this statement. Now read the 6th verse:

But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him;
and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things.

So when a Jehovah's Witness comes to your door to challenge your confession of Christ as God, read to him 1 Cor. 8:4-6. We own but one God, but that one God has been pleased to reveal Himself in three Persons. You remember that Philip asked the Lord Jesus,

Lord, show us the Father.

How wonderful was our Lord's reply:

He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; . . . I am in the Father, and the Father in Me (John 14: 8-11).

Now let us turn to John's first epistle, the last chapter and the 20th verse.

And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true; and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true Clod, and eternal life.

Oh, how definite! Crystal clear are these pronouncements; *Jesus is God*. Yes, in Christianity we know but one God. Sometimes He is manifested as the Father, sometimes as the Son, and sometimes as the Spirit. (Cf. Acts 5:3,4.) So in Christianity we find ourselves in hearty accord with Moses' first commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."

Going back now to the 20th chapter of Exodus, let us take up the second commandment. We will read from v. 4.

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments.

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.

Now turn to 1 Cor. 10:14.

Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

See also v. 7.

Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

We are living in a period which is readying itself for the "man of sin" (2 Thess. 2:3). The world is going to plunge into the most awful idolatry that it has ever known. The Jews themselves will be sevenfold more deeply involved in idolatry than ever before. (See Matt. 12:43-45.) The rest of the world will follow right along. This trend is apparent today. Have you noticed the rapid increase in the stock of figurines and statuettes for sale in many different kinds of stores? Among such you will see exact replicas of heathen idols. One feels that all this is moving in the direction of having all

the materials ready for idol worship and worship of the image of the beast (Rev. 13). When man gives up the true knowledge of God as revealed in the Word of God, he readily falls into idolatry. Such has been his history. Behind the seemingly innocent idol of clay or wood, is the sinister power and presence of a demon. It is really demon worship. Cp. 1 Cor. 10:20. (See Rev. 9:20.) Thus we find in this 10th chapter of 1 Cor. a solemn warning to us Christians to flee from anything that borders on idolatry. Bowing down before images has no place in Christianity. This is in full agreement with the second commandment.

Again back to Ex. 20; this time we shall read v. 7.

Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.

Let us turn to James 5:12.

But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

How completely this substantiates the third Mosaic commandment. Let us go a little more into detail here. I do not believe there is anyone present in this room today who deliberately takes the name of the Lord in vain. But let us notice that James takes the matter beyond this minimum prohibition.

Let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

I wonder how many of us here can plead innocence as we hear that exhortation. If you will look up the word "mince" in Webster's dictionary, you will find the term "minced oath." . . . This provides a polite way to swear -- a refined method of profanity. It is a grievous fact that many of the Lord's people fall into the habit, thus ignoring this salutary warning of James. I have here with me a little pamphlet put out by Good News Publishers, Wells St., Chicago. It is entitled "Minced Oaths." I thought perhaps you would bear with me if I read one paragraph of this tract.

A commonly used interjection is "Gee." It is capitalized in Webster's *New International Dictionary*, and given this definition: "A form of Jesus used in minced oaths." Two common words and their definitions are these: "Golly -- a euphemism for God, used in minced oaths; Gosh -- a substitute for God, used in minced oaths." "Darn, darned, darnation" are said to be "colloquial euphemisms for damn, damned, damnation." Persons who allow their lips to utter "gosh-darned" quite freely, would be shocked if they realized the real meaning of the word.

To gain the full victory in this matter of obedience to the Word of God we need to make the prayer of David our daily petition,

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer (Psa. 19: 14).

I think of you young people, especially, in the matter of forming your habits of speech. When you are young is the time to eliminate all from your conversation that borders on the rough, the uncouth, or the profane. Never allow anything of the kind to creep into your utterances. Let us heed this warning of the Word. Let us guard our speech, in the home, in the school, in the factory, in the office; let it be chaste and pure. Let it be such

as can stand the Lord's examination at the judgment seat of Christ.

In Ex. 20 again, v. 8. Here we have the fourth commandment.

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Now I will have to confess that I am absolutely unable to produce anything that answers to that commandment in Christianity. It is not to be found. Remember, that word "sabbath," which means "rest," is first used in Ex. 16:23 in connection with the children of Israel gathering the manna. It was not to be gathered on the sabbath, the seventh day. This day was distinctly declared to be a day of rest. But when we enter the Christian dispensation, or administration if you prefer, we find no directions for the observance of any such day. There is only one mention of the sabbath in any of the New Testament epistles; that is in Col. 2:16.

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days.

But now notice the qualifying statement in the next verse,

Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

Evidently the only reason for mentioning the sabbath here is to show that it forms no part of the Christian revelation. On the contrary, it was but a shadow of what was to follow. As far as our day of rest is concerned, we learn from Heb. 4:9 that,

There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

We cannot say that the sabbath has been changed to Sunday. The sabbath was always the seventh day of the week; Sunday is the *first* day of the week, so it could not possibly be the sabbath. So we await our day of rest when the Lord shall take us to His Father's house, that we may rest in His love. The rest is at the end of the journey.

Some may ask the question, "What about the Lord's day, the first day of the week; is that not our day of rest?" To this we must answer, "No." Then what place does it hold in our lives? Does the expression itself not answer the question, "the *Lord's day*"? The day belongs to the Lord. It is to be used for Him. It is on that day that we come together to break bread {Acts 20:7}. The term *Lord's day* is found only once; namely, in Rev. 1:10. The word {Lord} in Greek here might be translated *dominical*. So we might translate this verse in Rev. 1, "I was in the Spirit on the dominical day." Now if we go back to the 11th chapter of 1 Corinthians, we shall find this same Greek word used in connection with the Lord's supper. Or, it might be called the dominical supper. Now, is it not significant that the only use of this Greek word dominical in the New Testament is in connection with the supper and the day? So the Lord's supper is observed on the Lord's day.

The Lord's day is definitely distinguished from other days by several significant scriptures. Our Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead on the first day of the week; He appeared to His disciples on that day; He appeared to them again the second Lord's day after His resurrection {John 20:26}. We note that the Holy Spirit descended on the day of Pentecost, which was also the first day of the week; the disciples came together on the first day of the week to break bread {Acts 20:7}; the Apostle told the Corinthians to lay by on the first day of the week their contribution for the collection for the poor

saints {1 Cor. 16:1-3}. All these scriptures go to show us that in Christianity the first day of the week completely displaces the Jewish sabbath. How inconsistent it would be for the Church of God to celebrate as their day, that during which their Lord and Savior lay under the power of death and the grave. But how glorious to come together on the first day of the week, the day of His victory over the tomb. How sweet and precious to give to Him this first day of the week, *His* day.

I desire to say something to you young people here today. It grieves me as I go about to find so many of our young folks using the Lord's day for their ordinary tasks of life. You tell me that you would not think of getting out and cutting the lawn on the Lord's day, nor, perhaps, would you consider doing your washing on the Lord's day. But now, let us come nearer home. You say you are in school. Well and good; that is a proper and legitimate part of your life. I hope you do well in your school work. But listen; is your school work of such importance that it can rightfully displace your giving the Lord's day to Him to whom it belongs? Perhaps you answer, "If I do not study on the Lord's day, I will not get an 'A' grade." Perhaps not, but even so, which is of more importance to you, an "A" or the Lord's approval? Let us seek, by the grace of God, to give the Lord His day.

Perhaps some young person is saying, "Well, how then am I to spend my Lord's day?" I happen to know how some of our dear young brothers and sisters make use of their spare time on the Lord's day. They find various ways of giving out the gospel. Maybe it is the visiting of institutions for the passing out of tracts and speaking to souls individually about the Lord. Perhaps it is street preaching. With others it is visiting the sick and the shut-ins. Some take a part of the Lord's day to write helpful letters to Christian friends, or perhaps to unsaved relatives and friends. Others take a part of the day to mail out literature to those whom they think might be helped in their souls by some tract or pamphlet. No, there is no Sabbath, no day of rest in Christianity, but there is a day we may be free to serve the Lord. May the Lord give us a tender conscience that it may be truly His day.

Returning now to Ex. 20, we will read the 12th verse. Here we have the fifth commandment.

Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

If we turn to Eph. 6:2 we find this commandment is quoted word for word. Christianity would not ask less of children than would the law. How blessed it is when we see the children of Christian parents seeking to carry out faithfully the request of the Word as given here in the epistle to the Ephesians. Such will never have cause to regret that they sought to give their parents this place of respect. God will not be their debtor. They will reap the blessing of it in their own lives.

In the 13th verse of Ex. 20 we have the 6th commandment,

Thou shalt not kill.

If we will now turn to 1 Peter 4:15, we read,

Let none of you suffer as a murderer.

God's standard on this matter of taking human life is no less strict under the Christian revelation than it was under Judaism. Murder cannot be tolerated in the Christian economy.

Next in order is the well-known seventh commandment,

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Here let us turn to Heb.13:4. We will read this verse as translated in Mr. Darby's version of the New Testament. I quote:

Let marriage be held every way in honor, and the bed be undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers will God judge.

Then to 1 Cor. 6:9,

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Some of those Corinthian saints to whom Paul was writing had been guilty of these breaches of God's moral code. But is it not a wonderful thing that God has found a way through the sacrifice of His beloved Son on Calvary, to cleanse the vilest of every trace of sin, and make him a child of God? We are sanctified, set apart for God, justified -- counted as if we had never been guilty. I have enjoyed so much the little girl's definition of *justified*. She replied to her teacher who had asked her as to the meaning of that word justified, "It means I am just-as-if-I'd never sinned." She was right. God so regards us. See v. 11,

Ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Notice that the whole trinity are occupied in this transaction. But let us never minimize the seriousness of immorality in God's sight. He has not changed His attitude one whit from the solemn pronouncement made at Sinai. Listen to His warning today,

Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

We are living in the last days, just near the end of the present economy of grace. There is a general breakdown in standards all along the line. Some of us that are older have seen a tremendous change in our lifetime. Some of you who are young may have the idea that present moral looseness has always been rampant just as it is today. But such is not the case. I am not saying that these things did not formerly occur; they did, but at that time there was a measure of public opinion against them. Those guilty of such wickedness were regarded as in disgrace. But now, if we accept Hollywood as our rule of thumb, such breaches of the moral code are regarded almost as badges of honor. These same Hollywood heroes and heroines do not forfeit their acceptability in social circles because of their conduct. But, dear young people, remember as long as you live, God's standards in these matters do not fluctuate one little bit. He is a thrice holy God, who does not by any means overlook sin. Brethren, let us not let down the bars in these matters. Keep the standard just where God has placed it, and we shall never go wrong.

The longer we are left here in this scene, the more difficult it is going to be to adhere to God's judgment in this momentous matter. God still speaks with the dignity and authority of the God who knows the end from the beginning. His word is, "Flee these things."

Ex. 20 again, and v. 15 for the eighth commandment,

Thou shalt not steal.

Now turn to Eph. 4:28.

Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Stealing is just as much condemned in the Christian economy as it is in the Jewish. The Ephesian church received the highest truth that God gave to any assembly. There must have been a condition there that qualified them to become the depository of such wonderful truth. And yet after having seated them {all believers now} in heavenly places in Christ Jesus {Eph. 2:6}, God has to come down to the humiliating level of the flesh in them, and talk to them about stealing. Such is man! The law stopped with the blunt prohibition, "Thou shalt not steal," but Christianity goes beyond this and says we are to labor, working the thing that is good, that we may have to give to him that lacketh. How lovely! But notice, it is working the thing that is good. Just because you may be working and making an honest living does not in itself clear you. Are you working the thing that is good -- the thing that can have God's approval? We knew a brother in Christ years ago. He is now with the Lord. When he was converted he was a bartender in a saloon. He was thus making an honest living, but he felt he was not working the thing that is good, so he sought other work, and found it. We do not steal; that is negative; we work the thing that is good, but for what? That we may have to give. That is Christianity. You know the Word of God speaks about "poor saints." Nor is there any biblical inconsistency in those two words, "poor" and "saints." Let us then keep them in mind, and so fulfill the will of God.

Now for the ninth commandment, Ex. 20:16,

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

The equivalent of this we may find in Eph. 4:25,

Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor.

Also note Rom. 13:9,10,

Thou shalt not bear false witness. . . Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

The Christian demand in this matter is the same as in the law, but it goes far beyond the law's demands, and issues in love to the neighbor.

Our last commandment is found in Ex. 20:17,

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, . . . nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.

Now to Heb. 13:5,

Let your conversation [manner of life] be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake

thee.

This is the one of the ten commandments that slew the Apostle Paul. He seemed to be able to cope with the other nine, but he admits in Rom. 7:7,

I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. . . . For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.

Paul found out what we have all discovered, that it is as natural to covet as it is to breathe. But, nevertheless, the revealed truth of Christianity condemns covetousness no less severely than did the law of Moses. Oh! the sad tragedies we have seen of saints of God sacrificing everything in order to get on in the world. Covetousness is selfishness.

“Be content with such things as ye have.” Now that does not mean that if you are at present living in poverty, you will always have to live in poverty. No, it is not that; the meaning of this exhortation is that we should bow to our circumstances, and be content in them until such time as God may see fit to alter them. In other words, do not constantly be feeling sorry for yourself because things are not as you would have them. Do not be groaning and complaining; be content. If God may be pleased to better your present circumstances, thank Him for it.

Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things (1 Tim. 6:6-11).

How true is the Word of God! Have we not all seen the above statements of Scripture verified in the lives of saints? Sometimes our young people feel that they must keep up with the standard of living that they see in the lives of others. And so it becomes just one thing after another to be coveted. The fact that we live in the most prosperous age and land that the world has ever known has contributed to accelerate this desire to have more. The more we have the more we desire to have. There is no stopping place. But, oh, how different is the Spirit of Christ! His was the spirit of giving, not getting. So He taught us,

It is more blessed to give than to receive {Acts 20:35}.

Now I am not saying that we are all to give away everything that we have. There was only one man in the Bible to whom the Lord addressed such advice; that was the rich ruler in Luke 18. But the Lord said this to him in order that the young man might be brought to realize what the cancer was which was eating out his own soul -- covetousness. No, brethren, worldly possessions are not the secret of happiness. Happiness is a state of soul. It is the enjoyment of Christ, His Person and His work, that keeps the heart at rest and in peace.

Now to summarize. In Christianity we are not under law, but under grace. We are not under the letter of the ten commandments. We are under the moral equivalent of them as set forth in the epistles, save in the case of the commandment that was

ceremonial; that is, the sabbath. This has no ritualistic counterpart in Christianity. The other nine commandments, as a matter of their moral content, we do have, but not as a matter of “Thou shalt,” and “Thou shalt not.” But we have them as the expression of the new nature that we have as born of God.⁸⁰ If we thus respect them, beloved, we shall never regret it. It will be to our good for time and for eternity. The righteous requirements of the law will be fulfilled in us (see Rom. 8:4; JND Trans.) and thus the fruit of the Spirit will issue in love to God, and to all who are born of God.

Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the *fulfilling* of the law (Rom. 13:10).

C. H. Brown

80. {“If I walk after the Spirit, I am not under the law; but the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, meekness, temperance, patience; against such there is no law {Gal. 5:22-23}. I keep the law *de facto*, by not being under it *de jure*, because the life and Spirit of Christ make me love my neighbor, and he who does that fulfils the law. It is produced, not imposed.” J. N. Darby, *Collected Writings*, 10:297.}

Chapter 8

Christian Responsibility

The following paper was written by J. N. Darby.

❖ *What Is The Responsibility of the Saints?*

It is an unhappy circumstance that many Christians have an idea that responsibility and grace are incompatible (and by grace I mean full saving grace), and if strongly impressed with the necessary truth of the one, they reject the other. This arises partly from the groundless supposition that responsibility and uncertainty, as to the result, necessarily go together; partly from a confusion between the responsibility of man, sinful man, and the saint's responsibility; and partly from the supposition that responsibility and power *must* necessarily go together. All these suppositions are founded on human reasonings, and are all alike groundless. When a Roman cut off his thumb, so that he could not hold a spear, his responsibility to the State to be a soldier had not ceased, although he had not the power to fulfil his responsibility. The responsibility flowed from another course, namely, his being a Roman subject or citizen. If I command my child to come, and it will not, alleged incapacity to come, if true, is not an excuse, if it willed not to come. Had the will been there, the incapacity might have been removed.

Again, the elect angels are bound to do God's will, but there is no uncertainty. God sustains them in will and deed; they delight to do His will, and there is no question at all about the result. Such a question cannot be raised. Their delight to do God's will is a part of their existence, in which they are sustained by infinite power, and thus they do it by the strength given to them. Even Christ Himself was responsible to do His Father's will when He had undertaken it; but there could be no question for a moment as to failure. His moral being was perfectness, was never anything else, nor could be. But every created being is responsible; that is, he ought always to do God's will, not his own. It flows from the necessary and immutable relation of the creature to the Creator. The creature ought to be, in all its thoughts and ways, what suits the relationship in which it subsists. All relationships as such have duties in the including thoughts and feelings which correspond to and express the relationship. Husband and wife, father and child, master and servant, brother and sister, by virtue of the relationship in which they are, ought to be what the word expresses, and all that is implied in it. The husband is bound to be a husband: that is, he is bound to be what the word means; and so the wife; and the rest. The relationship is not the duty; but the duty is inseparable from the thought of it. It will be found that this is not the idea that men have of their responsibility to God (and in part they are right, but that they are so is the consequence of the fall), and in practical result they are wholly wrong.

The idea men generally have of responsibility is, that they must live in a certain way

to escape judgment, and to gain eternal life. Now there is a fundamental truth in this, as in every testimony of conscience.

To them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life {Rom. 2:7}.

They who are contentious, and do not obey the truth, will have

indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil {Rom. 2:8-9}.

As a general principle, we have the knowledge of good and evil (which in itself is a divine perfection, though we have acquired it through the fall), and we know that God approves good and hates evil. So far as the fact of a natural conscience, thus judging, goes, men are right. But they do not really believe, till taught of God, that we are in this state as fallen. Yet all their life betrays it -- I do not merely mean betrays the fact that they are sinners, but the thought that they must gain eternal life, find God's favor, and as they hope in the end come to God, and be happy. They have not yet found Him then, nor know His thoughts concerning them. They are in no relationship with God, from which duties flow, save that in which they have already failed; but while they look at God as a Judge, they hope to win a place of safety in a happy relationship, by doing their best, and with God's help, and the like.

This may have a more or less religious coloring, but the general idea remains the same; that man has to win the happy relationship to God by his conduct; that he is responsible to please God in his conduct, and by this means inherit (really at bottom, merit, whatever makeweight they may throw in) eternal life and happiness. God's goodness, Christ's merits, religious duties and ceremonies, come in to help the account, and make up for failures; but account it is, to be decided by the day of judgment, and uncertain till then. There is no present subsisting relationship with God. There is no real consciousness of being either saved or lost. Man, perhaps, is admitted to have been lost, but in some vague way. Christianity, it is thought, has put an end to this (without, after all, saving him), at least provided men behave themselves properly.

The result is, a man's responsibility is to maintain a conduct required in order to inherit eternal life, and a real present relationship to God is unknown. It is to be acquired. Some indeed pretend by ceremonies to place you in a perfect relationship with God; but it is lost before it is found or known, so that it has nothing moral in it, and the result is, man has to make it out, after all, by his own conduct.

Now, though there is an abstract principle of truth in the groundwork of this idea, the real truth of man's condition and Christianity is wholly set aside by it.

God does love good and hate evil. There must be a life in true purpose of what is good, to be with Him in bliss; and natural conscience gives a true, if not an adequate sense of good and evil, and of its result. But these general principles say nothing of my actual state, be I in or out of Christ. They are true, but they say nothing of me, nor do they tell me what responsibility is, nor what my actual relationship to God is, if I am in one. Responsibility there is. The maintenance of responsibility is the maintenance of the rights of God -- of His authority over us. Where it is objected to, there lies always at the

bottom of the objection either the notion that man must have power of his own to be responsible, or that the result is uncertain, which is only another form of the same idea. But if God creates any being, He creates it in and for the position it is in, whatever be His ultimate purpose, and cannot mean it to abide in inconsistency with the position He has placed it in. It would be a kind of blasphemy against Him and deny judgment. No, the angels that kept not their first estate are reserved in chains of darkness. Man, who kept not his first estate, is passed under death, and excluded from paradise, awaiting also the judgment of God, except as delivered and saved in Christ. "So he drove out the man."

But then the notion man has of responsibility -- that of conduct by which eternal life may be won -- is a mere consequence of our fallen state, of our alienation from God. It is a laboring, working, to win what we have not, and to gain by our conduct a position in which we are not. Yet, though this is consequent on the fall, on our distance from God, that distance is not really known. What man is, as fallen is not really acknowledged: for if such be our position, we are already lost. We need to be saved.

But responsibility to pursue a course of conduct by which we gain a position or a reward is not the only character of responsibility: nay, it is an unnatural one -- one which flows from disordered relationships. True, genuine responsibility is the walking according to a position in which we are, and which carries its obligations with it. The impossibility of losing the position does not alter the responsibility, but makes it perpetual. A child is always a child to its parent, be he a good child or a disobedient one. We must get the thought well fixed in our minds, that responsibility connected with labor for the yet uncertain attainment of a relationship in which we are not yet, is an extraordinary, and, so to speak, an unnatural, kind of responsibility.

When we come to the real fact of what a creature is, we shall find that uncertainty does not characterize responsibility so much as we suppose. If not sustained of God by divine strength, we shall fail; if sustained, we shall not. Our sense of this dependence is our daily safety.

Without me ye can do nothing {John 15:5}.

The angels that fell, and Adam, are witnesses of the path of a creature left to his responsibility, untempted or tempted. The elect angels and renewed men are examples of beings sustained of God in responsibility. But man is not of this mind. He is, he says, in a state of probation; he thinks that, though fallen, he may (doubtless, he will say, with God's help) make out the leading a life which will adequately satisfy his responsibility. Many, of course, will add the goodness of God (as they will feel their path imperfect) and the merits of Christ, to make up what fails.

It is not my purpose to dwell on this point; but the truth is, what is here called goodness is merely a hope that God will think as lightly of our sins as we do, and as we, for safety's sake, should like Him to do, which is a sure proof of not being converted. As to the merits of Christ, they are not meant to make sin excusable, but righteousness perfect before God. His blood cleanses from sin, because God will have none before

Him. He is our righteousness, and it is a divine and perfect one: but He is not to make up ours, so that our failures are forgotten.

But, for man, out of God's presence, with the thought of having to do with God, this question must arise -- how to have His favor, how to have life. And God has met it. Man is responsible to live before God according to the position he is in as man. He has got wholly out of this. Morally he is a sinner. But the character of the responsibility depends on the relationship between man and God, and man and man. He has to act according to the relationship in which he is as man toward each. That is abstractedly what he ought to be. He pretends to be or to will it, and takes his position on this ground to seek God's favor and life. God takes him up on this ground:

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy mind and all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself {Lk. 10:27}.

Or, if man will, He presents to him the duties even of the second table, as it is called: this do, and thou shalt live {Lk. 10:28}.

This is written in the law, and sanctioned by the Lord as the answer to the question, What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? {Lk. 10:25} Let man, away from God, do that, and he shall live.

Promises had been given unconditionally, which center all in Christ, the Seed of the woman, and of Abraham, and of David. Here no question of righteousness was raised: none of responsibility. It was the free gift of God, His promise. If we dare to say so, He was responsible alone; His accomplishment of the promise therefore sure. But, with a creature knowing good and evil, and with a God who judges it, the question of righteousness must come. God could not be indifferent to evil. The question of responsibility and righteousness was raised in the law. There the promises were taken on condition of obedience, and "this do and live" became the rule for man. Responsibility took partially the character of a position to be acquired by conduct, and the fulfilment of the duties of a position in which man already was. I speak of course as between him and God. In that conduct relative duties are contained, but the accomplishment of them was to be the means of possessing life. The real result was the discovery that the righteousness was not to be had, that the condition which had made it necessary made it impossible. Man was a sinner away from God. Therefore he had to seek life; but therefore he had not the righteousness needed to acquire it. As the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda, the disease of which he had to be cured disabled him from doing that by which he was to acquire health.

The law was given, as Scripture expressly declares, that this state of things might be made plain to the conscience of man. It entered that the offence might abound. By it was the knowledge of sin. Sin, by it, became exceeding sinful; and it proved not only that sin was there but a harder lesson, namely, that we were slaves to it -- "without strength" {Rom. 5:6} -- that the law was weak through the flesh, and that flesh could not be subject to it. As many as were of the works of the law were under the curse. The responsibility was undertaken, not fulfilled; and what was ordained for life was found

to be for death. This is not all that man has done, but I confine myself to my subject, namely, what was done as to inheriting eternal life, by meeting our responsibility as men. *It is closed.* We have lost our created position in innocence; we cannot gain another by our conduct. We are, as men, lost! The responsibility was there in paradise, and man failed. He places himself under it when really already ruined, under the law, and makes his ruin evident. Such is the only result, as to our relationship with God, of our being on the ground of responsibility as men. What is needed for us is the distinct discovery of it. We are under sin, death, and condemnation already, looked at as in ourselves.

But God's salvation is another thing. That is not our responsibility. Christ comes in grace and love into the state in which we were by sin, Himself sinless; and the object of divine favour in doing it; but He came and died, and drank the cup of wrath. He has closed for all who believe on Him, and in the Father's love in Him, the whole question relative to the first Adam and our sinful life. We own that we were in enmity against God, condemned, guilty: this He has taken upon Himself as bearing it before God; that is, the whole consequence of our responsibility as men, and *it is closed.* He has died as bearing it; He has died to sin once: and he that is dead is freed from sin {Rom. 6:7}. Thus, in our representative, all whose work is available to us, the whole question of our responsibility as men has closed in judgment and death for me, as I had discovered it had as to myself: the life has passed away in which I lived and was responsible to God. I exist no more, as living, as a child of the first Adam.

If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why as though living in the world . . . ? {Col. 2:20}

says Paul.

Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God {Col. 3:3}.

I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live; yet not I, etc. {Gal. 2:20}.

Reckon yourselves therefore to be dead indeed unto sin {Rom. 6:7}.

Christ has perfectly glorified God's righteousness in respect of all the evil; but all has passed away in His death judicially as to which God had to be glorified. The nature, being, sins, guilt, existence in which he was responsible and subsisted before Him, are, as regards the believer, gone before God. "When we *were* in the flesh", says Paul, the motions of sin which were by the law {Rom. 7:5}. But ye are *not* in the flesh, but in the Spirit if the Spirit of God dwell in you {Rom. 8:9}.

The whole question of our responsibility, as living in the life of man before God, is settled by Christ's judicially bearing the consequences before God, and by the death of the life in which we stood as sinners. But then Christ is now in a new life. He is risen, and we are alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me {Gal. 2:20}. I am quickened together with Christ, and . . . raised up together {Eph. 2:5-6}. God has quickened us together with Him, having forgiven us all trespasses {Col. 2:13}. They are buried in His grave, and I am alive anew and without them.

But more than this. There is a divine righteousness in which Christ stands before God, as risen; that is, in which I stand in the power of a new life as risen with Him. I am made the righteousness of God in Him. As He is, so am I in this world. This is in the reality of a life in which we live, which is Christ: and of a divine righteousness in which we stand before God, which is Christ.

Not I, but Christ liveth in me {Gal. 2:20}.

It is a real, living, certain position before God, in which I through grace and Christ are one, though all flows from, and, thank God, is dependent on Him. God has given us eternal life, and that life is in His Son.

He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life {1 Jn. 5:12}:

but then it is perfect righteousness already before God.

More than this, I am a child, a son. Such is my relationship with God. I have eternal life. I am in a known blessed fixed relationship with God, where grace has placed me through the working of the same power in which Christ was raised from the dead, and set at God's right hand. I am not only in it, but it is my relationship with God, and there is none but this. The old one is passed; the new one, founded on divine righteousness, flows from my being really born of God, made partaker of the divine nature. I cannot be in any other. It is my being, my existence, before God -- the life and relationship in which He has placed me, and in which I live from Him. The old one is gone in Christ's grave.

What is now my responsibility? To make all efforts to obtain eternal life by my conduct? I have it. To make out righteousness? I am the righteousness of God in Christ: He is my righteousness. To seek to win God's favor? He has loved me so as to give His Son for me, and accepted me in the Beloved {Eph. 1:6}. To win a position with God? He has made me His child and son.

Now are we the sons of God {1 Jn. 3:2}.

What can I seek other, or more, than to say, as He is, so am I in this world? {see 1 Jn. 4:17}.

Here my soul is at peace -- a precious thing! At peace with my God and Father, in known relationship with Him. Christ is gone to His Father and my Father, His God and my God {John 20:17}. Blessed thought! What a place of peace and love, according to the very nature of God, and the revelation of Him by the Son, it sets me in.

Here then I enter into the true kind of responsibility, in contrast with the hopeless and sin-convincing one into which I got by the fall; a responsibility which was really according to a lost position, that I might find out my ruin and condemnation. My responsibility now is a responsibility flowing from the position in which I am; which belongs in peace to it, not one by which it is to be attained -- a responsibility such as all our responsibilities are according to God, that of walking according to the position in which I am already. He that says he abides in Christ ought to walk as He walked. A child of God, and such for ever, ought to walk as a child of God,

as dear children {Eph. 5:1}.

My responsibility is that of a Christian. I am to walk as one, because I am one, not that I may be one. The fact that I am a child for ever is not a reason for not walking like one. It is only the baseness of a morally ruined being, that he could suppose that he was not to be consistent with the relationship he was in because it was an unchangeable one. As we are in our Christian position in virtue of a new life, such a thought cannot at bottom be that of a Christian. This is the reasoning of the apostle in Romans -- not that I ought not, but that I cannot, if dead, live to what I am dead to.

My responsibility then is not as a man in the first Adam, but as a Christian in the Last. On the first ground I am wholly lost already; it is vain to talk of responsibility, unless to convince of sin. On the second, because I am saved, and a child of God in the family, I am become responsible for walking as such, like the example of the Firstborn of many brethren {Rom. 8:29}. It is not connected with the possibility of losing my position more than of my gaining one. It flows from the position I am in. I am to walk like a child of God since I am one. It is a responsibility of peace and joy -- what James calls

the perfect law of liberty {Jas. 1:25},

because my new nature finds its delight in what God wills and commands, and in obeying Him. It finds delight in Him, but therefore in obeying Him, and also in what He wills. The nature I have received is that divine nature which expresses itself in the commands given to me; only there is also authority in them. But the commands are morally the expression of the nature which I have, and which delights in them, and finds the comfort of perfect light and guidance in them. And here is the immense and total difference of the commands of the law and Christ's commands. The law says, "Do this and live." Christ's commands are the expression of the life which He had, and the guide of that which I have. The life was the light of men {John 1:4}. The perfect expression of the will and nature of God in man, which His words and commands expressed; and now we can say,

Which thing is true in him and in you {1 Jn. 2:8},

because He is our life in the power of the Holy Ghost. Christ was the real expression of divine life in man; that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested to us {1 Jn. 1:2}.

Hence it was the light of men. It was in the place, condition, and state of men, and hence obedient also dependent. Thus was it brought out in His temptation. This life is ours, since His exaltation on high, when He had presented a perfect righteousness to the Father. In that I have a perfect peace and perfect favour, and now the only thing I have to do is to glorify Him, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in my mortal body {see 2 Cor. 4:11}.

I can say, "I abide in him" -- placed with the Father in His perfectness before Him -- a place of joy and peace, and witness of eternal love. I ought then so to walk as He walked. Christian responsibility is the responsibility of being a Christian; that is, of walking because we are in Christ, as Christ walked, through Christ dwelling in us.

Our place before God is Christ -- our part to exhibit Christ before men. This, while the flesh is still in us, and the world around us, needs the daily cross: always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal body {see 2 Cor. 4:11}.

Our responsibility is not to attain unto life, but to manifest it, in spite of hindrance, yea, through hindrances, and in the midst of the world. Two things have to be noticed here. First, the manifestation of the divine life, in which, through the Holy Ghost, we are united to Christ, has to be carried on in the midst of temptation, and in spite of the existence of the old nature, the flesh, in us, by which all that is in the world can become a temptation to us. Communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, and the manifestation of the divine life, can only have place so far as the flesh is practically held -- as we have the title to hold it -- for dead, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal body.

Here is the daily exercise of the life we have got, in which we learn what we are practically; and the faithfulness, graciousness, and tenderness of God are daily experienced, and to be felt by us; in which we have our senses exercised to discern good and evil, the contrast between God and the flesh is deeply learned, what is mere nature discerned through what is spiritual; while the effect of all is, that one is emptied of self, and Christ acquires, in a certain sense, an exclusive place, and becomes all in all. The soul is satisfied with Him, and hence in lowliness and singleness of eye can discern what is flesh, and either avoid it, or content itself without the false support its efforts or objects give to the natural heart, which leans on them.

Two means are employed of God to carry the redeemed through the desert, the word of God, and priestly intercession. They may be found in Heb. 4:11-15. The word is the weapon of God to discern between that which is of the Spirit, and everything in which the will of the flesh works. All that is mere nature, which is ever a snare, and positive sin where the will is at work, gets often so closely allied to what God Himself has created and owned, that the close application of the word in the power of the Spirit, is needed to distinguish. Yet morally they are most different and opposed, because God is not in the one, but human will, and is in the other, as affections, for example, which become idolatrous (though legitimate and in themselves right) or passions. In these, and in all cases, the word, sharper than any two-edged sword, the true sword of the Spirit, the truth, the bringing home of the living Word, who has sanctified Himself for us, is the means by which God first of all judges in us all that would tend to make us fall in the desert.

Then for all weakness and even failure comes the priesthood; for it is to the course of this exercise, in which above all our entire dependence on God is brought to light, and the heart is practically purified, that the priesthood of Christ also applies. It is not exercised to obtain justice for us, nor to bring us to God. It is founded on perfect righteousness, and the propitiation made for our sins, and is exercised to maintain or restore the communion of the saint, while walking in weakness, with the perfect light

into which he is brought, through the rent veil, by that righteousness and propitiation. Nor do we go to Christ in repentance that He may intercede for us: this would be distrust of the perfect love of the Father, into whose presence He has brought us as children, nor would anyone do so really; but He intercedes for us that we may repent. Our souls are thus restored through grace to communion, or maintained in it. Intercession is for the saints. For will, the word is used; for weakness and for failure, the grace of priesthood.

The other point to which I allude is our encouragement in the course we have to run. This is afforded us in promises and rewards, to which is annexed the careful and faithful government of the Father, who chastens where needed {Heb. 12:5-11}. God is sovereign in the revelation of His goodness to the heart, and knows when to grant it; but He has revealed principles of government.

If a man love me, he shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him {John 14:21}.

If any man love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our abode with him {John 14:23}.

It is evident that God cannot have communion even with an idle thought. Christ does not say as to salvation, If a man love Me, God will love him.

We love him because he first loved us {1 Jn. 4:19}.

The very characteristic of God's love is, that He loved us when we were sinners. But though God can visit and restore in grace, His communion is in holiness, and with the obedient; while we are dependent on His grace for both.

Here comes too the scripture doctrine of rewards. As regards righteousness and salvation, reward can have no possible place. These privileges are in Christ, and perfect. They are the reward, so to speak, of His labors and work. So, if one takes reward as the motive for work, he is wholly on false ground. Love and obedience are the only true motives, as they were in Christ Himself.

"That the world may know", He says, "that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me commandment, so I do" {John 14:31}.

And again,

My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work {John 4:34}.

But rewards are presented as encouragements in the difficulties which are on the road into which love and obedience bring us. Thus it could be said of Christ,

Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God {Heb. 12:2}.

So Moses is approved by the Holy Ghost, saying,

He had respect to the recompense of the reward {Heb. 12:26}; and of all,

Every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour {1 Cor. 3:8}.

The Thessalonians are a crown, a glory, to Paul, as they are not to us. Yet the word keeps steadily before us, that it is of grace, and that, in rewarding His labourers, God does what He will with His own: but in overabounding grace, to sit on Christ's right hand and on His left is given to them for whom it is prepared of His Father. But as to

righteousness and salvation all are alike. We shall be conformed to the image of God's Son. But, though sovereign as to the place God gives us, in connection with the Holy Ghost's work in and by us (for it is in connection with this that reward is; it has nothing to do with our righteousness, which is Christ Himself), this sovereignty is exercised in giving the reward according to the labor in gift and calling; so that God's government and the saint's responsibility may be displayed; yet so as that the saint is brought more clearly to say,

Not I, but the grace of God which was with me {1 Cor. 15:10}.

It is exactly he who has the deepest sense of his responsibility who will the most deeply feel his entire dependence upon grace. If these questions are mixed up with that of salvation, all is legal and false; but when clear on this, the exercise of the heart in them is most useful, as leading to the sense of dependence, confiding in Him who is able to bless, and delights to do it -- the sense that there is the living God, that we can do nothing of ourselves, nothing without Christ. It humbles and leads to daily confiding dependence upon God.

The principle I have alluded to above will be found to be universal, namely, that reward is in Scripture never the motive of action, always the encouragement of him who is active from other motives. Thus, we well know, it was love, eternal, divine love, and thence obedience to His Father, which led Christ in the path of sorrow. In that path, for the joy that was set before Him, He endured. Moses visited his brethren because God put it into his heart to prefer suffering with the people of God to a life of ungodly ease in a court. He endured as seeing Him who is invisible, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. "In due time we shall reap", says the apostle, "if we faint not" {Gal. 6:9}.

The love of Christ constrained him too, the excellency of the knowledge of Christ; but he knew that a crown of righteousness was laid up for him, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, would give to him in that day. Where reward is the motive, all is wrong; but the gracious Lord encourages us in our labour with His approbation, and His promise of reward at the end. We believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him.

Thus our relationship with God is founded on a perfect and divine righteousness, so that it is divine, and His perfect love enjoyed in a known relationship, and in a divine way. Hence holy affections are free, and God is glorified. All is from Him, and according to Him. No question of righteousness can be raised outside Christ. Blessed be God, such a relationship is ineffably sweet, and sure as divine perfection can make it. At the same time, the active moral energies of a life which pursues its object under the hand of God are maintained. "One thing I do", says the apostle:

I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God {Phil. 3:13}.

If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead {Phil 3:11}.

The whole Epistle to the Philippians goes on this ground, and hence speaks of attaining, working out salvation, and the like. The moral development which is

connected with personal responsibility under grace takes place, and under the eye of a gracious and holy Father and holy God. We are set in the path in which Christ walked, to follow His steps. Sweet to be allowed to do it, and that His servant, walking in this path, shall be where his master is. The word,

Well done, good and faithful servant {Mat. 25:23}, sounds sweet in the ears, and most so in his who knows that by His grace alone can we be one or the other. If we were not His, we could not serve; His, by a new life; His, by the purchase of His blood! And in the service all hangs upon His daily grace; and the place He has given to us) and the special glory in which each faithful servant will be set, is part of the purpose and operation of God. But all our responsible moral exercises, once we are free, are connected with it, the lively energies of hope, the watchfulness and keeping under of the body {1 Cor. 9:27}. We fight the good fight of faith {2 Tim. 4:7} and lay hold on eternal life {1 Tim. 6:12}.

What has secured us as salvation, has set before us, as this salvation, a hope of glory which sets in play the whole energy of the new man through the Holy Ghost. Paul saw Christ glorified. There was an end of legal righteousness and the certainty of divine. There was the glory to be attained. All was dross and dung that he might win Christ; and if it cost him his life, good! on the road to a resurrection from among the dead. It was not a responsibility in which he labored alone, so to speak, as obliged under law to fulfil his tasks or fail. It was closely allied with the attachment of his heart to Christ -- that he might win Christ. Christ had laid hold of him for it; but he longed to lay hold therefore of the blessed prize.

This is carried on as under the moral government of God. The flesh cannot serve Christ -- it can only hinder. To be vessels made to honour, we must be clean. Hence the apostle kept his body under {1 Cor. 9:27}. Hence Peter tells us

If ye call on the Father, who, without respect of persons, judgeth every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear {1 Pet. 1:17}.

The Father judges no man as regards final definitive judgment; so the apostle says, "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear." Is it fear of not having part in redemption? On the contrary, it is founded on the solemn greatness and excellency of it, the moral depth of God's judgment of good and evil. "Forasmuch," he continues,

as ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, but with the precious blood of Christ {1 Pet. 1:18-19}.

