

# The Two Covenants

By Eld. Uriah Smith

"For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." Heb. 8:8.

THE subject of this text is the new covenant. This new covenant is called in the preceding verse the second covenant. But a new implies an old, and a second implies a first. Two covenants are thus singled out in the word of God, as standing in this relation to each other; the one called the first or old, covenant; the other called the second, or new, covenant. Why are two covenants thus coupled together, and made so prominent in the Sacred Scriptures? It is because these relate particularly to that great work, the redemption of a lost race, for the furtherance of which, even the Scriptures themselves are given, which have consequently received the names of the Old and New Testaments. This is shown in the fact, that the new covenant is designed to bring all those who avail themselves of its proffered blessings into such a relation to God that their sins and iniquities will be remembered no more; which can be accomplished only by redemption. The conclusion is therefore clear, that these two covenants embody two grand divisions of the work which Heaven has undertaken for human redemption,

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and cover two especial dispensations devoted to the development of this work.

The subject of the covenants is one in which every person has reason to feel the most lively interest; for it embraces the whole question of our relation to God in this world, and of all our hope for the future. There is no evil which, through Christ, we hope to escape, from which we are not guarded by these covenants which God has so graciously condescended to make with his people, and no good which we hope to obtain, which is not embraced in, and secured to us by, them.

Paul, in Ephesians 2:11, 12, sets forth the condition of those who do not place themselves within the provisions of the covenants: "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision, by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

This presents in a startling light the condition of every unconverted man; and a more utterly wretched and abject condition it would be difficult to describe. No Christ, no hope, no God! Such is the condition of him who is a stranger from these covenants of promise. It becomes therefore a matter of infinite moment to ascertain what the new covenant is, upon what conditions its blessings are suspended, and what we are to do in order to become partakers of its benefits.

In addition to this general statement, we may remark

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that the subject of the covenants is becoming a theme of particular interest to Seventh-day Adventists at the present time, because it is just now considered a favorite point of attack by some of those who oppose the doctrine of the perpetuity of the ten commandments, and the still binding obligation of the original Sabbath. Having exhausted every other source of theoretical opposition to the Sabbath in their futile efforts to overthrow it, they now claim that in the doctrine of the covenants they find conclusive evidence that the ten commandments have been superseded by something better, and that the seventh-day Sabbath, at least, has consequently come to an end.

It is more particularly with reference to this phase of the question that the present examination will proceed. We will therefore fairly state, and then candidly examine, these claims of our opponents.

Briefly stated, then, their claim is this: That the ten commandments constituted the first or old covenant; that that covenant was faulty and has been done away; which is simply to say, in other words, that the ten commandment law was imperfect, and has been all abolished, the Sabbath with the rest.

In proof of this they quote a few texts of Scripture, which to new hearers would seem quite pertinent and positive. Thus, Deut. 4:12, 13: "And the Lord spake unto you, out of the midst of the fire; ye heard the voice of the words but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded You to perform,

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even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone."

Here they claim that the ten commandments are plainly called the covenant. Then they turn to Deut. 5:2, 3, to show that this covenant had no previous existence, but was established at Horeb, where Paul also, quoting from the prophet, says that the first covenant was made: "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day." Having found these texts so much to their mind, they turn to 1 Kings 8:21, for a statement to settle forever the controversy: "And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt. "Verse 9 of the same chapter says, "There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb." They ask us what can be plainer. There was nothing in the ark but the two tables of stone, containing the ten commandments; yet Solomon says that in the ark was the covenant which the Lord made with the fathers of his people, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt. Therefore those commandments were the covenant. And having established this point, they have only to quote Paul's testimony, that the old covenant has waxed old and vanished away, to reach the conclusion so long and anxiously sought, that the ten commandments have been abolished, carrying with them the obnoxious seventh-day Sabbath into their eternal tomb.

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Now to one who has not made this matter a subject of study, this seems very plausible. To those not familiar with this question, the quotations would seem to be to the point, the reasoning consistent, and the conclusion inevitable, that the ten commandments constituted the old covenant which has been abolished. To such who would say that this cable which our opponents make appear to the uninformed of such strength and fair proportions, does not contain one solitary fiber upon which they can justly hang a single proposition contained in either their claims or their conclusions. This we think we can clearly show.

