

Two Covenants

MEMORY VERSE: “*In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away*” (Hebrews 8:13).

“As the Bible presents two laws, one changeless and eternal, the other provisional and temporary, so there are two covenants.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 370.

Suggested Reading: Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 363-373. (At the bottom of this page)

1. GOD'S ETERNAL LAW

Sunday, February 11

a. What was the main object inside the ark of the covenant, and what did it signify? Exodus 25:16; 26:33, 34; 31:18; Psalm 85:10.

Exodus 25:16

And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.

Exodus 26:33-34

And thou shalt hang up the vail under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the vail the ark of the testimony: and the vail shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy. **34** And thou shalt put the mercy seat upon the ark of the testimony in the most holy place.

Exodus 31:18

And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.

Psalm 85:10

Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

“The law of God, enshrined within the ark, was the great rule of righteousness and judgment. That law pronounced death upon the transgressor; but above the law was the mercy seat, upon which the presence of God was revealed, and from which, by virtue of the atonement, pardon was granted to the repentant sinner.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 349.

“Adam and Eve, at their creation, had a knowledge of the law of God; they were acquainted with its claims upon them; its precepts were written upon their hearts. When man fell by transgression the law was not changed, but a remedial system was established to bring him back to obedience. The promise of a Saviour was given, and

sacrificial offerings pointing forward to the death of Christ as the great sin offering were established.”—*Ibid.*, p. 363.

b. What did Christ say about the jurisdiction of God’s law? Matthew 5:17–19.

Matthew 5:17-19

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. **18** For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. **19** Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

“While many are saying in their hearts that He has come to do away with the law, Jesus in unmistakable language reveals His attitude toward the divine statutes. ‘Think not,’ He said, ‘that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets.’ ”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessings*, pp. 47, 48.

2. TRUE HAPPINESS

Monday, February 12

a. How does obedience relate to happiness? Psalm 1:1, 2; Proverbs 6:23; 13:13.

Psalm 1:1-2

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. **2** But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

Proverbs 6:23

For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:

Proverbs 13:13

Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded.

“It is the Creator of men, the Giver of the law, who declares that it is not His purpose to set aside its precepts. Everything in nature, from the mote in the sunbeam to the worlds on high, is under law. And upon obedience to these laws the order and harmony of the natural world depend. So there are great principles of righteousness to control the life of all intelligent beings, and upon conformity to these principles the well-being of the universe depends. Before this earth was called into being, God’s law existed. Angels are governed by its principles, and in order for earth to be in harmony with heaven, man also must obey the divine statutes. To man in Eden Christ made known the precepts of the law ‘when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.’ Job 38:7. The mission of Christ on earth was not to destroy the law, but by His grace to bring man back to obedience to its precepts.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 48.

b. After we have sinned, can we obey God’s moral law of the Ten Commandments in our own power—and why or why not? Romans 8:3, 4.

Romans 8:3-4

For 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: **4** That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

“The apostle Paul clearly presents the relation between faith and the law under the new covenant. He says: ‘Being *justified by faith*, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ ‘Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.’ ‘For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh’—it could not justify man, because in his sinful nature he could not keep the law—‘God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that *the righteousness of the law* might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.’ Romans 5:1; 3:31; 8:3, 4.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 373.

“It was possible for Adam, before the fall, to form a righteous character by obedience to God’s law. But he failed to do this, and because of his sin our natures are fallen and we cannot make ourselves righteous. Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law. We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 62.

“We are utterly powerless to rescue ourselves from the grasp of Satan; but God has appointed a way of escape. The Son of the Highest has strength to fight the battle for us, and ‘through Him that loved us’ we may come off ‘more than conquerors.’ ”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 740.

3. PERFECT OBEDIENCE UNDER THE NEW COVENANT

Tuesday, February 13

a. How can we present perfect obedience to God’s law? Romans 3:31; 1:16, 17.

Romans 3:31

Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

Romans 1:16-17

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. **17** For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

“The condition of eternal life is now just what it always has been—just what it was in Paradise before the fall of our first parents—perfect obedience to the law of God, perfect righteousness. If eternal life were granted on any condition short of this, then the happiness of the whole universe would be imperiled. The way would be open for sin, with all its train of woe and misery, to be immortalized. . . .

“Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness. If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ’s character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned.

“More than this, Christ changes the heart. He abides in your heart by faith. You are to maintain this connection with Christ by faith and the continual surrender of your will to Him; and so long as you do this, He will work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. So you may say, ‘The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.’ Galatians 2:20. So Jesus said to His disciples, ‘It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.’ Matthew 10:20. Then with Christ working in you, you will manifest the same spirit and do the same good works—works of righteousness, obedience.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 62, 63.

b. What is God’s assurance under the new covenant? Hebrews 8:10; Jeremiah 31:33, 34.

Hebrews 8:10

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

Jeremiah 31:33-34

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. **34** And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

“The work Christianity is designed to achieve in the world is not to depreciate the law of God, not to detract from its sacred dignity in the slightest degree, but it is to write that law in the mind and heart. When the law of God is thus implanted in the soul of the believer, he is approaching eternal life through the merits of Jesus.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 50.

“The ‘new covenant’ was established upon ‘better promises’—the promise of forgiveness of sins and of the grace of God to renew the heart and bring it into harmony with the principles of God’s law.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 372.

4. GOD’S LAW IN THE HEART

Wednesday, February 14

a. When is God’s law written in the heart of believers? Romans 5:1–5.