Thus the bright energies of hope, the joy of communion, the sweetness of dependence, the holy watchfulness of fear as engaged in this great conflict with evil and on God's side -- all unite to bring out through known grace, and as founded in grace, every moral development of which a human being, as quickened of God, is capable, so as to connect him with the perfection of God, in communion with whom it is all wrought; and to make him like Christ, who is the perfect model of it, as His communion with His Father was perfect -- to grow up to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

For the need in which this service and path sets us inwardly and outwardly -- the path in which Christ walked -- sets us in communion with God, in all that is in Him to

meet it in grace to our souls. It is not only help for the circumstances, but what God is for the soul, in all that is discovered in it by its passing through the circumstances. The wilderness makes the heart of man known; but it makes God known to the heart too. The full joy of it will be hereafter. In the type, as in the reality, it was founded on a perfect redemption; and as Israel at the Red Sea chanted the salvation which had brought them to God, so at the close Balaam must testify that no divination was of any avail. God had not seen perverseness in Israel, nor iniquity in Jacob. He would treat him for his faults in wisdom Himself, as His; but no accusations were of avail. It is beautiful to see God thus answering for Israel on high, while poor foolish Israel was ignorantly murmuring and disobeying below.

Finally, grace is such, that what God gives as the ground of destruction in judgment, I will consume, for it is a stiffnecked people {see Ex. 33:3,5}, once grace is known, Moses can give as a reason for God's going with them:

If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiff-necked people {Ex. 34:9}.⁸¹ ❖

81. *Collected Writings*, 17:307-321.

Chapter 9

Covenantism and the Law

Discontinuity Between the Conditional Mosaic Covenant of Law and the Unconditional Abrahamic Covenant of Promise Continuity Between the Two Covenants Affirmed

John H. Walton, a teacher at Moody Bible Institute, wrote:

None of these covenants replaces the one before it -- each supplements what has come before.⁸²

In this retrogressive scheme, in the covenants He substitutes, "God has undertaken as a primary objective a program of self-revelation,"⁸³ for the Covenantists' progressive unfolding of redemption as the unifying factor in Covenantism. He takes a major step of rapprochement with Covenantism by alleging that the conditional Mosaic Covenant of law supplements the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant of promise. He goes on to say:

The covenant at Sinai is linked to the Abrahamic promises (Ex. 6:2-9; Deut. 7:7-9). As we found in the analysis of passages in Chapter 2, there are numerous verses that link the covenants to one another.⁸⁴

Peter Golding, a Covenantist, wrote:

The orthodox Reformed view of this covenant has been that it 'was *essentially* the same as that established with Abraham, though the form differed somewhat' ⁸⁵ . . . It is sufficient to say at this point that there are clear indications in Scripture that the covenant with Abraham was not supplanted by the Sinaitic covenant, but remained in force.⁸⁶

Covenantists think of both covenants as conditional, no doubt so as to be able to connect them and to have them in force concurrently. How can an unconditional and a conditional covenant be in force concurrently?

82. John H. Walton, *Covenant, God's Purpose, God's Plan*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, p. 49 (1994) -- a Professor at Moody Bible Institute, his book is an attempt to set up a theological system called the "Revelatory" View (p. 183).

83. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

84. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

85. Quotation is from L. Berkhof, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

86. *Covenant Theology, The Key of Theology in Reformed Thought and Tradition*, Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications, p. 156 (2004).

Scripture Affirms Discontinuity Between the Two Covenants The Opposition of Law and Promise

Scripture expressly tells us that law and promise are opposed to one another:

For [it was] not by law that the promise was to Abraham, or to his seed, that he should be heir of [the] world, but by righteousness of faith. For if they which [are] of law be heirs, faith is made vain, and the promise is of no effect (Rom. 4:13, 14).

Who is Paul speaking of when he says "they which [are] of the law"? The answer is not a class of Judaizers of the law who abuse its alleged grace to seek a legal justification. It means those under that covenant and its principle.

For if the inheritance [be] on the principle of law, [it is] no longer on the principle of promise; but God gave it in grace to Abraham by promise (Gal. 3:18).⁸⁷

The conditional Mosaic Covenant is the proposal that Israel inherit on the principle of law. That is not supplemental, but contrary to inheriting on the principle of promise. These texts teach us the *discontinuity/opposition*, between the principles of these two covenants, as would the fact that one was unconditional and the other conditional. In reality we have seen proposed what amounts to a conditional covenant supplementing an unconditional covenant. An unconditional covenant cannot have terms, conditions, added later. It is not even acceptable regarding man's covenants for someone to add conditions later:

Brethren, (I speak according to man,) even man's confirmed covenant no one sets aside, or adds other dispositions to (Gal. 3:15).

The Covenantist View

How do Covenantists circumvent the force of Rom. 4:13, 14 and Gal. 3:18?

L. Berkhof wrote:

If that covenant {of the law} was a covenant of works, it was certainly not the covenant of grace. The reason why it is sometimes regarded as an entirely new covenant is that Paul repeatedly refers to the law and the promise as forming an antithesis, Rom. 4:13ff.; Gal 3:17.⁸⁸

Here is the point, and he has to work around the antithesis by defining the antithesis to something other than what we read in those texts:

But it should be noted that the apostle does not contrast with Abraham the Sinaitic covenant as a whole, but only the law as it functioned in this covenant, and this function was misunderstood by the Jews.⁸⁹

Not God's Word, but Covenant Theology says that. This is semantic obfuscation -- calling it the Sinaitic covenant and speaking of the function of the law within it. Scripture calls it a covenant of law:

A covenant confirmed beforehand by God, the law . . . (Gal. 3:17).

And Scripture says:

87. See J. N. Darby's paper, "Not Law but Promise," *Collected Writings*, 21:299-310.

88. *Op. cit.*, p. 297.

89. *Ibid.*

For as many as are on the principle of works of law are under curse. For it is written {see Deut. 27:26}, Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them; but that by the law no one is justified with God [is] evident, because The just shall live by faith {Hab. 2:4}; but the law is not on the principle of faith; but He that shall have done these things shall live by them {see Deut. 21:23} (Gal. 3:10-12).

Israel as such was under a covenant of works and were bound by that covenant to “continue in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” Covenantists do not face the true nature of this covenant as that would destroy Covenantism, which regards this as a gracious covenant, so they severely limit the force of such texts and tell us:

The error of the Judaizers was that they reduced the Mosaic covenant to a system of works-righteousness . . . ‘the legal principle which was operative in the Mosaic Covenant did not function in isolation from its broader redemptive context.’⁹⁰

The truth is that the covenant of the law *was* a system of works-righteousness. That is its principle. Israel was under law as a principle of relationship with Jehovah.

Tell me, ye who are desirous of being under law, do ye not listen to the law? . . . for these are two covenants: one from mount Sinai, gendering to bondage (Gal. 4:22, 24).

The Covenantists present the covenant of the law as if it genders to grace, for they regard it as a gracious covenant. Hagar and her son speak of the covenant of law and the flesh, respectively. That is what go together when man in the flesh assays to carry out the precepts of God. This is the principle of the covenant of law.

Covenantists do not understand what Paul said in Gal. 3, 4. Any view of the covenants that sees continuity between the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenant is false. The connection between the two covenants is that in one we have the promises given unconditionally and, in the other, man in the flesh assays to gain the promises by law-keeping. That God worked sovereignly in the elect in the midst of Israel’s history stands in contrast with the covenant of law under which they were.

Scriptures Alleged to Support These Two Covenants as Being in Force Simultaneously Covenantist View

To show that the Abrahamic Covenant was in force while the Mosaic Covenant was in force, Peter Golding cited these Scriptures:

Even at Horeb, the Lord reminded the people of the covenant with Abraham (Deut. 1:8); and when the Lord threatened to destroy the people after they had made the golden calf, Moses based his plea for them on the covenant (Ex. 32:13). The Lord also assured them repeatedly that, whenever they repented of their sins, he would be mindful of his covenant with Abraham (Lev. 26:42; Deut. 4:31). Moreover, in

Psa. 105:8-10, the two covenants are clearly represented in their unity.

Then in Gal. 3:15-22, Paul insists that the law was not intended to supplant, but rather to serve the gracious ends of the promise. If the Sinaitic was only a covenant of works, in which legal obedience was the way of salvation, then it was a curse for Israel, because it was imposed on a people who could not keep it. But this covenant is uniformly represented in Scripture as a blessing bestowed upon Israel (Ex. 19:5; Lev. 26:44, 45; Deut. 4:8; Psa. 148:20 {sic}).⁹¹

The truth is that the references to the Abrahamic Covenant point to the failure of Israel under the Mosaic Covenant, not that the Abrahamic Covenant was in force -- a totally confused, unscriptural notion which subverts the intention of God in referring to the unconditional promises. J. N. Darby wrote:

❖ . . . I will add a few passages which clearly prove that, historically, God threatened the Jews to set them aside -- looked at as placed under the dispensation of law -- and that He did set them aside in consequence of their sins. Jehovah never forsakes the unconditional which He made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and He often recalls it in grace. Read Deut. 4:23-31; ch. 8:19, 20; ch. 28:63-68; ch. 29:28; ch. 30:17, 18. All these passages show plainly that judgment has fallen on Israel by reason of their sins. By this judgment the relationships formed between God and Israel under the law, these relationships, the existence of which depended expressly on the people’s obedience (Ex. 19:5), have been entirely interrupted and even terminated. The first covenant, that of Sinai, has been suppressed -- abolished, as the Epistle to the Hebrews says, in order to give place to another.

The word declares the same thing with regard to the kingly power, which was the means God in His goodness used to maintain His relationships with Israel. The relationships of Israel with God by its means were broken through the iniquity of the kings; 1 Chron. 28. The kingdom was set up conditionally. Compare 2 Chron. 7:17-22, where we see that the whole nation has to undergo the consequences of unfaithfulness. We see (2 Kings 23:26, 27) that the judgment of Israel was in fact brought on {brought to a climax} by the iniquity of king Manasseh. And Israel has become *Lo-ammi* (that is to say, the relationships between God and Israel have been entirely broken off), and that, as the prophets had so often said and repeated to the Israelites, on account of their iniquity. And I would call your attention to this, the covenant and dispensation have been set aside. God used perfect patience; but when even His Son, who could have restored all things, was rejected by the Jews, there was no longer any way for maintaining them in blessing on the old footing. The vineyard was taken from this people and entrusted to others.⁹² ❖

So Peter Golding reads into Deut. 1:8 what he wants to find. Moses told them the

90. Peter Golding, *Covenant Theology* . . . , Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications, p. 157 (2004). There was no “broader redemptive context.” The sacrificial and tabernacle types are for us, as Hebrews shows. How much understanding the elect had is a question, but the system itself was a covenant of works.

91. *Covenant Theology, The Key of Theology in Reformed Thought and Tradition*, Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications, p. 113 (2004).

92. *Collected Writings*, 4:276, 277.

land sworn to their fathers was before them. That is the fact. That does not state the basis on which they were going in to take the land. They were not going on in the basis of the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant, but on the basis of the conditional Mosaic Covenant. Concerning Ex. 32:13, if God destroyed Israel, how could Jehovah fulfill the covenant with the fathers if they had no seed? Moses' words do not show that Israel was actually under the Abrahamic Covenant. The repentance called for in Lev. 26:42 will occur in the future just before the inauguration of the millennial kingdom (Zech. 12:8 - 13:9). That is when the Abrahamic Covenant will be fulfilled, and God will remember the land. Deut. 4:31 also shows us that Jehovah would not destroy the people. If He did, He could not fulfill the promises. Indeed, the previous verse stated:

In thy tribulation, and when all these things shall come upon thee, at the end of days, thou shalt return to Jehovah thy God, and shalt hearken to his voice (Deut. 4:28; see Zech. 12:8 - 13:9).

The "end of days" is the end of the Mosaic age, *in which age we presently are*, for there is no such thing as a Church Age. The Church is above and outside the ages, though in responsible testimony here below.

Concerning Psalms 105:8-10:

He is ever mindful of his covenant, -- the word which he commanded to a thousand generations, --

Which he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac;

And he confirmed it unto Jacob for a statute, unto Israel for an everlasting covenant, saying unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance;

When they were a few men in number, of small account and strangers in it (Psalms 105:8-12).

It seems desperate to find two covenants in this. In reality, there is only one covenant here, the one which He made with Abraham. He is ever mindful of it in all His ways with Israel, and never exterminated them -- for He will fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant to the physical seed of Abraham (Rom. 9:3-5) when they are all righteous (Isa. 60:21; Rom. 11:25-32).

We have had some Scriptures from Gal. 3 before us already. Covenantists do not understand the teaching in Gal. 3, and advocate the opposite of what it actually teaches. The above writer inverts the Apostle's point, and also goes on to show us that he does not understand what God was doing in connection with the covenant of the law. In Covenant Theology, allegedly Adam had the law of 10 commandments and was under probation concerning those commandments. So, testing with respect to the law was already completed in Eden. The covenant of the law is not a repetition of probation regarding the law. Rather, the law's purpose was "to serve the gracious ends of the promise." The 10 commandments, or the one commandment if that be the case, certainly did not do that in Eden. One may detect the transmutational power of the Covenantist hermeneutic in this. Well, Adam had *a* law; and the point to testing under the Mosaic Covenant supposes man's fall in Eden, and is a testing of the fallen man, in the persons of Israel, to show that he was not recoverable from the fall.

The Mosaic Covenant certainly did suspend the Abrahamic Covenant. The law served to show the incapacity of the flesh (Rom. 7:8, 9) to obtain the promises by works. I suppose he would not pretend that Israel could keep the law -- they surely, over and over, proved their inability to do so. Is it denied that it was a covenant of law? If it was a covenant of law, they did not keep it. A people professed to be party to a covenant that they most surely could not keep, and Jehovah made such a covenant with them. There is a pretension here as if the Sinaitic was a proposal on how to be saved by grace.⁹³ If a person perfectly kept the law he would not die, just as if Adam had kept the commandment he would not die -- but that is not the same thing as salvation or what the NT speaks of as eternal life. Adam's commandment was not so that He might gain salvation, nor does the law of Moses have salvation in view. The covenant of the law was a "ministry of death" and a "ministry of condemnation" (2 Cor. 3:7-9).

The covenant is a blessing in that it should teach those under it that they cannot be acceptable to God by keeping it, and they must turn to His grace. Jehovah ever kept before him His gracious covenant with Abraham, and would not destroy that disobedient and gainsaying people {Rom. 10:21}. They might think upon the grace of the unconditional covenant and turn to Jehovah, casting themselves on His grace. See Psalm 51.

O. Palmer Robertson has an idea why the Abrahamic Covenant was not suspended:

The coming of the law did not suspend the Abrahamic covenant. The principle enunciated in Genesis 15:7 {sic, 15:6} concerning the justification of Abraham by faith never has experienced interruption. Through the Mosaic period of law-covenant, God considered as righteous everyone who believed in Him.⁹⁴

Without question, God did deal distinctively with ethnic Israel under the Abrahamic covenant during the entire period preceding the coming of Christ.⁹⁵

1. The Abrahamic Covenant was made *after* Abraham was accounted righteous (Gen. 15:9ff). Concerning being considered righteous, would he suppose that Enoch and Noah, who had nothing to do with the Abrahamic Covenant, were not righteous -- and Abel too.

By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he

93. Covenantists believe that Adam was given a commandment and that by being obedient he would gain eternal life. Herman Hanko said:

Exactly how long this probationary period was intended to last, the defenders of the covenant of works have never been able to say (*God's Everlasting Covenant of Grace*, Grand Rapids: Reformed Free Publishing Association, p. 29 (1988)).

He looks at Covenantism from a "Reformed Churches" viewpoint, not the Presbyterian viewpoint represented by the Westminster Confession.

Here, the writer objects to legal obedience being a way of salvation. Concerning Adam, the truth is that as long as he did not sin, he would continue in the natural life he had; eternal life is not in view.

94. *The Christ of the Covenants*, Grand Rapids: Baker, p. 174 (1980).

95. *The Christ of the Covenants*, p. 214.

obtained testimony of being righteous . . . (Heb. 11:4).

Thus, the principle of being righteous by faith was true from the earliest time, yet not because of the Abrahamic Covenant.

2. The notion that God considered as righteous everyone who believed in Him, during the time of the Mosaic Covenant, does not prove that therefore the Abrahamic Covenant was in force during the Mosaic period.
3. And ever bear in mind that this system has Israel under a conditional covenant and an unconditional covenant at the same time.

The idea about the non-interruption of God considering as righteous everyone who believed in Him clearly fails to establish the continuance of the Abrahamic Covenant in spite of the vacuous assertion of “without question.”

What the Covenantist View Does Not See

We have already had a lengthy extract from J. N. Darby regarding the important introduction of mediation with the second giving of the law. We shall here have another quotation which is of great profit regarding the references to the promises to Abraham while the Mosaic Covenant was in force. What is asserted by Covenantists hinders understanding of God’s ways.

❖ We have seen the promises made to Abraham unconditionally; the exodus from Egypt through grace and the strong arm of God. We have seen the people, led by grace to mount Sinai, enter into a covenant based on their obedience, and break every tie with God by making to themselves a god of gold. But this circumstance gave opportunity for the revelation of another principle of the greatest importance -- *mediation*; which served at once to maintain the consistency of the character of God with the choice which He had made of a wicked people, and to give occasion for the development of that character, in patience, justice, and faithful chastisements and pity. Mediation always recalled to God *His grace*; *never* the covenant of obedience: for *then* there was no need of it, inflicting, perhaps, at the same time, severe chastenings, the duration and severity of which were proportioned to the fervor of the mediatorial supplications -- a mediation on which, consequently, all the relations of God with His people were based; in order that He might display all the riches of His grace and of His nature, manifested towards the people of His choice, beloved by Him (the just God), but constantly failing, in fact, in the obedience which was His due, and which would have been the source of direct blessing.

Mediation sustained the relations of God with His people in the midst of their transgressions, whilst all His wonders were made known, and until His judgment had severed the wicked from among them, and completed the blessing and glory of His people under the sustaining hand of him who had been the mediator during the time of all their trials.

And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word: but as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord. Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness,

have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; surely they shall not see the land which I swore unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it: but my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land, and his seed shall possess it, Num. 14:20-24;

read all the chapter.

But we must observe the historical evidences of this introduction of mediation as a support to the old covenant, or the foundation of a new one.

And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and behold it is a stiffnecked people: now therefore let me alone that my wrath may wax hot against them, . . . and I will make of thee a great nation. And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against *thy* people, which *thou*⁹⁶ hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. *Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants*, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land which I have spoken of will I give unto thy seed, and they shall inherit it for ever. *And the Lord repented* of the evil that he thought to do unto his people (Ex. 32:9-14).

Here was the principle.

The consequences of this mediation -- the conduct of Moses towards the people -- his return to God with fresh supplications (placing himself as the one hoping to atone for their sins), together with the detail of God's answers, are found in what follows in Ex. 33. At length Moses intreats to see the glory of God: this was impossible; but He promises to make all His goodness to pass before him.

And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children unto the third and to the fourth generation (Ex. 34:5-7).

Then, on the renewed intercession of Moses, the Lord announces to him some modifications of His dispensations; and in the end it is said (v. 27),

Write thou these words, for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.

Here we see a covenant founded on the calling to remembrance the covenant made

96. God had before said to Moses, “*thy* people, which *thou*.”

with Abraham, etc. (the intercession of Moses staying the uplifted hand of God), and the revelation of a special character of relationship with the people; a character on which is based the new covenant with Moses the mediator, and the people. When Moses interceded in the desert on the return of the spies, his intercession was founded on the character given by God as the terms of the relationship existing between Him and the people; and both the answer and the judgments of God are in accordance with this character, save only one special mark of mercy which arose from circumstances.

Ezek. 18 (often quoted with really unbelieving views) announced that God acted towards the people for their own iniquity, and according to the covenant of which we are speaking, and in truth put an end to an important application of an important principle it contains. The same thing is found in Jeremiah, who concluded the period of their history in their country, as Ezekiel concluded it out of it, accompanied in the former by a promise of a covenant and a new order of things, which should in the latter days be made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah; Jer. 31:27-37. It will be found also that Daniel, who prophesies of the four empires, confesses both their *past* and actual transgressions.

Having traced the allusions to this covenant, there is one remark which it is very important to make; and the intercession of Moses, at the time of their sin in making the golden calf, gives rise to it. It is this: the Spirit of God, in all references to the true hopes of Israel, refers to the unconditional covenant made with Abraham. Thus we have seen Moses saying,

Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, saying, etc.

In the same manner the God of mercy, having pronounced blessing on their obedience, and followed their rebellions with threats, until their actual dispersion, adds in Lev. 26,

If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers. . . and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.

See also Micah 7:20. Such was the hope of Zacharias, filled with the Holy Ghost (Luke 1:72, 73); such also the prophetic song in Psa. 105:6-9, 42. According to the solemn declaration of God, when Moses asked,

If they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM {Ex. 3:13}.

He said also,

Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations {Ex. 3:14-15}.

Therefore, the apostle in discussing this subject says (Rom. 11:28),

As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the

election, they are beloved for the *fathers'* sakes.⁹⁷ ♦

Messianic Jewish View

Reynold E. Showers, a Jewish Christian, and Scofieldian dispensationalist, after pointing out that the *unconditional* Abrahamic Covenant remained in effect even after Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had sinned a number of times, says that Psa. 105:8-11 and Luke 1:67-75 show that the Abrahamic Covenant was in effect in David's day and Zacharias' day. That would mean that Israel was under *two covenants at the same time*, the *unconditional* Abrahamic Covenant and the *conditional* Mosaic Covenant. The incompatibility of being under both law and promise at the same time is made clear in Rom. 4:13, 14 and Gal. 3:18, which we considered above, which state the fundamental difference in principle between law and promise. Promise and law cannot be mixed. In which of the two was Israel before God after the Mosaic Covenant was made? -- obtaining by promise or obtaining by law? -- by both at the same time? Stop. Answer the questions. One cannot obtain the inheritance in both ways simultaneously, nor can the mutually exclusive covenants of promise and of law be in force simultaneously.

The Mosaic Covenant was a trial of the first man to show that he was not recoverable from the fall. This was a conditional covenant -- and the ways of God with man in this covenant were that Israel engaged to secure the promises on the basis of conditions. ***The lesson, not learned by most Christians, is that Israel was under trial to show that the first man does not answer to what circumcision signifies.*** While circumcision was a sign of God's grace to Abraham, not so with Israel. They were circumcised in accordance with the presumption of the first, fallen man, to answer to its meaning by sinful flesh presuming to carry out the precepts of God. It amounted to a sign of their presumptuousness. Hence, admonitions to the people that they needed to be circumcised in heart (Jer. 9:26). Under the unconditional New Covenant, the meaning of circumcision will be made good to Israel by sovereign grace (Rom. 11:25; etc., etc.). In the good of the Abrahamic Covenant, the new Israel will have circumcision as Abraham had it: a sign of the grace of God made good to them.

Also what underlies this attempt at being under both simultaneously is not understanding the true character of the trial of the first man, which is a severe lack in the Scofield system.⁹⁸

The cross did not change the age. The Mosaic system was ended, the Mosaic age runs on, but God is not doing an earthly-centered work now. He is forming a heavenly people. At "the end of the age," i.e., the end of the Mosaic age, he will form a Jewish remnant in view of the appearing of Christ in glory to set up the millennial kingdom. The cross did not end the Mosaic age (the church is not an age -- it is above ages) nor did the cross revive the Abrahamic Covenant, which covenant was suspended when the covenant of the law was established.

He goes on to say of Acts 3:25, 26:

. . . indicates his {Peter's} conviction that these Jews were still sons of the covenant and

97. "Divine Mercy in the Church and Towards Israel," *Collected Writings*, 2:141-145. Read the entire paper.

98. The continuance of probation, or testing, continuing after the cross shows this to be so, for the trial of the first, fallen man to see if he was recoverable from the fall, ended at the cross. Adam unfallen was not, of course, part of this trial. Adam in the garden was another matter.

that the covenant was still in effect for them. The only way the Abrahamic Covenant was still in effect with the nation of Israel was if that covenant were unconditional.⁹⁹ This means that the *earthly* Abrahamic Covenant, with its *earthly calling*, is in force now when the *heavenly calling* (Heb. 3:1) is in effect.

What we have been reviewing here strikes me as the reasoning of a Jewish Christian who *wants* the Abrahamic Covenant to be in effect *now*, and this then justifies certain Jewish practices for Jewish Christians, including circumcising their eight day old male children. Peter did say that they were sons of the prophets, and of the covenant, but did not say “and that the covenant was still in effect for them” (nor did he say that the prophets were still in effect for them). He may wish to believe that, but Peter did not say that. They are sons of the covenant just as Paul stated that the covenants belong to his kinsmen according to flesh (Rom. 9:3, 4), but not meaning thereby that the covenants were in effect for them.

Being mindful of God’s promises to Abraham was an encouragement to the godly in Israel while under the law but that fact also does not prove that the Abrahamic Covenant was in effect.

Circumcision in the flesh is for God’s earthly people. God now has a heavenly people (1 Cor. 15:48; Heb. 3:1). Is the Jewish Christian of the earthly people or of the heavenly people? Positionally, in Christ, he is of the heavenly people; in practice he may violate it by claiming to be under the Abrahamic Covenant. Apparently “dispensational” “Messianic Jews” want one foot in each. Covenants are for the earthly people of God. Is part of the church under the Abrahamic covenant and another part not? The Abrahamic Covenant is for the earth and an earthly people with an earthly calling. Today, Jewish Christians have a heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1) and have been instructed to go outside the camp (Heb. 13:13). Leaving the camp does not mean dragging some of the camp along with them.

Is the Law a Covenant of Works?

Covenantists must affirm that the covenant of the law is not a covenant of works because they hold that Adam had a covenant of works before he fell.¹⁰⁰ Then in Gen. 3:15, allegedly God made a covenant of grace with him (in spite of the fact that actually God spoke to the serpent). Therefore, since the covenant of works once existed, and since the covenant of the law is an administration of the succeeding covenant of grace,

99. *There Really Is a Difference*, Bellmawr: Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, see pp. 63-66 (1990).

100. According to Covenantism, Adam’s was the only probation. Note that carefully. Probation is limited to Adam before the fall:

Moreover, humankind in its fallen condition does not now undergo probation in terms of the covenant of works . . . (Peter Golding, *Covenant Theology, The Key of Theology in Reformed Thought and Tradition*, Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications, p. 113 (2004).

Certainly not at this very moment, but the history of the OT is the history of probation of the fallen first man to show that he was not recoverable from the fall. This was carried on from the fall of Adam until the Cross. Humankind did undergo that probation, and representatively so in Israel under the Mosaic Covenant, until the Cross, which was the final demonstration in fallen man’s probationary history of man’s incorrigibility. He is lost, meaning *totally lost*, and the doctrine of it was not stated in Scripture until after that probationary period was over. But instead, Covenantists view everything after Gen. 3:15 as God working by a covenant of grace.

the real covenant of law as given by Moses cannot be a covenant of works.

The transmutational power of Covenant Theology may be seen in the remark by O. T. Allis:

The law was not a covenant of works. It was a preliminary form of the covenant of grace.¹⁰¹

Why the words “preliminary form”?¹⁰² since, allegedly, the Covenant of Grace was in existence from Gen. 3:15. In Covenant Theology, the Mosaic Covenant (a legal covenant) was a form of the Covenant of Grace! I suppose the notion is that it was *gracious* of God to thus show that man could not perfectly keep God’s commandments, and that makes the *legal* covenant a form of the Covenant of *Grace*. Moreover, in this system, Israel actually inherited the land under the legal-works covenant (Ex. 19:8) -- but that, allegedly, leaves the promise concerning Gentiles for the church now.

It is no surprise, then, that one who can so confound law and grace would say: “The difference between the law and the promise was not one of kind but of degree.”¹⁰³ In Covenantism, the true character of the Mosaic Covenant must be transmuted into something that is not an actual covenant of works. The promise (unconditional Abrahamic Covenant) was about the inheritance -- to be fulfilled under the Second Man. The law (the conditional Mosaic Covenant) was about gaining the inheritance on the basis of keeping the law -- an effort of the fallen, first man -- to show whether or not he was recoverable from the fall. Scripture shows that promise and law differ in kind, not degree:

For if the inheritance [be] on the principle of law, [it is] no longer on the principle of promise; but God gave it in grace to Abraham by promise (Gal. 3:18).

This only I wish to learn of you, Have ye received the Spirit on the principle of works of law, or of [the] report of faith? (Gal. 3:2)

For if they which [are] of the law be heirs, faith is made vain, and the promise is made of no effect (Rom. 4:14).

We, Jews by nature, and not sinners of [the] nations, but knowing that a man is not justified on the principle of works of law [nor] but by the faith of Jesus Christ, we also have believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified on the principle of [the] faith of Christ; and not of works of law; because on the principle of works of law no flesh shall be justified (Gal. 2:16).

Wherefore by works of law no flesh shall be justified before him; for by law [is] knowledge of sin (Rom. 3:20).

. . . not on the principle of works which [have been done] in righteousness which we had done, but according to his own mercy he saved us . . . (Titus 3:5).

“Works of law” points to the principle of attainment of righteousness and of the inheritance. It does not mean some mythical abuse of the law by first century Judaizers.

101. *Prophecy and the Church*, p. 294, note 44.

102. Perhaps an ‘administartive’ form was meant?

103. *Ibid*, p. 37.

The Apostle contrasts the law, as a system, with faith.

What is the Consequence of Israel Being Under a Covenant of Works?

Let us note two points:

1. If Israel inherited anything at all on the principle of law (law which they undertook to do), Gal. 3:18 would be violated. Israel was certainly “of the law,” and if they were heirs in anything at all, “faith is made vain, and the promise is of no effect.” Promise is not law; and to found the inheritance on law, and give it to Israel because of the law, made the promise of none effect. Promise, and faith in it, went together. Law was man’s work, and on God’s part requirement from man, not promise to him. And indeed the law works wrath instead of giving an inheritance; for where no law is, there is no transgression, there is nothing to transgress: working wrath and bringing in transgression is surely not promise. But the inheritance is of faith, not of law, that it might be by grace . . . ¹⁰⁴
2. The entire nation of Israel was under the covenant of the law. If you say God made good the inheritance, or a part of it, to Israel while under the law, then it was made good to non-saints in Israel also, who were not children of promise, yet thus making them heirs according to promise (cp. Rom. 9:6-8). In the future it will be made good to “all Israel” (Rom. 11:26). The entire nation will be righteous (Isa. 60:21) when the nation inherits on the principle of promise.

This is Israel, not some legalistic group in Israel. It is the nation and the principle upon which the nation, as such, stood before God. They stood before Jehovah on the basis of doing the law. Are you going to make a fuss that doing the law is not doing works of law -- that the nation’s standing was not on the principle of works of law? The New Israel under the New Covenant, in the millennium, will be under a gracious, unconditional covenant; the Old Israel under the covenant of law was under a conditional, legal covenant of works.

❖ Here are thus two great principles in contrast. If it is a promise, what I have to do is to believe it. It is another who accomplished it. God undertakes this, and He accomplishes it by Christ. It is all on God’s side. This is the difference between promise and the law.

Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness {Rom. 4:3}.

And so if I believe God, and it is counted to me for righteousness:

So then they that be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them {Gal. 3:9-10}.

It is not as many as do bad works, but “as many as are on the ground of law-works.” The law is good, but we are bad; and hence all is ruin on that ground; for it is written,

104. *Collected Writings*, 26:137.

“Cursed is everyone that continueth not,” etc. I cannot keep it so as to be saved.¹⁰⁵ ❖

What is the principle of the law? It is works. We read:

For as many as are on the principle of works of law are under curse. For it is written, Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things which [are] written in the book of the law to do them; but that by law no one is justified with God [is] evident, because The just shall live on the principle of faith; but the law is not on the principle of faith . . . (Gal. 2:10-12).

But Israel, pursuing after a law of righteousness, has not attained to [that] law. Wherefore? Because [it was] not on the principle of faith, but as of works (Rom. 9:31, 32).

These were works of the law, relied upon by Israel (though not by the faithful among them). Works of the law are spoken of in Gal. 2:16; 3:2; 3:5; 3:10. In Heb. 6:1 and 9:14 they are called “dead works.”¹⁰⁶ While they were doing the works of the law for righteousness, they were not doing the works of Abraham (John 8:39). His were works of faith. The fact is that works of the law to which Israel was committed in a conditional covenant at Sinai is a principle differing *in kind*, not degree, from works of faith. The principle of law is a principle differing *in kind*, not degree, from the principle of promise.

Believe Heb. 11:39, which applies to even David and the prophets (v. 32):

And these all, having obtained witness through faith, *did not receive the promise*.

Covenant Theology’s contradiction of Scripture, having it so that Israel realized the promise of the land while under the law, forces what was given on the principle of promise to be inherited on the principle of law. That is the real meaning of claiming that the promise was realized by Israel while under the law. That some *individuals* under the law were saints proves nothing for the Covenantist view. The promises for Israel are *national*, but never were realized nationally during that gross mixture of children of promise and children of flesh, though the promises will be realized when the Deliverer turns away ungodliness from whom? from *Jacob* (Rom. 11:26, etc., etc.); then they all shall be righteous (Isa. 60:21) and under the New Covenant (Heb. 8:8-13). Meanwhile, we Christians have a higher portion, seated in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2).

105. *Collected Writings*, 21:295; see p. 304.

106. “Dead works” are works of the flesh, works of “sin in the flesh,” as “works of righteousness” {Titus 3:5}, i.e., to obtain righteousness. It is the flesh assaying to carry out the precepts of God -- the essence of legalism. The conscience must be cleansed, or purified, from this (Heb. 9:14). Indeed, Heb. 6:1 speaks of “repentance from dead works.” These differ from wicked works {Col. 1:21}. “Dead works” are not in Scripture viewed as “wicked works,” for dead works are works of the law done to obtain merit with God, done by those not quickened by God. Those quickened are enabled to do “good works” {2 Tim. 3:17}. Only God is good, and what is good must come from Him as its source. They are possible because God has implanted faith in the soul. Such works are works of faith.

Chapter 10

The Land-Tenure Covenant *A Conditional Covenant*

We now will look at what C. I. Scofield called the “Palestinian Covenant.”

Previously we noted that there were two givings of the law; i.e., there were two covenants of the law. The first was “pure law,” meaning it was a covenant without the mediation of Moses as was connected with the second giving of the law. Israel never entered the land under the first covenant of law -- and could not, for the covenant was broken and the tables smashed. They entered the land in connection with the second covenant, the *Mosaic* Covenant, with mediation provided so that God could go on with the stiff-necked people,¹⁰⁷ and under a third, conditional covenant specifically regarding tenure in the land.

The land-covenant (Deut. 29-30) is a third covenant, a conditional covenant just as is the Mosaic Covenant. It has the unconditional land-promise to Abraham in view, of course, but not as the actual basis for the proposed entry into the land. Rather, this is another step in the trial of the first man, in the persons of Israel, to show that he is not recoverable from the fall, and that he cannot obtain what God promised on the basis of meritorious performance. The realization of God’s promises rests, of course, on *His* faithfulness, not man’s, for man is constitutionally unfaithful. Conditions do make manifest man’s irremediable ruin. Jehovah did not put the land before them on conditions because man can keep the conditions, but to manifest man’s lostness. The Arminian assertion that ‘God’s commands are man’s enablement’ is about as absurd a notion as I have ever heard in divine matters. The fleshly pretension fathers the absurdity. At any rate, the entry into the land is on the basis of a conditional covenant, but it has in view the unconditional promise to Abraham, which God will sovereignly make good under Christ when He undertakes for Israel to bring them, as the new Israel, under the New Covenant.

The Land and the Unity of God

There is another point to make clear regarding the land, namely its connection with Israel’s testimony to the unity of God in view of idolatry. J. N. Darby wrote:

❖ Another still more signal failure took place after Noah’s. God had made His judgments terribly felt in the deluge, and His providence was thus revealed. What did Satan do? As long as he is unbound he takes possession of the state of things here below. No sooner did God manifest Himself in His providential judgments, than Satan

107. See *Synopsis*, 1:94.

presented himself also as God; he made himself, as it were, God. Is it not written, The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God {1 Cor. 10:20}.

Satan made himself the god of this earth.

Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time . . . and they served *other gods* {Josh. 24:2},

said the Lord to the Israelites. It is the first time that we find God marking the existence of *idolatry*. When it made its appearance, God calls Abraham; and thus, for the first time, appears the call of God to an outward separation from the state of things here below; because Satan having introduced himself as influencing the thoughts of man, as the one whom man was to invoke, it was necessary that the true God should have a people separated from other people, where the truth might be preserved; and consequently all the ways of God towards men turn upon this point -- that here below God called Abraham and his posterity to be the depository of this great truth,

There are none other gods but one (see Deut. 4:35).

Consequently, all the doings of God upon the earth have reference entirely and directly to the Jews, as the center of His earthly counsels and of His government. This is shown us in Deut. 32:8. It was according to the number of the children of Israel that the bounds of the nations were set. It was with reference to Israel that He gave them their habitations.¹⁰⁸ ❖

The Setting of Entry Into the Land

❖ This book {Deuteronomy} takes up Israel just on the borders of Canaan, and insists upon the faithful maintenance of their relationship with God, and on obedience to His commandments, as the only ground on which Israel can enter and continue therein, adding warnings as to the consequence of failure in obedience. It takes, in the main, the ground of their historical state (not of typical forms, presenting the thoughts of God, as the books we have just been considering do). The body of it, after recalling the history of the wilderness, deals with the ordering of Israel in the land under God without a head on earth. The people are under responsibility to walk in obedience, with only God as their king and ruler. In immediate reference, the people are in enjoyment of the promised land under condition of obedience; but feasts, and such like ordinances, look forward to millennial times. At the end the distinction between possessing the land under condition of legal obedience, and by the grace which accomplishes its purpose in spite of failure is definitely brought out.¹⁰⁹ ❖

❖ When the people should have gone over Jordan to take possession of the land of promise (an idea which constantly presents itself), having set up great stones and

108. *Collected Writings*, 2:347.

109. *Synopsis*, 1:220.

plastered them with plaster, they were to write the law upon them. This law contained the conditions on which the land was to be enjoyed.¹¹⁰ ❖

❖ We see, in the book of Deuteronomy, the people, when nearly entering Canaan, put under the principle of obedience, and their enjoyment of the promises dependent on that obedience. Moses recalls to the people all that God had done for them, adding,

The Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear . . . Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do . . . that thou shouldest enter into a covenant with the Lord thy God . . . that he may establish thee today for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob {Deut. 29:4-13}.

As it is said, Moses “set before” them “life and death, blessing and cursing” {Deut. 30:19}. It was a covenant which, in remembrance of the oath made with the fathers, is a covenant of blessing, if they obeyed, and of threatenings, if they disobeyed. God did not promise that they should possess the land, but that they should be blessed *in it*; otherwise, that they should be driven out of it; but that God would show mercy unto them in a far country, if their hearts turned to the Lord. For this reason the apostle quotes a passage here as a pledge of the righteousness of God according to faith, because the observance of the law was impossible in any land except that of Israel. Nevertheless, if they were obedient in heart, and turned to the Lord, they should be heard and delivered. The return under Nehemiah was a partial accomplishment of this promise, and this covenant. But in that return, there was no question of the promises made to Abraham. It was an event that showed the mercy and faithfulness of God, but which was not the fulfilment of His promises and original covenant, although it involved important consequences. The original promises, given unconditionally, and guaranteed by the oath of God, must find a complete fulfilment in all their extent.¹¹¹ This is what still remains for the people of God. Joshua gives the history of their then present and earthly fulfilment; and the book of Judges, that of the fall of Israel in the midst of human enjoyment.

In order, then, to accomplish the full manifestation of the thought and will of God, there was needed, not only the promise made to Abraham, and the mediation (which testified to the complete violation of it), to sustain the weight and truth of God’s promises, in conformity with His justice, until the fulfilment of the promises should take place (a mediation which was the type of Christ’s); but there was also needed the representation of the type of Him who was to be the instrument of their accomplishment, and the center of the blessings they comprised. This must be by *grace* in the midst of a fallen and rebellious people, who were consequently thrown upon the

110. *Synopsis*, 1:241.