That the old covenant has been abolished by being superseded by the new, Paul plainly states; of this there is no question. And we affirm further that nothing has been abolished but the old covenant. Whatever has been abolished was included in that covenant, and whatever was not included in that covenant, still remains, unaffected by the change from old to new. If the ten commandments constituted the old covenant, then they are forever gone; and no man need contend for their perpetuity or labor for their revival. But if they did not constitute the old covenant, then they have not been abolished, and no man need breathe a doubt in regard to their perpetuity and immutability. This therefore becomes a test question. It determines as definitely as any one subject can, the whole question of the perpetuity or abolition of the moral law.

Can we then tell what did constitute the first, or old, covenant. What does the word, covenant, mean? Webster defines it thus: "A mutual agreement

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of two or more persons or parties, in writing and under seal, to do or to refrain from, some act or thing; a contract; stipulation." This is the primary, leading definition of the word; and in looking for the old covenant, we look for some transaction to which this definition will apply.

We have definite data from which to work. We are told who was the author of the first covenant. It was God. We are told with whom it was made. It was made with Israel. We are told when it was made: It was made with that people when they came out of the land of Egypt. Jer. 31:32; Heb. 8:9. By these circumstances the old covenant is clearly distinguished from the Adamic, the Abrahamic, or any other covenant brought to view in the Bible.

We go back therefore to the history of Israel as they came out of Egypt, and lay down this as a consistent and self-evident principle: That the very first transaction we find taking place between God and the Israelites after they left Egypt, which answers to the definition of the word covenant, must be the first covenant, unless some good reason can be shown why it is not.

Do we find anything of this kind in the experience of that people? anything which constitutes a formal and mutual agreement between God and themselves, based upon mutual promises? We find one, and only one, transaction of that kind. The record of it commences in Ex. 19:3: "And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say unto the house of Jacob, and tell the children of

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Israel: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bear you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice

indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel."

The briefest glance at this language shows it to be a formal proposition on the part of the Lord to the Israelites. Moses was the minister through whom the negotiation was carried on. Go down, said God to Moses, and make to the people this proposition: If you will obey my voice, and keep my covenant, I will secure you in the possession of certain special blessings above all people. With this instruction Moses went down to the people, and God waited for their answer.

Verses 7, 8: "And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him. And all the people answered together and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord."

Such was the response of the people. They said, "We agree to the terms; we will enter into the arrangement." We now have the two parties before us, and the mutual, voluntary action on the part of each. This is the first transaction of the kind recorded between God and that people. It answers most strictly to the meaning of the word covenant. Therefore we say that this has the primary

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claim to be considered the old covenant of which Jeremiah prophesied and Paul discoursed.

It may be asked, then, how the ten commandments can be called "the covenant." We answer, That is just where the people are misled. They are never called "the" covenant, referring to the first or old covenant. That the ten commandments are called "a" covenant, we admit; but what kind of a covenant? and in what sense are they so called? Pleased read again Ex. 19:5: "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep *my covenant*", etc. Then God had something which he called *his* covenant, which antedated the covenant made with Israel. It was already in existence, before any formal agreement whatever was made with that people. And this explains Deut. 4:13. Those who read that verse should be critical enough to observe that Moses does not call the ten commandments *the* covenant, nor *a* covenant, but *his* (God's) covenant. "And he declared unto you *his* covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments." These, then, are what God referred to in Ex. 19:5, in the words, *my covenant*; and these were already in existence when the covenant was made with Israel. It should be noticed, further, that the covenant of Deut. 4:23, is not a covenant *made*, but a covenant *commanded*; and surely any one can see the difference between an arrangement established upon this voluntary and mutual promises of two parties, and that which one party has power to enjoin with authority upon another party. But the covenant here mentioned,

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God did thus enjoin upon them without regard to any action on their part.

It is now easy to be seen why the ten commandments are called a covenant, and what kind of a covenant they were. They were simply the basis of that agreement recorded in Ex. 19:3-8. For the very first condition God proposed was,

"If ye will keep my covenant." In this sense, and in this only, are the ten commandments ever called a covenant.

And this brings us to the secondary definition of the term covenant; which is, "a writing containing the terms of agreement between parties." Thus the conditions upon which an agreement or covenant rests, are in a secondary sense called also a covenant. This may be illustrated by the relation which all good citizens sustain to their respective States. They are all in covenant relation with the State. The State says, If you will obey the laws of this commonwealth, you shall be protected in your life, liberty, and property. The citizens respond, We will obey. This is the mutual agreement, the covenant, virtually existing everywhere between the citizen and the State. But when we speak of the State alone, *its* covenant would be its laws which it *commands* its citizens to perform. These are the conditions of the agreement, and hence may be called the covenant of the State, because upon obedience to these are suspended all the blessings which it proposes to confer.

Such was the relation established between the Lord and his people. He had a law which the very circumstances of our existence bind us to keep; yet he graciously annexed a promise to the

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keeping of it. Obey my law, and I will secure you in the possession of certain blessings above all people. The people accepted the offer. The matter then stood thus: The people said, We will keep God's law. God said, Then I will make you a kingdom of priests, a peculiar treasure unto myself. This was the agreement or covenant made between them. But so far as God was concerned his law was his covenant, because it was the basis of the whole arrangement, and upon the keeping of that by the people, all the blessings were suspended which he proposed to confer.

1 Kings 8:21, may still present a difficulty to some minds. Does not Solomon here say that in the ark, where the ten commandments alone were, was the covenant which God made with the fathers of his people, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt? The key to the explanation of this passage lies in the antecedent of the word wherein. Solomon, speaking of the temple, says, "And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord." Does the word, wherein, mean in which ark, or in which place? Hebraists tell us that the grammatical construction refers it unquestionably to the place. "I have set there a place for the ark, in which place, not in the ark, is the covenant of the Lord," etc. Was the covenant always in the place where the ark was? See Deut. 31:26. "Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God." That this book of the law is the same as the book of the covenant, see 2 Kings 22:8, and chapter 23:2. And the expression, in the side of the

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ark, means a coffer or receptacle expressly prepared for it and placed by the side of the ark. See Prideaux, vol. 1, p. 152. Wherever the ark was there was this book of the covenant by its side. Hence Solomon could say, referring to the place

where the ark was, that there, in that place, was also the covenant which the Lord made with that people when he led them out of Egypt.

Thus the strongest texts claimed to prove that the ten commandments constituted the old covenant, are found to contain not one shade of evidence in that direction. We have found in what sense the ten commandments are called a covenant, simply because they are God's covenant, the basis of the agreement which he entered into with Israel. In the same sense the tables are called the tables of the covenant, and the ark, the ark of the covenant, because they contained this covenant; but none of these expressions refer to the covenant made with Israel by the mutual pledges to each other of the Lord and that people, as recorded in Ex. 10.

We now return to that chapter and resume the examination of the covenant then made. When the people agreed to obey God's voice, verses 5, 8, they had not heard his voice, and knew not what conditions it might impose. But on the third day after this, the Lord came down in fearful majesty, and with a voice that shook the solid earth from pole to pole declared the ten commandments. Here for the first time the people heard God's voice which they were to obey. Then the Lord took Moses into a private interview with himself and gave him some instruction which the people were to follow in civil

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and religious matters, under this arrangement. This instruction is found in the latter part of Ex. 20, and chapters 21, 22, and 23 entire, and is an epitome of the civil and ceremonial laws given to that people.

In chapter 24 is resumed the narrative of the steps taken in the formation of this covenant. Moses appeared before the people a second time, and rehearsed in their hearing all the words which the Lord had communicated to him. And here the people, after having heard for themselves God's voice, and being told all that he had said to Moses, had an opportunity to answer again whether they would enter into this arrangement or not. At their first answer, Ex. 19:8, they did not know what would be required of them; now they understood all the conditions; and what will they answer now? Ex. 24:3: "And all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said, will we do."

It would seem that this was all-sufficient. But the Lord moved very carefully in the matter, so that the people might have no opportunity to plead in after years that they did not know what they were doing in entering into this covenant with him. So he caused Moses to write out in a book all the words he had told him, that all points might be again carefully considered, and then to read it all over to the people. Verse 7: "And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people." Here they had opportunity for the third time to reconsider the matter and change their decision if they so desired. And what was

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their answer this time? "And they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do and be obedient."

Moses then took blood which had been offered for the purpose, verses 5, 6, and sprinkled it on the people and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant which

the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words." Verse 8. Here the covenant was closed up, sealed and ratified, by the shedding of blood.

Keep this scene in mind while we pass down fifteen hundred and fifty-five years to the days of Paul, and notice his remarks upon this event. Heb. 9:17-20: "For a testament is of force after men are dead; otherwise it is of no force at all while the testator liveth. Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you."

Paul here plainly states that the first covenant was dedicated with blood, the words testament and covenant meaning the same thing, being from the same original word. And to what scene does Paul refer? To the very one recorded in Ex. 24:8, just described. Moses says, Behold the blood of the covenant; and Paul says that the covenant then and there ratified was the first, or old covenant.