111. What is said in Deut. 32 goes farther and deeper: God speaks not according to the covenant, but according to His sovereignty, and His thoughts. Consequently, the joy of the Gentiles with His people is there introduced.

mercy of God. This representation took place in *David* among a people, who, transgressing under the immediate government of God, desired in their wretchedness another king than Him, that they might be like unto the nations. After this filling up of their iniquity, God, in His grace, gave them a king, who was a remarkable type of Christ -- named as king, rejected, driven out, hunted as a partridge on the mountains, but just, patient, and obedient under his sufferings; the hope of Israel, when Israel would not hope in him; filled himself, in the midst of his trials, with all those glorious hopes with which the Spirit of God inspired him; afterwards vanquishing all his enemies, and reigning in glory in Solomon. These are the things which God gave us, to serve as a type of Christ rejected -- Christ the hope of Israel. And in fact the Psalms are the prophecies of the experience or the expression of the sympathy of Christ with all the sufferings of His people. We see the soul of Christ revealed, either in the circumstances which were to befall Him, in the midst of His people (and in that case taking the form of direct prophecy); or in the events which were to happen to His people (and in these He is found by His complete sympathy, as His Spirit expresses itself, “In all their afflictions he was afflicted,” or, as He said, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou *me*?”). In every case they are songs which give, not an historical narration, but the soul, the feelings, the thoughts, the dependence of the spirit of Christ under the circumstances detailed: an admirable thing to give us the most perfect acquaintance with Christ, and throw a light and a personal interest over all the circumstances described in the gospel histories, and in those prophecies whose accomplishment is yet future.¹¹² ❖

Israel Never Possessed the Land on the Basis of Obedience

❖ There is still another covenant in Deut. 29:1:

These are the words of the covenant, which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.

And the subject of this third covenant¹¹³ with the Israelites is this: God makes it with them, in order that under it they, being obedient, might be able to continue to enjoy the land. They did not keep it, and so they were expelled from the territory. They were installed in it at the epoch of this third covenant, and by the keeping of it they would have been maintained there. See vv. 9, 12, 19. Thus we get the principle on which they entered at all into the land of Canaan. But we have also seen that before the law God had promised them the land for a perpetual possession, by covenants and promises

112. *Collected Writings*, 2:145-147.

113. {The previous two covenants were the first giving of the law regarding which Moses broke the two tables when he came upon the golden calf; and then the second giving of the law, with the mediation of Moses added.}

made without condition {to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob}; and it is owing to these promises, by the mediation of Moses, that Israel was spared, and at last enjoyed the land -- enjoyed it, we say, on the terms of the third covenant, made in the plains of Moab.¹¹⁴

❖

❖ The blessings of the Jews, such as they are yet to enjoy, are based upon the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, without condition. These are not touched upon here {Dan. 9} by Daniel. They have never possessed the land under the law, properly speaking; but they have had it, according to the promises made to Moses in favor of the people, at the time of the mediation at Sinai. The land has never been possessed on the principle of obedience to the law, for immediately after it was given, the apostasy of the golden calf came in. Moreover, they have never yet enjoyed the land in quality of Messiah's people. In order to enjoy the land according to the promises, they must enjoy it according to the new covenant; but as yet, neither the Messiah nor the new covenant has introduced the people into it. The new covenant is not yet established with the Jews. The promises cannot yet have been accomplished, because Christ is the true seed of Abraham. The Jews have been rejected, and the accomplishment has never yet taken place. These, viz., the Messiah and the new covenant, are two great elements of the future blessing of this people. The fact is, that God, after the idolatry of the golden calf, placed His people Israel (consult Ex. 32, 33, 34), under a government, founded, half upon law, and half upon grace, for when Moses ascended the mount of Sinai, God declared His name (Ex. 34:6) as

the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.

This was grace, while at the same time He gave him the law of the ten commandments, so that the people were placed under a condition of obedience. This was the condition under which Israel was placed from the time that Moses ascended Sinai the second time. Although he had previously confessed the sins of Israel, and, by his intercession, obtained the pardon, through grace, of the people, yet God, notwithstanding, replaces them under a condition of obedience to the law.

In all that there was no question of Jerusalem, but only of the great principles which were the groundwork of the relationship between God and His people. Later, as in Lev. 26, we have threats made to the people should they fail in their conduct. It is a long chapter, where blessings are promised in the event of obedience. He engages even to place His tabernacle in their midst, and every earthly blessing was promised them (vv. 3-13), "but if ye will not hearken to me" (v. 14), they are menaced with the heaviest judgments and at last are to be cast out of their land (vv. 31-39). This was precisely what befell them, when they were carried captive to Babylon (cp. 2 Chron. 36:21, with Lev. 26:34), and the land enjoyed her Sabbaths, during the time of the desolation of Jerusalem. Once every seven years there was to be a year of rest, but the people had not

114. *Collected Writings*, 2:352.

faith in God to observe it; and the consequence of their not believing God in not allowing the sabbatic years was, that God found this means of enforcing obedience to His law. A promise succeeds this threat,

If they shall confess their iniquity . . . then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, etc., etc. (vv. 40-42),¹¹⁵

that is, they would be brought back. The same principle is presented in Deut. 28, 29. We have conditional blessings and cursings, and subsequently (Deut. 30) promises; that is, grace for those who repent in the land whither they have been carried captive. It was this special case that Daniel had to do with the case: namely, foreseen in the threatenings. I would call your attention also to 1 Kings 9, for there God shows, in answer to Solomon, what He would do in case of infidelity, and He identifies His name with the city of Jerusalem, and particularly with the temple; 1 Kings 8:29. In his prayer he does not ask for the accomplishment of the promises made to Abraham, but only of those made to Moses, which place the people under the condition of obedience when in their land (v. 56). It was this prayer which was answered.¹¹⁶ ❖

God Ever Has

His Unconditional Promises Before Him

❖ . . . With regard to the Jews (at present Lo-ammi, or not my people {Hos. 1}), it is necessary to see that their failure arose from their disobedience to a law which they had promised to observe, and which {disobedience} they consummated in the rejection of Messiah; but they will be restored to the land of Canaan, owing to the free mercy of God, on account of His promises to Abraham, notwithstanding their failure, for which they have been and will yet have to be punished. In Gen. 13:15, we find the land of Canaan given to Abraham and to his seed for ever; and in Gen. 15:13, 14, the prophetic announcement of the captivity of Egypt, and of the recovery thence, and the gift of the land is again made to his seed by an unconditional covenant of God. See also Gen. 17:8. We know that the former part of this took place; that is, the children of Israel were delivered from Egypt, and brought to Mount Sinai, where the law was given. God's dealings with them up to that point had been simply in grace. Then it was (Ex. 19:8) that they put themselves of their own will under the law.

All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.

But they failed under this law, as the sin of the golden calf (Ex. 32) witnessed. This, however, did not touch the promises to Abraham. The intercession of Moses (v.13) is grounded on these promises, and on the oath of God; and it was owing to these that they came into the land at all: so in all God's after dealings with them. Though He chastised

115. {Let the reader take note that we do not read that God will remember the Land-Tenure Covenant. Indeed not, for it is conditional. God remembers the unconditional covenant.}

116. *Collected Writings*, 5:165-166.

them while in the land, owing to their broken engagements, and at length cast them out, yet the promises made to Abraham still remain certain to them. See Lev. 26; Mic. 7:20.

There are two great principles connected with their final restoration, which seem to distinguish it from all previous dealings, however gracious, with them. First, they will be planted in the land, under the new covenant; Jer. 31:31-40. Secondly, they will have the presence of the Messiah; Ezek. 34:23, 24; Ezek. 37:21-28; Ezek. 43:7; Jer. 33:14, 26. When Messiah first came, they rejected Him; but even that, while it filled up the measure of their guilt, did not touch the promises given without condition. Many of those in Isaiah, that in 2 Sam. 7, and those in Amos 9:11-15, remain still unaccomplished.¹¹⁷ ❖

❖ But to pursue our subject -- Leviticus then gives us the whole imposed order, as set in the Land upon this foundation, in this, so to speak, anomalous state, and accordingly we have them, in Lev. 26, set upon the condition of their obedience in it, and warnings given of the consequences; but you may observe that that which God remembers, on their repentance, is not the covenant of Sinai, nor the covenant of Moses, but His own unchangeable covenant with Abraham, which drew Him back, not to their righteousness, but to His own faithfulness for the sake of their fathers. To this, accordingly, the saints, the watchers of the Lord ever looked. This is it that is expressed in Psalms 105 and 106. As in the beginning of Psalm 105, Psalm 106 gives the utter failure of -- rather the acknowledgment and confession of the utter failure of them as standing upon the other ground of the actual covenant, and upon the footing of this unfeigned acknowledgment, as in Leviticus, seeks to be gathered and saved from among the heathen. Psalm 107 is the celebration of the ways of the Lord, as evidenced in the ultimate result in their own land, as detailed in the latter verses. Zacharias speaks in the same spirit, seeing the redemption, or rather viewing the prophet of repentance, the witness of the Redeemer. The Spirit of Christ stands yet upon a higher ground, for it is Immanuel's Land, and, while it supplicates it in weakness, declares it on that higher ground as in Isaiah 63: 16, *et seq*; compare the preceding verses, for there it is fully Immanuel's Land, for the covenant with Abraham was but the development of that covenant with the Seed, by which, as Heir, in the flesh, of the world, He was to take hold upon it. So that this was Abraham's joy, and therefore, through death, the Gentiles were to be let in (though as an earthly inheritance it circled round the members of the children of Israel, the firstborn) to the inheritance of that better resurrection, in which also they stood, and so Abraham received it in a figure, and rejoiced that he should see His day. It was upon the sacrifice of Isaac that the promise was made to the seed, and Abraham's faith was in the power of the resurrection, as Paul testifies, and it is in the power of the resurrection, as Abraham's portion is in it, that all these mercies are established and assured as in Isaiah 55; cp. Acts 13: 34. And it is therefore as "the sure mercies of David." We can see that day spoken of as in Ezekiel, etc.; and cp. Rom. 1,

117. *Collected Writings*, 5:117, 118.

2, etc.¹¹⁸ ❖

Additional Notice of the False Idea that This Covenant is Unconditional

The notion found among some Scofieldians that this covenant is unconditional would not have arisen had it been rightly understood that with the giving of the law Israel was placed under trial to show that the Abrahamic promises, which include the land, could not be obtained by the flesh. The first, fallen man was under trial to show that he was not recoverable from the fall. If God gave a promise, the first man must be tried regarding that promise. Then, in God's proper time, He will make good the promise by sovereign grace and power. This way of God's acting must ever be kept in mind by the reader of Scripture.

The "theology" of the OT is that it is *the history of the first man*. That history closed with the cross. The first man has been displaced by the Second Man. After the cross, man is no longer under trial to see if he is recoverable from the fall. If that great fact had been rightly observed we would not be dealing with a religious system that continues testing of man after the cross.

The same is true concerning circumcision. Under the Mosaic Covenant the test is: will the first, fallen man, under the conditional covenant, express the meaning of circumcision in his life? The Mosaic Covenant has primarily to do with the flesh obtaining righteousness (cp. Rom. 10:31-33; etc.), to which, of course, Israel did not attain. This was true also concerning the land. That aspect of the promises to Abraham likewise came under specific conditional treatment.

We see, then, that this matter of the conditional trial of the first man to show that he was not recoverable falls into two categories:

- (1) spiritual: addressing the first man regarding his personal state concerning righteousness; and
- (2) the land: addressing the first man regarding his fitness to enjoy the blessings of God's provisions.

Both were under conditional trial regarding obtaining them meritoriously.

Regarding this trial concerning the land of promise, Deut. 30:1-10 shows us the anticipated failure, that Israel would be dispersed, and that eventually God would circumcise their heart and they shall return to the land.

Really, what is there in Deut. 29-30 that would lead one to regard this as an unconditional covenant? Amazingly, it has been stated:

It is unconditional, as seen in the statements "God will," without

118. *Notes and Comments*, 3:229-230.

corresponding obligations.¹¹⁹

Deut. 29:1 shows that what was said in Deut. 28 was part of the Land-Tenure Covenant. Let us list the “if’s” that we find:

Deut. 28:1, 2, 9, 13, 14, 15, 58;

Deut. 30:10 (twice).

Possibly a little less shallowly, Ezek. 16:60-62 is put forward as affirming that this so-called Palestinian Covenant is actually unconditional. We may say that all the unconditional covenants are eternal and this one in Ezek. 16:60b is eternal.¹²⁰ In commenting briefly on v. 60 in the *Synopsis*, J. N. Darby remarked:

The free unconditional covenant of promise would be made good to Jerusalem (Ezek. 16:8).

Yes, the covenant that God remembers (Ezek. 16:60a) is indeed an unconditional covenant but it is the Abrahamic Covenant referred to in Ezek. 16:8. May I add that this use of Ezek. 16 sounds like a desperate attempt to have the Land-Tenure Covenant be unconditional?

We must treat the land covenant as an adjunct to the Mosaic Covenant and bundle them together. Note that Ezek. 16:59 speaks of the covenant being broken. That is the Mosaic Covenant. Ezek. 16:60a speaks of the covenant that preceded the Mosaic Covenant, which is, of course, the Abrahamic Covenant. The covenant spoken of in Ezek. 16:60b is the New Covenant of Jer. 31:31-34.

119. Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, Revised and Expanded, Moody Publishers, 2014.

120. “Eternal” means as long as the sun and moon endure, which the reader will discover when he examines all passages that use such language in the OT. These covenants have nothing to do with the eternal state. We are considering earthly covenants in the present creation, not the new heavens and the new earth.

Chapter 11

“Then Stood Up Phinehas and Executed Judgment”

The Covenant of the Priesthood to Phinehas

Israel’s Standing and State (Num. 24 and 25)

It was while Israel stood under the conditional, Mosaic Covenant, that three more gracious, unconditional covenants were given. These augment the Abrahamic Covenant. We noted that while Israel stood under the conditional, Mosaic Covenant, God ever kept before Him the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant, and so also His saints in Israel.

The first of these three covenants is the priesthood for Phinehas’ line, the second is kingship for David’s line, and the third is the New Covenant. All depend on Christ sovereignly implementing their fulfilment in the millennial reign when He is priest upon His throne (Zech. 6:13). That is the time when the purpose which God has purposed upon the whole earth (Isa. 14:26) will come to pass, when the government of the whole earth shall be taken up by the Son of man (Zech. 14:9), and the center of worship shall be at Jerusalem. Then shall the sons of Zadok minister before the Priest upon His throne (Ezek. 40:46; 43:19; 44:15; 48:11), offspring of Phinehas, officiating under the Melchizedec order of priesthood which Christ will exercise as Priest upon His throne (Zech. 6:13), the throne of David (Isa. 9:7; Jer. 22:2,4,30; 29:16), the throne of Solomon (1 K. 1:37), the throne of Jehovah (1 Chron. 29:23).

Israel is in the plains of Moab, just before entry into the land. Jehovah provides His view of Israel from the mountain-top, concerning their unalterable *standing* (Num. 24). Next, we see their actual *state* (Num. 25) just when they are nearing entry into the land. In Phinehas, Jehovah brought forward the warrior-priesthood that suits His holiness, the holiness that should have characterized Israel in the land they were about to enter.

In Num. 24, we see Balaam, having been hired to curse Israel from the mountain top, controlled and compelled¹²¹ by Jehovah to “see the vision of the Almighty” (Num. 24:4). He spoke of Israel (as such) according to Israel’s *standing* in God’s sight.¹²² We have taken note of the fact that the declaration of Israel’s standing (Num. 24), viewed

121. Would this not be, for an Arminian, a violation by God of Balaam’s supposed moral free-will?

122. In Rev. 12:1 we see Israel, not as she was when the man-child was born, but as Israel is in God’s sight in her standing -- indeed, in her millennial glory, when the Man-child rules. Israel’s standing is unalterable, as is the Church’s standing and place.

from the mountain-top, just precedes the evidence of their awful state seen in the plains of Moab (Num. 25). We also take note of the diametrically opposite characters of the two principle men in each chapter: Balaam the diviner (Num. 24) and Phinehas, the holy warrior priest (Num 25).

Balaam was a diviner {Josh. 13:22}, and though he desired to die the death of the righteous {Num. 23:10}, now awaits the judgment due him. His name appears in the awful triad in Jude 11:

Woe unto them! Because they have gone in the way of Cain, and given themselves up to the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

Concerning Cain, his "way" was carefulness to appear religious, but bringing an unbloody sacrifice -- not what spoke of Christ. He was a man of pride, naming a city after his son.

Concerning Balaam, his "error" was religion for personal gain rather than doing the will of God. He had a paid and honored 'ministry.' True ministry comes from God (Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4).

Concerning Korah, his "gainsaying" would set aside the true worship and priesthood of God's appointment. He stood in opposition to Moses (royalty) and Aaron (priesthood), i.e., opposition to Christ, introducing a false worship ("strange fire").

Regarding Balaam, Scripture speaks of his "error," his "way," and his "doctrine." His "error" we have just noticed; his "way" (or path) was loving the reward of unrighteousness (2 Pet. 2:15); his doctrine is (Rev. 2:14) to ensnare the people of God, by causing them to engage in idolatry and fornication.

Balaam's doctrine is that **God should not have a separated people**, that association with the world is good.

Phinehas believed that **God should have a separated people**, clear of idolatry and fornication (these things go together, whether in a physical or a spiritual form).

In the ordering of God, Balaam could not curse Israel. He was compelled to declare the vision of the Almighty. He was compelled to acknowledge Israel's (unalterable) standing. But *Balaam's doctrine* ensnares Israel and leads to Israel's state being manifested. Finally, the unmitigated, brazen effrontery of Zimri, prince of a father's house of the Simeonites, taking Cozbi, the daughter of Zur, the tribal head of a father's house in Midian (Num. 25:14, 15), into his tent,

in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of the whole assembly of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the tent of meeting (Num. 25:6),

-- weeping because of the slaying of those who had joined themselves to Baal-Peor (see Num. 24:5) -- it resulted in this:

THEN STOOD UP PHINEHAS AND EXECUTED JUDGMENT (Psa. 106:30).

Observe:

I have given them thy word, and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, as I am not of the world (John 17:14).

Adulteresses, know ye not that friendship with the world is enmity with God? (James 4:4; see 1 John 2:15-17).

May these Scriptures fasten themselves upon the conscience and soul of the writer and the reader. God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints (Psa. 89:7).

Concerning the one who wanted to die the death of the righteous, we read:

. . . and Balaam the son of Beor they slew with the sword (Num. 31:8).

Balaam's name lives in infamy (Num. 31:16; Deut. 23:4, 5; Josh. 13:22; 24:10; Neh. 13:2; Micah 6:5; 2 Pet. 2:15; Rev. 2:14) while Phinehas' lives in Psa. 106:30.

The Gracious Covenant of the Priesthood Given to Phinehas

I think of the blessed man of Psa. 1 as the Lord Jesus, Who alone answers fully to that Psalm, and it teaches what characterizes the godly. Psa. 2 brings before us God's king whom He will establish upon the hill of His holiness, even Zion, the city of royal grace. The man of Psa. 1 is the godly one suited to be the King of Psa. 2. This is mentioned to bring to bear the paramount importance of holiness before God. Now, though there is only One who has been and is, and will be, perfect as man, God looks for holiness in His own. Is that too much for Him to be looking for in us?

His delight in what Phinehas did was the occasion for bringing out something that is connected with the future, earthly glory of Christ. Christ will be a priest upon His throne (Zech. 6:13) and there must be a priesthood under Him characterized by the holiness we see in the warrior-priest, Phinehas.

And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, in that he was jealous with my jealousy among them, so that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy. Therefore say, Behold, I give unto him *my covenant of peace!* And he shall have it and his children after him, *the covenant of an everlasting priesthood;* because he was jealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel (Num. 25:10-13, emphasis added).

Now, Phinehas represents holy, warrior priesthood, and Christ will have this character of priesthood in the millennium, the sons of Zadok ministering before Him. The jealousy for Jehovah's honor, which characterized Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, will characterize the throne of Christ.

Concerning Phinehas, J. G. Bellett wrote:

Under the Old Testament Scriptures, two persons are distinctly set in the office of the priesthood. Aaron, in Lev. 8 and 9, and Phinehas in Num. 25. The difference between them was this. Aaron was simply *called* into the priesthood, Phinehas *acquired* a title to it. When we come to the Lord Jesus, we find that both these, Aaron and Phinehas, are seen in Him. He was "called of God, as was Aaron." Aaron was a mere called priest. The priesthood of Num. 25 stands in contrast with Aaron's. Phinehas was not called, as was Aaron, but he acquired his title. How did he do this? He made an atonement for Israel, in the day of their great breach, touching the daughters of Baal-peor, and enabled the Lord to look with satisfaction again at His erring camp. Phinehas stood forward to avenge the quarrel of righteousness, and to make atonement for the sin of the people. "And the Lord

spake unto Moses, saying, Phinehas hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel; wherefore say, Behold I give unto him my covenant of peace, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood." Nothing can be finer than this. You could not have a more magnificent light in which to read the Christ of God than in that act of Phinehas. Aaron was never in this way entitled to a covenant of peace. So you have these two Old Testament lights, in which to read the priesthood of the Lord Jesus.¹²³ He was the true Aaron, and the true Phinehas. Both these are brought out here. The blessed Lord Jesus was called into office, as was Aaron; but He was in office because He made an atonement. This earth was like the outside place of the temple, where the brazen altar was. The Lord Jesus is now seated in the sanctuary of the heavens, which God has pitched, and not man, because He has passed by the brazen altar on earth. He has passed it by and has satisfied it. Nothing can be simpler, and yet nothing can be more mysteriously grand. How did God bear witness to the satisfaction of the brazen altar? By rending the veil. Then it is an easy thing to pass in. If God has rent the veil, am I to let it be rent for nothing? If it be now rent, I have as much right to go inside as the Israelites of old were bound to keep outside. By satisfying the altar, He has passed by the rent veil, into the sanctuary in the heavens. All that is brought out here. He glorified not Himself to be made a High Priest. Why is it a matter of honor to be made a High Priest? You'll tell me, that nothing can dignify the Son of God; and I grant it. But let me ask you, Do not men know what it is to have *acquired* honors, as well as *hereditary* honors? The son of a nobleman goes to battle; and may he not acquire honors as well as his hereditary family dignities? And tell me, which will he value the most? Those which he has acquired. He himself is more honored by them. His hereditary dignities are his, and no thanks to him; but his acquired honors are more especially his own. Divine things are illustrated by human things. Who can add anything to Him who is God over all, blessed for ever? But the Son has been in the battle, and acquired honors that would never have been His, if He had not taken up the cause of sinners; and dear and precious honors they are to Him! That word "called" is very sweet in the original. God "saluted," "greeted," Him, when He seated Him in the sanctuary, as He greeted Him when He seated Him on the throne: "Sit thou at my right hand."¹²⁴ The epistle to the Hebrews shows, in the opened heavens, a throne as well as a sanctuary.¹²⁵

The Millennial Fulfilment of

123. Melchisedec was a third (Heb. 7).

124. {We must carefully discriminate certain things that differ. The reader will keep in mind that Christ is *now* on the Father's throne (Rev. 3:21; Heb. 1:3), not yet His own throne, the Davidic throne, in the millennium. Christ is presently exercising a heavenly priesthood in a heavenly sanctuary (Heb. 8:1, 2), in connection with a heavenly people (1 Cor. 15:48) who have a heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1), and who enter there above -- in spirit -- (Heb. 10:19) where our High Priest is. The Christian has no sanctuary on earth. In the millennium, Christ will exercise a priesthood suitable for an earthly sanctuary -- the restored temple -- as the priest after the order of Melchizedec.}

125. "Musings on the Epistle to the Hebrews," *The Present Testimony*, 14:236-237, also printed separately as a book.

the Covenant for Phinehas

Fulfilment in the Sons of Zadok

Therefore say, Behold, I give unto him *my covenant of peace!* And he shall have it and his children after him, *the covenant of an everlasting priesthood;* because he was jealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel (Num. 25:10-13, emphasis added).

Of course, this was never made good while the conditional, Mosaic Covenant was in force; nor will it be made good until Christ does so when He is priest upon His throne in the millennial reign. Thus we read in Zech. 6:13:

the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

That "counsel of peace" is between Jehovah and the Melchisedec priest on His throne. That counsel of peace involves the "covenant of peace" given to Phinehas. These things will be in force during the millennial reign of Christ.

But how does God actually fulfil His gracious covenant with Phinehas? Christ is not in the line of Phinehas, and the order of the priesthood will then be according to Melchizedec, not Aaron. The answer lies in the fact that the sons of Zadok are in the line of Phinehas, and they shall have the priesthood under Christ (Ezek. 40:46; 43:19; 44:15; 49:11). Thus, Phinehas' line will be under the "covenant of peace," made good by Christ. While the sons of Zadok are of the Aaronic line, they function under the Melchizedec priesthood, a priesthood held in the power of an indissoluble life, life taken in resurrection by Christ, founded on the once-for-all finished work. The millennial sacrifices derive their character from this Melchizedec priesthood, a priesthood founded on the once-for-all finished work, and are therefore *memorial* of that work, suitable for an earthly people all made righteous (Isa. 60:21) -- for the Deliverer will have come to Zion and have turned away ungodliness from Jacob (Rom. 11:26), blessed under the New Covenant, the law written in their minds and hearts.

The officiating priests, then, will be the sons of Zadok, offspring of Phinehas. Phinehas' line will have that priesthood, under the order of Melchizedec, for the entire millennium. "*Everlasting* priesthood" does not indicate that this will be true in eternity, but for the entire reign of Christ. The OT statements concerning Israel's blessings being *everlasting* means as long as the present sun and moon subsist; i.e., as long as the present earthly order goes on. The earthly, millennial order will pass away and will not be present in the new earth.

Solomon and Zadok

Concerning the priest Zadok in Solomon's time, note that there was another important priest, Abiathar. Solomon thrust Abiathar from the priesthood to fulfil the word of Jehovah concerning the line of Eli (1 Kings 2:27);¹²⁶ and Zadok was made the priest (1 Chron. 29:22). David and Solomon together typify the coming and reign of Christ. Solomon typifies Christ as the Prince of Peace. When he came to the throne he began to judge evils and bring matters into adjustment suitable for the kingdom (1 Kings 1, 2). Thus, Solomon's making Zadok the priest is typical of Christ establishing the sons of Zadok before

126. Awful as was the deed of Doeg the Edomite, Saul's servant, in killing the priests at Nob, observe that it was a place where those of the line of Eli lived. God's government is sure; its wheels are terrible (Ezek. 1).

Himself under the order of the Melchizedec priesthood, in the millennium (see Ezek. 40:46; 43:19; 44:15). Remarkably, Ezek. 48:11 identifies the act of Phinehas with the sons of Zadok, as does Ezek. 44:15. Such is the result of the faithfulness of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest. Is there no lesson for our life in that? Does God mark holiness or does He not? Do we learn from it or do we not?

Abiathar was of the line of that Eli of the early chapters of 1 Samuel. Eli was not in the line of Phinehas, but in the line of Ithamar, Eleazar's brother. Somehow this spoilation of order came about and it was not set right until Solomon, type of the coming Prince of Peace upon His throne, set it right. It is a remarkable type. Christ will set everything right before God. In Zech. 4:10 we read of the plummet in the hands of Zurubbabel who was then building the house of God -- typical of Him who will build the millennial temple (Zech. 6:12, 13). The plummet is for setting things right vertically, and in connection with the order of God's house -- sets them right *with God's mind*. Thus shall the King and Priest upon His throne (Zech. 6:12-13) set everything right according to the mind of God -- without the failures of David and Solomon.

The Moral Character of the Priesthood of Phinehas

Before leaving the matter of Phinehas, let us note that Scripture brings Phinehas before us in connection with guarding against the entrance of evil, examination of possible evil, and giving character to the judgment of evil. We have already considered Num. 25 and so pass on.

In 1 Chron. 9:19, 20 we learn that Phinehas was the ruler over the Levites that were keepers of the entrance to the court of the tabernacle. The Phinehas character should be stamped upon that guardianship -- to keep anything evil out.

When Jehovah's judgment was to be executed on Midian, Moses sent

Phinehas the son of Eliazar the priest, to the war, and the holy instruments {of the sanctuary}, even {margin: and} the alarm trumpets in his hand (Num. 31:6).

No doubt this was meant to give character to the judgment on Midian according to the character of Phinehas, but the people failed in it and Moses was angry with them.

In Josh. 22 there was a question about the altar of Ed (i.e., witness) that those built who did not possess land across the Jordan. Ten princes plus Phinehas went over to examine the character of the altar. It was an examination to see if there was evil.

Judg. 18-21 is an appendix to the book of Judges showing some things that happened earlier in the times of the Judges. Judg. 19 records the infamy of the Benjaminites and Judg. 20 Israel's response to it. The two defeats of Israel in Judg. 20 show the lack of Israel's self-judgment in undertaking to deal with the Benjaminites. Judah's saying "who shall go up first" bode ill for the endeavor to judge the evil. Only when they wept and sacrificed properly before the Lord did Phinehas step forward. Now, this last-recorded act of Phinehas should be viewed along with the first recorded one, in Num. 25. There, he rose up from among his brethren -- not consulting them --

and dealt with the evil summarily with Jehovah's jealousy, making an atonement for Israel. In this last act, he held back until self-judgment was manifested in Israel. Each was right in its place. Israel went to Bethel, where the tent of meeting was. There they abode and fasted, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before Jehovah. Typically speaking, this means that their acceptance (the burnt-offering) and the ground of their peace (peace-offering) was in the substitute (looking on to Christ). *Then* Phinehas says those remarkable words:

Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother, or shall I cease? (Judg. 20:28).

I do not take these words to mean that he had been involved the first two times, but rather that he identified himself with Jehovah's people and their failure. So, now that Israel had been humbled, and acknowledged their state before Jehovah, Phinehas comes forward to give character to any further dealing with Benjamin. "Shall I," he says. This is not pride. I learn in Judg. 20, in the crowning act of holiness of Phinehas, that this priest was a humble man.

How suited he was to receive the covenant of the priesthood, to be fulfilled by a greater than Phinehas, even the Melchizedec Priest upon His throne. He will come from Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Rom. 11:26). And Phinehas was deeply in sympathy with turning ungodliness away from Jacob.

We do well to ever remember that we have to do with One who is "the holy, the true" (Rev. 3:7).

Chapter 12

Kingship in Israel:

Introductory Observations on Its Place in the Ways and Purpose of God

❖ The Books of Kings show us the kingly power established in all its glory; its fall, and God's testimony in the midst of the ruin; with details concerning Judah after the rejection of Israel, until Lo-ammi {Hos. 1} had been pronounced upon the whole nation. In a word, it is the trial of kingly power placed in the hands of men, not absolute, as in Nebuchadnezzar, but kingly power having the law for its rule; as there had been a trial of the people set in relationship with God by means of priesthood. Out of Christ nothing stands.

Although the kingly power had been placed under the responsibility of its faithfulness to Jehovah; and although it had to be smitten and punished whenever it failed in this, it was yet at this time established by the counsels and the will of God. It was neither a David, type of Christ in his patience, who, through difficulties, obstacles, and sufferings, made himself a way to the throne; nor a king who, although exalted to the throne and always victorious, had to be a man of war to the end of his life; a type in this, I doubt not, of what Christ will be in the midst of the Jews at His return, when He will commence the coming age by subjecting the Gentiles to Himself, having been already delivered from the strivings of the people (Psa. 18:43, 44). It was the king according to the promises and the counsels of God, the king established in peace, head over God's people to rule them in righteousness, son of David according to the promise, and type of that true Son of David, who shall be a priest upon His throne, who shall build the temple of Jehovah, and between whom and Jehovah there shall be the counsel of peace (Zech. 6:13).

Let us examine a little the position of this kingly power according to the word; for responsibility and election met in it, as well as the foreshadowing of the kingdom of Christ. In ch. 7 of the Second Book of Samuel we have seen the promise of a son whom God would raise up to David, and who should reign after him, to whom God would be a father, and who should be His son, who should build the temple of Jehovah, and the throne of whose kingdom God would establish for ever. This was the promise: a promise, which, as David himself understood, will be fully accomplished only in the Person of Christ (1 Chron. 17:17). Here is the responsibility:

If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men (2 Sam. 7:14) ;

which David well understood also (1 Chron. 28:9). The book which we are considering shows us that this responsibility was fully declared to Solomon (1 Chron. 9:4-9). Psa. 89:28-37 sets the two things also before us very plainly, namely, the certainty of God's counsels, His fixed purpose, and the exercise of His government in view of man's responsibility.

In the Books of Chronicles we have only what relates to the promises (1 Chron. 17:11-14), for reasons of which we will speak when we examine that book.

From all these passages, we perceive that the royalty of David's family was established according to the counsels of God and the election of grace; that the perpetuity of this royalty, dependent on the faithfulness of God, was consequently infallible; but that at the same time the family of David, in the person of Solomon, was in fact placed upon the throne at that time under the condition of obedience and faithfulness to Jehovah.¹²⁷ If himself or his posterity were to fail in faithfulness, God's judgment would be executed; a judgment which nevertheless would not prevent God's fulfilling that which His grace had assured to David.

The Books of Kings contain the history of the establishment of the kingdom in Israel under this responsibility, that of its fall, of the longsuffering of God, of God's testimony amid the ruin which flowed from the unfaithfulness of the first king, and finally that of the execution of the judgment, a longer delay of which would but have falsified God's own character, and the testimony that should be given to the holiness of that character. Such delay would have borne a false testimony with respect to that which God is.

We see that, after Solomon's reign, the greater part of the narrative refers to the testimony given by the prophets Elijah and Elisha in the midst of Israel, and in general to that kingdom which had entirely departed from God. Little is said of Judah before the complete ruin of Israel, i.e., the 10 northern tribes. After this the ruin of Judah, brought on by the iniquity of their kings, is not long delayed, although there were moments of restoration.¹²⁸ ❖

A Survey of God's Ways from Moses to Christ

It is good to trace God's ways with Israel from Moses to Christ, observing where kingship comes in. J. N. Darby wrote as follows.

❖ Let us . . . consider the unfolding of the relationship of God with the world, and with men, in this people: after that we will return to their history. From this time we see the three great instruments of these relations, holding their place in the midst of them: Moses was the representative of royalty among the people of God.

Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.

And he was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel

127. This is the universal order of God's ways: to set up blessing first under the responsibility of man, to be accomplished afterwards according to His counsels by His power and grace. And it is to be noted that the first thing man has always done is to fail. Thus Adam, thus Noah, thus under law, thus the priesthood, thus as here the royalty under law, so Nebuchadnezzar where it was absolute, so, I add, the church. Already in the apostles' days all sought their own, not the things of Jesus Christ. God continues His own dealings in grace in spite of this, all through, besides His government according to responsibility in the public body in this world, but a government full of patience and grace.

128. *Synopsis*, 1:371-373.

were gathered together {Deut. 33:4-5}.

Aaron held the place of the great high priest; and Miriam as the prophetess:

For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam (Micah 6: 4).

See also Ex. 15; Num. 13. Thus we see in the wilderness the model of the three mediatorial instruments of the power of God -- one, the communication of His will; the second, the means of our approach to Him; and the third, the instrument of His government, the recipient of His power.

Moses at different periods filled all these three functions. Thus also in the plagues inflicted on the proud Egyptians, Aaron acted as prophet, Moses as God to Pharaoh, but that changes nothing in the main. During the union of the two principles of government and calling, these things were fully developed. But under responsibility in these things, the Jewish people corrupted themselves in each one of them.

Under the priesthood (when God was their King, and there were only judges raised up from time to time to preserve them in their inheritance from the occasions of misery produced by their unbelief), they were connected with God through the medium of the priest. Shiloh was the place where God had put His name; but what was the end of it? A witness of judgment to all generations.

Go ye now [saith the Lord] to my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel . . . I will do unto this house . . . as I have done to Shiloh (Jer. 7:12).

Under the priesthood there was complete corruption, even in the priests; as we see in 1 Samuel 2, and in the touching scene described in ch. 3, which marked *Ichabod* on the people of God. I say not that the priesthood was abolished; far from it: it was, on the contrary, to be an example of the patience of God, until He came who could efficiently fill all its functions.

Samuel was the representative of the prophetic line, a *judge* also, governing the people by the witness of God -- a witness given, as we have seen, against the actual state of the priesthood. It is for this reason Peter says, in Acts 3,

All the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after.

This then was God's government by prophets; yet the people were not yet satisfied with it, but desired a king: and God gave them

a king in his anger, and took him away in his wrath (Hos. 13:11).

A king chosen according to the flesh, when God was their King, served only to show the weakness of all that man did, the folly of all he desired. Nevertheless, the kingship of Christ over His people was ever in God's designs. And He gave them a king after His own heart, and David and Solomon furnished the type of the kingship of Christ: one, in suffering and overcoming all his enemies, after complete obedience; the other, as reigning in peace and glory over a happy, obedient, and prosperous people. There the picture ended! Man may furnish types, but can never fill the functions of that which is true, and which shall be fulfilled in Christ. The repose and glory which Solomon enjoyed were the cause of his fall. He kept not his uprightness in the midst of the gifts

of God, but, drawn aside by his wives, he followed other gods. Kingship, the last resource of God for maintaining His relationship with His people, was corrupted, just in that particular in which Israel should have been His witness. The kingdom failed, and was divided: nevertheless, the house of David had one tribe, in the wisdom of God, for the love of David His servant, and of Jerusalem, the city which He had chosen among all the tribes of Israel; for the calling of David was a calling according to grace, and the choice of Jerusalem was the choice of God. See 1 Chron. 21:22; 22:7-14; 1 Kings 11:13.

After that, the longsuffering of God waited, teaching, reproving, and forewarning by His prophets. For

the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place: but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees (2 Chron. 36:15).

The rest of their sorrowful history is short: the kingdom was made over to the Gentiles. God, to fulfil His designs, preserved and restored a remnant, in order that His Christ should be set forth in the midst of the people,

a minister of the circumcision, to confirm the promises made to the fathers {Rom. 15:8}.

The prophet was manifested, the king was born but rejected. The history of this all-important event is given us, though shortly, in the controversy which Jesus had with all classes of the Jews, at the close of His ministry; Matt. 21, 23, etc. At length He sent unto them, saying,

They will reverence my Son. But when the husbandmen saw the Son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him* {Matt. 21:37-39}.

And their judgment was given, and their desolation declared in these tender words:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord {Matt. 23:37-39}.

Having accomplished His ministry to the people as a prophet, and maintained their cause (notwithstanding their being under a righteous judgment *until that day*) like Aaron, not yet come from within the veil (they therefore consequently ignorant of their fate), He will return as a King, and fill the throne of David His father. He shall be a Priest upon His throne, according to the promise:

For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim. Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days (Hos. 3:4, 5).

In those days, the government and the principle of calling shall be united under the reign of Christ; and

Jehovah shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Jehovah, and his name one {Zech. 14:9}.

Nevertheless, Jerusalem shall be built and safely inhabited; and God shall say,

It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God (Zech. 13, 14).¹²⁹ ❖

Having reviewed the over-all history from Moses to the cross, let us now consider some points in a little more detail.

“The Kingdom Was Set Up Conditionally”

We noted this fact in the above quotation. It deserves special emphasis. Just as the promises to Abraham were taken up by Israel on a conditional basis, under a conditional covenant, so was the introduction of kingship in the immediate descendants of David conditional. The first man must be tried conditionally regarding those things God has purposed to make good by His Christ, by sovereign grace, after the first man has been proved incompetent in every respect and unrecoverable from the fall. A short quotation from J. N. Darby regarding the conditionality of the kingdom is apropos here.

❖ I will add a few passages which clearly prove that, historically, God threatened the Jews to set them aside -- looked at as placed under the dispensation of the law -- and that He did set them aside in consequence of their sins. Jehovah never forsakes the unconditional covenant which He made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and He often recalls it in grace. Read Deut. 8:19, 20; 28:63-68; 29:28; 30:17, 18. All these passages show plainly that judgment has fallen upon Israel by reason of their sins. By this judgment the relationship formed between God and Israel under the law, these relationships, the existence of which depended on the people's obedience (Ex. 19:5), have been entirely interrupted and even terminated. The first covenant, that of Sinai, has been suppressed -- abolished, as the Epistle to the Hebrews says, in order to give place to another.