Now to settle the fact, once and forever, that this covenant was not the ten commandments, we have only to remark that neither Moses nor the people

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had a copy of the ten commandments of any kind in their hands at that time. This will appear from the further record of Ex. 24. In verse 12, we read, "And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there, and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law and commandments which I have written, that thou mayest teach them." The idea that God had already caused Moses to write out a copy of these commandments, and that he had begun to teach them by having spoken them and read them in the ears of the people, verses 3 and 4, is utterly inconsistent with this statement, that God was about to put into his hands a law containing commandments that *he* had written, in order that Moses might teach them. But before Moses was called up to receive this law of ten commandments which God had written, the first covenant had been made, closed up, finished, and ratified by the shedding of blood.

These facts throw a fortification around this point which it is not possible either to break or scale. The first covenant was dedicated with blood. But when that dedication took place, the ten commandments, in visible form, had not been put into the possession of the people; they had no copy of them; hence they were not dedicated with blood. Therefore, the ten commandments were not the old covenant.

Another line of thought showing just as clearly that the ten commandments were not the first, or old, covenant, is based on Deut. 5:2, 3, a passage to which our opponents appeal with such seeming assurance: "The Lord our God made a covenant

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with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day." Having assumed that the ten commandments were the old covenant, these verses are appealed to, to show that these commandments were here for the first time introduced, and hence came to an end with that dispensation.. But the quotation is fatal to the

assumption; for the ten commandments did exist before this time; hence they were not the covenant at that time made.

The book of Genesis, though so brief in its record that its fifty short chapters cover a period of over 2300 years, nevertheless abounds with indications that the principles of the ten commandments were well understood and acted upon, even from the creation down. Why was Cain condemned for killing his brother, if the law against murder did not exist? "Where no law is, there is no transgression;" and, "sin is not imputed when there is no law." By what standard was it shown that Noah and his house alone were righteous, while all the rest of mankind were only evil and that continually, if there was no law for a standard in such matters? To be righteous is to be living in conformity with a standard of righteousness, or right doing. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." On what ground were the inhabitants of the wicked cities of the plain given over to the vengeance of eternal fire on account of their vileness, if there was no law against unchastity? There was such a law; and Peter makes a statement which shows that it was as well understood then as now. He says that

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those cities were made an ensample unto all that should after live ungodly. This covers all time from that day to this, and onward to the end. And the ungodly of to-day may look back to Sodom, and learn how God will deal with them unless they repent. Are there moral principles binding on them now? So there were then, if their case is an example. Do men understand these laws now? So they did then. Is it an acknowledged principle now that a man cannot justly be punished who does not know, or has not had an opportunity to know, the law? So it was then. We have heard of tyrants who posted their laws so high that no one could read them, and then struck off the head of every transgressor; but God does not so deal with his creatures. No; the law of God was in existence and understood in ancient Sodom, as well as in the numberless Sodoms of to-day.

But some may be ready to suppose that even if the principles of the other commandments were known, surely the Sabbath was neither known nor regarded before the time of Moses. We answer that if it can be shown that any other commandment was known, tenfold more proof can be given that the Sabbath was known, and a commandment given for its observance. In proof of this it is only necessary to refer to the record of Genesis 2:2, 3, which records the origin of the Sabbatic institution in Eden. God rested on the seventh day. He then blessed the day; not the day past, but the day for time to come. Then he sanctified it. Sanctify means to set apart to a sacred or religious use. This could not refer to past time, but to the seventh day for time to come. And it was to be used in this sacred or religious manner, not by the Lord; for he does not need it; but by man, for whom, says Christ, the Sabbath was made. Mark 2:27.

How, then, we ask, could the Sabbath be thus

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sanctified for man's use, or be set apart to be used in a holy or sacred manner by him? Only by telling man to use it in this manner. But just as soon as the Lord had told Adam to use the Sabbath in a sacred or religious manner, he *had given him a command for its observance*. The record in Genesis is therefore plain that



a Sabbath commandment was given in Eden. And we should do no violence to the text if we should read it, And God blessed the seventh-day, and commanded Adam to sacredly observe it. But a command given to Adam under these circumstances, was a command through him to all his posterity of every age and clime.

No more need be said to show to all who respect the testimony of God's word, that the ten commandments were known through all the ages before the time of Moses, and that men were held under obligation to obey them. Therefore, these commandments were not the covenant made with Israel at Horeb, which covenant had no existence previous to that time.

Perhaps all has now been said that need be said in this connection, respecting the old covenant. Every essential fact concerning it is clearly defined, and can easily be found. We have seen plainly brought to view the parties between whom this covenant was made, the time when it was made, what it contained, and the steps taken in its ratification. It was made between God and Israel, when that people came out of Egypt; it was the special arrangement between God and that people, whereby they became his peculiar treasure; the matter embraced in it was that privately communicated by the Lord to Moses, and by him written out in a book, called the book of the covenant; and it was dedicated with blood.

The ten commandments were not, therefore, the

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old covenant, because (1.) They were in existence, and were just as much binding on men before as after the exode. (2.) They were never dedicated with blood. (3.) They were set forth by the Lord himself as antedating his covenant with Israel, being the primary and essential basis of the arrangement then entered into with them.

We now turn to the subject of the new covenant, and shall pursue our inquiry under this head in the following channels: When was the new covenant announced? Why was it necessary that a new covenant should be made? By whom was it made? When was it made? With whom was it made? And what are its conditions and provisions?

The new covenant was announced by Jeremiah six hundred and six years before Christ, in the following language:

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, said the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jer. 31:31-34.

This language is explicit in answering nearly all the inquiries raised respecting the new covenant. Over six hundred years before Christ, it was announced

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that such a covenant would be made. And the reason for this covenant is announced; namely, because they had already virtually annulled the first arrangement, by breaking God's covenant.

Paul states this a little more fully in his letter to the Hebrews. He says, "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold the days come saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." This covenant is declared to be faulty, not that there was anything wrong about it, in itself considered; but it was imperfect, simply because its provisions were not ample enough, as we shall presently see, to meet the emergency which arose under it. And this is more than intimated in the next sentence: "For finding fault with *them*." The fault, then, in reality, was with the people; and the fault with them was that they had broken God's covenant, the ten commandments, and thus violated the conditions of the covenant made. Violating a law does not abolish the law, but it does break up or nullify any arrangement which is suspended upon the keeping of the law. Such was the effect of Israel's transgression of the law. It did not abolish the law, but it did virtually abolish the old covenant, by releasing God from all obligations he had placed himself under on condition of their obedience.

Well, suppose the people did break the ten commandments, was there not a remedy provided for such cases? They, by their transgressions against God, became sinners; but was there not provision for the removal of sin, so that they could come back into the same relation to God, as if they had not sinned? Here was the difficulty. To be sure, they had their services, their rounds of ceremonies, and

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their offerings. There was plenty of blood provided; but it was only the blood of beasts. Paul gives us a true view of the situation when he says that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission," Heb. 9:22, and yet that it was "not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Not all the millions of offerings that were brought during the fifteen hundred years of that dispensation, nor all the rivers of blood that flowed around their consecrated altars, had removed a single sin; and unless something more effectual should be provided, all was lost.

The new covenant undertakes to supply this deficiency, by providing a sacrifice which can take away sin; for the grand result of it, as expressed by Paul, is, that their unrighteousness would find mercy at the hands of God, and their sins and iniquities would be remembered no more.

Prophecy, after announcing the fact that a new covenant would be made, again takes up the matter, and brings to view the minister, and the sacrifice. The prophet Daniel, speaking of the Messiah, says, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week." There can be no question that this refers to the new covenant., Sixty-nine of the seventy weeks of Daniel 9, were to extend to

the manifestation of the Messiah. The last one of the seventy weeks was allotted to the work of the Messiah and his apostles of Daniel's people. Our Lord carried on the work in person for the first half of that week. In the midst of the week he caused the sacrifice and oblation (of the Jewish service) to cease, by the offering up of himself, thus providing the new covenant sacrifice. The apostles then took up the work and carried it out the remaining half of the week. Heb. 2:3.

We now have before us the minister of the new covenant, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the sacrifice

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provided, his own blood, and the author of the new covenant, God, who made the first covenant of which Moses was minister.

We now inquire, With whom was the new covenant made? Was it made with the Gentiles? Here is an important point on which a great deal of misapprehension seems to exist. The idea generally conveyed on this question is, that God at first made a covenant with Israel, but they finally proved to be such a hard-hearted, stiff-necked and reprobate race, that God determined to cast them off, and select a better class of people with whom to enter into relation; so he cast off the Jews, and made a covenant with the Gentiles. And this is probably why we so often hear the expression, "Show us where a Gentile is ever commanded to keep the Sabbath," etc.

What a short-sighted view does this betray! A more mistaken idea was never entertained. God never made, and never proposed to make, a covenant with the Gentiles. He has nothing whatever to do with the Gentiles, further than to hold them amenable to his government, and to open the way of mercy before them. So long as a man is a Gentile, he is in a Godless, hopeless state. And such is the state of every unconverted man. His condition must be changed before God can take him into favor with himself.

In the prophecy as originally given, and as quoted by Paul, it is plainly stated with whom the Lord would make the new covenant: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant," not with the Gentiles, but "with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah." The new covenant, therefore, is made with the very same people with whom the old was made.