The word declares the same thing with regard to the kingly power, which was the means God in His goodness used to maintain His relationships with Israel. The relationships of Israel with God by its means were broken through the iniquity of the kings; 1 Chron. 28:7. The kingdom was set up conditionally. Compare 2 Chron. 7:17-22, where we see that the whole nation has to undergo the consequences of unfaithfulness. We see (2 Kings 23:26, 27) that the judgment of Israel was in fact brought on by the iniquity of king Manasseh. And Israel has become *Lo-ammi* (that is to say, the relationships between God and Israel have been entirely broken off), and that, as the prophets had so often said and repeated to the Israelites, on account of their iniquity. And I would call your attention to this, the covenant and dispensation have

129. *Collected Writings*, 2:138-141.

been set aside. God used perfect patience; but when even His Son, who could have restored all things, was rejected by the Jews, there was no longer any way for maintaining them in blessing on the old footing. The vineyard was taken from this people and entrusted to others.¹³⁰ ❖

Kingship in Israel: First the Natural, Then the Spiritual God's Ways in Establishing Kingship in Israel God Has Christ in View

Recall that JND had pointed out:

I have quoted passages in direct proof that the existence of the royal authority of Saul was by an act of sin; and that it was not what God willed to maintain as that which He had established according to His will; and that the royal authority of David was established by the very act and by the will of God during the very existence of the other.¹³¹

The ways of God concerning kingship in Israel are:

1. by the will of the flesh, first the trial of the flesh in Saul;
2. then by the will of God, the kingship of David, type of Christ -- and the giving of His gracious covenant of kingship for the house of David -- followed by failure, of course; and,
3. then the making good of kingship in Christ, in the millennial reign.

The introduction of kingship in David, the type of Christ, points to the other great earthly glory of Christ connected with His being a priest upon His throne (Zech. 6:13). As has been noted, He will combine in His person these two offices, bringing everything earthly under His headship as the Son of man and son of David -- its government and its worship. We shall keep in mind that Christ's millennial, Melchizedec priesthood, combined with kingship, has the Phinehas character of warrior-priesthood. The execution of judgment will be the judgment of the King-Priest.

So, in the millennium Christ will be King upon the throne of David (cp. Rom. 1:3, 4; Psa. 110), for it is in the resurrected Son of David that the Davidic Covenant will be made good. In Zechariah, which speaks much of the future glory of Israel, the two offices of Priest and King are symbolized in the vision in Zech. 4. The two sons of oil point to these two offices of Christ *as fed by the power of the Spirit of God*. All that Christ did and said, when He was here, was empowered by the Spirit. So will it be in the millennium. Christ is this great millennial light. In the vision, the light is fed by 49 pipes (7 x 7) from the ever-full bowl of oil above the lampstand. It denotes the plentitude of the Spirit's empowering (Christ received from the Father the Spirit without measure, John 3:34.) Such will be its display in the millennial earth. The

130. *Collected Writings*, 4:276, 277.

131. *Collected Writings*, 4:253.

kingdom will commence with the final feast of tabernacles (booths), on the 1335th day (Dan. 12), which brings Israel to the longed-for blessing. The feast of booths speaks of the joy of the kingdom. This feast has an eighth day, and that points to what lies beyond that future, mediatorial kingdom of Christ in this present creation, pointing to the new heavens and the new earth.¹³²

But First the Natural, Then the Spiritual

The failure of the priesthood in the house of Eli is particularly marked, with God raising up the Nazarite judge, Samuel, who was the instrument for anointing David. But before David was king, the people must have a king that pleases the flesh -- for Saul was a man of the flesh. It is another illustration of 1 Cor. 15:46:

But that which is spiritual [was] not first, but that which is natural, then that which is spiritual.

In the types, Egypt typifies the world. Amalek typifies the flesh, especially as acted on by the Enemy. In the ways of God, it is not mere coincidence that an Amalekite had a hand in the death of Saul (2 Sam. 1). Saul's attempted suicide, finished by the hand of an Amalekite, was the end of Saul. How sorry a thing that a saint like Jonathan did not go with David in his rejection, and so he fell with Saul. Do we take a place of rejection with the rejected One?

The Amalekite young man (the flesh in its energy) saw great advantage in slaying Saul. He took Saul's crown and bracelet and hastened to David, to ingratiate himself with David. Thus reasons the flesh for its advantage. The Amalekite had no idea that David would regard this as slaying Jehovah's anointed. Apparently the Amalekite had no idea that it had been in David's power to kill Saul. The flesh has no affinity with godliness and its exercises before God.

The Amalekite said, "I happened by chance to be on mount Gilboa" (2 Sam. 1:6). "Chance," indeed. Saul turned around and there was an Amalekite behind him. "Chance," indeed. God controls the circumstances. It was altogether fitting that a man of the flesh be slain by the flesh. Be that as it may, David's judgment was executed on the Amalekite. Let us learn from Saul's course and end.

The hand of God, not circumstances, controlled the events on mount Gilboa:

And Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he committed against Jehovah, because of the word of Jehovah which he kept not (see 1 Sam. 15), and also for having inquired of a spirit of Python, asking counsel of it; and he asked not counsel of Jehovah; therefore he slew him, and transferred the kingdom to David the son of Jesse (see 1 Chron. 13, 14).

God uses instrumentalities to execute His judgments, but woe to those instrumentalities. God did not make Judas to have the Judas character, but Judas being what he was, was chosen by the Lord Jesus to be one of the twelve, knowing what Judas was from the

132. These things are discussed in some detail in my *The Seven Set Feasts of Jehovah*, available from the publisher.

very beginning (John 6:64). Woe unto Judas! Woe unto the Amalekite. Woe unto Pharaoh. The sovereign One controlled the circumstances, using these instrumentalities.

Saul Provisional,

David the Type of the Man of God's Purpose

Just as Shiloh was a provisional place for the Ark of the covenant, to bring out the state of the people,¹³³ before God brought the Ark to Jerusalem the city of choice and purpose -- just so, concerning Kingship, Saul was merely *provisional*, in order to bring out the state of the people regarding Kingship. This is God's way in exposing what the flesh is. It was His *purpose* to bring David (the great type of Christ) to the throne, in order to characterize the throne in Israel as "the throne of David" on which Christ is to sit (I am not speaking of a literal throne, but what it represents); but even more, to characterize that throne as "*the throne of Jehovah*" (1 Chr. 29:23). This is remarkable; and that throne of David, the throne of Jehovah, is the same throne which Christ will occupy in the millennium. It is morally the same throne, just as the millennial temple will be the same house, morally speaking, as the temple Solomon built -- just as in the case of the house built in Haggai's day; that house was the same house (Hag. 2:3). We must think of *moral continuity* in God's earthly dealings with Israel. However, the final implementation of these things follows after the **natural Israel**, under the conditional Mosaic Covenant, is set aside, and the restoration of Israel as the **spiritual Israel** (Isa. 60:21; Rom. 11:26), under the gracious New Covenant. Thus are flesh and sovereign grace contrasted in God's ways. Meanwhile, while Israel after the flesh is set aside, God is doing a heavenly work, forming a heavenly people, giving them Christ's place before Himself (Eph. 1).

After these things I will return, and will rebuild the tabernacle of David which is fallen, and will rebuild its ruins, and will set it up, so that the residue of men may seek the Lord, and all the nations on whom my name is invoked, saith [the] Lord, who does these things known from eternity (Acts 15:16, 17).

It is clear that God will rebuild the tabernacle of David which is now fallen down. Do you not see the moral continuity in God's earthly ways concerning Israel? The church is not an earthly people; the church is not an age. It is a gathering out of a people for His name (Acts 15:14). It is not an intercalated age, but an interposed heavenly calling -- during the interval in God's dealings with Israel -- while the Mosaic age rolls on; and

133. Shiloh did not answer to Deut. 12 concerning the place of God's choice. Psalms 78:67, 68 says:

And he rejected the tent of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim, But chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved.

Ephraim means fruitfulness, and speaks of service. Judah means praise, and speaks of worship. Service has its place, but worship is first and should be formative of the character of true service. The Father seeks worshipers (John 4). Yes, the Levite is, so to speak, the servant of the priest.

God's choice of Zion was marked by the fire falling on the sacrifice in the threshing floor of Ornan (1 Chron. 21:26; 22:1). There is a familiar order in Shiloh first, then Zion.

when that gathering is completed, God will begin with Israel again.

The church is especially connected with the heavenly side of God's glory in Christ, while Israel is especially connected with God's glory in Christ in the earthly sphere, all to be united under His headship in the administration of the fulness of times (Eph. 1:10), i.e., what we call the millennium.

Concerning Israel's place and our place, not moral continuity, but *discontinuity* is the word that indicates the vast difference. The church is not the spiritual Israel. The spiritual Israel is the new Israel under the gracious New Covenant when Christ is the Melchizedec priest upon the throne of David. Presently, Christ is on the Father's throne, awaiting the setting up of His own throne (as man), in which the present overcomers shall share (Rev. 3:21). In contrast, Israel shall be under the rule of that throne, as will the millennial nations. Blessed Israel will have an earthly sanctuary in Jerusalem, with an officiating priesthood, the sons of Zadok, offspring of Phinehas. In contrast, our sanctuary is in the heavens, as Hebrews expressly shows {Heb. 8:1, 2; 10:19}, and was typified by the Tabernacle, which Hebrews says {9:9}. Thus, while Christ presently exercises a heavenly priesthood in an Aaronic character, it is a heavenly order; and in the millennium it will be the Melchisedec order.¹³⁴

We turn now to an excellent article that appeared in *The Bible Treasury*, vol. 12, which brings before us Saul and David as reflecting the first man and the second Man. The trial of the first, fallen, man precedes the establishment of the second Man. It is necessary to understand this, and its bearing on the unfolding of the ways of God, to apprehend God's purpose to glorify Himself in Christ in the heavenly and earthly spheres united under His headship (Eph. 1:10).

Saul and David: or, The responsible Man, and the Man of God's Choice

{All of the following headings have been added to extracts from this article taken from *The Bible Treasury*, vol. 12:202, 211, 225.}

God's Purpose for Israel was to Provide a King

In Deut. 17:15-20 God made provision for the day when Israel should desire a king. From whence he was to be taken, what he was not to do, as well as what he was to do -- these were set forth by the Lawgiver in that book, and in that portion of it (chs. 12-29) which treats of laws to be observed by the people when in the enjoyment of their land. Israel entered Canaan; Joshua, and the elders who survived him, passed away; judges were raised up as needed; but as yet no king was appointed over Israel, the only attempt

to set one up, which was made previous to the days of Samuel, having proved a miserable failure (Judg. 9). A king, however, was clearly contemplated by God; and His purposes could not, and cannot, be accomplished without one. Hannah spoke of the king (1 Sam. 2:10), but she never saw him. Her first-born, Samuel, however, was commissioned to anoint David in the house of his father Jesse, and in the presence of his brethren, to be the first king on that throne (1 Chron. 29:23) which is yet to be filled publicly by the Lord Jesus Christ. But before God marked out David for this office, there was one reigning, by divine permission, over the twelve tribes of Israel. Saul had been anointed by Samuel to be captain over God's people Israel, to save them out of the hand of the Philistines, for God had looked upon His people, because their cry had come unto Him (1 Sam. 9:16).

The People Demand a King to Fight Ammonites

Saul was given to Israel in answer to their request. But was this request unforeseen by God? A sceptic may affirm that the portion of Deuteronomy above referred to could not have been extant, or known, to the prophet, else why did he seek to turn the people from their purpose? The fact was that they asked for a king through unbelief. . . . And far worse than the personal slight put on Samuel was the rejection of the Lord as their King, for the proximate cause of their request was the invasion of Israel's territory east of Jordan, by Nahash, king of the children of Ammon (1 Sam. 12:12). . . . Scripture details all this to us (1 Sam. 8-12), giving the clue to Israel's actions, and furnishing us with a key, the key by which, if any difficulty arises in the mind about Deut. 17, it can be satisfactorily explained; whereas the sceptic would settle the question, as he thinks, by the denial that Deut. 17:14-20 is God's revelation by Moses. The law gave directions about the king, and guidance also for his conduct; but though foretelling the establishment of the kingdom, it did not prescribe the conditions under which they should prefer their request. Did, then, the existence of the law in Deuteronomy diminish their guilt in the matter? Assuredly not. They were wrong in asking for their king when and how they did, and, as the history shows, he became a hindrance to them. But to any true-hearted person among them, how comforting such a portion of the law must have been, as it showed that, whatever in their wilfulness and unbelief, they might do, God had given directions which, if carried out, would be for the welfare of all concerned when a king should be set over them. A saint of Samuel's day would surely have valued that law as a proof of Jehovah's forethought for His people. A critic of this day would deny its authenticity as part of the law given by Moses. The people's wish was for a king to fight their battles with the Ammonites; the Lord's thought was that the king should save them out of the hand of the Philistines (1 Sam. 9:16). Saul answered to the desire of Israel, but fell miserably short of the thoughts of God. Had God, in the days of Samuel, ceased to care for His people? Israel evidently seemed to think this. They considered only the pressing evil of the moment, that of Nahash, the Ammonite, acting against them from without. The Lord thought of a worse evil, the power of the uncircumcised within the land. Nothing less than deliverance from that would meet His

134. See JND's remarks in chapter 13 on "Kingship in View of the Priesthood Previously Established".

desires on their behalf. And David, in whose choice the people had no part, and for whom they had expressed no wish, carried out the mind of God as to the Philistines, by first slaying their champion, and subsequently subduing them, and taking Metheg-Ammah, or Gath, out of their hands (2 Sam. 8:1; 1 Chron. 17:1); and finally destroying, with his captains, the remnant of the giants that remained (2 Sam. 21:15-22). . .

The Character of Saul and of David

Between these two -- both kings by divine appointment -- there are great and important differences. Saul was not a converted man, though, after his anointing by Samuel, God gave him another heart, so that the aim of his life was changed, and his thoughts ran so far in another channel (1 Sam. 10:9). David was a saint of God, a man after His own heart (1 Sam. 13:14). Saul too, until he met Samuel, at the instigation of his servant, seems not to have known him. The servant, judging from his language, knew something of the man of God, whereas his master was in ignorance about him (1 Sam. 9:6); yet the prophet lived within the limits of the tribe of Benjamin, to which Saul and his family belonged. And the yearly circuit of Samuel to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpeh was all within the territory of little Benjamin. Kish was a mighty man of power, and the character of his son was evidently, in his native city, well known (1 Sam. 10:12); but to Saul, the man of God, the judge, the prophet was, it would appear, a stranger. Could that have been the case had grace previously worked on Saul's heart, and brought him to know God? With David, how different! Tending his father's flock by night, his thoughts turned to God (Psa. 8); and before he entered the lists against Goliath, he had experienced what the power of God could effect, and had known deliverance in the hour of peril (1 Sam. 17:34-86). Again, Saul comes before us as the responsible man, but David as the man of God's purpose, these two illustrating in some degree the first man and the second Man -- Adam and the Lord Jesus Christ. As the responsible man, the continuance of Saul's dynasty depended on his obedience (1 Sam. 13:18). David received the kingdom unconditionally. One command only was given to Saul, namely, to wait seven days at Gilgal for Samuel, but that one command he failed to keep (1 Sam. 10:8; 13:18). In this he resembled Adam. If he had been entrusted with a number of commands from the prophet, and had kept all but one; or if he had been commissioned to do some great thing, which had overtasked his powers to accomplish, his weakness would have been manifested certainly, and we might have regarded him as an unfortunate person; but no such lenient judgment can be passed upon him. All he had to do was to wait for Samuel, and it was just in this that he failed. The Philistines pressing upon Israel, Saul could not trust God; so he offered a burnt-offering, and forfeited, for himself and his posterity, the kingdom over Israel {1 Sam. 15:28}. How closely did he resemble Adam, first, in distrusting God, and next, in throwing the blame of his disobedience on the one who had given him the command! . . .

Adam charged his sin upon God, --

The woman whom thou gayest me to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat (Gen. 3:12).

Saul held Samuel accountable for his failure:

Thou camest not within the days appointed {1 Sam. 13:11-12}. . .

But the consequences of his sin were not to be confined to himself. His posterity would share in them, for God had sought Him a man after His own heart to be captain over His people, and that man was not of the house of Saul. In this again does Saul resemble Adam, all of whose posterity are involved in the consequences of his act, and another, the second Man, is the One to whom God has turned to accomplish all His will.

The Responsible King and the Burnt Offering

Saul had disobeyed, yet he seemed to honor God, for he would not engage in battle till he had offered his burnt-offering. In this there is instruction for us. If God has acted in any remarkable way in the past, there is the tendency in those who have not really the divine mind, for their present circumstances, to resort to the imitation of something, which formerly done, whether in obedience to a divine command, or resulting from spiritual guidance, was fruitful in happy results. Thus Israel, on the first occasion that they met the Philistines at Ebenezer, sought to make use of the ark as a charm, and so brought it, unauthorised by God, into the camp. In the days of Joshua the ark had been in the camp, and had preceded the armed men round the walls of Jericho, till they fell. But we never read of Joshua making use of the ark in a similar manner again. The Israelitish warriors, however, in the days of Eli, evidently recalling to mind that striking passage in their history, commanded its presence among them (1 Sam. 4:3, 4), but only to suffer the most humiliating defeat they had ever known.

Israel was smitten, and they fled every man to his tent, and there was a very great slaughter, for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen: and the ark was taken, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain.

Was it from lack of power that God did not give them the victory? No, for twenty years after, on the same battle-field, at Ebenezer, God gave to Israel a remarkable and decisive victory. Assembled at Mizpeh, not for war, but for confession before God, the Philistines came up in force against them. Alarmed at the advance of the foe, they entreated Samuel to pray for them. The prophet, however, having the mind of God, first offered a burnt-offering, and then cried to God. By his action as we know, he brought the death of Christ in remembrance before God, and the Lord answered his cry by thundering upon the Philistines, and discomfiting them, so that they were smitten before Israel, and then, for the first time, was the Philistine yoke of servitude removed from the neck of the people (1 Sam. 7:18, 14). The Philistines were subdued, *kana*, a term not used of Israel's enemies since the days of Jephthah, and never again met with in connection with the Philistines till David was reigning in power at Jerusalem (2 Sam. 8:1; 1 Chron. 18:1). The haughty uncircumcised people of Philistia never bowed down their necks in token of submission whilst Saul, the son of Kish, wielded the sceptre in Israel.

Now, in a similar way to that in which Israel acted on the first occasion at Ebenezer, Saul acted at Gilgal. Jonathan had smitten a garrison of the Philistines which was in

Geba, thus bringing, as a consequence, the enemy in full force against Saul and his little army. . . In this state of matters it was that the king offered the burnt-offering, and, doubtless, remembering the effect of Samuel's burnt sacrifice at Mizpeh, he expected a similar result. But he had acted in direct opposition to the prophet's command. Hence, as Israel learnt that the mere presence of the ark in the camp could not ensure them the victory, Saul discovered that his sacrifice produced not the results which probably he anticipated. Imitation will not avail in the work of God. We cannot command God's presence or power as men resort to a charm. . .

Saul Rejected

But while gaining victories, and whithersoever he turned vexing his enemies, it was left for David to subdue each one of these. Nothing permanent could Saul effect. He was a warrior, that was true; he delivered Israel out of the hand of them that spoiled them; but for decisive results in battle with these different enemies, Israel had to wait till David reigned in Jerusalem. In the catalogue of Saul's wars one other enemy is briefly mentioned in 1 Sam. 14:48: "He gathered an host, and smote the Amalekites." But this expedition ended most disastrously for Saul; so it is related at length in the following chapter.

"Amalek," said Balaam, "was the first of the nations, but his latter end shall be that he perish for ever" (Num. 24:20). God had not forgotten what he did to Israel, narrated in Ex. 17:8-16. Now the time had come for the execution of divine vengeance, and to Saul was entrusted the duty of carrying out God's before-announced purpose (Ex. 17:14). Generations had come and gone since the Lord had sworn that He would utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. Had He forgotten His oath? No. The lapse of time made no change in His mind, and the hour having arrived, Saul is commissioned to carry it out. But in that he failed, sparing Agag, and the best of the flocks and of the herds. His disobedience was immediately dealt with. "Because," said Samuel,

thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king
(1 Sam. 15:23).

He lost the kingdom for his family when he disobeyed the word of the prophet, which was the command of the Lord. . . Agag was slain by Samuel, Saul was rejected, and now a new person comes on the scene -- a man after God's own heart. The kingdom was rent that day from Saul, and given, in God's counsels, to David, though he was not yet manifested as the man of God's choice. From that time, too, Samuel came no more, to see Saul till the day of his death. They did meet, however, once in the interval when Saul was made to feel that the power of the Spirit of God was stronger than that of a demon (1 Sam. 18:24). . .

I have sinned, yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship thy God {1 Sam. 15:30}.

Such was Saul's utterance, which evinced how little a sense he had of the gravity of his offence. Amalek was God's enemy. Saul had not taken God's part in the matter, as he had been commanded, and all his anxiety seemed to be not to lose his place in the

estimation of men, but there was no indication that he humbled himself before God. Samuel mourned for Saul, who did not mourn for himself. Now the probation of the responsible man has ended. . .

Jehovah's Election of David to Fight Philistines

Here we enter on a new chapter of Israel's history, and we might say a new book of the world's history; for the introduction of David upon the scene was an event of world-wide and of political importance. . . he sat on a throne, and, as its first occupant, on which no Caesar, no emperor, will ever be seated -- the throne of the Lord (1 Chron. 29:23). The kingdom given to him was the first public step taken by God in connection with the establishment of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ over Israel. God's purposes must be accomplished; so, when the responsible man fails in carrying them out, another one, the man of God's purpose, is raised up to fulfil them. . . But David was not brought forward till Saul had openly failed. So the Lord Jesus Christ, God's appointed King, was not spoken of till the first man had demonstrated what he was.

The hour had come for the appearance of David, . . . David was anointed king without any conditions as to the continuance of his kingdom and dynasty being expressed or implied, for he was the man of God's purpose, the type of the Lord's Anointed, Christ Jesus our Lord. . .

David and Goliath

In Ephes-Dammin, where subsequently David and Eleazar, the son of Dodo, the Ahohite, successfully withstood the onslaught of the Philistines (1 Chron. 11:13), the power of the uncircumcised received a check at the hand of the stripling son of Jesse. . .

How bold in his words, yet how really apprehensive of danger, did he {Goliath} show himself to be! Why all that armor, the helmet, the coat of mail, the greaves of brass on his legs, with a javelin (*kidon*, Josh. 8:18), not a target, of brass between his shoulders, and an armor-bearer with a shield going before him? What thought had Goliath taken for the safety of his person! Encased in scaly armor, and with a shield to cover his whole person borne before him -- in such attire, but not till he had taken such precautions, did this giant challenge the Israelites to single and mortal combat. Appearances were all in his favor; his height was imposing, and his armor would seem to defy penetration. But these precautions surely indicated a want of confidence in himself, and a fear of those he contemptuously called the servants of Saul. How bold the enemy can be before those who are afraid of him! And

when Saul and all Israel heard the words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

And no wonder, for unless God is brought into such circumstances, what can feeble man effect? For forty days this went on. A full period of probation Israel passed

through; but as yet no one was found to take up the challenge. The people were made to feel their own powerlessness. When this had been realized, David, sent by his father, entered the camp. He saw the giant. He heard his words. He witnessed the abject terror of the men of Israel. All were afraid but David, the youth, who viewed the matter in the right light. . .

With David, then, it was not a question how things looked to man, but what the things were in God's sight. He viewed things in the light in which God viewed them, and all was clear and certain for him, the man of faith. "Let no man's heart fail because of him," David said to Saul; "thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine." This was the language of faith, not the bravado of a boaster. Goliath was only an uncircumcised Philistine, he had not the token of God's covenant on his person (Gen. 17:11). But all this was lost upon Saul. He looked at David, took note of his youthfulness, and attempted to discourage him. All right, if David had been going in his own strength; but if the contest really lay between God and the enemy, what mattered youth and inexperience in war? The living God must conquer him who terrified His people with the dread of death. So David knew, and in God's strength would he meet the giant. For God was his God. He had proved His delivering power at the sheepfold. There he had received that training which fitted him for the combat. The lion and the bear, which had robbed his father's fold, he had slain single-handed. What better than the fate of those unclean beasts could the uncircumcised Philistine have meted out to him, seeing he had defied the armies of the living God?

Armed with Saul's armor, David assayed to go, for he had not proved it; but the armor of man's devising, since the conflict really lay between God and the enemy, encumbered the man of faith. So, putting it off, and furnished only with offensive weapons provided by God, the five smooth stones out of the brook, he went forward to the encounter. The Philistine moved forward, preceded by his armor-bearer. David went to meet him, with God for his shield. Goliath disdained him, and cursed him by his gods, vaunting of his ability to give his flesh to the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. Boasting in word, attempting, too, perhaps, to terrify David by cursing him, this was all that the enemy could do. David heard his boastful language, and replied with becoming spirit,

Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee, and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear, for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands {1 Sam. 17:45-47}.

Confident was the Philistine, as confident was David. Yet how different was the spirit of the latter from that of the former! Goliath boasted of his strength, "I will give thy flesh," &c. David trusted in the Lord; "the Lord," he said, "will deliver thee into mine hand." To Goliath he speaks of Jehovah. To Israel and to Saul he made mention of the

living God. Each term was in keeping with the circumstances in which David was placed. To rally Israel and Saul, he reminds them of the living God. Answering the boastful Philistine, he speaks of Jehovah of hosts as the God of the armies of Israel. The living God could not be overcome by the power of death. Jehovah of hosts, who has power in battle, could not be subdued by the champion of God's enemies. In His name, then, David, stripling though he was, would go forward, and felt sure of the victory.

With the sling and the stone Goliath was conquered. The weapon needed was not far off. In the brook which ran between the two armies the stone was found that laid low the champion of the uncircumcised, and silenced for ever his boasting. All his armor proved unavailing to ward off the death-blow: even the shield borne before him by his armor-bearer did not intercept the stone. God provided what was wanted, and it was found to be all-sufficient. A principle we have here of wide application. God does provide the weapons wherewith, if called upon, His people may meet those opposed to Him. The Lord promised to provide them (Luke 21:15). So Stephen proved the Lord's faithfulness to His word, when His enemies were not able to resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spake (Acts 6:10). In this he does not stand alone, for the Lord still cares for His people.

David had said that he would cut off Goliath's head. A vain boast it might have sounded, for there was no sword in his hand. He did it nevertheless. The giant's head was severed by his own weapon, a foreshadowing, surely, of that of which we read in Heb. 2:14.¹³⁵ The combat over, the Philistines fled, and Israel pursued them to the gates of Ekron and Gath, their two nearest cities. Israel spoiled the Philistines, but David was contented with Goliath's head and Goliath's armor. The armor he put into his tent (Luke 11:21, 22), the head he carried to Jerusalem, here mentioned for the first time in connection with God's king, but in perfect keeping with the order of events. For the one who has the power of death must be vanquished ere the kingdom can be set up in power. So Jerusalem, the place of the throne, only comes into notice in this history after the death of the enemy of God and of His people. And now a question arises as to David's parentage. Whence was he? Saul asked. To Saul it was unknown; to Abner likewise. And none answered the question, till David himself told Saul of his father. Some in the camp knew who he was, but his parentage was not openly proclaimed till after the death of Goliath (compare with this Rom. 1:4). . .

First, David at the Court and in the Camp

135. {The five smooth stones that David took, were formed by the running water. The five smooth stones remind us of the five books of Moses, perfectly formed by the Spirit of God. David used one stone to strike the Philistine in the head (the seat of the thoughts). In the wilderness, the Lord Jesus quoted three times from one book of Moses: Deuteronomy, the book that presses obedience. With this, the Lord Jesus defeated the Tempter. Subsequently, on the cross, the Lord Jesus annulled the power of death, even as David ran upon the Philistine, and with the Philistine's own sword (speaking of death), cut off his head. Through death, our Lord annulled the power of death.}

Jonathan was occupied with David.¹³⁶ Saul eyed him from that day and forward.¹³⁷ To him he was an object of jealousy, to Jonathan of admiration. What caused this difference? The songs of the women put Saul in the second place. This the king could not endure. So jealousy took possession of the unhappy monarch, and urged him to a course, which his better judgment, at times, condemned, but from which he never really turned. From this time, till Saul's death, David experienced his bitter enmity, and the history which sets this forth divides itself into several distinct portions. From 1 Sam. 18:9–19:17 we have David as yet at the court and in the camp. From 1 Sam. 19:18 – 21:15, we see him a fugitive from his home. 1 Sam. 22–26 describe his life, trials, and escapes in the land of Judea, and 1 Sam. 27–31 exhibit him as an exile with the Philistines, dwelling at Ziklag, until Saul's death. Many must have been the lessons that he learned of God's goodness in sustaining him and delivering him during these years, in spite of his failures. . .

While at the court, and in the camp, God, in a marked way, watched over David, and raised up friends where they might not have been expected. Twice did God preserve him from being struck by the king's javelin (1 Sam. 18:11). Removed by Saul from the court, he was transferred to the camp, where he behaved himself wisely, and the Lord was with him. In the camp, and on the battle-field, he by his conduct gained the hearts of all the people; but this only made Saul the more afraid of him. So, wishing to compass his death, without directly imbruing his hands in David's blood, Saul made him acquainted with the dowry he wanted, before he could become the king's son-in-law, by marrying Michal, Saul's daughter. Outwitted in his diabolical plan of thus compassing David's death, for David slew of the Philistines just double the number required, and, being still victorious in battle, Saul charged Jonathan and his servants to kill him. Here, again, the unhappy monarch's purpose was defeated, for Jonathan befriended him, and a third personal attempt on David's life (1 Sam. 19:10) proved as unsuccessful as the other two. What folly to fight against God! But what power can the enemy exert over a man! Attempting next to have David assassinated in his own house, the wretched man's daughter, Michal, took part against her father. After that, following David to Samuel's house at Ramah, the Spirit of God is seen to be superior to the spirit of evil, since Saul himself is once more found among the prophets. The power of the enemy was powerless before the Spirit of God. The king, so often led by the demon, is, however unwillingly, and to his own confusion, controlled by the Holy Ghost. Neither man nor devil can prevail against God. Into what a dreadful position, however, can a vessel drift which once was used of God. Once endowed with power by the Holy Ghost to work for the deliverance of Israel at Jabesh Gilead, the same spirit has at Ramah to counteract the murderous intentions of this unhappy man.

136. {But he did not give David his *shoes*; for he did not walk with David in his rejection, and died with Saul on Mt. Gilboa.}

137.

Second, David a Fugitive

The second portion of the history of David in trial has commenced. He has become a fugitive. But at what a juncture to fly from Naioth! Saul's intentions were certainly manifested, but God's sheltering care and power were as clearly evidenced. How irrational is unbelief, and God may demonstrate it to our confusion. David fled to Jonathan, and told him, what Jonathan could not as yet credit, that nothing short of his death would satisfy the king. The opportunity for testing the accuracy of David's statement was speedily afforded Jonathan; but clearly it was not of the Lord that David should put into Jonathan's mouth a story destitute of truth. In this we see the man apart from the type, and whenever henceforth, in his exigency on account of Saul's enmity, he trusts to his own inventions, invariably have we to mark how untruthfulness characterized him. Born in sin, a transgressor, too, we see illustrated in David what it is to be the man of God's purpose, in whom the divine plan was to be carried out. He did not deserve the honor and greatness, being only a type of Him who is worthy of it all. As a man we can trace in him the taint of the fall, but, despite his failings, God's purposes connected with him are carried out. Had God dealt with him as He did with Saul, on the ground of responsibility, would he have remained the head of a dynasty which is never to end? A saint he was, but a sinner likewise; and, when left to himself, how low did he sink! Yet his throne will be established for ever (Isa. 9:7). As a type of the Lord, David stands out apart from all. But as an illustration how God's purposes can be carried out, despite the failure of the instrument, in this, thank God, he is not alone.

But surely we must admit that this portion of his history (1 Sam. 20, 21) is none of the brightest. Gibeah of Saul, Nob, and Gath are associated with a want of truthfulness in the man after God's own heart.

Third, David in Judea

We now enter on a new portion of his life. In this his trials increase, but he has now what is of immense value, the mind of God to direct him, first by the prophet, and next by the priest. The prophet Gad came to him, to tell him to leave the hold, and to depart into the land of Judah. . .

Asking counsel of the Lord, David went to Keilah, and the inestimable advantage of having God's mind is plainly seen, as we contrast at this time Saul and David. Saul, under the tamarisk tree at Gibeah, is like one fighting in the dark, as he upbraids his servants for not telling him that Jonathan is in league with David. Miserable man! He does not turn to God to learn the true condition of matters, but dark suspicion fills his heart; his son, his servants, his kindred, all seem to fail in befriending him, and Doeg, the Edomite, is the only one who is ready to do his bidding. With David how different. Directed by God to go to Keilah, his men at first demur, being unwilling to face the danger of an encounter with the Philistines; but when he inquired again of the Lord, the clear answer readily obtained removed all objections, Keilah was in consequence saved,

and the enemy was smitten with a great slaughter. Inside the town, as its deliverer, a new experience awaited him, now afresh exposed to the attempts of Saul against his life. On former occasions Jonathan and Michal had befriended him, now he has to learn what One greater than David had to say,

For my love they are my adversaries. They have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love (Psa. 109:4, 5).

The men of Keilah, it turned out, were quite ready, if the opportunity presented itself, to deliver up their savior to Saul, an act of baseness only frustrated because David, inquiring of the Lord by the ephod just brought by Abiathar, who had fled to him after the murder of Ahimelech,¹³⁸ discovered the intentions of the Keilites. . .

In the wilderness of Ziph, about fifteen miles south of Keilah, the son of Jesse now went. . . What people were these Ziphites! “Blessed be ye of the Lord,” said Saul, “for ye have compassion on me” (1 Sam. 23:21). Poor Saul. His language betrayed his unhappiness. Wretched Ziphites! Saul’s blessing was the witness of their shame, and their conduct has not been allowed to sink into oblivion. David, it would seem, did not forget it; for when he sent of the spoil of the Amalekites to all the places (1 Sam. 30) in which he and his men were wont to haunt, among the list of places specially mentioned, Ziph is not found. . . May none who read these lines be regarded by the Lord as Ziphites of their day! . . .

God so led Saul blindfold, as it were, that he is found alone in the cave, in the presence and power of David, to experience the forbearance of his son-in-law, and the respect in which the man after God’s own heart held one who had been anointed by the Lord. What cared Saul for David as such! How differently did David view Saul as such.

The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord’s anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord (1 Sam. 24:6).

What God had set up, though rejected by Him, David would not raise a hand to destroy, reading, surely, in this a lesson to many a one since his day. . .

What a victory did David gain that day! Saul had to humble himself before him, and to entreat his kindness for his offspring when David should be king in power, making David to swear to him. Saul could trust to David’s oath. David could not trust Saul. . .

Saul’s Last Interview With David

We now come to Saul’s last interview with his son-in-law. Betrayed again by the Ziphites, David’s hiding-place made known by them to Saul, the king set forth for the last time to seize the person of his daughter’s husband. . . whilst Saul and his host were asleep in their camp, David, accompanied only by Abishai, walked into their midst, and took away the king’s spear at his bolster, and his cruse of water; “for a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen upon them.” A deep sleep, *tardemah*, is a term never used of natural

138. {Terrible as was this deed by he that did it, nonetheless it was part of the fulfilment of what God had said to Eli (1 Sam. 2:30-31), for the priests living in Nob were descended from Eli.}

slumber, but of sleep, either supernatural, for a special purpose (Gen. 2:21; 15:12; Job 4:13; 33:15), or spiritual, in governmental dealing with man (Prov. 19:15; Isa. 29:10). . . {When Saul awoke,} he condemned himself:

I have sinned . . . behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly {1 Sam. 26:21}.

Saul’s own words determine the matter¹³⁹. . . But David could not trust Saul after this, any more than before. He remits his cause wholly to God to judge:

Let my life be much set by in the eyes of the Lord, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation.

. . . After this they parted, and never again, that we know, met on earth. . .

Fourth, David an Exile Among the Philistines

The last portion of David’s history during Saul’s life now commences (1 Sam. 27-31), and again we see him failing to trust Jehovah. Yet in what remarkable ways had God preserved him from being seized upon by his enemy, and the last escape not the least remarkable one of his life. . .

Saul’s last act of disobedience has now to be recounted. He had driven out David from his home; he had despised God’s prophet, in the person of Samuel, at Naioth, in Ramah; he had slain God’s priests, namely, Ahimelech, and others, at Nob. Now the mind of God, when he wanted it, he could not get. . . God, he felt, had forsaken him. Samuel confirmed this. It was true. Nothing now remained for him but death, and after death the judgment. His reign, which commenced, to outward eyes, so auspiciously, ended disastrously. Victory attended him at the beginning -- defeat, followed by death at his own hand, closed his career. He went out of this world to meet an offended God. Thus ended the course on earth of the responsible man.

David had been again left to himself, and what was in his heart had come out; but as the man of God’s purpose, his followers were being increased, whilst Saul’s end approached. Going to battle with the lords of the Philistines, some of the tribe of Manasseh swelled his ranks, and on his way back to Ziklag more of them joined him, the last chance for any in Israel to own the king, whilst still rejected by the nation (1 Chron. 12:19-21). Delivered from his false position by God, though ostensibly it came about by the worldly wisdom of the Philistines, he returned to Ziklag to find it burned, and all that he and his men had possessed carried captive by the Amalekites, they knew not where. Thus God chastised him for his unfaithfulness, and brought him back to real dependence on the Lord; for without a friend, it would seem, to stand by his side, he had to hear the murmurings of his followers, who threatened to stone him for the loss of their wives, their sons, and their daughters. Poor David! He wept. They all wept. But he encouraged himself in the Lord his God. Weeping was common to them all. Encouraging himself in God is only spoken of David.

Here he was alone, and doubtless his soul was restored by this dealing of God with

139. {See Prov. 28:13.}

him. But how had he fallen! Saul never joined hands with the Philistines, yet Saul at Endor was deserted by God. David, who had fallen so low, could nevertheless, at Ziklag, inquire of God by means of the ephod, and was assured of victory over that very people, . . . The saint of God can never be in too low, too desperate, a condition for God to come in, and bring him out of it.

David Takes the Kingdom

Returning from the slaughter of the Amalekites, the time had at last arrived when David could reward, by the bestowment of his favors, those who had befriended him and his men during his wanderings because of Saul. He thought of them, and requited them. Further, on the receipt of intelligence of Saul's death, as the king, he dealt judicially with the one who professed to have slain Saul, and sent a message to the men of Jabesh Gilead, in token of his marked approval of their act in burying the bones of Saul and his sons. Justice and judgment are prerogatives of the king. As yet, however, he was but king in Hebron, and owned only by the tribe of Judah, having to wait God's time till all Israel should accept him. For seven years and six months he thus waited, during which there were long wars between the house of Saul and the house of David. They of Saul's house were the aggressors (2 Sam. 2:12); but all efforts to thwart God's counsels proved abortive. One by one, every hindrance to David's receiving the homage of all Israel was removed. Abner was treacherously slain -- Ishbosheth was murdered. At length David was anointed king over all Israel, all the tribes accepting the man of God's choice. Throughout this time of expectancy, how did David act? He waited, for the most part, for God to act on his behalf. Once did he depart from this, his only right path, when he yielded to Abner's proposition to secure, by his personal interest, the kingdom for David. That the Lord would not allow. David was not to be indebted to Abner for the allegiance of all Israel. God would move their hearts to receive him. And He did. Yet that was not all. David waxed greater and greater, and increased in power and the extent of his dominions, till the throne of the Lord was established, in fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham, from sea to sea, and from the river Euphrates to the ends of the land.¹⁴⁰

Saul, the responsible man, went from bad to worse. He failed at the outset of his career, and ended it only after he had exhibited undisguised, unmitigated, and ceaseless opposition to the man after God's own heart. David, on his first appearance, was alone, his brethren did not even stand by his side. Trusting in God, he slew the giant, and, as his troubles increased, men rallied round him, till at length there came to him a great host, like the host of God (1 Chron. 12:22). At times his deliverance seemed hopeless, but God always opened a way of escape, till, every opposer and hindrance having been removed, he stood forth before Israel and the surrounding nations as the man of God's

purpose, the king of His choice. How long will it be before David's Son, of whom David was a type, shall be seen and owned as King of kings, and Lord of Lords?