Paul elsewhere mentions this fact in a number of places. In Rom. 9:3-5, he says, "For I could

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wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." There is no question but Paul is here speaking of the literal seed of Abraham. He continues: "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever."

These are the very important and lofty distinctions conferred upon that people. Let us for a moment consider them. To them pertained "the adoption." God adopted Abraham as his friend, and his posterity as his children, because when all others had apostatized from him, Abraham alone was found faithful; and of him God bore testimony that he had obeyed his voice kept his charge, his

commandments, his statutes, and his laws. Gen. 26:5. So that people were set apart to be the depositaries of God's law, and preserve the worship and the knowledge of the true God in the earth.

And to them pertained "the glory;" that is, the manifestation of God's glory among men. This was exhibited at the giving of the law, when Moses was obliged to put a vail over his face to hide the glory of his countenance; and after that in the visible appearance of God's glory in connection more especially with the ark and mercy-seat.

And to them pertained "the covenants," plural, both of them, the old and the new. He does not say that to them pertained "the covenant" referring to the old, while the new pertained to some other people; but both were theirs. "And the giving of the law." Then the law was distinct from the covenants. "And the service of God, and the promises." All the promises came through the same channel. No promise is made to any one who is

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not in some sense a member of the Israel of God.

And, finally, our Lord himself, as concerning the flesh, came from that people. Many seem to think that all they need to say about the Sabbath is that it is Jewish; and they look upon anything to which they think they can apply this term with apparent if not real abhorrence. But in what condition should we find ourselves to-day, had not the Jews acted the part they have acted in our world's history? They received the lively oracles to commit unto us. By them truth was kept alive in the world. They were for long ages the only conservators of the knowledge of the true God, and of revealed religion in the earth. And our Lord said that salvation is "of the Jews."

Those things did not become Jewish by being for a time in the charge of that people. The law did not become Jewish, because they alone were found worthy for a long period to be its depositaries; nor was our Lord merely a Jewish Saviour, because, as pertaining to the flesh, he sprang from that people.

Let us not despise the Jews, but honor them for the high distinction they once enjoyed, pity them that through blindness they rejected the blessings of the gospel, and pray for them, that they may yet, some of them, come to the light and be re-united to the good olive tree.

Away with this cry of Jewish; for the new covenant itself was made with Israel and Judah. How, then, do the Gentiles come in to share in its blessings? Paul explains in Eph. 2:13-15. After speaking of the Gentiles as aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of Promise, he says, "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the

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middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace." In verse 19 he adds, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."

Thus plainly is it stated that through Christ the Gentiles are brought into such a relation to God that they are no longer strangers from the covenants of promise. The middle wall of partition between the Jews and themselves was broken down by what Christ abolished on the cross.

We have already noticed that it was the old covenant that was abolished, and nothing but the old covenant. Now if that covenant was the ten commandments, the text should read, "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity even the ten commandments." But it does not read thus. It does not even intimate a change of those commandments. It reads, "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances;" and no one who can lay claim to any respectable degree of common sense, will for a moment contend that there was anything in the ten commandments pertaining to ordinances, or that could come under the head of what is here said to have been abolished.

These ordinances point unmistakably to the services and ceremonies of the Jewish worship, which constituted the body and substance of the old covenant. These peculiarities of the Jewish worship, their circumcision, priesthood, and offerings, for a time hedged in that people, as by an impassable wall of separation, from all other nations. This was the middle wall of partition which kept them separate. And this being broken down, what is the result?

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Here a most ludicrous and ridiculous blunder is made by some opponents of the Sabbath, even those who claim to be ministers of the word. They assert that the wall of partition was broken down in order that the Jews might come out where the Gentiles were, and partake of their liberty and blessings, the privileges of the gospel, and the first-day Sabbath.

This is just exactly the opposite of the truth. The Gentiles had no blessings to offer. We have already seen from Paul's testimony that they are without God, without Christ, and without hope, and have no interest in the covenants. The gospel was not theirs, but was preached to Abraham, to Moses, and the Hebrews, all through their history; and all its blessings were included in the new covenant, which, like the old, was made with that people. Gal. 3:8; Heb. 4:2.

No! the middle wall of partition was broken down that the Gentiles might go in where the Jews were, and be partakers of the blessings and promises which they had in their possession. Through Christ they enter in. He hath made both one so far as they will accept of his work and his offering. The Gentiles who thus come in, are then no longer Gentiles, but members of the commonwealth of Israel; no longer far off, but made nigh by the blood of Christ; no longer strangers, but fellow-citizens with the saints.

The Gentiles are then reckoned as Israel in a certain sense, Paul, elsewhere very clearly shows. Rom. 9:7" "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

In harmony with this, he testifies to the Galatians:

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"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29. All who are Christ's then, are the children of Abraham, not literally but spiritually, and are accounted for the seed. So we hear him saying to the Romans in language still more pointed: "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God." The inward work of grace, then, in the heart, under the gospel, constitutes one a Jew in reality, and an Israelite indeed.

Nothing need be added to such plain statements of the apostle, yet he uses a figure in Rom. 11, which beautifully illustrates this point, and is entitled to a passing notice. He there represents the Jewish people, while they were the children of God, by a tame olive tree, and the Gentiles by a wild olive tree. The branches of the tame olive tree were broken off, and grafts from the wild olive tree, the Gentiles, were inserted in their places. Did this change the tree and make a Gentile tree of it? No; it was the same tree; but now the Gentiles are brought in to be a part of it, and thus partake of its root and fatness, the blessings of the new covenant, the promises of God through Abraham and his seed.

Having now seen with whom the new covenant is made, namely, with Israel and Judah, and how the Gentiles come in to share in its blessing, namely, by joining themselves to the commonwealth of Israel through Christ, thus becoming Abraham's seed, we now inquire,

When was the new covenant made? In Matt. 26:26-30, we have an account of the institution of the Lord's supper. After he had broken the bread,

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"he took the cup and gave thanks and gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." The blood of Christ is the blood of the new covenant, the word testament, as already noticed, being the same as covenant. The disciples present on this occasion were Jews, and there, as representatives of the whole Christian church, they entered into the new covenant with the Lord. God had now set forth Christ as the Saviour of the world, virtually proposing to all that if they would receive him and his offering, on the conditions which he, in his divine teaching for three years and a half, had set before them, they should receive the remission of their sins, as it was for this purpose that his blood was shed. And they by partaking of those emblems, accepted the arrangement.

The next day Christ's blood was actually shed upon the cross, and there the new covenant was ratified and sealed. Paul says, "For a testament is of force after men are dead; otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." From that moment the new covenant was in force. And right in connection with this fact we call attention to what Paul says concerning the ratification of a covenant: "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth thereto." Gal. 3:15.

When a covenant is once confirmed no change can be made in it, not an item can be added, and not an item can be taken from it. And if this is true of a

covenant made by man, how much more of one made by the Lord! After the new covenant was ratified, therefore, upon the cross, no addition whatever could be made to it, and nothing taken from it.

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Now we ask where Sunday-keeping comes in. Where was that incorporated into the new covenant as one of its provisions and duties? We have never yet heard the claim put forth that it originated the other side of the cross. It is always placed this side. Then it is too late. It could not be added after the covenant was confirmed by the blood of the cross, on Paul's showing. Even if its origin could be traced back to the days of the apostles, it would avail nothing. We deny that it can be traced to that early date. It is lost in the theological bosh and bogs of the days of Constantine. But if it could be traced beyond that, to the days of the earlier fathers, to the days of the apostles, to the day of Pentecost, even to the day of the resurrection, still "Too late!" must be branded upon its brazen brow, and we must regard it as an interloper, an intruder, a fraud, and a deception. It has no place in the new covenant, and we are under no obligation thereto.

But what of the Sabbath? We answer, The Minister of the new covenant was careful to affirm its perpetuity and consequent binding obligation in this dispensation, by affirming in the most positive manner, the perpetuity and immutability of that law of which it is an integral part; that law which is the standard or righteousness, and from which not a jot or tittle was to pass while the heavens and the earth should remain. Matt. 5:17-20.

And the prophecy of the new covenant, itself, has something very emphatic to say about the law. Under this covenant says God, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." As Paul quotes it, it reads, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." To what law does this prophecy refer? To that which was the law of God in the days of Jeremiah, which no one will dispute was the ten commandments.

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If it does not mean this, then it should have read, I will put a *new* law into their minds, and write it in their hearts.

And if, as our opponents contend, the law of the commandments was the old covenant to be abolished, the prophecy of the change should have read, This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: I will abolish my law, and take it out of their way. Or if the law was not to be abolished, but only changed, that fact should have been noted in some such language as this: This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: I will change my law, and adapt it to the genius of the gospel dispensation.

But it says nothing of this kind, as the reader has sufficiently noticed. It says, I will put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. I will incorporate it into their very being; I will take away the carnal mind which is not subject to the law of God, so that it will be their delight to keep it in sincerity and truth.