140. {This statement goes too far, regarding the land. It did not quite extend to the full extent which will be realized only under the reign of Christ.}

Chapter 13

The House of Jehovah and the Altar of Burnt-Offering for Israel and the True Place for the Ark

God's Purpose to Have One Center

Introduction

The thought of God to have a place of His choosing came out in Gen. 22. A burnt-offering was appointed by Him on one of the mountains of Israel which He would show Abraham. "The place" was found by Abraham (Gen. 22:3, 4); and it was found in connection with that great and precious type -- the offering up of the only son. This surely demands (yea, commands) the attention of the heart of God's saints.

In several chapters of Deuteronomy, Israel is told that in that land, God would *choose* the place where He would put His name and they were also instructed concerning their responsibility relative to that place. These instructions were clear enough for the Israelites. Deut. 12 clearly teaches that God was going to set up one center of worship for Israel and that *the altar of Jehovah* would be at that place (Deut. 12:27).

We shall consider parts of Deut. 12, 14, and 16 which lay down the truth of the one, divinely appointed center, doing so in the spirit of 1Cor. 10:11. We do want to profit from these directions. These things have their counterpart in Christianity, though little understood and often resisted. The truth of the one center must be understood and acted upon if the Christian desires to honor God corporately, according to His will. There is a divinely appointed spiritual center now (Matt. 18:20). My reader may not be in the place of God's appointment and may wish to know how to find it. One trusts that these pages may be used of God for his help. Perhaps he professes to be in the good of Matt. 18:20 already. Let him then examine these pages and search the Scriptures if these things be so; and if he finds that he is not in the one, appointed center, let him seek of the Lord the right way for himself and his. "Them that honor me, I will honor."

Abraham had been directed to offer Isaac at "the place" (Gen. 22:3, 4). Christ is the center at the spiritual place now and the chief characteristic of that place is that Christ is remembered in His death (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 1:23-26). Gen. 22 foreshadows the burnt-offering aspect of Christ's death and this marks that center in a special way as we shall see. Indeed, the burnt-offering gave its name to the altar of burnt-offering. This is morally necessary and fitting, for the burnt-offering gives character to all. But that is hardly all that marks the center, so let us ask for grace to be enabled to gather the mind of God, from Scripture, regarding His directions about it.

Anticipatory Directions Given in Deut. 12

Deut. 12:1-3 teaches us that idolatry is inconsistent with the truth of the one center. There is no display of unity in idolatry. Idolatry has many places, or as verse 2 says, "all the places." Jehovah intended to have one, divinely appointed center that would command every Israelite subject to His word.

Idolatry is a serious thing. There are many forms of idolatry which Christians deny are idolatry. We naturally resent being told that something with which we are connected is idolatrous. But we know that Christians can have idols (1 John 5:21). It is a mistake to think that an idol is only a physical thing.

For rebellion is (as) the sin of divination, and selfwill is (as) iniquity and idolatry (1 Sam. 15:23).

Note well that divination and idolatry are compared to rebellion and selfwill. It is a very serious consideration. The author of rebellion and selfwill is Satan. See then how the sins of divination and idolatry are linked with rebellion and selfwill. So where rebellion and selfwill are found, there is no display of unity. Multiplied "places of worship" are the result of rebellion against the Word of God. They are founded in selfwill. They are the result of the working of the flesh, the world, and the Enemy, in their onslaught against the truth. This has resulted in substituting man's thoughts for God's one center. Nor is it only where persons speak of "places of worship" that the truth of the one place is rejected. Let us beware that we do not acknowledge the truth of the one place with our lips while our heart and/or practice is far from it.

Notice how thoroughly the idolatry was to be destroyed. The fire was applied and even the names should be destroyed. This meant no adaptation of anything idolatrous. Destroying the name involved destroyed the thing, not adapting the heathen practice under a new name.

In Deut. 12:5 we find a thought dear to the heart of God: *His habitation*. God did not dwell in the midst of His people until redemption in type had been accomplished at the Exodus. Then as soon as the tabernacle was finished, Jehovah hastened, as it were, to dwell in the midst of His people (Num. 9:15; Ex. 40). David entered into God's thoughts concerning this habitation:

Jehovah, I have loved the habitation of thy house and the place where thy glory dwelleth (Psa. 26:8).

See also Psalm 84. God has a habitation now:

. . . in whom ye also are built together for a habitation of God in (the) Spirit (Eph. 2:22).

Consequent upon the glorification of Christ (Acts 2:33) the church was formed (Acts 2:1-4) in the power of the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 12:13; Acts 1:5), sent down (John 14:26; 16:7; Acts 2:33; 1 Pet. 1:12) at Pentecost. God formed that habitation which included all sealed by the Spirit. But there ought to be a display of this truth in our walk. We ought to answer to this in our walk. We ought to live out the truth in practice.

There are things that God wanted brought to the "place which Jehovah your God will choose out of all your tribes to set his name there" (vv. 5-7). It was no question of them going there to get something. They were going to bring something. The one place

was the place for rejoicing, “Ye and your households, in all the business of your hand, wherein Jehovah thy God hath blessed thee” (v.7). The “business” is diligence in the good land, the land flowing with milk and honey; yea, the inheritance. This is what produces the firstlings, the tithes, etc. Occupation with Christ and His love, and hearkening to the voice of His words, results in increase. *The voice of my beloved!* May it fill our ears, minds and hearts, for then our business with that which is divine, unshakable, eternal, and real will result in increase; and we shall have burnt-offerings, sacrifices, tithes, heave offerings, etc., to bring to the divine center and we shall rejoice before our great God and Savior.

We must also notice how often it is remarked that *Jehovah* would choose the place. It was a divine choice. There was nothing voluntary about it. Israel would not be left to their human reasoning or human discernment to find some place. Jehovah would choose (vv. 5, 11, 14, 18, 21, 26).

Next, we should note that Jehovah would put His NAME in the one place (vv. 5, 11, 21). See Psa. 122:4; Isa. 26:8; Matt. 18:20; Rev. 3:8.

The last point that we shall consider in Deut. 12 is *the altar of Jehovah* (vv. 27, 28). This altar was going to be located in the place Jehovah would choose. Observe, too, that the burnt-offering is usually noted first in the list of things brought to the one place (vv. 6, 11, 13, 14, 27). This was dear to the heart of God. Oh, how dear it ought to be to us -- Christ, His burnt-offering. How those words thrill our souls; “I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do” (John 17:4). It speaks of that which was wholly consumed for Jehovah. It represents the highest aspect of Christ’s work, He offering Himself up wholly to God as a sweet smelling savor, for His glory.

We have then several marks for identifying the one place. It would be the *center of unity* where rebellion and self-will are depreciated. It would be the habitation, *the dwelling place of God*. It would be the place of rejoicing where the sacrifices, especially the burnt-offering, would be offered. His *name* would be placed there. And, the *altar of Jehovah* would be located there. Therefore there is this warning:

Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt-offerings in every place that thou seest (Deut. 12:13).

Please read *Notes on Deuteronomy* by C. H. Mackintosh, on Deut. 12 in loco.

Deuteronomy 14:22-27

Here we have a gracious provision for a trying circumstance. The way might be long to the place Jehovah would choose to set His name and therefore the distant Israelite was permitted to turn the items noted in v. 23 into money. But he must take the money to the chosen place. Distance was no excuse. God’s one center would command the presence of every Israelite.

Deuteronomy 16:1-8

Deut.16:5,6 lets us know that the passover must be eaten at the chosen center. Of

course, this order applies after the chosen place was actually pointed out by God. Note well that no passover could be eaten outside of the chosen place once the presence of Jehovah was there. Persons might eat a lamb in Dan or Bethel (1 Kings 12) and call it the passover. It might look like the passover. Those who would do it might sincerely believe it would be the passover. When those at Dan (1 Kings 12) would be warned by those at the divinely appointed place for the one passover, that God didn’t recognize what they were doing as the feast of the passover, such might mock and ridicule the truth saying that those at the one place were proud and arrogant and were making “high claims.” In reality it would be insisting on the truth and those at Dan and Bethel would be eating a false feast in spite of any appearance to the contrary.

Deuteronomy 17:8-13

Another thing meant to characterize the one center was order and authority (not infallibility). Compare with Matt.18:15-20.

The One Center Marked Out Was Shiloh the Center?

The children of Israel set up the tent of meeting (the tabernacle) at Shiloh (Josh.18:1). It was called the house of God (Judg. 18:31) and in this scripture we find idolatry also in Israel. Shiloh was located in Ephraim. 1Sam. 3 tells us the condition of things in Shiloh. The godly woman Hannah, one cannot but believe, was a Nazarite of God (1 Sam. 1:15) and the longing for the man child (1 Sam. 1:11) was the desire of a heart that was bowed down because of the evil, evil allowed at Shiloh by Eli. Certainty she did not merely want a child to dote upon and spoil, as many do. She wanted a Nazarite from the womb (1 Sam.1:11). She wanted one who would be used of God to remedy the evil. She was a true Nazarite, a real mother in Israel, one whose chief interest was God’s glory. Would to God every mother who is a Christian were so.

But Shiloh was not the place chosen in fulfillment of Deut. 12 and 14. We shall consider several proofs of this because some truth very much needed by us, the people of God now, is illustrated in the matter.

The first proof is that Shiloh was *never chosen*. Jer. 7:12 says that God caused His name to dwell there at the first, but it is never said to have been chosen. It is instructive that Shiloh was located in the lot of Ephraim. Reuben had lost, and Ephraim had acquired, the place of the firstborn (Jer. 31:9; 1 Chron. 5:1, 2) which denotes a certain place of eminence. With the passage of time a tension had arisen between the tribes of Ephraim and Judah and this is not without significance. We may learn from this fact (1 Cor. 10:11), if we are willing. We see the tension manifested in Judg. 7:24; 8:1-3; 12:1-6.

Judg. 17-21 is a *moral* appendix, as it were, to the book of Judges and the incidents recorded in these chapters actually took place early in the history of the Judges as seen by the fact that a grandson of Moses and a grandson of Aaron had a part in the

difficulties. These chapters show us the moral reasons for the declension recorded in the book. Judg. 17 opens with a Levite, a servant of God, leaving Bethlehem-Judah to go to Mount Ephraim where he becomes a (false) priest. What is the meaning?

Judah means “praise”; Ephraim means “fruitfulness”; Bethlehem-Judah means “house of bread and praise.” Judah represents worship; Ephraim represents service. However, service out of its order, as typified in Ephraim, represents service carried out in the energy of the flesh. The lesson in Judg. 17 is what results from substituting “fruitfulness,” i.e., service, for worship. Many Christians are caught in this snare. It almost seems that service has become a reason for happiness before God, or a ground of approach to God. Service should flow from communion. The Levite is the servant of the priest. Let us ever remember the divinely constituted order of these things, else we will get caught up with the spirit of Ephraim. What is that spirit?

After God had chosen Jerusalem as the one and only center, a division in the kingdom of Israel came about in the days of Rehoboam the son of Solomon. The ten northern tribes went with Jeroboam who set up two other centers (1 Kings 12). The ten northern tribes were sometimes called Ephraim (Isa. 7:8; Hos 5:3, 5, 9, 13, 14). Ephraim spoken of in this way became a cake not turned (Hos. 7:8), i.e., half-baked and one-sided. How often those whose only occupation is “service” complain about others that they conceive are not active enough, especially in their own line of service, which they seem to assume is the only worthwhile service. It was said of Ephraim that gray hairs were found on him (Hos. 7:9). These gray hairs on the head, the seat of intelligence, denote decline in spiritual discernment, typically speaking. Service is good and God has servants. Only let us be very careful to keep things in right perspective and balance. The development of the Ephraim attitude in our souls works against being found at the one place.

The second proof that Shiloh was not the chosen place is the fact that while the house of God was at Shiloh, burnt-offerings were permitted to be offered elsewhere. Deut. 12 did not permit burnt-offerings to be offered outside of the chosen place. The following scriptures speak of burnt-offerings offered elsewhere than Shiloh: 1 Sam. 6:15; 1 Sam. 7:9; 1 Sam. 10:8.

Finally, it is expressly stated that God had chosen no city to put His name there before David’s reign (1 Kings 8:16). So God had *not* chosen Shiloh in Ephraim. God has *not* chosen “fruitfulness,” i.e., service, for His dwelling place. Service is *not* the leading thought in connection with the place that God chose. Rather, it is Himself in the midst of His redeemed people inhabiting their praises. God rejected Shiloh. It was only provisional and brought out the true state of the people.

The sons of Ephraim, armed bowmen, turned back in the day of battle. They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in His law (Psa. 78:9, 10). Besides, we find the corruption of the house of Eli at Shiloh and then God raised up the godly Nazarite Hannah to intercede for His glory and that she might bring forth the man-child Nazarite to lend him to Jehovah all his days. This very son was chosen of God to anoint the great David to be the shepherd of His people Israel. What a signal

honor to Hannah! What a mighty answer to her godly cries to Jehovah! What a blessed rebuke to the Adversary! What a solemn lesson for every Christian mother!

Psa. 78:67-72 shows us that Shiloh in Ephraim was rejected and was not chosen. God chose the tribe of Judah. God has chosen *praise*. God has chosen *worship* as the pre-eminent thing. Nothing satisfies our hearts and God’s like worship in the Spirit (Phil. 3:3). The Father seeketh worshippers who worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:23). And He will have in His presence a redeemed people who shall have in everlasting remembrance the Person and work of His Son Who offered Himself up to God without spot by the eternal Spirit.

And Hezekiah commanded to offer up the burnt-offering on the altar. And at the moment the burnt-offering began, the song of Jehovah began . . . (2 Chron. 29:27).

May God grant His beloved people a right and mighty increase in the apprehension of what Christ is to God and thus may He fill our mouths with the high praises of God (Psa. 150).

How God Marked Out Jerusalem as the Chosen Center

And David gave to Ornan for the place in shekels of gold the weight of six hundred (shekels). And David built there an altar to Jehovah, and offered up burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and called upon Jehovah; and he answered him from the heavens by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering. And Jehovah spoke to the angel; and he put up his sword again into its sheath (1 Chron. 21:25-27).

David said, This is the house of Jehovah Elohim, and this is the altar of burnt-offering for Israel (1 Chron. 22:1).

Jerusalem was chosen in connection with David the great type of our Lord Jesus. The burnt-offering, the expression of acceptance, and the peace-offering, the expression of peace, were laid upon the altar and David called upon Jehovah. Jehovah answered him from the heavens by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering.

What a spectacular sight! What a momentous event! The fire of Jehovah fell upon the offering and consumed it. Jehovah accepted it. Jehovah chose the tribe of Judah, the Mount Zion which He loved; and He built His sanctuary like the heights, like the earth which He hath founded forever. And He chose David His servant (Psa. 78:68-70).

And David said, This is the house of Jehovah Elohim, and this is the altar of burnt-offering for Israel (1 Chron. 22:1).

Thus God noted His election of Zion by fire from heaven and David pronounces the place as Jehovah’s house. Here was located the altar of burnt-offering for Israel that was spoken of in Deut. 12:27 as the altar of Jehovah.

Shiloh was, then, provisional and it brought out the state of the people. Just so was it with Saul. He was provisional, too. God never chose him, as we shall shortly see. And this demonstrated the great force and meaning of “*choose*” in Deut. 12. It was God’s sovereign designation of what was important to Him, what was dear to His heart, what was precious in His sight. He ever had before Him His glory in the only-begotten Son manifest in flesh and exalted over all. And so David, a type of Christ, was chosen. It was no mere act of providence or provision. Psalm 78:70 says “he chose David his

servant” the type of the great Shepherd of the sheep and the ruler of God’s inheritance.

The other scripture which tells us that David was chosen shows that Saul was not. Since the day that I brought forth my people out of the land of Egypt I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build a house in, that my name might be there; neither chose I any man to be prince over my people Israel; but I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and I have chosen David to be over my people Israel (2 Chron.6:5, 6).

There is thus no question of where, and when, and what, and who was chosen. And all of these scriptures show us the immense importance of these matters in the eyes of God Who has the glory of the Son before Him in it all. God thus designated the place for the *name* and the *house* and the *altar of Jehovah*. Henceforth it designated the center of Israel’s national unity (composed of 12 tribes). Every Israelite who would go to that place according to the direction of Jehovah would give expression to the divinely appointed worship and to the national unity. He could not confess the divinely constituted, national unity of Israel in any other way but to go there with his worship and his gifts.

But the house of God was not yet built in connection with this altar. Solomon was the one chosen to build the house. Meanwhile there were still sacrifices offered outside of Jerusalem (1 Kings 3:2-4).

Then Solomon built the house of God at Jerusalem and when he had ended his prayer, we read,

And when Solomon had ended praying, the fire came down from the heavens and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of Jehovah filled the house. And the priests could not enter the house of Jehovah, because the glory of Jehovah filled Jehovah’s house. And all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of Jehovah upon the house, and bowed themselves with their faces to the ground on the pavement, and worshipped and thanked Jehovah: For he is good, for his loving-kindness (endureth) for ever (2 Chron. 7:1-3).

And then we read,

For I have now chosen and hallowed this house, that my name may be there for ever; and mine eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually (2 Chron.7:16).

In Jerusalem, then, was located the altar of burnt-offering for Israel. Thither were the offerings to be brought (Deut. 12 & 14). How good it was for every Israelite to be connected with the divinely chosen and appointed center. After this election of Zion, God owned no other place of assembly for His people to bring the sacrifices. God was exclusive about it. He gave His mind by fire from heaven and by the word of David as to the location. He gave His mind concerning Israel’s offerings in the divinely chosen place through Moses.

C. H. Macintosh notes something that we may learn from this.

Jerusalem was and will be God’s earthly center; but now, the Church of God should own no center but the glorious and infinitely precious Name of Jesus. “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.” Precious center! To this alone the New Testament points, to this alone the Holy Ghost gathers. It matters not where we are gathered -- in Jerusalem or Rome, London, Paris, or Canton. It is not where, but how.

But be it remembered, it must be a divinely real thing. It is of no possible use to profess to be gathered in, or to, the blessed Name of Jesus, if we are not really so. The apostle’s word as to faith may apply with equal force to the question of our center of gathering -- “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say” he is gathered to the Name of Jesus? God deals in moral realities; and while it is perfectly clear that a man who desires to be true to Christ cannot possibly consent to own any other center or any other ground of gathering but His Name, yet it is quite possible -- alas! alas! how very possible -- for people to profess to be on that blessed and holy ground, while their spirit and conduct, their habits and ways, their whole course and character, go to prove that they are not in the power of their profession.

Woe be to the man who presumed to turn his back on the place where Jehovah had set His Name. He would very speedily have been taught his mistake. And if this was true for God’s earthly people, is it not equally true for the church and the individual Christians? Assuredly, it is. We are bound, by the very highest and most sacred obligations, to refuse every ground of gathering but the one body, every center of gathering but the Name of Jesus, every power of gathering but the Holy Ghost, every authority of gathering but the Word of God. May all the Lord’s beloved people everywhere be led to consider these things, in the fear and love of His holy name.¹⁴¹

Another point to be noticed is this statement of Solomon at the dedication of the temple:

. . . that thine eyes may be open upon this house night and day, upon the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: to hearken unto the prayer which thy servant prayeth toward this place. And hearken unto the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people, when they shall pray toward this place . . . (1 Kings 8:29, 30).

Cp. Matt. 18:19, 20.

Kingship in View of the Priesthood Previously Established

We shall now look at a long quotation from J. N. Darby that addresses the place of the priesthood in connection with bringing in the king of God’s choice. It is important to make the effort to understand. Yes, there is some repetition regarding the setting aside the one pointing to the first man, but it is most important that the moral force of this be apprehended.

❖ I now come to the priesthood, center of unity to Israel, and to the change which took place at the time of the establishment of royalty. That a remarkable change then took place cannot be questioned. Ichabod had been written upon Israel, and every ordinary relationship with God had been broken, for the ark of the covenant had been taken. Hannah (in the song in which she celebrates, before this disaster, the goodness of God toward herself) had proclaimed that He would give power to His king, and would exalt the horn of His anointed {1 Sam. 2}.

The kingly rule is established, but, at first, not such as was according to the will of God, but, in truth, by the great sin of the people, who, in making a king, rejected God

141. Notes on Deuteronomy 2:200-202.

who was their King. And from that time the ark was never restored to its place in the tabernacle, but David removed it to the Mount Zion; and having established all the order of the house of God, upon a new footing, he had to leave to his successor (Solomon) the execution of all that which he had received by inspiration, as well as the instalment of the priests in the temple. The order established by David was communicated to him by revelation, just as much as that of the tabernacle had been to Moses. Everything was arranged afresh, although there were elements common to both. It was, then, the epoch of a great change, when grace, acting by means of David, placed the blessing of the people upon a new footing at a time when all had been lost. The prophet comes in between the two states referred to, it is true, as a sort of mediator, in the person of Samuel; but we will leave this for the present. His office was the sovereign means, employed by God, to maintain His relationship with the people, when it was unfaithful and fallen into decay. That I have rightly estimated this standing of the kingly authority of David, is proved by the close of Psalm 78 where it is said:

When God heard this, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel: so that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he placed among men; and delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand. He gave his people over also unto the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance. The fire consumed their young men; and their maidens were not given to marriage. Their priests fell by the sword; and their widows made no lamentation. Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine. And he smote his enemies in the hinder parts: he put them to a perpetual reproach. Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph and chose not the tribe of Ephraim; but chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved. And he built his sanctuary like high palaces, like the earth which he hath established for ever. He chose David also his servant and took him from the sheepfolds: from following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance. So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.

Here we see the sovereign grace and election of God, who raises up David as an instrument to lift up the people, when God had forsaken His tabernacle, and delivered up His people to the sword. This passage is very important, as portraying the true royalty willed by God; but how subject now is the priesthood!

But before giving power to His king, and lifting up the horn of His anointed -- of whom the true Anointed was to be the descendant, and who bore, indeed, prophetically, his name of "Beloved" (David, see Ezekiel) -- before the existence of that kingly authority, what was the link between God and the people? What, I say, was the link when there was no king? For some link there must have been. He who is ever so little acquainted with the ways of God in the Old Testament will at once answer, "It was the high priest." For after Moses (who was king in Jeshurun), who else could be the link? The only person who could have been so was Joshua; but in the very times of Joshua it was the high priest rather who was so. Let us cite the passages which speak of this. Take Num. 27:15-23. There we see Joshua, who was to command, placed before Eleazar and the congregation; and when a portion of the honor of Moses has been

conferred upon him, in order that the people might obey him, he must needs remain before Eleazar the priest who enquired of the Lord by Urim and Thummim. At his word (the word of Eleazar) was to be the coming in, and at his word was to be the going out, of him (Joshua), and of the children of Israel with him, and of all the congregation. Indeed, if God was King in the midst of His people, His high priest, who drew near to Him, was, of necessity, the centre of unity. It was he (the high priest), who bore the names of the twelve tribes upon his breast before the Lord, and their judgment, continually, having the Urim and Thummim, sole true center of unity. On the other hand, when even it was Joshua who directed them, who communicated to them the will of the Lord, it was, nevertheless, always at the word of Eleazar that they were to come in; and at the word of Eleazar, that they were to go out. That Israel was unfaithful to this, in the times of the judges, is true; but what was the consequence thereof?

God adds a sad history at the end of this book (but it is a history of facts which happened about the commencement of this period, for Phinehas was high priest) in order to give us an idea of the state of things within the country (for almost all the book is occupied with what passed between the people and their enemies); and therein we see that, in their affliction, it was the priesthood which was their resource and common center; Judg. 18:26-28. It is the same in the division of the land, as also in all else (Num. 14:17; Josh. 14:1), Eleazar is always placed at the head. This had never been the case in the time of Moses. And I ask any attentive reader of the Bible whether such was the place of the high priest in the times of the kings. I am aware it may be replied: "He always bore the breastplate with the names of the tribes." Be it so, but it is forgotten that God had already abandoned the people upon that footing; that the ark had been delivered up to the Philistines, and that the king chosen of God, inspired by God, savior to His people through grace, had taken possession of it, and resettled all upon a new footing, as type and representative of the Anointed of the Lord, of Christ the King of Israel, of the King who should establish the kingdom of God and govern all as such. From that time all hangs upon the conduct of the king. When the kingly office failed, the priesthood could preserve nought. Now the character of Christ in Israel, at that time, will be that of King, and, consequently, it is under that same character that His type and precursor has appeared. Although He be a priest, yet it is as Melchisedek (a priest upon His throne), and not as Aaron, entering into the holy place, that He will act in that day. Aaron is the type of that which He is now; and, therefore, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in the very act of showing that Christ is personally after the order of Melchisedek, the apostle, as soon as he speaks of His present services, uses the type of Aaron. On the other hand, when the temple is dedicated, the priests cannot abide there by reason of the glory, and it is Solomon -- a remarkable type of a kingly priest -- who acts. He blesses Israel, and blesses the Lord, as Melchisedek had done when Abraham was returning from the conquest of the kings. David the deliverer, and Solomon established in glory, types of the Lord Jesus, the anointed King in Israel, necessarily take the prominent place, and all hangs on them. For instance, when Solomon sins, ten tribes are rent from his family and from the temple. The fate of the people hangs upon the conduct of the

king as leader of the people; 2 Chron. 7:17-20. The history of the kings, from Rehoboam to Zedekiah, shows us that it was thus; and as to the fact, it was the sin of Manasseh brought at length that entire ruin on the people and the house of God; 2 Kings 21:11-14.

The examination of the character of Christ, as Melchisedek, puts the change which took place as to the priesthood in so clear a light, that it is impossible that a Christian instructed in the word should mistake, or say that the sacrificial pre-eminence of the family of Aaron held the same place in the ways of God subsequent to the establishment of royalty, as it did before. Moreover, we have seen, in detail, proofs to the contrary. In like manner, Solomon sends back Abiathar to his own house, and when David, without troubling himself about the priesthood, places the ark in Zion -- an all-important change, he places the priests in Gibeon before the altar; and there were none before the ark (see 1 Chron. 16:37, to the end of the chapter). We find also (2 Sam. 6: 7, 18) this character of Melchisedek showing itself in measure in David. If we closely examine the change, we shall see how vast was its import. The expression (1 Sam. 2:35), "he shall stand, (or shall walk) before his anointed," has already revealed this. The ark taken captive, where is the glory? Ichabod being the state of Israel in such sort that the priesthood was a nullity as to its original exercise (for without the ark there was no day of atonement for Israel), God interposes in an extraordinary manner by means of prophecy, which was a sovereign means on His part, and announces to the afflicted and downcast people, in the person and by the mouth of Hannah, that there was a new means of blessing; that He

the Lord maketh poor and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them. He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed (1 Sam. 2: 7-10).

Here, in the presence of the priesthood, and on the eve of the capture of the ark, a new character, that of "the anointed," is introduced. The anointing had before been distinctively attached to the priesthood. The high priest had been the *anointed*. Now it is another who is distinctively "the anointed," it is the king; and this connects itself with the character in which the Christ was to appear. The king being thus distinctively the anointed, the high priest, who had been so previously, walks before Him. He (the priest) is still in office, but he is no longer the center of the system. The king, type of Christ, has taken his place.

Let us examine this in another point of view. It is certain that God, in His determinate counsel, designed to glorify His Son, even in the kingly power as regards Israel and the world. But on the other hand, the people ought to have remained before God by the means of the high priest, without a king being needed for the maintenance of its order. The Lord was their King. Consequently God permitted the sin of the people

to ripen, before He established His anointed. Now the priesthood, as we have seen, and as all the Levitical system testifies, was the center of all the relationships of the people with God -- the link of the chain which was near the throne of the Lord. The Lord was Himself King in Israel; but Israel needed to see a king, to be like the other nations. The notion that the sin was simply in desiring a king like the other nations, and that the thing was not evil because it was foreknown of God, cannot be admitted for a moment:

And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them (1 Sam. 8:7).

At the same time, God presents before the people what will be the consequences; but the people say,

Nay, but a king shall reign over us: Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations, 1 Sam. 8:5; compare with 1 Sam. 12:12.

Now, already, before this request, the high priest had, if one may so say, disappeared. Samuel offered sacrifices here and there; but at length God established His king, His anointed, as we have seen, and in such a position (for he was the type of Christ), that it is said by the Holy Spirit,

Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king (1 Chron. 29:23).

We see here the anointed of the Lord seated upon the throne of the Lord. The high priest walks before him. This it is which will take place when the kingdom shall be established. Without the least doubt Christ will be the head and center of it. The question here is not of the high priest, type of the heavenly priesthood (a thought which properly applies only to the tabernacle, as we see in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the apostle speaks only of the tabernacle), but of the position of the high priest in the presence of the king. Christ must have that place of king. David and Solomon are the types of this in suffering, in victory, and in glory -- sitting upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel (1 Chron. 28:5). Now, previously, the Lord Himself had been their King, and the high priest abode before Him. The people rejected God that He should not reign over them. Their iniquity gave occasion for the accomplishment of His designs in grace, even as it befalls us. But before this act of the people, the high priesthood itself had failed, and all the order to which it pertains was dissolved. The ark was taken, and consequently the relations of God with the people broken, so far as that depended upon their faithfulness. That order, such as it had been, was not restored. The tabernacle never received the ark. The king became the anointed; and he it is who arranges as to the ark, and the high priest must walk before him. Now, to say, in the face of changes of such a kind as this, that external splendor placed the high priest in a more glorious position, deserves no reply. It was worth while developing these things by reason of their intrinsic value.

These remarks will already have enabled us to understand what was the royal authority truly willed of God, and what was the royal authority which was chosen by man: but we will cite some passages to make it perfectly obvious.

First, I do not see exactly that royalty was in failure during the reign of Saul. The king fell by the hands of the Philistines, but Saul was no more an unbeliever at the close

than at the commencement. Sin came to its maturity in him; his heart hardened itself: alas! this is the history of man. But Saul never stood by faith; and the royal authority was not in worse plight at the close than at the commencement. He was disobedient, and God withdrew His favor from him as an individual; but I see not in what the royal authority, as such, failed. It is true, indeed, that the judgment which we have to form upon this, in measure, depends upon the principal question, viz., that of the character of the royal authority of Saul, and to what point we can call it the royal authority willed of God. This we will now examine.

Samuel sees so distinctively the will of the people in this matter, that he says (in substance in the terms of which I have made use),

Now, therefore, behold the king whom ye have chosen (1 Sam. 12:13).

This royal authority, was it that which was willed of God? The Spirit of God by Moses had anticipated the occasion in which the people of God would ask for a king, and had given rules to be observed when the occasion occurred; but the *will* of God is not found there (Deut. 17:14-29, etc.).

It is clear that nothing can happen without the will of God. But it is certain that the establishment of Saul was not, morally, according to the divine will. Several passages in the book of Samuel furnish unanswerable proofs of this.

The thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. Now therefore hearken unto their voice; howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them (1 Sam. 8:6, 7, 9).

Then Samuel recounts the oppressions which they must needs endure at the hand of the king, and adds,

And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not hear you in that day (1 Sam. 8:18).

But

ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the Lord your God was your king (1 Sam. 12:12).

We see here passages which show, with the most entire evidence unless the Lord willed that the people should reject Himself; (unless, which is impossible, He willed a great sin, see 1 Sam. 12:17, 19), that it is not possible that God willed the royalty of Saul. There is a collateral proof that this was not the royalty willed of God, viz., in that the entire responsibility of maintaining its relationship with God is left to the people. (See end of ch. 12.) But the people having shown that they could not do without that intermediate power -- could not walk with God in direct relationship, and God having also manifested the evil, the door opens for the accomplishment of His counsels in Christ: for there was a royalty which had its place in the counsels of God -- even that of Christ -- whose forerunner and type the Lord Himself raises up, without the will or thought of the people finding any entrance whatsoever. We have already seen the manner in which God (in Ps. 78) passes from His judgment upon Shiloh, by the way He had abandoned the tabernacle for ever, to His own choice, viz., to David and to the

place of His throne in the midst of His people -- the place chosen for His abode. Compare Ps. 132: 17, where it is written,

There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed.

Such was the royalty willed of God.

The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people (1 Sam. 13:14).

And again,

Fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse, the Bethlehemite, for I have provided me a king among his sons (1 Sam. 16:1).

Having anointed him, it is David who is the true chief and leader of Israel, even during the reign of Saul. The Lord also said to him, speaking of Solomon,

I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee (1 Chron. 17:13).

And in Ps. 89, where the bounties of God concentrate upon David, type of the true Well-beloved:

Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: with whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him.

And in 2 Sam. 7 (of which we have cited one verse) we find all the blessing of the people connected with the house of David. Moreover, his relation with Christ considered, this could not be otherwise. I would quote Hos. 13:11, but its application to Saul may be questioned. I have quoted passages in direct proof that the existence of the royal authority of Saul was by an act of sin; and that it was not what God willed to maintain as that which He had established according to His will; and that the royal authority of David was established by the very act and by the will of God during the very existence of the other. But, in fact, the manner in which the word expresses itself, as to the relationship between the royalty of David and that of Christ, the allusions of the prophets to Christ under this very name, the manner in which the Psalms speak, the history of David, its analogy with that of Christ, the bearing of all that is said, and the very history, all these things are (for him who takes notice of the ways of God) what manifest the divine thought as to His counsels in Christ; and they are evidence far more powerful than isolated texts in proof that the royalty of David was that willed by God, and that the royal authority of Saul (fruit of the will of the people, who in desiring him rejected God) was not so; although, in a certain sense, all things are according to His sovereign will. It is, consequently, in the royalty of David that the failure of this means of relationship with God is in question, and not in that which took place with the sin of the people, who, in establishing it, rejected God. When we speak of failure, we take for granted there was a state in which God had established man (or, indeed, angels) in blessing; but in blessing lost through the failure, so far as the responsibility of him who was placed in it goes, the sovereign grace of God alone remaining, and capable of reestablishing it according to His counsels of peace. And this proves, in an

unquestionable manner, that God never reestablishes, in its primitive state, a thing entrusted to men and placed under responsibility; because, as to that which regards man, all these things are but figures of some part of the glory of Christ, who alone can uphold them. Thus Adam himself was the pattern of Him that was to come; and the blessings of an earthly paradise must needs be replaced in Christ by far better mercies, but could not be so out of Him. So the priesthood, the royal authority, and every other form of blessing whatsoever, can only be realized in Christ. Nevertheless, God places man in positions which correspond to all these blessings, and man has always failed therein. The patience of God has been great (so it is expressed as to the royal authority),

till there was no remedy (2 Chron. 36:16).

Then man is judged in the failed thing, and it is in Christ alone that the thing is established -- in Him who alone maintains, and is able to maintain, all the glory of God and the blessing of man in these things.

And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons (Isa. 22:24).¹⁴² ❖

* * * * *

❖ Your assertion that God would not have founded and established institutions, knowing that they would fail directly, is entirely without foundation. The principle is shown to be false by the history of man, of the Jews, of the priesthood in Israel, of the kingly power in this people -- by the whole history of the Bible.¹⁴³ ❖

Kingship in View of the Ark

David's Bringing the Ark to Jerusalem

The place of the Ark in connection with the establishment of kingship is important to consider.

❖ Knowing that the tabernacle was abandoned, David did not dream of putting the ark in the tabernacle. This would have been to restore things on the spoilt footing of the law. The external routine had quite fallen short of God's glory. The king takes the lead, as priesthood had failed; and the ark is put in the seat of kingly power; as Christ the deliverer in grace will order all by-and-by in Zion, whence the rod of His power is to go forth.¹⁴⁴ ❖

❖ As the head, David orders everything and appoints psalmody for the service of God. Then by the help of God, the ark is brought from the house of Obed-edom into the tent prepared for it in Zion, with offerings to God who helped the Levites by His power, and with joy and songs of triumph. David himself, clothed with a robe of fine linen and an ephod, dances and plays before the ark of Jehovah who was going up to His place in

Zion. This action -- unintelligible to the unbelieving Michal, to whom the king's behavior was therefore unintelligible also -- was of very great importance. It identified kingly power in Zion (that is to say, the kingly power of Christ, as deliverer in grace) with the token of Jehovah's covenant with Israel -- a token established there in grace, when Israel had already failed entirely under the law, and even after their rejection of God as their King.

The Aaronic priesthood was not able to maintain the people's relationship with their God, and consequently the outward order had completely failed. The altar at which the priests were to sacrifice was elsewhere (at Gibeon), and not before the tent which contained the ark. And the ark, which was the sign of the covenant and of the throne of Jehovah, was at a distance from the altar at which the priests ministered.

The covenant of Jehovah is connected with the *kingly power*, and that in Zion -- the place which He had chosen for His rest. David himself assumes somewhat of the Melchisedec character, but only in testimony and by anticipation (1 Chron. 16:1-3). In these verses the priests do not appear.

In order to apprehend more clearly the import of the removal of the ark to Zion, it will be well to consider Psalms 78:60-72 and Psalm 132, and to compare v. 8 of the latter with what Moses said during Israel's journey in the wilderness (Num. 10:35, 36). It is interesting to see that each petition in the earlier part of Psalm 132 is exceeded by its fulfilment at the close.

The circumstance of the ark not being taken to the tabernacle at Gibeon was also of deep significance. It was completely judging the whole system connected with this tabernacle. The tabernacle was still in being, as well as the altar, and the priests offered sacrifices there; but the ark of the covenant of Jehovah had been taken away from it. The king disposed of the latter by his authority, placing it elsewhere. Ever since the ruin of Shiloh this judgment had continued as a chastisement executed by the enemy; but, now that God interposes by means of David and acts in power, this power places the visible sign of His covenant with His people elsewhere. The kingly power is established at Jerusalem, and the sign of God's covenant is taken away from the tabernacle of the congregation to be placed on Mount Zion, the seat of the kingly power.¹⁴⁵ ❖

The Proper Place for the Ark

There is more to the matter concerning the Ark that should be understood. It needed to be placed at the place the God was going to choose, in accordance with choosing the place where His name would be (Deut. 12). Shiloh was not the place; Jerusalem was. There needed to be a signal marking of the place of choice, and it was His purpose to mark that place in connection with the King of His choice, with the introduction of Kingship according to His purpose to glorify Himself in Christ, in the earthly sphere. There was going to be a temple built in Jerusalem where the Ark would be. But David

142. *Collected Writings*, 4:245-254.

143. *Collected Writings*, 4:343.

144. *Collected Writings*, 30:7

145. *Synopsis*, 1:422, 423.

was not the one chosen to build that temple. Solomon, as a type of the peaceful reign of Christ, was, according to divine purpose, to build that temple. However, the place, the location, would be marked out for David.¹⁴⁶ To this we now turn.

Kingship in View of the Choice of the One Place for Israel

The Threshing Floor of Ornan the Jebusite (1 Chron. 21)

{J. G. Bellett, *The Bible Treasury*, 13:193, 209, duplicated in 15:107, 114.}

. . . When the Lord took Israel of old, as we have seen, to be His peculiar people, of course He prepared Himself a place among them -- the tabernacle first, and then the temple. The tabernacle was but a moveable pavilion; there Jehovah dwelt as between curtains, and walked as in a tent, refusing with infinite grace to enter into His rest while His Israel sojourned from one nation to another people (2 Sam. 7:5-8). But the temple was fixed; for when Israel was brought into the land of their covenant, and all their enemies had been reduced, then the Lord would enter into rest among them. In their affliction having been afflicted, He would now rejoice in their joy (Isa. 63:9); and He, whom the heaven cannot contain, seated Himself in the midst of His chosen nation.

But where was the honoured spot? Who of us that clings with all desire (as, if we be saints, we at least should) to the hope of God's restored presence and kingdom in this world, that would not but know something of it? I speak not of what travelers have told us of it, but how the oracles of God mark it out. And from them we learn this simple story of it, that it had been the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite; and it was the place where the angel of God stayed his destructive course through the city of Jerusalem, whither he had been summoned by the sin of the king and the people. It was this spot which became the place of the temple, and most fitly so, as we shall see, if we can a little more narrowly survey the ground, as it is spread out before us by the Spirit of God in 1 Chron. 21:1-6:

And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel. And David said unto Joab and the elders of the people, Go number Israel, from Beersheba even to Dan, and bring the number of them to me that I may know it. And Joab answered, The Lord make this people an hundred times so many more than they be; but my Lord the king, are they not all my Lord's servants? Why then doth my lord require this thing? Why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel? Nevertheless the king's hand prevailed against Joab. Wherefore Joab departed and went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem. And Joab gave the sum of the number unto David; and all they of Israel were a thousand thousand, and a hundred thousand men, that drew sword; and Judah was four hundred threescore, and ten thousand men, that drew sword. But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them, for the king's word was abominable to Joab.

At the time when this scene opens, the sword of David and of Israel had been victorious over all their enemies. The Philistines had been subdued -- Moab had brought gifts --

garrisons were put in Damascus; and the Syrians, as also the Edomites, had become David's servants. With all promised blessings the house of God's servant had been blest, and nought of the goodness of which the Lord had spoken to him had failed. "The fame of David went out into all lands, and the Lord brought the fear of him upon all nations."

But Satan, we here read, too soon serves himself of all this; and Israel proves again, that man, utterly without strength, is unable even to hold a blessing. The gifts with which their gracious Lord had thus endowed Israel, and which had been ordained for their comfort and His praise, became, through the craft and subtilty of the devil, an occasion to them of self-congratulation and pride, as to Adam of old (Gen. 1-8). For David's heart in all this was moved by the old lie -- "ye shall be as gods." Any thing for poor fallen man but the living God! "Nay, but we will have a king to reign over us," said Israel to Samuel of old, rejecting Jehovah Christ, "that we also may be like all the nations" (1 Sam. 8:19, 29). But the Lord will not give His glory to another: none have ever forsaken Him and prospered, as it is written, -- "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help, and stay on horses, and trust in chariots because they are many, and in horsemen because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord" (Isa. 31:1). "The Egyptians shall help in vain and to no purpose" (Isa. 30:7). David here, like Hezekiah afterwards, in the pride of his heart, would exhibit his magnificence, would survey his resources.

The infatuation in which David was sunk is marked by the fact of Joab expostulating with him; for (though a man of blood and eminently one of the children of this world, as all his policy bespeaks him, yet wiser far in his generation, looking not to the ungodliness so much as to the impolicy of this purposed wickedness of the king) Joab at once discovers that which his master refuses to see.¹⁴⁷

The whole system of Israel, by this national transgression, was now defiled and tainted, and ripe for severity or judgment. This pride was the giving up of God, and God would have been dealing righteously had He at once laid Israel aside, as He did Adam in such a case, -- "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Vv. 7-14. And God was displeased with this thing; therefore he smote Israel. And David said unto God, I have sinned greatly because I have done this thing: but now I beseech thee, do away the iniquity of thy servant, for I have done foolishly. And the Lord spake unto Gad David's seer, saying, Go and tell David, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them that I may do it unto thee. So Gad came to David and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Choose thee either three years' famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh thee; or else three days the sword of the Lord, even the pestilence in the land, and the angel of the Lord destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. Now therefore advise thyself what word I shall bring again to him that sent me. And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait; let me fall now into the hand of the Lord, for very great are his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man. So

146. In various respects it requires both David and Solomon to typify the coming and reign of Christ.

147. The narrative, as it stands in the book of Chronicles, presents David only as the offender in this matter; but we see from the parallel place (2 Sam. 24:1) that the nation generally was in the transgression.

the Lord sent pestilence upon Israel, and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men.

For nine long months the pride of the king's heart deceived him (2 Sam. 24:8); as alas! lust had before dimmed his eye for the same time. He had too long walked in the ways of his heart and in the sight of his eyes; but after his hardness and impenitency was but treasuring up unto himself wrath against the day of the righteous judgment of God now about to be revealed. Sinners should be stopped in their course by the remembrance that God, though He suffers long, "has appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness."

But David, as a child of God, might be tempted, overtaken in a fault, and thus brought to shame and grief, but could not be left impenitent (Luke 22:32). And so Israel as God's nation could not be consumed, because God's gifts and calling are without repentance (Rom. 11:29), because His compassion towards them could not fail (Lam. 3:22). Their transgressions were to be visited with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes, but the divine loving-kindness was not to be utterly taken from David and his nation (Psa. 89:33). Correction {for Israel} is ever in covenant love. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth, and therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (Amos 3:2). To walk comfortably and without interruption as in an even path, we must walk watchfully as with the Lord. Had David walked in his integrity, and humbly with his God, he would have been spared this discipline; but now "he must hear the rod" {Mic. 6:9}. And he is required to choose the rod; by this, much grace might be exercised in his soul; he would by this be brought to consider well the fruit of his transgressions, and thus be more humbled and broken in spirit, and he would also have occasion to encourage himself afresh in the Lord who was slaying him, as we find he did.

But corrected he must be, and that too, just in the place of his transgression; having boasted of his thousands, his thousands must be diminished. God would now number to the sword whom David had numbered to his pride. And so the day of the Lord is to be upon every one that is proud and lifted up (Isa. 2:12).

v. 15. And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it; and as he was destroying, the Lord beheld, and he repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the Lord stood by the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

In this verse we have the threshing-floor of Ornan first brought within view, a mean spot in itself, but destined of the Lord to be the joy of the whole earth; the place of the glory, the rest of God and His Israel. It presents itself to us at once, as the witness of that blessed precious truth, which is the sure ground of all our hopes, that with our God "mercy rejoiceth against judgment" (James 2:13). The whole system of Israel had, as we have observed, exposed itself to the severity or displacing judgment of the Lord; He might have broken it at once as a vessel wherein was no pleasure; He might have taken away His vineyard from His unthankful and wicked husbandmen. But "mercy rejoiceth against judgment" in the bosom of their God. He repents Him of the evil with which His people "because of their transgressions and because of their iniquity were now

afflicted"; and He commands the destroying angel to stay His hand by this threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

Here the same mercy displays itself as that which shone out on ruined condemned Adam in the garden. He had there no plea to plead with the Lord: all that remained for him was to fly and be concealed, if that were possible, when in the bosom of the Lord mercy rises over judgment; and He decrees that "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head" (Gen. 3:15). Often do the scriptures, as here, present our faithful God and Father, opening as it were His own heart, and showing His thoughts to His people how kind they are; as He says *within Himself* concerning the husbandmen of His vineyard, "what shall I do? I will send my beloved son" (see also Jer. 3:19). Oh! that we may drink at this fountain of Israel, the love of the Father -- the springhead of all the healing waters that visit us.

vv. 16-17. And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand, stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders of Israel, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces; and David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, O Lord my God, be on me and on my father's house; but not on thy people, that they should be plagued.

David as yet was not given to read the secrets of his God and Savior: the grace that was rejoicing in the bosom of his covenant God over him, was not as yet opened to him; all that he saw was the fearful agent of death and ruin hanging over his city and people. And Oh! how often an afflicted soul is thus reduced, how often does the eye fix itself on the cloud that darkens all around, without a single glimpse of the bright and peaceful heavens that lie beyond it, not knowing or refusing to know

"The clouds they so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on their head."

v. 18. Then the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up, and set up an altar unto the Lord in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

"If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). The relief for David in this dark hour is announced by the angel of destruction. The eater himself yields meat, the strong man sweetness; the law itself prophesied of Jesus who was to displace it, as here the altar was to displace the angel who directed it.

An altar needs a priest or an accepted worshiper; the Lord would not have directed the one, if he had not provided the other. "The Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering" (Gen. 4:4). His person was first accepted, and then his sacrifice; and here the Lord's readiness to receive an offering at the hand of David was a pledge that David himself, through mercy rejoicing against judgment, had been received, and his iniquity put away. If the Lord had been pleased to kill him, he would not have received a burnt-offering at his hand (Mal. 1:10-13).

vv. 19-26. And David went up at the saying of Gad which he spake in the name of the Lord.

And Ornan turned back and saw the angel: and his four sons with him hid themselves. Now Ornan was threshing wheat, and as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David and went out of the threshing-floor; and bowed himself to David with his face to the ground. Then David said to Ornan, Grant me the place of this threshing-floor, that I may build an altar therein unto the Lord; thou shalt grant it me for the full price, that the plague may be stayed from the people; and Ornan said unto David, Take it to thee and let my Lord the king do that which is good in his eyes; lo, I give thee the oxen for burnt offerings, and the threshing instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat offering: I give it all. And king David said, Nay but I will verily buy it for the full price; for I will not take that which is thine for the Lord, nor offer burnt-offerings without cost. So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight: and David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called upon the name of the Lord; and He answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering.

These verses present to us David's thankful believing acceptance of the mercy revealed to him. He received not the grace of God in vain. He at once went up at the saying of the prophet, while Ornan and his sons hid themselves from the angel. Here we may observe, that while no flesh can stand naked, as in its own resources, before the Lord, yet that sinners may come fully up to His heavenly presence in the power of simply believing in His grace. Ornan and David here illustrate this, Ornan had not the grace of the Lord revealed to him, he knew nothing of the altar that was to be set up in his threshing-floor and therefore -- as nakedly a creature in the sight of God, like Adam before in such a case -- he hid himself. But David knew the remedy which mercy rejoicing against judgment had provided, and therefore he dares to stand, though shamed and humbled; without distraction he fulfils his appointed service, he purchases the threshing-floor, prepares the altar, offers his offering, and calls upon the Lord. The sword still unsheathed has no alarms for him now; believing, he is not ashamed or confounded; he stands to see God's salvation; his soul is brought simply to be a receiver of grace which God Himself brings nigh to him. Hence we see, in all his action, no disturbance or motion of the flesh; but all is the assurance and quietness of faith resting in the word of the Lord. And the Lord gives him his answer before he calls, and hears him while he is yet speaking (Isa. 65:24).

v. 27. And the Lord commanded the angel and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof.

The reconciliation was complete; being justified by faith, there was peace for David with God. As the accusings of the adversary, the demands of the law, the complaints and howlings of conscience, are all and for ever silenced by the voice of the blood of sprinkling, which tells us that with our God "mercy rejoiceth against judgment"; so, as soon as David had trusted in this grace, as soon as he had built his altar in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, where mercy had thus rejoiced, the angel of destruction puts up his sword again into the sheath thereof, at the commandment of the Lord.

vv. 28-30. At that time when David saw that the Lord had answered him in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there. For the tabernacle of the Lord which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt-offering, were at that season in the high place at Gibeon. But David could not go before it to enquire of God for he was

afraid because of the sword of the angel of the Lord.

David was given grace to interpret the writing on the Jebusite's floor. That mystic sacred plan had brightly reflected the glory of forgiving love; there he had seen that with his God "mercy rejoiceth against judgment" -- the oft repeated but ever sweet and blessed truth. Close therefore by this floor he keeps. The corn which his faith had trodden down there was the finest wheat, the very fat of the kidneys of wheat; and, having tasted it, he dared not to forsake his own mercy; having fed at an altar whereon had been spread for him the dainties of a Father's love, he could not return to serve the tabernacle (Heb. 13:10). He had not feared to prepare his altar in the angel's presence, but he does fear now to return by the way of the angel's sword. "This is the house of the Lord God," said he of Ornan's floor, "and this is the altar of the burnt-offering for Israel" (1 Chron. 22:1). His heart, by the Spirit who ever witnesses to grace, was knit to the spot; and he proceeds at once to make preparation to link the name of the God of Israel inseparably with it also. What Moses had given them should be no more remembered or sought unto: in grace the system should be set and confirmed; and Israel and their God should meet for ever where mercy had rejoiced against judgment.

Here, with David we also meditate for awhile, and trace our interest in all this precious truth. Our souls, if we are saints of God, will breathe, "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? but there is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared" or worshiped (Psa. 130:3, 4). All service of the name of our God comes of this; and our thankful acceptance of forgiveness, sealed as it is to all who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, is our entrance into His temple, our assumption of that character in which alone we can do service in the heavenly temple {Heb. 8:1,2; 10:19}, that is, of *pardoned sinners*. We are to know no affection at variance with such a character. None else gives full glory to God. We stand in presence of a mercy-seat, before a throne of largest richest grace, and yet of brightest untainted righteousness, because blood in which God smells a savor of rest is on it, through which He can be just, and yet let mercy rejoice against judgment (Gen. 8:21; Rom. 3:26; Eph. 5:2).¹⁴⁸ "The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple in our heavens." ["Salvation to our God" {Rev. 7} is the burthen of worship by and by; "blessing, and honour, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever," will "every creature" say in that day.] And as mercy through the Lord our righteousness has thus "raised us up, and made us sit in heavenly places" (Eph. 2:6), so in the day when "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom. 11:26) mercy shall in like manner rejoice in the lower parts of the earth. As the church is now set in grace, so will the people then be. That covenant, and that alone, which takes away sin through the Deliverer, shall establish them as it now establishes the saints; "for all are included in unbelief, that God may have mercy upon all" (Rom. 11:26-32). Ex. 32 exhibits this

148. As David would stand only by Ornan's floor where mercy had visited him, so we abide only by the wounded side of Christ, which our sin, like the soldier's spear, had opened, but out of which mercy has brought forth blood and water to cleanse the sins away.

truth, and most interestingly presents Israel as drawn forth, from their standing under Mount Sinai, to take their stand in the last days in and under Christ. And their last tenure of the land by grace will be the accomplishment of the promises made of old to their father Abraham; for the land and its accompanying blessings were given to him and to his seed, not as through the works of the law, but by promise or grace {Gal. 3}. The closing scenes of that lovely portion of the divine word give us the same truth in mystery. Moses veiled typifies Israel *as they are now*, and the flesh under law, or in blindness of heart (Isa. 6:10). Moses unveiled typifies Israel *as they shall be* (Rom. 11:27; 2 Cor. 3:16); and when the heart of the Jewish people shall thus “turn to the Lord,” and the veil shall be taken away, this turning of Israel to Jesus shall be followed by the unveiling of the nations, or the life of the world (Isa. 27:6; Rom. 11:15).

This in the end shall all be established by grace, not only the children of the resurrection in the Father’s house in the *heavens*, but Israel and the nations, “from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same,” *on earth*.

“Mercy shall be built up for ever” (Psa. 89:2). “With everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee (Zion), saith the Lord thy redeemer”; and then shall Zion’s children be many, and her seed shall inherit the Gentiles, *and the redeemer of Israel shall be called the God of the whole earth* (Isa. 54:5-8). The Gentiles shall be embraced in the same mercy, for it is written, “In thee shall all nations be blessed”; and it is written again, “Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people” (Rom. 15:10). Thus shall the whole earth be the extended floor of Ornan the Jebusite, and be the altar and dwelling place of Him with whom mercy has rejoiced against judgment. Thus shall our God show the rich fulness of His wisdom, providing a way whereby He can be just and the justifier of Him that believeth in Jesus, -- whereby He can preserve the righteousness of His throne in all its brightest glory, and yet allow mercy to rejoice against judgment, seating Himself in the earth as in His temple and kingdom. Mercy with righteousness, peace with truth, shall rear that temple, and uphold the kingdom; His shall all things be, not only by title, by creation, but by purchase, -- His “peculiar treasure,” His “purchased possession.” Thus will the Lord fully repossess Himself of the world, and walk again among the children of men; {however,} the saints, who have acknowledged Him while absent {now}, shall be acknowledged in His glory; “the righteous shall see it, and all iniquity shall stop her mouth” (Psa. 107:42).

Chapter 14

Sinai: Law -- Zion: Grace

Meaning of Zion

Having considered God’s choice of David and Jerusalem, we shall now examine the place that mount Zion has in God’s ways in government in the earth. Zion never means the church, just as Israel and/or Judah do not mean the church. Moreover, Zion never means heaven. The hymn which says of Christians, “we’re marching to Zion . . .,” is quite erroneous, springing from confusion on this matter.

There are two contrasted mountains regarding Israel, Sinai and Zion. These signify the two ways in which God deals with Israel, His earthly people. Moreover, these two mountains are presented in that order in Scripture -- according to the principle:

But that which is spiritual [was] not first, but that which is natural, then that which is spiritual (1 Cor. 15:46).

Sinai is the mount that has to do with the testing of the first man and is the mountain that speaks of the law. It is the mount connected with the Mosaic Covenant, which is a conditional covenant -- thus dependant on human performance. Zion is the mount, metaphorically speaking, that is the intended seat of Messiah’s royal power in the earth when God brings Israel into the good of the Abrahamic promises and the New Covenant -- thus dependant on divine sovereignty only. These two mounts, then, stand in marked contrast. One is connected with the trial of the fallen first man, marking his failure, showing that he was not recoverable from the fall. The second displays God’s resource in the face of man’s abject failure, even His sovereign action to establish the Second Man as King of Israel, and over the whole earth.

Mount Zion and Jerusalem are connected together because Jerusalem is the city of the great king (Matt. 5:35). It is the place from which the earthly government of Christ will proceed in the millennial reign.

David and Solomon, combined as types, set forth respectively the coming and reign of Christ. This type centered in Jerusalem. Yet, it was not the fulfilment of God’s purpose regarding Zion. It was a type while the first man was under trial until the cross. In the ways of God, what He purposed to do concerning Zion was first presented to man in responsibility. Then man fails with respect to it. Finally, God brings to pass His purpose, through Christ, the unfailing One. Thus, Mount Zion and Jerusalem will be sovereignly established under the future government of Christ -- who brings to fulfilment and completion the development of God’s ways in government in the earth -- of which Israel is the center under Christ.

Zion will be established by God’s sovereign grace, not by Israel’s efforts in Palestine as at the present time. The present activity is but a seeking to circumvent God’s discipline on Israel (Matt. 22:7) when His armies, the Romans, destroyed the temple system (AD 70 under Titus). Indeed, in the fleshly attempt to set up Zion, they

will even presumptuously reinstate the sacrificial system, but it will be set aside by the Beast and the Antichrist. Finally the Assyrian confederacy will destroy all of what they have erected (cp. Psa. 83 and 79) in defiance of God's governmental discipline presently imposed upon them. The field will be cleared by the rod of God's indignation upon them (the final Assyrian of prophecy) to make way for the display of sovereign grace by Christ's appearing in glory and power to establish Israel in the land by regathering into the land those born of God, the rest being judged. God must be acknowledged as sovereignly acting through Christ, who alone is worthy to bring all divine purposes to pass. He, and He alone, must establish Zion.

Following these brief comments are several articles.¹⁴⁹

Extract on Rev. 14:1

(W. Kelly, *Lectures on the Revelation, in loco.*)

"And I looked, and, lo! the Lamb stood on the mount Sion." Now let us just pause for a moment and enquire what are the ideas that the Holy Ghost conveys by or connects with the hill of Zion. The Apocalypse everywhere supposes an acquaintance with the other parts of the word of God, from Genesis even to the close of the New Testament. It would be difficult to find any part of scripture that is not required in order to come to a full understanding of this wonderful prophecy.

Let us take the present allusion to Zion as an instance. If I do not know what God teaches elsewhere by mount Zion, how shall I understand what is meant by this opening vision of Rev. 14? The first occasion where Zion comes into view is in the history of David, when he became king over all Israel (2 Sam. 5). And what was the state of the people then? Israel had previously chosen a king after their own heart; one that reflected them, that could go at their head and fight their battles. "We will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations." Saul was their choice, David the elect of God. Not that David did not need the mercy and forgiveness of God; for indeed after God's favor to him he fell grievously. Beyond question, however, David entered into and responded to the thoughts of God in a most remarkable way. He sinned, it is true, but who felt and owned his sin more thoroughly? Who more than he vindicated God against himself? Neither, on the other hand, did God make light of his sin because he delighted in David. The deed was secret, but it was published upon the housetop. He had dealt treacherously with his faithful servant, and had defiled his servant's house. And what a tale of sorrow did his own house show for many a long year afterwards! (2 Sam. 12).

149. Some additional comments may be found in J. N. Darby's *Collected Writings*, 2:226; 5:168; 8:91, 157, 195; 17:206-208; 30:205; W. Trotter, *Plain Papers on Prophetic and Other Subjects*, pp. 189, 200 (available from Present Truth Publishers); see Zion in index of W. Kelly, *Lectures Introductory to the Study of the Old Testament*, as well as *Lectures introductory to the Study of the New Testament*, Present Truth Publishers edition; G. Gardner, "Zion's King and His Co-heirs," *The Bible Treasury* NS 6, traces the subject of how the King and His co-heirs will be established by God's sovereignty; the articles in *Words of Truth*, vol. 7, "God's King."

It was then under David, when Israel had been in confusion, when the priests had corrupted them and the king had wrought no deliverance, when all were in rebellion against God and constantly exposed to the razzias and tyranny of their Philistine neighbors. All was in ruin; the sanctuary, in what a state was it! The very tabernacle and the ark of God were severed. Thus, in all respects, sacred and political, great and small, public and private, the picture was most dismal. And it was then that God began to work energetically by His Spirit in the people. Justly were they suffering under the law which they had undertaken at Sinai. True, there was mercy and faithfulness too, in the midst of all, on God's part; but still evil was fast increasing, and in Israel there was no hope and no resource. And what then? God calls David out step by step, and Zion acquires a most marked place in his history. It was there David's city was built, the seat of his royalty. It may not be thought much of now in the world, but in one sense all the blessing of this world as such is suspended over that little spot; and never will there be rest or glory for the earth until the city, which was a stay in the downward progress of Israel, and was meant to be a resting-place for faith, shall by and by be taken up by God. In the Psalms and the Prophets it constantly reappears, the Spirit of Christ ever leading on the hearts of the saints to anticipate the full result which the early type promised as it were in the germ.

In Heb. 12 the Holy Ghost refers to it, though perhaps in a different way. Still the great thought is the intervention of God's grace. The passage contrasts the position of Israel with that of the Christian; and, after having described the vision of Sinai, with its blackness, and darkness, and tempest -- all most terrible even to the mediator, it proceeds: --

But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, &c.

Now there we see just the same great and precious principle. Israel had come to Sinai, and that was the mountain that characterized their whole course from beginning to end. And what was the result of it? As it began with darkness and distance, so it ended with misery and death. As they were and Sinai was, they could not but shrink back from God; for there God was in His majesty of judgment -- not in the love that comes down and puts itself under the burden, in order to take it away. That could not be at Sinai; for there it was a just God in the presence of sinners only; and therefore He could but overawe and fill all with terror and the forebodings of judgment. Bounds must be set round the mountain. If even an unconscious beast touched it, death was the penalty; and this was Sinai. "But ye are come," says the Spirit, "unto mount Sion," the mountain of God's intervention in grace, as Sinai was of man's responsibility; and with Sinai, what could be the effect for the sinner? Only to press his conscience with the terror of death. The Israelite was as good as a dead man, when he stood there, being already a sinner; and death would be as surely executed, after he left the burning mount. The Apostle shows the Christian ground of grace, the exact opposite of man trembling before a God who righteously demanded what the flesh could not do. Now, it is God who has come down -- it is God who has accomplished His work of love. When Zion first appeared

by name, it was when Israel -- people, priests, king -- had utterly failed. Then God entered unsought, established the king of his own choice in Zion, and raised him and his son to such a pitch of glory as never was or will be in Israel again, till the true David comes and plants His royal glory on Zion, never more to be moved.

The principle involved in Zion, then, is God's activity for His people in the way of grace, when all was lost under the law. This gives the mountain of Zion its true force in Rev. 14. It is the gracious interference of God on behalf of those who sit with the holy sufferer -- the Lamb. God acts for His Son, securing His glory on earth and gathering round Him in heart a remnant, not merely sealed as the servants of God (like a similar band out of the twelve tribes of Israel in Rev. 7), but brought into association with the Lamb in Zion, that is, with God's royal purposes in grace. These seem to me sufferers of Judah, who pass through the unequaled tribulation, which it is not said that the other remnant do. This is what is meant by their standing with the Lamb on the mount Zion. There St. John saw them. Of course, I do not mean that in fact they will be on Zion, or that they will necessarily understand what this symbol sets forth. The question is, what God was conveying to John's mind or to any who desire to understand the sayings of this book. It was, I believe, God's special interference on behalf of His people in the last days. He will associate with the Lord Jesus Christ, as the suffering Messiah, a full, numbered, godly remnant {of the Jews}, who will be brought into fellowship with Him. There stand in the vision the hundred and forty-four thousand, having the Lamb's name and His Father's name written on their foreheads. It is not said that they know God as their Father. The Revelation never contemplates us in the position of children, much less does it so present the {future} Jewish remnant. Thus, even when speaking of the church, we are said to be made kings and priests unto God and His Father, rather than ours. And this is the more remarkable in John, because no other evangelist takes so much pains to show the relationship of children in which God has put us before Himself now. Thus, in John 20, directly the Lord is risen from the dead, the message to His disciples is,

Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father,
and to my God and your God {John 20:17}.

Nothing of this appears here, because the Revelation is not so much intended to open our nearness of relationship to God as our Father, but rather His judgment and glory, though with mercy for a remnant. I speak of the prophetic and earthly portion -- not, of course, of that which gives us a glimpse of things above. Thus, the name of the Lamb and the name of His Father (for so it ought to be read) written on their foreheads is in contrast with the name of the beast in Rev. 13. The beast's name or mark was put on the right hand or forehead of his followers. The Lamb's name and His Father's these hundred and forty-four thousand have on their foreheads -- not in their hearts only, if we may so speak; they were evidently and openly the Lamb's.

***Not Sinai, but Zion,
With Other Coming Glories Heavenly and Earthly***

{This article by W. Kelly appears in *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 5:106-110.}

For ye are not come to a palpable thing and all aglow with fire, and to obscurity and gloom and tempest, and to trumpet's sound, and a voice of words, which those that heard deprecated that a word more should be addressed to them; for they were not able to bear that which was enjoined: And, if a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned; and, so fearful was the scene, Moses said, I am affrighted and trembling all over. But ye are come to mount Zion; and to a living God's city, heavenly Jerusalem; and to myriads of angels, a universal gathering; and to an assembly of firstborns, enrolled in heaven; and to God judge of all; and to spirits of just made perfect; and to Jesus mediator of a new covenant; and to blood of sprinkling speaking better than Abel (Heb. 12:18-24).

Let us look at this wonderful contrast drawn between the people under the law, after which so many uninstructed and unsteady of the Jewish confessors of the Lord Jesus were hankering, and the Christian privileges to which the gospel entitles all who now believe. Therefore was the Epistle written to wean them from an unbelieving return to a covenant which the prophet, who predicts a new one of divine grace and blessing to come, makes the first old and nigh to vanishing away (Heb. 8:8-13). The sin, folly, and danger of such unbelief is vividly set forth here in Heb. 12:18-21.

Hence this word boldly declared to the circumcision that confessed Jesus, "ye are *not* come" as the Jewish people in their fathers came, to Sinai, a mountain that might be touched, before all eyes in its stern and barren and solitary grandeur. Then also was a state of burning with supernatural fire still more terrible than anything ordinary, along with obscurity and gloom and tempest. What an unearthly and strange aggravation (attested in Ex. 19 and Deut. 4, 5)! and a trumpet's sound, never heard before nor since, which waxed louder and louder in its awful summons; and a voice of words audible to every soul as God's, more terrifying than all the rest in majesty and deadly meaning for the conscience! Therefore did they above all deprecate this voice that they might hear no more, but Moses on their behalf. For was it not charged that even a beast, unconscious of sin, if it touched the mountain, should be stoned? How then could a poor sinful Israelite stand? And so fearful was the scene, that the very mediator on whom they set their hope said, as the inspired writer could avouch, I am affrighted and full of trembling.

How truly the law was a ministry, not of life and the Spirit, not of pardon and peace, but of death and condemnation! {2 Cor. 3}. Could God have made it plainer than that, in itself and in its accompaniments, it was to make sin exceeding sinful {Rom. 7:13}, and to warn sinners of the delusion that the least help for the sinner lay within its condition? Salvation must come through another, the Messiah; salvation is and must be of God's grace in Him, of whom God had spoken from the day sin entered man and the world (Gen. 3:15); as He confirmed it by many signs and tokens and sacrifices and deliverances throughout the OT, which no believer that searches can overlook.

Alas! it is not only that Jews are still obdurate. Christendom is more guilty still; and as faith in grace and truth declined, a judaizing reaction has tainted it everywhere. Hence the more ancient bodies have revived the temple, altar, sacrifice, and priests

(some with its three orders of high-priest, priests, and Levites). The more modern societies {i.e., Protestant} follow the synagogue with its preachers. Both are now flooded with rationalism, superstition, heterodoxy, and worldliness; and this in their all but universal prevalence and alarming growth. Sight and sound, learning, science, sentiment, oratory, show, carry away high and low, with the utmost zeal to gain the masses, but gold and silver also, earthly rank and reputation. Thus is the cross of Christ (abused in a material or idolatrous form) undermined and overthrown on earth; and His heavenly glory in dogmatic and practical power utterly ignored, as is the Holy Spirit's presence and action and testimony to both set aside more and more. It is Judaism and Gentilism supplanting Christianity; and this is Christendom.

Next is the divine picture for Christian eyes, as presented to correct and instruct and warn the Jewish confession (22-24).

But ye are come to mount Zion; etc.

It is a coming, not actually in letter, but in spirit by faith, even if only professedly so. Sinai was the original standing of Israel, their proudest boast. What nation could truthfully say that the living God appeared unequivocally as to them in giving His fiery law, spoken directly and afterwards written on tables of stone by His own hand? But ye, Christians, have come to the mountain of grace, not law.

Such then is the principle of Zion. 1 Sam. tells us of the priests corrupt and profane; of the ark taken, of Ichabod written even on their religion and state; of the people sick of Jehovah in their midst, and demanding a king like the nations, in disobedience of the prophet; and their king {Saul} disobedient like themselves, and pursuing him whom Jehovah chose {David} till he wearied of faith, and the king {Saul} sought a witch {spiritist medium} and fell with his three sons by Philistine hands on mount Gilboa. David came at length to the throne of all Israel; but Jerusalem, the future and true metropolis, was so firmly Jebusite, that they taunted him with the insult that the blind and the lame could hold the fort in his defiance {2 Sam. 5:6}. Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion; and there was the king's palace, as the temple later on Moriah.

Thus Zion became the most marked sign of royal grace; but, it awaits great David's greater Son to prove and display it effectively and for ever. And the day hastens. He whom the Jews rejected in reckless hate shall sit on the hill of Jehovah's holiness {Psa. 2} in royal glory as well as grace. It is, not heaven, as the Socinians expound; nor is it the church, as the theologians of Christendom dream. It is the center of the kingdom restored to Israel, when they repent and are converted to their true King. Compare Psa. 2, 9, 14, 48, 68, 69, 76, 78, 84, 87, 110, 127, 132, 137, 149. The Prophets abound in similar anticipations, as Isa. 1, 2, 4, 12, 24, 33, 35, 40, 49, 51, 53, 59, 62, 66; Jer. 3, 31, 50, 51. See too Micah 4, 5, Joel 3, Obad. 17, 21, Zeph. 3, Zech. 1, 2, 8, 9.

Zion therefore is not merely like Gerizim a pledge of blessing at the start, but an ever recurring signal of sovereign and royal grace triumphing after utter sin and shame and ruin. No mountain named in the Bible suited the aim here so admirably as Zion, the Zion of scripture, not the whimsical substitute of theology, "the catholic church" as even Cromwell's Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University, the able and excellent J. Owen

makes it to be, militant and triumphant, and to this end omits the copulative (Works, xxiv. 329, Gould's Ed.). But here we may add that almost all editors of the Greek Test. as well as the commentators almost universally fall into error sometimes repeatedly, by not heeding the plain and sure fact that the conjunction (*καὶ* -- and) connects with Zion each new and distinct link in the chain of glory. In the next page after, as in the text of the page before, it is given correctly; but such laxity makes sound exegesis impossible. The most prevalent instance is in joining "general assembly" (as in the Auth. V.) with "the church of the firstborn"; of which Dr. Owen of course is also guilty, to the destruction of all right intelligence of the context. The least skillful of handlers could not have the hardihood to construe "God the judge of all," "Jesus the mediator of the now covenant," and "the blood of sprinkling" etc., as the further description of the catholic church; but they do strive hard to merge "the spirits of just men made perfect" in the same object.

Even J. A. Bengel (*Gnomon* ii. 467, Ed. 1836) lumped "myriads of angels and firstborns" in one category, so as to make out his double sevenfold; whereas the latter consists really of eight, not of seven. Yet in the next p. 468 he properly asks, who would join together as synonyms the church of the firstborn with the general assembly of angels? Nevertheless, who knows not that able men of research like Dean Alford, and Bp. Chr. Wordsworth, and Bp. Westcott, persisted in the same false punctuation, and in joining more or less two categories so different as the angels and the church; as the erudite Bp. J. Pearson laid down in his famous exposition of the Creed since 1658? The perplexities of the learned are great and varied, as F. Delitzsch here speaks of three closely connected questions, and among the hardest in our Epistle. But, whatever the connection, the difficulty is largely due to overlooking the help rendered by the conjunction as the introduction of each added object after the first, or Zion. The neglect of this threw even so eminent a preacher and teacher as J. Howe into confusion like almost every other, as we may see in his use of this scripture everywhere, particularly in his sermon, or part of it, dedicated to Lady Russell. Lesser lights we need not notice.

The inspired picture then starts as a great principle from the spot of all on earth most ennobled by its associations to believing Israelites. For though the Epistle would bind their hearts and relations with Him who sits in heaven at God's right hand (and therefore Christian truth, above all visible forms and shadows), care is taken to notice briefly by the way the people of God and their hopes of the Kingdom and rest on earth also (Heb. 2, 4).

Next, we read, "and a living God's city, heavenly Jerusalem." There is thus no connection with a dying David's city, but a rise from earth to heavenly glory, as this Epistle testified of Abraham's case when in the land. For

by faith he sojourned as a stranger in the land of promise as a foreign [country] having dwelt in tents with Isaac and Jacob the joint-heirs of the same promise; for he waited for the city that hath the foundations, of which God is architect and builder (Heb. 11: 9, 10).

The same truth is if possible more plainly stated in vers. 13-16. It will be in addition to

what their seed will have on earth under Messiah and the new covenant for their joy and the blessing of all the families of the earth; their own seat of glory above as risen saints. Not that we should confound the coming and abiding city on high of which this Epistle speaks with the holy city in Rev. 21:9, which was seen coming down out of heaven from God. For the Epistle never rises to the mystery in the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians. When “church” is spoken of in Heb. 2 and 12 in this context, it is not in its unity but in its constituents, as “of first-borns” proves. Its city is a place of glory which risen saints are to occupy. But in the Revelation it is what the church is to be, and not *where*; not objective but subjective, as men say. For it would contradict scripture, to infer that Abraham or any other OT saint had any idea of that union as the one body with its heavenly Head which is its essence, being the great mystery expressly declared to be not made known to the sons of men, the mystery or secret hid, not in scripture, but in God, and now revealed to the holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit {Rom. 16:25, 26; Col. 1:26; Eph. 3}.

Then we hear,

and to myriads of angels, a universal gathering (or, myriads, universal gathering of angels).

A multitude of this heavenly host at the Incarnation hailed with unjealous delight the Divine Savior’s birth as man, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good pleasure in men. Here they are seen as the indigenous denizens of heaven in festal assembly, rejoicing in the results of grace for men on earth.

But now follows not only the glory of God seen above supremely, but first an unexpected sight: those who, expressly as lost ones saved irrespectively of special promises (after all seemed a hopeless ruin of Jew no less than Gentile in the cross of Christ), were brought into the nearest association with Him for heavenly places.

And an assembly of firstborns, enrolled in heaven

by sovereign grace as angels are not, and called to reign with Christ which a created angel never is. If we do not hear of them as Christ’s body and bride of the Lamb, as the apostles Paul and John speak elsewhere, their being heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ is here recognized in the remarkable title of these as individuals. Contrary to nature which admits of but one in human limits, here they were all and equally first-borns, as He who in His own right infinitely above them deigned to treat them as His “fellows,” in no way ashamed to call them “brethren” (chs. 1, 2), His holy brethren partakers of a heavenly calling {Heb. 3:1}, not like Israel of an earthly one however grand. They were enregistered in heaven as their proper fatherland in sovereign grace.

Thence we ascend to Him who is supreme.

And to God judge of all.

Judicially He had been known, though by few comparatively in OT times, as in the age to come {i.e., the millennium} here contemplated He will be universally manifested, proved, and confessed. So for instance He is celebrated in Psalms 50, to take one witness out of many.

El Elohim Jehovah hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined

forth. Our God will come and will not keep silence; fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He will call to the heavens above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather to me my godly ones, those that have made a covenant with me over sacrifice! And the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is judge himself.

Isaiah points out (24:21-23) His action still more loftily and profoundly:

And it shall come to pass in that day Jehovah will punish the host of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth on the earth. And they shall be brought together, an assembly of prisoners for the pit, and shall be shut up in prison, and after many days shall they be visited. And the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed; for Jehovah of hosts shall reign on mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients [in] glory.

As God is and must be the summit of glory, it is clear that, if another step be added, it is to come down from Him on the other side. And this is just what we see next. The richest manifestation of grace in Christ is toward the church; and this we had, before we were directed to God in His judicial capacity, the great burden of OT expectation, which is to be displayed in the Kingdom, which our Lord taught us to consist of two distinct parts, not only the heavenly kingdom of the Father, but also the Son of man’s kingdom, out of which His angels shall gather all offences and all that do lawlessness. God as judge of all prepares the way naturally for the saints in OT days who knew Him thus, yet walked in hope of Messiah.

And to the spirits of just [men] made perfect

fits those saints more aptly and fully than any other class. They all died according to faith, having promise but in no way its accomplishment; whereas the church of first-borns did not begin to exist as such till the Son and Heir of all things, being rejected of Jew and Gentile, suffered for sins on the cross, rose, and ascended to heaven; whence He sent forth the Holy Spirit to commence and establish that new creation by baptizing those that believe into one body, Christ’s body. These spirits are the elders that obtained testimony before the Lord came, and are here grouped as spirits of men who had finished their course, but not yet crowned or enthroned till their bodies are glorified at Christ’s coming. No more exact phrase could be used about them; nor any less adapted to the church, even if we had not the church already, which must have a surviving part on earth when the Lord comes, instead of being all separate “spirits.”

The seventh object we come to here is,

and to Jesus mediator of a new [or fresh] covenant.

This is a remarkably precise and significant clause. It is not said that we are come to the new covenant, which, as Jer. 31:31-34 tells us, is to be made with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the first covenant at Sinai where all hung on the people’s faithfulness to Jehovah, and, as they were unfaithful, to their ruin till this day. The new covenant is on the opposite principle of His grace and faithfulness to them, when He will put His law in their inwards and within their heart; and He will be their God and they His people in His love and power, not on their responsibility. They shall all know me from the least to the greatest, saith Jehovah; for I will pardon their iniquity, and their sins will I remember no more -- the great hindrance to knowing

Him being thus taken away. To this state of Israel we are not said to have come, but to Jesus its mediator, as is indubitable; and we enjoy “the spirit,” if not “the letter,” of that covenant, on the principle of grace in contrast with law, as 2 Cor. intimates. But there is more here implied in this, the only place where occurs a “fresh” covenant in the NT. Its force appears to be that, however long that covenant of grace¹⁵⁰ got suspended for the ancient people of God in their unbelieving Lo-Ammi condition, it awaits their sure and repentant acceptance of it, as “fresh” as when founded on the only sacrifice by which it could come to them.

The last is

and to blood of sprinkling speaking better than Abel.

Here we descend to earth again, but it is not to the central seat of Zion, from which we rose. It is the earth in all its extent, with any such exception as is due to God’s indignation during the kingdom before “a new heaven and a new earth” in their absolute form, and for the everlasting state, as in 1 Cor. 15:24, 2 Pet. 3:13; and Rev. 21:1-8. As the blood of Abel cried to Jehovah from the ground and brought a curse (Gen. 4:10-12), Christ’s blood of sprinkling has reconciling power, in virtue of which when He is revealed and the sons of God along with Him in glory, all things (not all persons) that were dragged down through Adam’s sin shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. We even now know by faith the liberty of grace, as Rom. 8:1-4 teaches, and Gal. 4, 5 and many another scripture. This the groaning creation cannot from its unintelligent nature enter into and enjoy through the Holy Spirit, as is now our portion. But none the less shall the whole creation which fell with the first Adam share the blessed power of the Last Adam when He appears, not only to save Israel, but to gladden the wilderness and the dry land; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose or lily: not a leaf or an insect too tiny to expand to His honor in that bright day of glory.

Question About Zion and the Christian’s Heavenly Glory with Christ

(W. Kelly, *The Bible Treasury* NS 2:79, 80.)

Q. -- It is acknowledged that the Lord will reign in Zion (Psa. 2, 8, 12, 24, &c., Zech. 2, 8, &c.). Yet it is drawn from the NT that His or our especial scene of glory will be in heaven. How can this be? R.