And this is further indicated in the fact that when the Minister of the new covenant came to take away the first and establish the second, he said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, *thy law is within my heart*". Ps. 40:8; Heb. 10:5-9.

And as he was, in all holy affections and loyalty to God, so must all his followers be.

But if we take the ground of our opponents, what is the difference between the old and new covenants? The old covenant being the ten commandments which people were then to obey, the new covenant is the code of requirements in force under this dispensation. And what are these? The same exactly as the original ten with the Sabbath left out! The old covenant was therefore imperfect and faulty because the Lord had inadvertently put a Sabbath into it; so he undertakes to make a

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better one by giving the same law over again, leaving the Sabbath out. But as soon as this is done, lo! it is found that the Sabbath cannot be dispensed with; for even man's physical necessities imperatively demand it. Mentally, morally and physically, society would plunge into complete anarchy and ruin, were it not for this beneficent institution.

Now what shall be done? Under these circumstances men step in to remedy this defect which the Lord has made in the new covenant; and the apostles, or somebody else, give to the church a new Sabbath. Then having a Sabbath inserted, is not the new covenant identically the same as the old? Oh! no; for another day is taken which, as a Sabbath, has no foundation in fact, and no earthly significance whatever, and the Sabbath is put upon that day, and then it is all right! So the old covenant was one with a seventh-day Sabbath, and the new is one with a first-day Sabbath. The trouble, then, was not with the Sabbath in itself considered, but only with the day on which it was kept. And the only trouble with the day, we must conclude, was, that it was the day on which God rested in the beginning; for that alone gave it all its significance.

This is a fair statement of the case; but does it look like the work of the Lord? Does it not look like the short-sighted and blundering work of men, or rather like the work of the great foe of all righteousness, who is working behind the scenes, to impel mankind into every species of error and confusion?

If, then, under the new covenant that law which requires the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is written in the heart of every believer, how does it happen that multitudes who have lived under this covenant, and who have certainly enjoyed the blessing and favor of God, have lived and died in

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the observance of the first day of the week? This is with many a very perplexing question. But we think it is subject to a fair and consistent solution. We reply, that these persons have had the true principle of obedience implanted in their hearts. And they have kept the first day of the week, because they have for a time labored under a misapprehension of what the law requires. In keeping that day, they supposed honestly they were rendering obedience to the fourth commandment of the decalogue; or in not keeping any day in a true Sabbatical sense, they have supposed honestly that God's law required nothing of the kind at their hands. Had they become convinced that the fourth commandment required of them the observance of the seventh day, whether they were keeping another day or no day, would they not have immediately changed their practice



accordingly? Assuredly, every individual of them. Otherwise the principle of obedience was not in their hearts, and they were not in covenant relation with God.

Therefore, leaving them with the Lord, who will deal with all in accordance with the light they have enjoyed, and the sincerity with which they have followed it, it becomes us all to look rather for the truth of our time, and to our own circumstances and obligations. Paul speaks of times of ignorance which God winked at, and other times of greater light when he commanded all men everywhere to repent., Our times are of this latter character. Covering after covering, which the great apostasy has thrown over the law of God and other portions of his truth, has been lifted off, and men are accountable to God, for the increasing light. We are living in days of reform preparatory to the coming of Christ; and we have reached the last reform; for we can find nothing higher nor holier than that law of liberty which is designed to develop

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perfect characters in us, and by which we are to be judged in the last day. Jas. 2:10-12. Friend, you may heretofore have honestly kept the first day of the week for the Sabbath, and have enjoyed the favor of God; but you can do so no longer. The light has now come clearly forth; and before whomsoever it is set, he has no longer a cloak for following the traditions of men.

Blessed be God, for so graciously condescending to take mankind into covenant relation with himself. Reader, are you yet a stranger from these covenants of promise? If so, you are without hope. The present brief scene of turmoil and trouble, and then the regrets, the remorse, and the pains of the second death, for privileges unimproved and mercies abused, are your only portion. In place of this infinite evil, you may have infinite good. Join yourself to the commonwealth of Israel. Christ is the way; and he invites you to come. The promises are of value untold, and will soon be fulfilled. The opportunity will expire by limitation when Christ concludes his work as priest. Come while you may. And soon in that heavenly city, which bears upon the twelve foundations with which it is garnished the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and upon its twelve gates of pearl, the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel, and into which all who have entered into covenant relation with God, both of the literal and spiritual seed, will have a right to enter, you will realize what an infinite blessing was couched in that arrangement through which God condescended to be our God, and took us to be his people.