A. -- Few truths are more important, whether one thinks of Christ or of the church. It is a question of the purpose of God, hidden in the ages and dispensations, but now brought to light formally and fully by the apostle Paul. Take Eph. 1:9-11 as a grand unfolding of it, where we learn that for the administration of the fulness of the times

(or seasons) God will gather together (or head up) in one *all things* in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; in Him in Whom also we obtained (or were given) inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.

This rises incomparably beyond the kingdom in Zion, or the yet larger dominion of the Son of man {reigning over the earth}, both of which will assuredly be accomplished “in that day.” It is even beyond all the promises to which the OT saints have just claim, and wherein no disappointment shall ever be. But grace gave to the apostle to reveal the divine counsel of setting Christ at the Head of all creation, the Heir as the Creator of all, now His (as the Epistle to the Colossians shows) on the ground of reconciliation. He is thus constituted the glorified Head over all, as we now know by faith. And “that day,” which proclaims Messiah’s reign over the land of promise with Israel renewed as His people, and all nations and tribes circling round Israel and subject to the Son of man, will make known the still more wondrous glory of our Lord over all things heavenly, angels, principalities, &c., with the church in the same glory His bride as now His body.

When this characteristic truth of the NT dawns on the soul, a crowd of scriptures confirm it. Thus in Matt. 6 our Lord taught His disciples to pray for “Thy” (i.e., the Father’s) kingdom to come, as well as His will to be done on earth. The Father’s kingdom is as distinctly heavenly as the Son of man’s is earthly; so Matt. 13:41-43 clearly proves. The risen saints shine as the sun, which is not earthly, in their Father’s kingdom; whereas the Son of man by His angels executes judgment on all offences and unrighteous persons in His kingdom as manifestly on earth. But it will be the day for His exaltation manifested on high as well as here below, being the Son of the Father and set by God over all things heavenly and earthly.

Then John 14 is unmistakable that our special hope of blessedness is not merely reigning with Christ, as all suffering saints shall, but that He is coming to receive us to Himself in the Father’s house where He now is. And the great NT prophecy shows us (Rev. 21:9 to the end) the bride the Lamb’s wife the center of heavenly and universal glory; as the OT is equally clear that Zion will be for all the peoples of the earth, then owning Israel to be the seed which Jehovah has blessed and set at the head of all nations under the Great King, Himself Jehovah-Messiah.

So Rom. 8:16, 17, designates the Christians as God’s children.

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.

This goes far beyond the earth; as Rom. 5:17 cannot be limited to the millennial reign.

Again, 1 Cor. 6:2, 3, teaches that we shall judge the world -- nay more, judge angels. And 1 Cor. 15:48, 49, distinctly calls us even now “heavenly” in title, after the pattern of the Heavenly One, and points on to our bearing that heavenly image, as we have now borne the image of the earthly (Adam’s).

But instead of gathering up other intimations, look at the glorious type of that day furnished by Gen. 14 where Melchizedek meets Abram victorious over the foe in the hour of their short triumph, and pronounces him blessed of the most High God,

150. {I take it that he refers to the Abrahamic Covenant, which I have referred to as one of four gracious covenants, avoiding the use of the words “covenant of grace,” though it surely is a covenant of grace, as are the other three.}

possessor of heaven and earth; as he blesses the most High God Who had delivered his enemies into his hand. Christ is even now, as the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches, priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek; but He will exercise its privileges in the blessings of that day of blessing. One might add many a glimpse in the types of Joseph, and of Moses, as well as in that of the sanctuary. But enough is said to show the blank left by looking no higher than the earth for the Lord in that day. If nature abhors a vacuum, the Christian in hope awaits glory in the heavens for Christ and the church, while fully assured that the glory of Jehovah and the knowledge of it shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea.

Chapter 15

David and Solomon, A Type of the Coming and Kingdom of Christ

The following article is by R. Beacon from *The Bible Treasury*, 16:289-301.

Preparation For Messiah's Kingdom

In bringing these papers to a close let us take a glance at the establishment of the kingdom. And it may be but a glance, such as is afforded by the might of David and the splendor of Solomon, which are but shadows in comparison of the power and brightness of Messiah when He takes the kingdom. The fullest type necessarily falls short; He must be present before we can see His glory. Even as in the past, David may have felt the sorrow of being hunted by Saul and in the end driven to seek shelter among enemies, far more than any that were with him sharing his toils; but what were his sorrows compared to the sorrows of the Lord? And as His sorrows were deeper so will His glory be greater. But here we are met with the fact that when looking at David the type of the rejected Messiah, we had Messiah Himself before us in the Gospels, and so could read the type in the Antitype; for it is He Who throws light upon the type, not the type upon Him, and the contrasts stand out in sharper outline than the analogies. Indeed the closest analogy is never without proof that the image of the coming King was looked at through a defective medium; yet enough remained to His glory to call forth our praise. For it is Christ's life in the Gospels that throws a halo around the wanderings of David. In looking still at David now on the throne as type of Messiah, whose kingdom is not yet established in the earth, we have not its glorious reality whereby to judge of the type under David's reign. All that we know of the future kingdom of Christ must be gathered from the prophetic word, the lamp which we must use to read of David the King. We must wait for the advent of the kingdom to see the application and the importance of many things in David's reign, and also in Solomon's; for, as typifying the kingdom, David and Solomon must be considered as one; and indeed they are so presented historically, for Solomon was on the throne and crowned before David died. For not as a mere historical fact is it recorded, but to give one complete picture of Christ's kingdom on the earth, in one unbroken reign, David's death not interfering with its unity.

Though many a detail may be dark as to its typical application, the great truth is clearly read, that all enemies shall be destroyed, and that Messiah will begin to reign before peace is brought in; -- that there will be in fact a David, and a Solomon aspect of His reign.

In the history, the kingdom of David immediately succeeds the death of Saul, which involved the ruin of Israel. A greater ruin has now befallen Israel, and the kingdom of

Christ is not yet established. There is nothing between Saul and David that points to the lapse of nearly nineteen centuries during which Israel remains ruined and scattered beyond the wit of man to say where. In this interval, unnoticed in type or prophecy, the hidden purpose of God is revealed, and the exhaustless wonders of grace made known in the church. The church was revealed only by its presence when the Holy Ghost was given at the day of Pentecost. Even when the risen Lord ascended from the mount of Olives, it was the kingdom that filled the mind of the disciples, and to the kingdom the answer of the two white-appareled men alone refers. Not the least allusion do they make either to the calling or to the rapture of the church. Prophecy overlooks this long parenthesis, and therefore in the typical presentation of Christ as rejected, and then reigning in power, the one follows the other without a gap. The church of God is no part of the course of the ages which carries the idea of government either direct from God, as when He ruled in Israel, or when they were dispersed and government entrusted to the Gentile, where the intervention of God among men was by no means so marked as when Israel was publicly His people. Both Israel and the Gentile are now thrust aside -- both having failed -- to make room for the church; the times of the Gentiles {Luke 21:24} still run on, but modified through the calling of the church. When the church is gone, God will resume the government of the world, in spite of the dragon and his slaves, and by judgment will prepare the earth for the advent and reign of His Son, to Whom Jehovah has said, "Sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool" {Psa. 110:1}. Then He comes. Meanwhile He is waiting. The sufferings and the glory are in the prophetic word joined together. Grace to the lost, and going beyond all previous revelation has placed an interval between the sufferings and the kingdom glory, and has formed a sphere outside the limits of prophecy and above its range. "They are not of the world," {John 17:14} said the Lord. This is true of us dispensationally, it ought to be equally true of us morally. We do not belong to the *ages* of the world, but are a separate people.

Nor is there, in the history we are looking at, any foreshadowing of the judgments of which the prophetic word is full, and which will take place at the close of this present age after the church is caught up; that is, before His appearing {in glory}. While these judgments are being poured out upon the earth, Christ is still hidden until He appears for the destruction of antichrist, "the king" {Isa. 30:33; see Dan 11:36; 2 Thess 2; Antichrist}. There is nothing analogous to Christ's sitting at the right hand of Jehovah in the history of David, who with one step rises from the place of rejection to the throne. When Saul is removed, David immediately is presented to the nation; unless Saul be considered as a type of "the King," for then Christ begins to act in power. When He appears, it is not by one great victory that peace is brought to the earth. He rules in the midst of enemies (Psa. 110:2) till they are all subdued, and this is the characteristic of David's reign. As it is said, "Jehovah shall roar out of Zion" {Joel 3:16, Amos 1:2}. After "the king" is destroyed, there will yet remain nations to be subdued, and a rearrangement of them according to God. For the landmarks and divisions, which the pride of man and his lust of power have made, will be annulled, and the original

divisions, as God divided the nations, will again appear (see Gen. 10). And by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood (v. 32). The world is marked by families, and nations, and races, and in this day each is asserting itself according to its power; but the final settlement will only be when Christ reigns.

The first effect of Christ taking His power will not be peace. He will in fury tread down His enemies. This is the preliminary or David aspect of war, not the Solomon display of glory which is properly the millennium. It is not according to His purpose by one stupendous act to put down all authority and power -- which of course He could do if He pleased but during a certain limited period, after the sudden and instantaneous judgment of the beast and of the false prophet {Rev. 19}, and a little later of the Assyrian {Dan. 8:23-26; 11:40-45: Isa.}, to use Israel as His instrument in breaking to pieces the opposing Gentile power. But Messiah will Himself personally appear in the judgment of these three at least. The brightness of His presence, and the breath of His nostrils, slay the wicked, but these are cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone (Rev. 19:20). He will also personally meet the king of the north, the Assyrian, whose doom overtakes him in the same terrible manner as it fell upon the western beast and upon antichrist. The Assyrian falls not by the sword of a mighty man, nor by the sword of a mean man, but by the voice of Jehovah shall he be beaten down. That is, his will not be the destruction which falls upon his armies whose bones Israel will be seven months in burying, but he shall be cast alive into Tophet. To an Israelite no more appropriate word could be used, or so significant of his end. Tophet is the place where the Israelites burned alive their children to the god Moloch; the word is closely associated with, and carries the idea of being burnt alive (2 Kings 23:10). Tophet was prepared for him and also for "the king." "The breath of Jehovah like a stream of brimstone doth kindle it" (see Isa. 30:27-33; also Ezek. 38, 39; Zech. 14:1-3).

Messiah rules in Zion before His kingdom is established over the whole earth, not as sitting upon His throne, but His power will be manifested, and will proceed from Zion as from a central point. "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron" (Psa. 2). "Jehovah shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies" (Psa. 110). His enemies shall be broken to pieces as a potter's vessel, but His people, "thy people," shall be a willing people. See also Psa. 118:6-16, which so clearly expresses the condition of the inhabitants of Jerusalem when the hosts of the king of the north are besieging the city. It is the introduction to the reign of peace by the noise of war, by the sword and the spear, not by the soft and persuasive voice of the gospel. The rebellious Jew with the Gentile share in that destruction. "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me" (Luke 19:27).

This period answers in general to David's reign who was a man of war from his youth, and on that account was commanded to leave the building of the temple to his son. It will be when all Israel are gathered and all nations subdued, that Ezekiel's temple {Ezek. 40-48} will be built, and the healing waters flow. When the heathen know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity, and after they have

borne their shame and are dwelling safely in their land, and Jehovah's word is given that He will no more hide His face from them, for that He has poured out His Spirit upon the house of Israel (Ezek. 39:23-29), then comes the description of the temple, in which Jehovah will dwell, Whose presence will be its glory. When Judah comes back in unbelief, they will build a temple, but the abomination of desolation will stand in it. Of the temple of Ezekiel, yea, of the whole city, its very name from that day shall be, "Jehovah is there."

David reigned seven years in Hebron, and thirty three in Jerusalem, together forty years: -- a number always used to express the sufficiency and completeness of that of which it is spoken. And Messiah's rule in the midst of enemies will be till all are put down. But how to divide the era of judgment, from the first seal to the last mighty act of vengeance upon the Assyrian, is not revealed. To diligent faith God will give intelligence; but any attempt to arrange them so as to make the events of David's reign, and the course of judgment in the future dovetail into each other, will inevitably result in mistakes. The light of Christ in His lowly path shines upon the previous life of David; the light of Christ's exaltation in the earth is not yet come. We have as yet as regards the kingdom only the lamp of prophecy, which though only a lamp, as compared with the Day-star, distinctly foretells a time when Christ will rule out of Zion before the millennium begins. When that time comes, Christ in glory will rise upon the world. The Day-star risen in our hearts now reveals our heavenly position in the coming kingdom and glory. But neither David nor Solomon points to the place grace has prepared for us.

It was the Philistine, Israel's most persistent and formidable enemy, who felt more than any other the weight of David's arm. Again and again were they smitten, and it was over them that David's mighty men won their renown. Only among them were the giants found. But all, great and small, pay homage and tribute to David, and to Solomon, for David's reign is blended with that of Solomon. The "David" character is not quite gone when Solomon begins to reign. David yet lives till after the last struggle of the enemy, as seen in the attempt of Adonijah to possess the kingdom, and with him are found Joab, the chief of the army, and Abiathar the priest, up to that moment head of the priesthood. But he is now thrust aside, according to the word spoken to Samuel long before, yet historically owing to his own act and deed; so marvelously does God blend man's responsibility with His own counsels. Zadok is called to anoint Solomon.

Adonijah said, "I will be king." Did he not know that Solomon was the chosen of Jehovah? (1 Chron. 28:4-6). Here is wilful rebellion, and, considering him typically, he is an antagonist of Christ. It is said of "the king" that he shall do according to his will {Dan. 11:36 -- Antichrist}. Does Adonijah in any measure present "the king" to our eye? We discern one or two of the same features in each, yet scarcely sufficient, taken with other circumstances, to say that Adonijah is a type of "the king." The similarity is that both do their own will, and that neither is an external enemy; they are both in Jerusalem. But there is this difficulty, that "the king" as Antichrist is destroyed immediately at the appearing (Rev. 19 -- the False Prophet, the second beast of Rev. 13).

The conspiracy of Adonijah, Joab, and Abiathar is at the close of David's reign just before his death, i.e., before Solomon, the man of rest reigns alone, and, as to time coincides rather with the judgment of the king of the north, who has the same mark of *will* upon him. It may be that the session of judgment closes with his being cast into Tophet. For at the time that Jehovah lays His rod upon him "in battles of shaking," there will be with Israel "tabrets and harps." The inhabitants of the unwallled villages where they dwelt in peace, at that same time, "shall have a song as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept" (Isa. 30:29, &c.).

The Assyrian, looked at through his type, Antiochus Epiphanes, who is the king of the north in his day, does "according to his will" (Dan. 11:16). Was the Holy Spirit looking at the future Assyrian through Adonijah? At most it is but a faint shadow, for self-will is the common mark of all that oppose Christ. Adonijah is spared for a brief moment till a more subtle attempt is made against the authority of Solomon, which brings judgment, and Adonijah is slain.

In these three men we see, in Adonijah the authority of the world, in Joab the executive power, in Abiathar the religious power, all combined against Christ. They are the representatives of the three great moral forces of the world. In the midst of their revelry the shouting of the people is heard; sudden fear seizes them, and destruction soon overtakes them. So it will be at the end.

The next prominent event we notice is the building and dedication of the temple. The glory of Jehovah fills it. It is a picture of the millennium. Solomon's prayer looks onward to it, but takes up also the intervening time. He, as it were, counts upon the coming glory, and pleads for mercy in view of it; he sees the scattering of rebellious Israel. His prayer is a divine forecast of their history, couched withal in the language of supplication. Grace will restore the nation to the rule and glory of Christ. And even as it is grace, so it will not be limited to Israel, but the glory will be displayed to the world. The queen of Sheba -- as representative of the nations -- comes to learn the wisdom and see the glory of Solomon. And thus it will be when Christ reigns, not only King of Israel, but also King of kings and Lord of lords.

Moses said, "Shew me Thy glory." To us as to him, our faces are covered with His hand till the glory passes by; then we as he, shall see the back parts. When the glory of the kingdom shines over the whole earth, we shall be able to trace as we cannot now the lines of purpose and glory, the responsibilities of man and the dispensational dealings of God with him, all converging upon Christ. God has been pleased to foreshadow the coming glory for Israel and blessing for the world. We adore though seeing dimly. The church of God has not to search amid types for her peculiar glory. It is summed up in this -- with Christ; and like Christ; and for ever.

R. B.

Chapter 16

Israel's Failure in Government, Pronounced Lo-ammi, and The Times of the Gentiles Begin

God's order with respect to the accomplishment of His purpose is first the presentation of the matter to man in responsibility. Thus the law came first by Moses, grace and truth subsists through Jesus Christ (John 1:17). God dispensed priesthood in Israel, but it fails, and Christ makes it good. Shiloh was provisional, to bring out the state of the people. Then, through David, Jerusalem is chosen, though that, too, comes under failure -- to be established under Messiah's power in the millennium as He is the great light filling the earth with the light of His glory, as depicted by the candelabra fed by the sons of oil -- His offices as Priest and King (Zech 4). Then will He be priest upon His throne (Zech. 6:13).

But Saul came before David, for the kingdom must first be in the hands of this representative of the first man, slain by an Amalekite. Respectively, David and Solomon form together a type of the coming and the kingdom of Christ. Still, it was the epoch of the testing of the first man (cp. 1 Cor. 15:47) to show that he was not recoverable from the fall. Thus, the old Israel fell before the flesh in responsibility. Christ came as the final test of Israel, then was the great secret of the mystery of Christ brought out and God is forming a heavenly people while the world lies in the wicked one (1 John 5:19). The judgment on the world is thus meanwhile held in suspension until this work is completed. Then God will form an elect remnant of the Jews in preparation for the sovereign inception of Messiah's kingdom, when Christ will make good those things wherein the first man failed.

Let us consider this, again bringing in a few more aspects of man in responsibility: having something committed to him, and failing therein. The line of David failed in responsible kingship. Man always fails in responsibility, but God will make good, sovereignly, through Christ, all in which man failed in responsibility. Let us be clear concerning two great matters that were combined in Israel. *Calling* (in Abraham) and *government* (first given to Noah), were combined. In Israel's history, the time came when government in Israel was in the hands of a king. In God's ways, this power was first placed in the hands of a king according to the order in which God acts for His glory in Christ:

But that which is spiritual [was] not first, but that which is natural, then that which is spiritual (1 Cor. 15:46).

Saul and David serve as *types* of this principle and order, not as the fulfilment of it. Thus, though Saul and David illustrate this principle, David's kingship pointed to Christ as the King who would eventually make kingship good in Israel, to God's glory. So,

great as David was as a type, kingship was under trial in responsibility and eventually the failure in kingship in Israel was without remedy and it had to be taken away from Israel.

Consequent upon the failure in Israel, governmental power was placed into the hands of the Gentile in a special way and form. That governmental power took the form of Gentile empires, depicted in Daniel in two different ways:

- (1) as depicted in the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the colossal image (Dan. 2) -- the four-part image of a man, the human view of it;
- (2) in Dan. 7 depicted by the prophet Daniel as four consecutive empires seen in bestial character, God's view of it. Man does indeed look at things differently than God does.

These four consecutive powers of empire span the time from Nebuchadnezzar until the smiting stone crushes the power of empire first committed to Nebuchadnezzar. It is clear that the four consecutive empires span the time until the appearing of Christ in glory and judgment. This span of time is called "the times of the Gentiles" (or, nations) in Luke 21:24 -- which text also shows the on-going domination of the Gentiles until Christ appears in glory and judgment. The times of the Gentiles continue during the period of Daniel's 70th week.

Thus, this period of "the times of the Gentiles" is an interruption in the combination of calling and government in Israel. The combination is in suspension for this epoch. We may call this epoch *the Gentile parenthesis of judgment on Israel*. It is also the epoch of Israel being Lo-ammi (i.e., not-my-people) as pronounced in Hosea 1. Their being pronounced to be Lo-ammi has to do with government being taken away from them.

What Israel is presently doing in the land is this: the assumption of statehood with governmental power is not owning the discipline of God on them. They are headed for the worst calamity Israel shall ever experience. Is God's disciplinary judgment to be set aside by wilfulness and God not eventually to address the revolt from His discipline? (This principle applies to persons and families too.)

But there is another aspect to the refusal of God's discipline on them. Eventually God used the fourth empire to destroy Jerusalem (in AD 70). That removed their worship system -- which was previously invalidated, spiritually, by the cross. But God struck that blow (Matt. 22:7) and Israel will yet revolt more by eventually re-introducing the sacrificial system. In God's disciplinary ways with this people, they will be given over to accept the final Antichrist of prophecy, accepting the mark of the Beast -- except for a godly, Jewish remnant. A little after 3 1/2 years of the future worship of the evil Triad (Satan, the Beast, and the Antichrist), God will have ready a rod of Indignation, the final Assyrian of prophecy, who will over-run Israel (cp. Psa. 83 and 79, and Isa. 30).

Then, in Christ's coming in glory and judgment, He will break that rod of His Indignation, etc., etc., finally regathering Israel by sovereign power, having purged all rebels from among them (Ezek. 20), so that what remains are the godly as the nucleus

of the Israel thus all righteous (Isa. 60:20), for He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Rom. 11:26).

At the present time, then, Israel is unwittingly preparing for the worst ordeal ever. In the ways of God, He allows them to manifest the rebellious heart of religious man, this leading to the most awful pouring out of divine judgment upon the nation -- worse than AD 70, worse than under Adolph Hitler.

When Christ comes in glory and judgment, the fourth empire will be in place for the judgments of God, being the special sphere of the judgments depicted symbolically under the seven trumpets and also the seven last plagues (Rev. 15:1), the seven bowls of His fury. This was the empire under which the great governmental travesty took place in its representative, Pilate. The called-people and the representative fourth empire combined to cast out the Christ of God. Consequently, in the ways of God, an epoch within "the times of the Gentiles" commenced; which, if one desired to do so, might be called *the Gentile parenthesis of the heavenly calling* -- not, of course, excluding believing Jews. The phrase designates the characteristic feature of what God is doing just now.¹⁵¹ This epoch will close before the times of the Gentiles closes. It is, so to speak, a parenthesis within a parenthesis. But the times of the Gentiles continue to roll on, of course. What God is doing is what needs to be understood. This present period is the time of the mystery of Christ and the church, a heavenly thing, not an age or administration, which have to do with the earth. We Christians are here in responsible testimony, but we are not seated in the earth. Where, then, are *we* seated? In the heavenlies in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:6). Israel will be seated in the earthlies, so to speak, where Zion is, the seat of Christ's royal, earthly power. Regarding these two parentheses, this matter has been considered at some length in *Elements of*

151. The olive tree in Rom. 11 is figurative of the line and place of *privilege* on the earth. It is not figurative of the body of Christ, nor of the church, and began with Abraham. Consequent on the cross, the mass of Jews have been broken out of the place of privilege, but some Jewish branches remain. It is to be carefully noted that the grafting in of the Gentile is not the grafting in of numbers of Gentile branches (as if salvation puts one in the olive tree). One might come to that erroneous conclusion because it speaks of individual Jewish branches. In Rom. 11:17ff, the Gentile profession (what we call Christendom) is treated as a body, as an entity, as a "thou." Not individuals but "*thou*, being a wild olive tree, hast been grafted in amongst them," i.e., amongst the Jewish branches. It is not branches *from* the wild olive tree, but *the wild olive itself* has been grafted on the good olive, among the remaining Jewish branches. The wild olive tree remains. It is the *Gentile profession as a body*, in distinction from Israel as a nation, that has been brought into the place of privilege *presently*. Thus, God is doing a peculiar work *now* with regard to blessing to Gentiles, blessing not covenanted, blessing outside covenants, blessing to Gentiles not mediated by the covenant people, Israel, as in the millennium. The present favorable place of the Gentile profession as grafted on the good olive tree will come to an end. In Rom. 11:22, the cutting away is not of individual Gentile branches but cutting off of the wild olive that was grafted on the good olive tree. This will surely happen, following which, Israel will be grafted into their own olive tree. The Gentile profession will lose the present place of privilege, Israel will be reinstated in that place of privilege, in the millennium, and Gentile blessing (of Gentiles outside the present graft) will be connected with the acknowledgment of Israel's status of supremacy. At that time Gentile blessing will be that which was spoken of in the Abrahamic promises, mediated through Israel -- which is not the case at the present time.

Dispensational Truth, Vol. 1, Part 3 (pp. 77-166). Here we will supplement that.

Having briefly outlined the place of the times of the Gentiles in the ways of God with man, let us examine this all more closely.

Israel Under Government and Calling Combined

The combination of government and calling introduced the second, i.e., the Mosaic, administration. It comprised a test of "the first man" (man viewed in his Adamic standing and responsibility), in the persons of a specially-favored people, Israel, which stood in covenant relationship with Jehovah. It was a test in which "the first man" failed. In contrast to that, the combination of both calling and government will occur again when Christ reigns and *He* will fully glorify God in it. We shall see more of this as we proceed. J. N. Darby wrote:

❖ In Noah's time there was government of the earth, and God coming in judgment and committing the right of the sword to man. After this comes the call of Abraham. Mark: the principle of government is not put forward by the word [in Abraham's case], but the principle of promise, and the call to be in relationship with God, of that one person who becomes the root of all the promises of God -- Abraham, the father of the faithful. God calls him, makes him quit his country, his family, bidding him go into a country which He would shew him. God reveals Himself to him as the God of promise, Who separates a people to Himself by a promise which He gives them. It is at this epoch that God revealed Himself under the name of God Almighty.

After that, among the descendants of Abraham, by this same principle of election, God takes the children of Jacob to be His people here below -- the object of all His earthly care, and out of whose midst Christ was to come according to the flesh. It is in this people of Israel that God displays all His character as Jehovah; it is not only as a God of promise, but it is a God who unites the two principles of calling and government, which two had been each successively brought out in Noah and Abraham. Israel was the called, separated people -- separated indeed only to earthly blessings, and to enjoy the promise; but, at the same time, to be subject to the exercise of the government of God according to the law. We say then, that in Noah was marked the principle of government of the earth, and in Abraham that of calling and election; and so Jehovah will accomplish all that He has said as God of promise, "who was, and is, and is to come," and govern all the earth, according to the righteousness of His law -- the righteousness revealed in Israel . . .

We have remarked that, when the fall of the Jewish nation was complete, God transferred the right of government to the Gentiles; but with this difference, that this right was separated from the calling and the promise of God. In the Jews, the two things were united, namely, the calling of God, and government upon the earth, which became distinct things from the moment that Israel was put aside. In Noah and Abraham we had

them distinct; government in the one, calling in the other.

With the Jews these principles were united; but Israel failed, and ceased thenceforward to be capable of manifesting the principle of the government of God, because God in Israel acted in righteousness; and unrighteous Israel could no longer be the depository of the power of God. God, then, quitted His terrestrial throne in Israel. Notwithstanding this, as to the earthly calling, Israel continued to be the called people: "for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." As to government, God transports it where He will; and it went to the Gentiles. There are, indeed, the called from among the nations (namely, the church), but it is for the heavens they are called. The calling of God for the earth is never transferred to the nations; it remains with the Jews. If I want an earthly religion, I ought to be a Jew. From the instant that the church loses sight of its heavenly calling, it loses, humanly speaking, all.¹⁵² ❖

When Christ comes in power and glory He will judge the nations, take the government into His own hands, and administer it through restored Israel, then all righteous (Isa. 60:21; Rom. 11:25,26) and in the good of national adoption, or sonship (Rom. 9:5). Thus government and calling will be again combined in the administration of the fullness of times (Eph. 1:10), but under the reign of the second Man.

The Principle of the Trial Under Law

The principle of the trial under law is that man is viewed as standing in responsibility, a standing in Adam as fallen, and all depends on what he is.

❖ Intimately connected with this government of God is the Law; it establishes the rule of good and evil according to God, and founds it upon His authority. The Lord furnishes us with the expression of it, in drawing from various parts of the Pentateuch principles, which, were they established and operative in the heart, would lead to obedience, and to the accomplishment of God's will, and would be productive of human righteousness. The Ten Commandments do not create duty, the existence of which is founded on the relationships in which God has set man.

There is this difference between the principles of the law as laid down by Jesus, and the Ten Commandments, that the principles drawn by Him from the books of Moses comprehend absolute good in all its extent without question of sin, whilst the Ten Commandments suppose sin to be there, and with one exception, are prohibitory of all unfaithfulness to the relationships of which they treat. It is important to notice that the last of these commandments forbids the first motion of the heart towards the sins previously condemned: "the sting is in the tail." {"Thou shalt not covet," Ex. 20:17.} Moreover, the various relationships were the basis of duty, the commandments forbidding men to fail in them. But the principle of law, of any law, is this: that the approbation of Him to whom I am responsible, my reception in favor by Him who has the right to judge of my faithfulness to my responsibility, or of my shortcomings -- in

152. *Collected Writings*, 2:375, 377, 378.

a word, my happiness -- depends upon what I am in this respect, upon what I am towards Him. For the relationships are established by the Creator's will and authority, and when I fail in them, I sin against Him who established them. Although the sin may be directly against the person I am in relation with, yet as the obligation was imposed by the will of God and is the expression of His will, I in fact despise His authority and disobey Him. The principle of law is that the acceptance of the person depends upon his conduct; grace does what it pleases in goodness, in conformity to the nature and the character of Him who acts in grace.¹⁵³ ❖

History of Man under the Law

❖ There can exist no more serious question for the soul than this: where shall I find righteousness before God? We have said that the law raised this question. It is of importance to see the position it takes when the law is given.

From the first existence of man on the earth the question between responsibility and grace was placed at issue. In the earthly paradise there was the tree of life which only communicated life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to which the responsibility of man was attached. As to the tree of life,¹⁵⁴ man did not eat of it; and (once become a sinner) the mercy of God, as well as His righteousness and the moral order of His government, closed against him the way of this tree. An immortal sinner on the earth would have been an insupportable anomaly in the government of God. Besides, man had deserved to be shut out of the garden. On the other hand man failed in his responsibility. Before the fall he did not know sin, but he was in the relation of a creature towards God. There was no sin in eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, except inasmuch as this had been forbidden.

When man fell, the Seed of the woman, the last Adam,¹⁵⁵ was immediately announced: the hopes of the human race are thenceforth placed upon a new ground. The deliverance presented does not consist in something which would have been but a means of raising up [fallen man] again founded on the moral activity of man already in a fallen condition; but another person is announced, who, while of the human race, should be a source of life independent of Adam, and who should destroy the power of the enemy; a person who should not represent Adam but replace him before God, should be the seed of the woman, which Adam was not, and should at the same time be an object of faith for Adam and for his children -- an object which, being received into the heart, should be the life and salvation of whoever should receive it. The first Adam was made a living soul; he was lost: the last Adam, the second Man, is a quickening

153. *Collected Writings*, 34:3,4. See also 5:136, 386; 22: 342-344.

154. More on the tree of life may be found in the *Collected Writings*, 5:102; 7:127; 9:61; 10:150,273; 16:330; 21:26, 206; 22:345; 32:233, 237; 34:148, 151, 294, 450.

155. See *Collected Writings*, 9:19,34; *Letters of J. N. Darby*, 1:360; 3:350; *Notes and Jottings*, pp. 17, 108.

spirit.¹⁵⁶ Until the coming of Christ the promise only was the source of hope; it alone, through grace, begat and sustained faith. We believe in its accomplishment. When God called Abraham, He gave him (Gen. 12) the promise that in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Afterwards (chap. 22) this promise was confirmed to His Seed. The one who was to be the seed of the woman was also to be the seed of Abraham.¹⁵⁷ Thus the ways of God towards man were established on an indefectible promise. It is without condition, a simple promise, and consequently it did not raise the question of righteousness nor the responsibility of man.

Four hundred and thirty years afterwards the law comes, and, as we have said, raised the question of righteousness, and that, on the footing of the responsibility of man, by giving him a perfect rule of what man, the child of Adam, ought to be. Now, observe it well, he was a sinner. This law had a twofold aspect, a kernel of absolute truth, which the Lord Jesus was able to draw from its obscurity -- supreme love to God and love to one's neighbor. It is the perfect rule of the blessedness of the creature as a creature. The angels realize it in heaven. Man is as far as possible from having accomplished the law on earth. But this rule is developed in the details of relative duties, which flow from the relation in which man finds himself, as a fact, before God, and from the relation in which he finds himself placed as towards others in this lower world.

Now in the circumstances in which man found himself these details necessarily had reference to the moral state in which he was, supposed sin and lusts, and forbade them. As the law of God applying itself to the actual state of man, it necessarily condemns sin on the one hand, and necessarily proves it on the other. What can a law do in such a case, but condemn -- be, as the apostle says (2 Cor. 3), a ministry of death and condemnation? It demanded righteousness according to the rule which the conscience of man could not but approve, and which at the same time proves his guiltiness. It is in this, in fact, that the usefulness of the law consists; it gives the knowledge of sin. God never gave it to produce righteousness. In order to this, an inward moral power is absolutely necessary. But the law on the table of stone is not the power. The law requires righteousness of man, and pronounces the last judgment of God, makes sin exceeding sinful, and brings the just anger of God. No law produced a nature. Now the nature of man was sinful. The commandment demonstrates that he will seek to satisfy that nature, in spite of God's forbidding it. The law is thus, and because it is just and good, the strength of sin. It entered that the offence might abound. Those who are of the works of the law (these are not bad works: the apostle speaks of all who walk on this principle) are under the curse it has pronounced on such as disobey it. The flesh is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. The promise of God remains sure. Man is put to the proof so that it may be made manifest whether he can produce a

156. See *Collected Writings*, 26:296.

157. See *Synopsis*, 5:195; *Letters of J. N. Darby*, 2:173; *The Bible Treasury*, 12:366; W. Trotter, *Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects*, p. 150; W. Kelly, *The Second Coming and Kingdom*, p. 153.

human righteousness.

The law was presented to man under a twofold aspect -- the law pure and simple, and the law mingled with grace, that is to say, given to man after the intervention of grace, but leaving man to his own responsibility after a forgiveness accorded by grace. The history of the first point of view is very short. Before Moses came down from Mount Sinai, Israel had made the golden calf. The tables of the law never entered the camp. They never were able to form the basis of the relations of man with God. How reconcile the commandments with the worship of the calf of gold? Subsequent to this sin Moses intercedes for the people, and they receive the law anew, God acting in mercy according to His sovereignty and proclaiming Himself merciful and gracious. The relationship of the people with God is founded on the pardon which God grants, and established no longer as an immediate relationship with God, but on the ground of Moses' mediation.¹⁵⁸ The people however are put under the law, and everyone is to be blotted out of God's book through his own sin, if he render himself guilty. At the same time the law is hidden under an ark, and God Himself is hidden behind a veil, within which the sprinkling of blood was to be made on the mercy-seat which formed, together with the cherubim, the throne of God.

But this mixture of grace and law could not, any more than the unmingled law, serve to establish between God and man relations capable of being maintained. It could serve to demonstrate that, whatever might be the patience of God, man, responsible for his conduct, could not obtain life by a righteousness which he himself should accomplish. Also, the impossibility in which man finds himself of subsisting in presence of the exigencies of the glory of God, however feebly it may be revealed, is presented to us in a remarkable figure, which the apostle makes use of in 2 Corinthians. The people prayed Moses to cover his face, which still shone with the reflection of the glory of Jehovah, with whom he had been in communication on the top of Mount Sinai. Man cannot endure the revelation of God when God demands of man that he should be what he ought to be before Him. The veil disclosed, at bottom, the same truth. God must hide Himself. The way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest. A law was given on God's part to direct man's life, a priesthood established to maintain the relations of the people with God, notwithstanding the faults of which they became guilty; but man could not come nigh to God. Sad state, in which the revelation of the presence of God, the only thing which can really give blessing, necessarily repelled the one who needed the blessing! We shall see that, in Christianity, exactly the contrary takes place: the veil is rent.

But let us pursue the ways of God with man under the law.

We have already seen that, in the system we are considering, life was proposed to man as the result of his faithfulness. Whatever may be the patience and grace of God, all depends on this faithfulness; and not only is the responsibility of man completely at

158. See *Collected Writings*, 2:141-143.

stake, but all depends on the way in which he meets this responsibility. God, no doubt, had patience, and manifested His grace. He bore with Israel in the desert and introduced them into the land of Canaan, in spite of all sorts of unfaithfulness on the part of the people. He put the people in possession of the country, giving them victories over their enemies. He raised up judges to deliver them, when their unfaithfulness had subjected them to their powerful neighbors. He sent them prophets to recall them to the observance of the law. At length, with a goodness which would not judge them without using every means to gain their hearts, He sent His Son to receive the fruit of His vine, on which He had expended all His care, and on which He had lavished so many proofs of love. But His vine yielded only wild grapes; and those who cultivated it, those to whom He had entrusted it, rejected His servants the prophets, and cast His Son out of the vineyard and killed Him. Such was the end of the proof to which man was put under the law: all the grace and all the patience of God having been employed to induce them to obey and maintain them in obedience -- all was useless.

There is the history of man under the law.¹⁵⁹ If we examine the bearing of the law on the conscience, we shall find that it brings condemnation and death as soon as it is spiritually understood; but the aim of this article is to consider the ways of God. Nevertheless I cannot leave this subject without entreating my reader to weigh well what is the bearing of the law, if it be applied to his conscience and his life before God, if he be responsible -- and he surely is -- if all he can do is to recognize the justice and excellence of that which the law demands. If he sees that he ought to avoid that which the law condemns, and that the two commandments which form the positive part of the law are the two pillars of the blessedness of the creature; if he finds that he has constantly done and loved that which the law and his own conscience condemn, and that he has entirely failed in that which his conscience must acknowledge as being the perfection of the creature: if all that be true, where is the life which is promised to obedience? How escape the condemnation pronounced on the violation of the law, if he places himself on the ground of his own responsibility and has to be judged according to a rule which he himself acknowledges as perfect? Another law could not be found. If he is without law, good and evil are indifferent; that is as much as to say that man is more than wicked; even natural conscience is ruined, good does not exist, and man is unbridled in evil, saved by the violence of his neighbor or the just judgment of God displayed in an event like the deluge. No: the law is just and good, and man knows it, his conscience tells him so. But if the law is good and just, man on the ground of his own responsibility is lost. The life which it promises to obedience [to the law] man has not obtained; the judgment which will make good the authority and justice of the law awaits the one who has disobeyed it, and will at the same time be pronounced against all the shamelessness of an unbridled will. All the guilty will be reached. As to the law, as the apostle expresses it -- happily for the awakened conscience -- that which

159. See *Collected Writings*, 1:126; 2:138; 7:269; 1:48; 22:346.

was ordained to life, man finds it to be unto death.¹⁶⁰ ❖

Past History of the Combination of Government and Calling in Israel

The *national call* of Israel formed a national display of the government of God in conjunction with calling. Israel's history under this combination is an administration. It formed a trial of the first man *in the persons composing the nation*, as well as the nation as a whole. The law did not address the children of God, as such. The law addressed the children of fallen Adam in their Adamic responsibility, in the persons of the favored nation. It is a form that the testing of the first man took. It is God's purpose to display His government in the earth in combination with calling, under the second man (Christ). But first that which is natural (1 Cor. 15:46) and so the first man, in the persons of the favored nation, must make trial of God's government in the earth combined with a national call, not to educate God concerning the inevitable result, but to instruct us concerning the first and second man and that all depends on sovereign grace, for man obtains no blessing on the basis of discharging his Adamic responsibility as fallen man. JND has traced God's dealings with Israel in a number of papers and I quote from one of them here at some length.

❖ We have seen the principle of judgment and daily retribution introduced under Noah, as a constituent of the new world. This is the principle of government. We have also seen the principle of the calling of God marked out in the history of Abraham. This is the principle of grace, holiness, and the supremacy of God. But the union of these two principles is also presented to our view in the Scriptures; a union very remarkable for a time, as a new trial of the faithfulness of man under responsibility, and in circumstances altogether singular, and accompanied by a still more astonishing display of patience on the part of God, which will furnish the subject of that solemn praise in the latter times: "His mercy endureth for ever." As to the future, the union of these two principles is the source of a state of things which will be the manifestation of the incomparable wisdom and power of God, when He takes the government into His own hands.

The history of the union of these two principles, whether under the responsibility of man or in the efficacy of the supremacy of God, is the history of the Jewish people. The law is the directing principle of it, as being the expression of the actual terms of God's government. It is consequently in the history of this people that we must look for the center of the administration of the government of the world; containing (as it does) in its past history, on the one hand, the witness given by a people called to the knowledge of the only true God against the false gods of the Gentiles ("Hear O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord!"), and, on the other hand, the witness afforded to the principles of the government of the true God by His conduct towards His chosen

160. See *Collected Writings*, 22:345-350; 22:369, 370.

people, blessing or punishing them openly according to their proceedings: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities," Amos 3:2 . . .

But if the responsibility of man gave mediately an opportunity for the display of the whole character of God on the one hand, the weakness of man on the other made it necessary for God to establish the hope of all His promises on some other basis than this responsibility. And, in fact, we see, in the history we are examining, that Israel receives the promises in Abraham, according to the calling of God absolutely and unconditionally. Under the law, Israel takes these promises on the responsibility of their own obedience . . .

Let us pause for a moment at this important juncture, and consider the unfolding of the relationship of God with the world, and with men, in this people: after that we will return to their history. From this time we see the three great instruments of these relations, holding their place in the midst of them: Moses was the representative of royalty among the people of God. "Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. And he was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together." Aaron held the place of the great high priest; and Miriam as the prophetess: "For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam," Micah 6:4. See also Ex. 15; Num. 13.

Thus we see in the wilderness the model of the three mediatorial instruments of the power of God -- one, the communication of His will; the second, the means of our approach to Him; and the third, the instrument of His government, the recipient of His power.

Moses at different periods filled all these three functions. Thus also in the plagues inflicted on the proud Egyptians, Aaron acted as prophet, Moses as God to Pharaoh, but that changes nothing in the main. During the union of the two principles of government and calling, these things were fully developed. But under responsibility in these things, the Jewish people corrupted themselves in each one of them.

Under the priesthood (when God was their King, and there were only judges raised up from time to time to preserve them in their inheritance from the occasions of misery produced by their unbelief), . . . there was complete corruption, even in the priests; as we see in 1 Samuel 2, and in the touching scene described in chapter 3, which marked *Ichabod* on the people of God. I say not that the priesthood was abolished; far from it: it was, on the contrary, to be an example of the patience of God, until He came who could efficiently fill all its functions.

Samuel was the representative of the prophetic line, a *judge* also, governing the people by the witness of God -- a witness given, as we have seen, against the actual state of the priesthood. It is for this reason Peter says, in Acts 3, "*All the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after.*" This then was God's government by prophets; yet the people were not yet satisfied with it, but desired a king: and God gave them "a king in his anger, and took him away in his wrath," Hos. 13:11. A king chosen according to

the flesh, when God was their King, served only to shew the weakness of all that man did, the folly of all he desired. Nevertheless, the kingship of Christ over His people was ever in God's designs. And He gave them a king after His own heart, and David and Solomon furnished the type of kingship of Christ: one, in suffering and overcoming all his enemies, after complete obedience; the other, as reigning in peace and glory over a happy, obedient, and prosperous people. There the picture ended! Man may furnish types, but can never fill the functions of that which is true, and which shall be fulfilled in Christ. The repose and glory which Solomon enjoyed were the cause of his fall. He kept not his uprightness in the midst of the gifts of God, but, drawn aside by his wives, he followed other gods. Kingship, the last resource of God for maintaining His relationship with His people, was corrupted, just in that particular in which Israel should have been His witness . . . ❖

Israel's Continuance in the Land

We have just had a sketch of Israel's history from the pen of JND. We should keep in mind that the introduction of judges, kings and prophets did not change the dispensation. We shall now consider some points in connection with Israel's continuance in the land that might be profitably noted.

❖ We see, in the book of Deuteronomy, the people, when nearly entering Canaan, put under the principle of obedience, and their enjoyment of the promises dependent on that obedience . . . As it is said, Moses "set before" them "life and death, blessing and cursing." It was a covenant which, in remembrance of the oath made with the fathers, is a covenant of blessing, if they obeyed, and of threatenings, if they disobeyed. God did not promise that they should possess the land, but that they should be blessed in it; otherwise, that they should be driven out of it; but that God would shew mercy unto them in a far country, if their hearts turned to the Lord. For this reason the apostle quotes a passage here as a pledge of the righteousness of God according to faith, because the observance of the law was impossible in any land except that of Israel. Nevertheless, if they were obedient in heart, and turned to the Lord, they should be heard and delivered. The return under Nehemiah was a partial accomplishment of this promise, and this covenant. But in that return, there was no question of the promises made to Abraham. It was an event that showed the mercy and faithfulness of God, but which was not the fulfillment of His promises and original covenant, although it involved important consequences. The original promises, given unconditionally, and guaranteed by the oath of God, must find a complete fulfillment in all their extent. [What is said in Deut. 32 goes farther and deeper: God speaks not according to the covenant, but according to His sovereignty, and His thoughts.] This is what still remains for the people of God. Joshua gives the history of their then present and earthly fulfillment; and the book of Judges, that of the fall of Israel in the midst of human enjoyment.

Consequently, the joy of the Gentiles with His people is there introduced.¹⁶¹ ♦

Gal. 3:17 shows that Israel's failure under the conditional covenant (i.e., the law) cannot set aside the promises given to the fathers. The promises were unconditional and will be made good under the new covenant in the dispensation of the fullness of times.

Israel Pronounced to be Lo-ammi

The time when Israel became Lo-ammi (i.e., "not-my-people") and the commencement of "the times of the Gentiles" with Nebuchadnezzar were co-incident. Israel remained the called people but government was taken away. This important change in the ways of God with Israel and the Gentiles has been well commented on by J. N. Darby, and it would be of profit to the reader to understand this matter. Here is his exposition of it. ♦ The rejection of Judah, at the time of the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and, consequently, the cessation of the application of the title "Ammi" {i.e., my-people} to the whole people, has been the universal conviction of those Christians who have studied these subjects; and this for very simple reasons. One may be astonished that any one should call it in question, but I will briefly here present some of the proofs. To give them in full and in order, it would be needful to transcribe the greater part of the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Before producing some of these, it is well to recall the fact, that Israel is always the people of God; and if the affections of the heart and of the faith of a Daniel and a Nehemiah have called them so, nothing is proved thereby. Israel cannot cease to be the people of God.

The gifts and calling of God are without repentance {Rom. 11:29}, and it is of Israel that this is said. God never ceases to consider Israel as His people; but He *has* ceased to govern them as His people, and to have His throne in the midst of them upon the earth. Paul insists in Rom. 11 upon this point after their rejection of Christ --

I say, then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid (Rom. 11:1).

So that Israel may now be called the people of God, and ought to be so, as beloved for the fathers' sakes, respect being had to the election. Hence this is not the question. If Zacharias (Luke 1) says He has visited and redeemed His people, this is still less difficult to understand, because he speaks of the coming of Jesus, who was, in truth, to establish the people in the enjoyment of all its privileges as the people of God. This, then, proves nothing; for, if this proves that "Lo-ammi" was not applicable, because Israel remain the people of God, it is evident that they never will be "Lo-ammi," because they are always the people of God.

It might be said, perhaps, "But this is because Judah always remained the people of God." One could hardly venture to say so after the death of Jesus. But the fact is, that the apostle takes no notice of the distinction between Judah and the ten tribes. He speaks of all Israel, and shows that they are beloved for the fathers' sakes -- that God

has not cast off the people whom He had foreknown. Now this, evidently, does not apply only to Judah, but to all Israel, as the apostle expresses himself; and the distinction which he draws is between all Israel and the election according to grace. This will suffice for the moment; we shall see positive proofs of it farther on. Here I seek only to show that the recognition of the people, as a people, applies to all Israel, and that it is entirely to misapprehend the force of the passages, and to mistake as to the whole question, to suppose that the faithfulness of God to His predeterminate counsel, and the precious faith of them that are His in that unchangeable faithfulness, according to which the title of His people is given to Israel, touches the question of the judgment of "Lo-ammi." It is to confound the counsels of God with His government. In all times, Israel is His people, according to His counsels, and the thoughts of His love. This does not prevent their being called "Lo-ammi" (not my people) as to the government of God. Consequently, the fact that Israel has been called "His people" at any given epoch leaves the question entirely unanswered of "*When* was the sentence of 'Lo-ammi' pronounced?" Only we have made a step in our research after truth, to wit, in that we have found that this concerns the government of God. For "Lo-ammi" certainly applies, as to the government of God, to all Israel, and to the ten tribes, at one epoch or another. And as to the sovereign love and the counsels of God, Israel as a whole are always His people. The question then is of His government, and we can now ask, "When is it that God, in His government of the people of Israel, executes upon that people the sentence of 'Lo-ammi'?" I am about to show my reader that it was at the time of the captivity of Babylon.

It is certain that the ten tribes bore the name of Israel after their separation from the other two, and that they are presented in general as having the right to the title, the other two being rather an appendage to the family of David whom God would not utterly forsake. Yet the fate of the whole people hung upon that family, on account of the Messiah, who was to be of it, and of the temple, which was at Jerusalem. The perusal of the Book of Kings will show that the ten tribes held the place I refer to; the Book of Chronicles shows the importance of the family of David. The last chapter of 2 Chronicles shows us that the God of Israel was thoughtful of His house and of His people, until there was no remedy. Lastly, 2 Kings 23 shows us that the sin of Manasseh was the cause of the Lord's saying,

I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem, which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there. {2 Kings 23:27}

As Jeremiah had said --

Then said the Lord unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight and let them go forth. And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the Lord; Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity. And I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the Lord: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the

161. *Collected Writings*, 2:145, 146.

fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy. And I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem. For who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall go aside to ask how thou doest? Thou hast forsaken me, saith the Lord, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting. {Jer. 15:1-6}

Compare 2 Kings 21:13; Jer. 14:7. Thus we learn that in the captivity of Babylon (for that event is the subject of these passages) the Lord rejected Judah as He had rejected Israel. He drove that people from before His face and destroyed Jerusalem, being weary of repenting.

Now, Hosea handles the case of Israel and of Judah, and his prophecy bears date of the reign of the various kings of both countries who reigned in his time. The ten tribes are principally the objects, inasmuch as they formed the main body of the people, and as their dispersion was nearer at hand; but the judgment of Judah is also proclaimed, and the prophet, at times, speaks of the whole together under the titles of "the children of Israel," and "my people": especially in ch. 4, as being the priesthood of God, while at the same time he speaks of the priests separately. The general application here of the expression "children of Israel" is explained clearly by its use in Hosea 3:5. The judgment on Judah is announced in Hos. 5:5, and 10-15, Hos. 6:4-11; that of the house of the Lord, Hos. 8:1; that of Judah, again, v. 14; of Ephraim, Judah, and all Jacob, Hosea 10:11; of Judah and Jacob, Hosea 12:2. The sum of these passages shows plainly enough the object of the prophecy of Hosea; it applies to the whole of the land and of the people, to Judah as well as to Israel; but the ten tribes are chiefly in view. The expression, *the mother*, includes both, and the restoration of the whole people is announced, chapter 2, when God will again become their husband. The point which is not treated by Hosea is the family of David, if not in Hosea 3:4, 5, in which the subject is the people as a whole, under the title of "children of Israel," and their history in a few striking words up to the time of their millennial restoration.

The expression "Lo-ammi" necessarily applies to all the people, and, consequently, could not be announced before the captivity of Babylon, although great progress may have been made towards its fulfilment by the captivity of the ten tribes. The conduct of the king had, from the days of David and Solomon, been the question with God, in His dealings with His people, who were finally rejected on account of the sin of Manasseh. The impiety of Solomon had already been the cause of the separation of ten tribes from the throne of his family, and then the peculiar iniquity of these ten tribes had finally caused them to be delivered over into the hands of the Gentiles. Still, the house of God, the family of David, the priesthood of Aaron, the ark of the covenant, continued surrounded by two tribes and some other Israelites, in such sort that one could not say absolutely that there is no longer a people. Yet the arm of the Lord was already lifted up to smite Judah. One has only to consult Isaiah (who prophesied at the same time as Hosea), the declarations of the first four chapters, and the magnificent and touching appeal of Isa. 5 of his prophecy, to see what was the judgment which God had formed

upon the state of Judah.

In the midst of these circumstances, Hosea announces, first of all, the judgment of the house of Jehu. Then, under the (symbolical) name of "Lo-ruhamah" {Hos. 1:6}, he announces that the Lord will entirely remove the house of Israel, that is to say, the ten tribes. But He will yet have mercy upon Judah, and will deliver it, even as He did in the case of Sennacherib, successor of him who led captive Israel. Then He declares by another (symbolical) name given to another child, that at length He will pronounce the sentence of "Lo-ammi"; for, said He, you are not My people. Having announced this judgment in an absolute manner, by a prophetic act, after the judgment executed upon Israel, by means of which it was already entirely cut off, and having declared at the time of this cutting off that Judah should be spared, the evidence is of the clearest kind, that it would be by the judgment executed upon Judah that this sentence would take effect. This is by so much the more evident in that "Lo-ammi," by the import of the term, applies to the whole people, which was the object of the prophecy of Hosea. Immediately afterwards, the prophet, publishing the mercies of God, declares, first, that the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea-shore, and that then the children of Israel -- here expressly distinguished the one from the other in order to establish their re-union in one -- shall be gathered together, and shall appoint to themselves a leader, etc. We thus see clearly that the answer and the deliverance embrace Judah as well as Israel, both of whom were included in "Lo-ammi," although the judgment pronounced for the latter could not take effect until Judah also should be rejected, and thus there should no longer be a people before God. That God in the meanwhile preserved a little remnant, which He brought back in order to present Christ to it, is evident. The question which we have to solve is this -- Did God, as to His government, put in force this sentence of "Lo-ammi" at the time of the captivity of Babylon? for that sentence must needs at some time be put in force.

Now let us bear in mind, that the question, as to this expression, is one of the relationship of God with His people, already broken as to the ten tribes (whatsoever may have been the patience of God, and the messages which He sent to them) by the separation of Jeroboam. For the golden calves did not maintain the relationship of Israel with God. Now, Jerusalem was the place which He had chosen, the temple the place where He had placed His name. The ark of the covenant of the God of the whole earth was there. The family of David, a family chosen for the maintenance of His relationship with His people, the Urim and the Thummim, means of receiving (by the intervention of the priesthood) light and direction from God, were there. Now, not only had Judah sinned, but the family of David, upon the conduct of which all depended, had failed in fidelity. There was no remedy (2 Chron. 36:16), and God must reject Judah as He had rejected Israel {i.e., the 10 northern tribes}.

But in this case the act is more solemn, because the house of God, the throne of God (dwelling) between the cherubim, the royal authority, which was of God, which "sat on the throne of the Lord" (1 Chron. 29:23), His Urim and His Thummim, were in question. But how preserve them there in order to sanction the iniquity which existed?

That would have been still worse, and God executes the judgment which He had pronounced upon His people. The house of God is destroyed, the family of David is led into captivity, and the times of the Gentiles commence. The scepter of the world is placed in the hands of the Gentiles by the authority of the God of the heavens, an event of immense import, which exists even at this time, and which necessarily prevents the establishment of the earthly people of God, considered in the light of the government of God, because the reign of the Messiah cannot consist with such empire in the hands of the Gentiles. Now it is as clear as possible that the epoch of the restoration and blessing of Israel, when they will no longer be "Lo-ammi," will be that of the reign of the Messiah. For the time being the people of God is a heavenly people, subject to the powers which be, a people which has nothing to seek in the world but the glory of Him who has saved it in order to introduce it into the heavens.

We see then, at the taking of Jerusalem, the judgment of God executed upon His people; the ark of the covenant taken; the house of God burnt; its royal authority taken from the family of David (and this until the coming of the true son of David); the Urim and the Thummim of the priesthood lost; the throne of God removed from off the earth; and sovereign authority placed in the hands of the Gentiles. In a word, all that which, as institutions, formed the link between God and the people is set aside (observe it, reader), and by a means which renders the re-establishment of the people impossible, because the sceptre and authority have been transferred by God to the hands of the Gentiles.

Under the old covenant, all was lost; under the new, under the Messiah, all is yet future for Israel. Christ manifested in flesh has not re-established the old covenant, and Israel have not been placed under the new. Christ was personally perfect under the old, and when He shed His blood -- basis of the new covenant, the time was past for Israel as a nation. If the grace of God proposed to this people the return of Jesus (Acts 3) if they repented, the people in their blindness stopped the mouths of those who made the declaration. This truth, that it is under the new covenant and under the Messiah that Israel will be recognized as a people, is of all importance in order to judge in these matters. We shall see that the prophets who announce the judgment by Nebuchadnezzar pass directly from it to the coming of Christ. We shall see that, although God acted to bring matters to this point by divers acts of providence, Christ, when the blessing is established, is always in relationship with the people as a whole, and that the existence of two tribes without the ten cannot accord with the accomplishment of the promises in Christ. He may come from heaven to destroy the wicked one; but once united to Israel, it is to all Israel: so that there should have been the re-establishment in the promised blessing at the time of the return from Babylon is impossible, if in that view that event is considered as a continuation of Judah alone as the people of God.

We will now examine the passages which prove that which has just been stated. That the royal authority over all the earth was conferred on Nebuchadnezzar is most clearly stated in Dan. 2:37, 38; and even that this should continue until the setting up of the kingdom of God (vv. 38-44); which renders it impossible that Judah during that

interval should be the people of God, recognized by Him, His government being that which we have to consider. Israel is always "Lo-ammi" during this period.

I need not say that the royal authority was not renewed in the family of David. We nowhere find that the ark of the covenant was made *de novo*; certainly it was not so by the command of God; and, surely they could not make the tables of the law having the writing of God, which rendered the ark the ark of the testimony. We have, further, the assurance that no manifestation of the glory of God, sign of His presence, took place at the time of the dedication of the second temple, as happened when the tabernacle was set up, and when the ark was introduced into the temple of Solomon, and they sounded with the trumpets. So that the testimony and the glory of the presence of God were wanting to the ark, if so be they made one. The absence of these two things made the existence of an ark the plain proof that all that which could have given importance to it was wanting. That there was neither Urim nor Thummim is a fact also admitted by the Jews, and proved by Neh. 7:65.

The absence of this mysterious token was a fact of the most serious kind, for it was thus that the high priest bore the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually. That is to say, all that which symbolized the presence of God, and all the links established of old and which maintained the relation of the people with God, were wanting, while the people themselves were subjected to the Gentiles by reason of their sin. God might come in in grace; He might send messengers to the little off-shoot of His people which found itself at Jerusalem; He might bear with the mutilated state of institutions, the exterior appearance of which was re-established; He might, further, send His Son: all this He did; but He never cancelled the decree of "Lo-ammi". He could not do so, save by Jesus and the new covenant, when the links of the first covenant were broken, and Israel subjected to the Gentiles. He presented Jesus -- the people would not have Him. He presented Him in the faithfulness of His promise; and it is evident that it was not according to the old covenant, under which Israel had been in relationship with God as a people: all was lost according to that covenant. The new covenant could not be established with a people who rejected its Mediator in Jesus.

There remain three things for us to consider. That which the prophets said after the captivity, and that which they said before, as to the means which God would employ in order that Israel might be His people, and, then, the manner in which the New Testament presents this point. I put in the forefront the prophets after the captivity, because we find there all that the Spirit of God could say of the strongest kind to encourage the people on their return. If in examining these passages we find that the remnant which returned from the captivity is not in them called the people of God, we shall also understand that the other prophets and the New Testament confirm this testimony.

Let us examine Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Never once is the people returned from the captivity called by any one of these prophets the people of God: contrariwise, in the occasions in which one would have supposed this inevitable, the expression is not found, but they say, that they will be His people in the last days. But in these occasions

it is Israel and Judah: proof manifest that they were not recognized by God then as His people. Never do these prophets say on behalf of God "My people." Their prophecies are full of remarkable revelations on the subject of times yet to come, as also with regard to the first coming of Jesus; and they connect the blessings which are to come with the encouragements which they give for the time present; but never at the time, nor in reference to the first coming of Jesus, are the people called the people of God. While Zechariah is very plain in declaring that it will be so in the latter days, never is it said that God should dwell in the temple then, but He promises to abide there in the days yet to come. But it is after the glory that the prophet is sent to the nations who have robbed Israel; then it is said, "I will dwell in the midst of thee." (Compare Zech. 2:8-10.)

It is said,

I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it (Zech. 1:16); but the promise of abiding there is reserved for another time, when the four carpenters shall have "frayed away," and "cast out the horns of the Gentiles, which lifted up their horn over the land of Judah to scatter it" (Zech. 1:21).

Again, in Zech. 8 it is said, "I will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem" (v. 3); but, forthwith, we find the times yet to come in which God will cause His people to come from the east and from the west, and when He *will be* their God. For the time present, he says, "so again have I thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah: fear ye not" (v. 15).

Precious encouragement! yet leaving the abiding of God and the title of "His people," as a hope for days to come, when (Zech. 6:12), "behold the man whose name is the Branch shall grow up out of his place" and (Zech. 9:13) Ephraim and Judah shall be united as the bow and the arrow of the Lord.

The promises in Haggai are temporal, and the presence of the messenger of the covenant is promised for the house, but for a time yet to come, for it is when God shall have shaken all nations, the heavens and the earth -- a declaration which Heb. 12: 26 makes us understand is not yet accomplished. The attentive reader of the Bible will not have failed to observe that God constantly addresses Himself to Judah, or to the whole nation as to His people, by the prophets who spoke to them before the captivity. Stronger proof one can scarcely have, that God no longer recognized Judah as His people after the captivity of Babylon, while, at the same time, He was vouchsafing to them the promise that, together with Israel, they should be His people, when He should re-establish them by means of Christ under the new covenant. I will now examine what is the light which the prophets who announced the judgment executed upon Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar furnish, and what is the epoch at which they declare that Israel will anew be called the people of God. They are the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel. We have already seen that the Lord, weary of repenting, would reject Judah as He had rejected Israel, and that He would execute, without longer deferring (Ezek. 19:21-28), the judgment announced. We shall, then, now see at what epoch the prophets place the re-establishment of Judah in the enjoyment of the privilege of being the people of God.

Before clearing up this point, and examining at what moment the name of "my

people" is given to Israel (I say to Israel because the two families are always united in this blessing), I will draw the attention of my reader to the solemn judgment which took place at the time of the taking of Jerusalem, which stamps its true character upon this, and gives the true force of the term "Lo-ammi," placed on the forehead of Judah, as well as of the whole nation, when it was led captive to Babylon, and on the import of the transfer of the throne to the midst of the Gentiles. The throne of God shows itself, and the cherubim of glory, with the wheels, the rings of which were so high that they were dreadful to the spirit of the prophet -- these wheels which were as a wheel within a wheel; the cherubim running to and fro, according to the appearance of lightning, and the wheels in the rings were full of eyes round about. There was the likeness of a man sitting upon a throne. This was the vision of the glory of the Lord. Then he declares to the prophet the end:

An end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land. Now is the end come upon thee, and I will send mine anger upon thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense upon thee all thine abominations. And mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity: but I will recompense thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee: and ye shall know that I am the Lord (Ezek. 7:2-4).

Then, having set a mark upon those that sighed and cried by reason of all these abominations, He visits and smites the wicked according to the glory of His throne, beginning at His house. But a judgment yet more solemn, announced by the most significant action, awaited the rebellious city. The throne of glory, the cherubim which the prophet had seen at Chebar appeared anew at the side of the house of the Lord, whither the prophet had been carried.

Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory (Ezek. 10:4).

Wherefore this solemn visit of the Lord to His house full of imagery and corruption? Wherefore this unwonted glory? Alas! the reason was but too soon evident. Then the glory of the Lord departed from the threshold of the house and mounted up above the cherubim. The temple is void; the glory has departed from it! In vain the cherubim of gold stretched forth their wings over a forsaken mercy-seat, and over a broken law -- He who, till within a while filled that throne of glory, had quitted it. Nebuchadnezzar might take possession of the temple as of a corpse. The God of heaven had entrusted him with a kingdom. The glory of the Lord had forsaken His throne upon the earth.

Then did the cherubims lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city (Ezek. 11:22, 23).

The Lord had quitted Jerusalem; the throne on earth was given to the Gentiles. Has the Lord returned to Jerusalem to hold His throne in subjection to that of a Persian or a Greek? We have seen that, whatever may have been His compassion for His people, His presence has not returned to fill with His glory the new building. If God is not

there, what meaning in the title -- "The people of God"? And when is it that this poor but ever loved people will find again their blessedness? When will "Lo-ammi" be forever effaced from their forehead, to make way for that precious title "Ammi"? God had already accomplished His word:

And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab; and I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down. And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies (2 Kings 21: 13, 14).

As it is said in Jer. 12:7,

I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage; I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies.

Already, at the moment of quitting Jerusalem, as He did before driving our first parents from Eden, He announced the deliverance and the blessing:

I will even gather you from the people and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel (Ezek. 11:17).

But one sees at once that it is not of the return from Babylon that the prophet speaks, for it is added,

And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh (Ezek. 11:19).

Now, we know with the most perfect certainty, that this did not take place at the return from Babylon, nor, certainly, since the first coming of Jesus. The prophet passes to the latest days, in order that the people may be blessed. Let us again turn to Jeremiah, who announced and saw the taking of Jerusalem, of which we speak. He declares in Jer. 30 that God will bring back the captives of Israel and of Judah, and that they shall possess the land given to their fathers. David their king shall be raised up,

and their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them (v. 21);

and, adds the Lord,

Ye shall be my people, and I will be your God (v. 22).

In chapter 31: 31 we have the new covenant. There is also the question of Israel and Judah in verse 27.

In Jer. 32 Judah is again restored by an everlasting covenant; they shall no more draw back from God, they shall be His people, and the Lord will be their God. (See vv. 38-40.) Again, in Jer. 33:7, God will bring back again Israel and Judah.

In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David (Jer. 33:15).

In Ezek. 34 David shall be prince (v. 24).

They shall be my people, saith the Lord God (v. 30).

In Ezek. 36 we have the remarkable promise to which above all others the Lord Jesus made allusion in His conversation with Nicodemus, and which declares the necessity of that work in order that Israel may enjoy their privileges even in the land, and that they may be at the same time "Ammi," the people of God, and that God may be their

God. We have also here the proof that this work (which shows that the people were not recognized as the people of God), is applicable to the people, such as they were at the return from Babylon, since the Lord so applies it, and that the promise of being the people of God cannot be fulfilled without this work of grace being made good; a work which was not made good in the days of the Lord, and which is not yet either, as to the restoration of the nation. In Ezek. 37 we see Judah and Israel reunited in a striking manner -- the people of God "Ammi," and God their God -- twice repeated and David king over them. They shall walk in the judgments and statutes of the Lord, David being their prince, in their own land for ever. Upon these points Ezek. 38 and 39 may also be consulted. These passages show, in a way not to be disputed, that the epoch at which Israel should become "Ammi" (that is to say, should no longer be "Lo-ammi," for "Lo" is but a negation), was not to be realized until the last days, when Christ will be their king; that this was to have its accomplishment by that grace which will write the law in their hearts, when God gives them a new heart according to the new covenant, and all Israel will be there. Judah and the ten tribes will form but one nation which will never be divided nor driven from the land, over which Christ will reign for ever. And all this is said on the occasion of the captivity of Babylon, in which God rejected Judah as He had rejected Israel; as also that the promise of the return from the captivity which would cause "Ammi" to be named upon Israel should be when all these things therein recited should be accomplished; so that the period during which "Lo-ammi" is the name of Israel was to last from the captivity of Babylon until the return of the Lord.

Lastly, to remove all possibility of question, I add that judgment of "Lo-ammi" was not executed before the captivity of Judah, for in Jer. 2 God still calls them His people. And to show that this was not because the term "Lo-ammi" could not apply but to Israel, I quote v. 4,

Hear ye the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel.

On the other hand, the New Testament shows us, that then also all Israel was thought of, and that God considered it as not His people, making an allusion to Hosea. We have seen the Lord showing that the kingdom of God, under which the people would be the people of God, could not come but by the fulfilment of the promises of the new covenant. And the Apostle Paul says (Acts 26), "Unto which [promise] our twelve tribes instantly serving God day and night"; so also James, "To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad."

We have already seen that (Rom. 11) Paul only distinguishes between the election and Israel; the latter, in the last days, when a deliverer should come out of Zion {Rom. 11:26}. And the distinction was so lost at that time, that (in Acts 26) the expression of the twelve tribes is a neuter in the singular (to *dodekaphulon*). So, in citing the passage which speaks of "Lo-ammi," Paul applies it to the state of the Jews, before being called by the revelation of Jesus as Savior, without distinguishing "Lo-ruhamah" {i.e., not-having-obtained-mercy} and "Lo-ammi." Peter is still more positive in his manner of expressing himself, and tells us in just so many words, that the term "Lo-ammi"

applies to the state of the people before the revelation of Christ, while those who received Him quitted that position. I say "people," for it is without controversy that the expression "strangers scattered abroad" (*parepidemois diasporas*) belongs to Israel, while at the same time it restricts itself to such among them as believed. So that we have a direct revelation that the state of the people, after Babylon, was the state of "Lo-ammi." See 1 Pet. 2:10.

I believed it might be useful to present this point clearly for brethren who are interested in it. It treats not of the question of the Church, save so far as all truths are linked together; but it treats of an epoch, singularly important, as to the government of God, because God ceased to dwell upon the throne of the earth between the cherubim, and entrusted sovereign power to a chief raised up among the Gentiles -- a state of things which is to continue under one form or other until the judgment of the world.¹⁶²



Priest, Prophet and King

Previously we saw that JND spoke of the priest, the prophet and the king, as "the three mediatorial instruments of the power of God," and that during the union of the two principles of government and calling (i.e., in Israel), these were fully developed. But under responsibility for these two principles of government and calling, the Jewish people corrupted themselves in each one of them. Thus was the failure of the first man put in bold relief, though he was cultivated with every provision and care of God lavished so richly on him. Not only government and calling, but also these three mediatorial instruments in which the first man failed will be made good in Christ, to God's glory, in the administration of the fullness of times (Eph. 1:10) when Christ heads up both the heavenly and earthly spheres.

The final Antichrist of prophecy will imitate these three offices. His time will be short. He who will fill these three offices with the unspeakable glory of His Person, and who as a consequence of the glory, virtue, and value of His work upon the cross imparted to that work the glory, virtue, and value of His Person as the God-man, will do this regarding that Man of Sin:

... whom the Lord Jesus shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and shall annul by the appearing of his coming (2 Thess. 2:8).

Not at the pre-Daniel's 70th week rapture of the saints at His parousia for us, but at the epiphania of His parousia, when He appears in glory to strike down the enemies. Subsequently His light, as depicted by the candelabra fed continuously by the two sons of oil (Zech. 4), shall fill the earth. He shall be the Melchisedec priest upon His throne (Zech. 6:13) in that day: priest and king. In, and under Him, shall all uttered by Israel's prophets coalesce.

A brief discussion by William Trotter concerning these three offices is found in *The*

Bible Treasury, 1:55, 56.

Meanwhile, The Times of the Gentiles

We have noted that the times of the Gentiles (which began with the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and which will end at the appearing of Christ in power and glory -- the smiting stone of Dan. 2 having fallen upon the feet of the image) is a distinguishable time period during which God gave the power of empire to the Gentiles, but that does not make that period an administration. The times of the Gentiles forms a parenthesis, an earthly parenthesis of Gentile judgment upon Israel, during the time when Israel is declared Lo-Ammi. In his *Elements of Prophecy*, JND has some wide-ranging comments about the Jews and Gentiles regarding the ways of God in government and in grace (this last affording reason to comment on the church also).

❖ But this leads me to note two characters of prophecy, arising, as regards the Jews, from two different positions in which we find them in Scripture: first, a people more or less fully owned of God (God acting amongst them on known principles of government); secondly, rejected for a time (the sovereign power in the earth being confided to Gentiles). This last period forms the times of the Gentiles.

For the moment, I confine myself to the Jews. God, while He could in any sort own His people, addressed Himself directly to them. Until Nebuchadnezzar's time, God's throne and presence was in the midst of Israel. From that period, sovereign power in the earth ceased to be immediately exercised by God and was confided to man, among those who were not His people, in the person of Nebuchadnezzar. This was a change of immense importance, both in respect of the government of the world, and God's judgment of His people. Both lead the way to the great objects of prophecy developed at the close -- the restoration, through tribulation, of a rebellious people, and the judgment of an unfaithful and apostate Gentile head of power. However, the previous relationship of Israel and the nations is not left out; but we must introduce another all-important point for the development of this.

Israel, as we have seen, as between it and Jehovah, had been unfaithful, and Ichabod written on it; the ark of God, His glory and strength in Israel, delivered into the enemy's hand; enemies left in the land by their unfaithfulness. But God comes in, in sovereign grace, and raises up David, figure of Christ, who descended from him according to the flesh, king of Israel in grace and deliverance. Evil arising in his descendants, the major part of Israel revolt from the king of his family: two tribes remain, and to a residue of them brought back from Babylon, Christ is presented and rejected. Hence two things gave occasion to Israel's judgment -- idolatry and rebellion against Jehovah, and the rejection of Christ.

Having brought out this second ground of judgment, I leave it for the moment, in order to consider the former ground, rebellion against Jehovah. Israel ought to have been the witness of the blessedness of being in such a relationship with the Lord. "Happy are the people who are in such a case; yea, blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God." Israel, on the contrary, learnt the ways of the heathen; yea, became

162. *Collected Writings*, 4:254-267. See also 2:46, 356; 24:79; 32:400-401; *Synopsis*, 2:17, 352-353. Brief comments on "Lo-ammi" are scattered throughout his writings.

more corrupt than they, and the Lord allowed the surrounding nations to attack and distress them. This had its full development in the ten tribes; the house of David, raised up in grace, being for a time a stay to Judah . . .

But the family of David itself, as placed responsibly on the throne of the Lord at Jerusalem, was, we know, unfaithful, and the sin of Manasseh made their government insupportable to Jehovah. Judah was removed out of His sight, as Israel had been. But, then, what remained of the sphere of the direct government of God on a given law? Nothing. His glory left Jerusalem and the earth, for it had filled the temple of Jerusalem. (See Ezek. 1-10.) This judgment then was of a far weightier character and import. It removed the government of God from upon the earth, and confided power to the head of the Gentiles. Israel was laid aside for a time. But Judah, providentially restored in a partial way, have Messiah presented to them, but as we have seen, reject Him, declaring they had no king but Caesar. This placed Judah under the Gentile power, not only as a chastening for their rebellion against Jehovah in the person of their King and of David's race, but on the ground of their own rejection of the promised Messiah and taking the Gentile for their head. This also consequently has its accomplishment in judgment in the latter days. The special Gentile part of it is scarcely alluded to in the prophets, who address Israel as more or less owned. It is the subject of Daniel, and we may add of the Apocalypse, for a reason we will add just now. Judah is seen in prophecy in the latter days under the oppression of the head of Gentile power, deceived by a false Christ, and oppressed. But God regards Israel still as His, having caused it to pass through the deepest tribulation. Those who, through grace, cleave to the Lord, call upon His name, and receive the word of the Spirit of Christ, instead of joining idolatry with the Gentiles and their chief, will be delivered, and the apostate Gentile power and the false prophet judged.

Another element introduced itself here. On the rejection of the Jews, as we know, Christianity came in. But alas! man was as unfaithful here as in Judaism. Early in the apostle's time, the mystery of iniquity began to work, resulting in an apostasy, and the ten kings of the Gentile world make war with the Lamb. In a word, a public apostasy in the sphere of Christian profession and the revelation of the man of sin, the open war of the beast and kings associated with him against the Lord, came in as an element of the latter-day events, completing the character and description of the Gentile power, which had taken the place of God's throne at Jerusalem, and to whom He had confided authority in the world. This, with its antecedents, is that which the Apocalypse furnishes of the prophetic volume.

The result of the destruction of this power, as well as of that of the Assyrian and other nations, is the establishment of Israel in blessing under Christ upon the earth, the throne of the Lord being thus re-established in surety at Jerusalem. The destruction of the Gentile power does not reach this latter period entirely. Hence Daniel, who treats of the period of Gentile power, never speaks of the millennium. He is made just to reach the deliverance, and stops there. The effect of the destruction of the Gentile power is to reunite the Lord, Jerusalem and Israel, and then comes the judgment of the Assyrian

and the various enemies who have risen up against the Lord and His people. This brings in the full reign of peace. Their connection with Israel had led in many respects to the anticipation of what regards the Gentiles.¹⁶³ ♦

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F. G. Patterson has given a brief summary of characteristics of the times of the Gentiles, as regarding the part of it since the cross, in his *The Ways of God*. This is taken from *The Bible Treasury*, 5:255.

1. It is now the time of the testimony of the cross and resurrection of Jesus, and the gathering together of the joint-heirs for Him, in whom we have obtained an inheritance; the time when God's secret work {i.e., the mystery of Christ and the church} is progressing, fitting the spiritual stones to His spiritual house.
2. The time of the Church suffering in brokenness and weakness here below, in the kingdom and patience of Jesus.
3. The time of confusion and misrule, when judgment is so far separated from righteousness, that when the only righteous One stood before the judgment-seat, owning that the power which was there was given of God: "Thou couldst have no power at all, unless it were given thee from above" -- it condemned the Guiltless!
4. The time of the blindness of the beloved people, the veil being over their face, the fulness of the Gentiles being gathered in.
5. The time of the Gentile domination, when the great image of Daniel has not yet received the blow upon his feet from the stone cut out without hands.
6. The time when the whole creation groans and travails in pain, waiting for the manifestation of the sons and heirs of God.
7. The time when Satan goes about, a roaring lion unbound, seeking whom he may devour; whose voice we hear in the evil spirits, "torment us not before the time."
8. The time of the "mystery of God," when He bears with much longsuffering the evil, without judging it; when wickedness is in high places, and goodness trampled under foot; when falsehood triumphs, and truth is fallen in the streets.
9. And the time when Jesus, rejected by the world, sits at God's right hand, waiting until His enemies are made His footstool.

Distinguishable Periods Not Necessarily Administrations

During the time of the Mosaic administration there came a time when Kings were placed over Israel. While the duration of kingship in Israel is a distinguishable time period, that does not make it another administration in the sense of the administration of government introduced with Noah, or that of the coming millennial kingdom, the administration of the fulness of times (Eph. 1:10). It is within the Mosaic administration

163. *Collected Writings*, 11:47-51. See also 5:138; *Synopsis*, 3:336; 5:396.

that God dispensed priesthood, and later, judges. We may in like manner speak of God dispensing kingship within the Mosaic administration -- and within the Mosaic age. Note that JND used the expression “kingly dispensation.”¹⁶⁴ When the time-period characterized by Gentile empire (Daniel 2 and 7) arrived, i.e., “the times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24), that did not constitute another administration either, though it is a distinguishable time-period. There are other ‘periods’ during which the ways of God were manifested in some character, but they do not add to the number of the three administrations.

The Nations Receive No Earthly Calling

The Gentiles never received an earthly calling combined with government in the earth. JND wrote:

❖ We have remarked that, when the fall of the Jewish nation was complete, God transferred the right of government to the Gentiles; but with this difference, that this right was separated from the calling and the promise of God. In the Jews, the two things were united, namely, the calling of God, and government upon the earth, which became distinct things from the moment that Israel was put aside. In Noah and Abraham we had them distinct; government in the one, calling in the other . . .

What has happened to the nations by their having had government given over to them? They have become “beasts” [Dan. 7]: so the four great monarchies are called. Once the government is transferred to the Gentiles, they become the oppressors of the people of God: first, the Babylonians; secondly, the Medes and Persians; thirdly, the Greeks; then, the Romans. The fourth monarchy consummated its crime at the same instant that the Jews consummated theirs, in being accessory, in the person of Pontius Pilate, to the will of a rebellious nation, by killing Him who was at once the Son of God and King of Israel. Gentile power is in a fallen state, even as the called people, the Jews, are. Judgment is written upon power and calling, as in man’s hand.¹⁶⁵ ❖

These last two sentences mean that man has failed in the use of the power given to the Gentiles during the times of the Gentiles; and Israel failed in its calling. Note that at the cross Israel and the Gentile power were there and rejected Christ. Thus power and calling will be taken up by Christ in the millennium and perfectly administered.

164. *Collected Writings*, 1:126.

165. *Collected Writings*, 2:377, 378. See also 11:50, 304.