Romans 5:1-5

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: **2** By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and

rejoice in hope of the glory of God. **3** And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; **4** And patience, experience; and experience, hope: **5** And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

“The same law that was engraved upon the tables of stone is written by the Holy Spirit upon the tables of the heart. Instead of going about to establish our own righteousness we accept the righteousness of Christ. His blood atones for our sins. His obedience is accepted for us. Then the heart renewed by the Holy Spirit will bring forth ‘the fruits of the Spirit.’ Through the grace of Christ we shall live in obedience to the law of God written upon our hearts. Having the Spirit of Christ, we shall walk even as He walked. Through the prophet He declared of Himself, ‘I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart.’ Psalm 40:8. And when among men He said, ‘The Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him.’ John 8:29.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 372.

b. What wonderful promises are provided to us under the new covenant? Hebrews 8:11, 12.

Hebrews 8:11-12

And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. **12** For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

“The fountain of the heart must be purified before the streams can become pure. He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law is attempting an impossibility. There is no safety for one who has merely a legal religion, a form of godliness. The Christian’s life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 172.

“The blessings of the new covenant are grounded purely on mercy in forgiving unrighteousness and sins. The Lord specifies, I will do thus and thus unto all who turn to Me, forsaking the evil and choosing the good. . . . [Hebrews 8:12 quoted.] All who humble their hearts, confessing their sins, will find mercy and grace and assurance.

“Has God, in showing mercy to the sinner, ceased to be just? Has He dishonored His holy law, and will He henceforth pass over the violation of it? God is true. He changes not. The conditions of salvation are ever the same. Life, eternal life, is for all who will obey God’s law. Perfect obedience, revealed in thought, word, and deed, is as essential now as when the lawyer asked Christ, ‘What shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ Jesus said to him, ‘What is written in the law? how readest thou? . . . this do, and thou shalt live’ (Luke 10:25–28).”—*That I May Know Him*, p. 299.

a. What is written regarding God’s people under the third angel’s message? Revelation 12:17; 14:12.

Revelation 12:17

And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 14:12

Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

“Under the new covenant the conditions by which eternal life may be gained are the same as under the old—perfect obedience. . . . In the new and better covenant Christ has fulfilled the law for the transgressors of law if they receive Him by faith as a personal Saviour. . . . Mercy and forgiveness are the reward of all who come to Christ trusting in His merits to take away their sins. In the better covenant we are cleansed from sin by the blood of Christ. . . . The sinner is helpless to atone for one sin. The power is in Christ’s free gift, a promise appreciated by those only who are sensible of their sins and who forsake their sins and cast their helpless souls upon Christ, the sin-pardoning Saviour. He will put into their hearts His perfect law, which is ‘holy, and just, and good’ (Romans 7:12).”—*That I May Know Him*, p. 299.

b. Based on the promises of the new covenant, who is really part of God’s people in these last days? Hebrews 8:10; Isaiah 51:7, 8.

Hebrews 8:10

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

Isaiah 51:7-8

Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. **8** For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

“The great obstacle both to the acceptance and to the promulgation of truth is the fact that it involves inconvenience and reproach. This is the only argument against the truth which its advocates have never been able to refute. But this does not deter the true followers of Christ. These do not wait for truth to become popular. Being convinced of their duty, they deliberately accept the cross. . . .

“We should choose the right because it is right, and leave consequences with God. To men of principle, faith, and daring, the world is indebted for its great reforms. By such men the work of reform for this time must be carried forward.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 460.

2. What habit will tremendously enhance my happiness in life?
3. How only can I cultivate and develop such a habit?
4. Describe the greatest miracle of God's creative power in our behalf.
5. How is the new covenant experience to distinguish the final remnant of God's people?

Suggested Reading: Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 363-373.

Adam and Eve, at their creation, had a knowledge of the law of God; they were acquainted with its claims upon them; its precepts were written upon their hearts. When man fell by transgression the law was not changed, but a remedial system was established to bring him back to obedience. The promise of a Saviour was given, and sacrificial offerings pointing forward to the death of Christ as the great sin offering were established. But had the law of God never been transgressed, there would have been no death, and no need of a Saviour; consequently there would have been no need of sacrifices. **(PP 363.1)**

Adam taught his descendants the law of God, and it was handed down from father to son through successive generations. But notwithstanding the gracious provision for man's redemption, there were few who accepted it and rendered obedience. By transgression the world became so vile that it was necessary to cleanse it by the Flood from its corruption. The law was preserved by Noah and his family, and Noah taught his descendants the Ten Commandments. As men again departed from God, the Lord chose Abraham, of whom He declared, "Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." Genesis 26:5. To him was given the rite of circumcision, which was a sign that those who received it were devoted to the service of God—a pledge that they would remain separate from idolatry, and would obey the law of God. The failure of Abraham's descendants to keep this pledge, as shown in their disposition to form alliances with the heathen and adopt their practices, was the cause of their sojourn and bondage in Egypt. But in their intercourse with idolaters, and their forced submission to the Egyptians, the divine precepts became still further corrupted with the vile and cruel teachings of heathenism. Therefore when the Lord brought them forth from Egypt, He came down upon Sinai, enshrouded in glory and surrounded by His angels, and in awful majesty spoke His law in the hearing of all the people. **(PP 363.2)**

He did not even then trust His precepts to the memory of a people who were prone to forget His requirements, but wrote them upon tables of stone. He would remove from Israel all possibility of mingling heathen traditions with His holy precepts, or of confounding His requirements with human ordinances or customs. But He did not stop with giving them the precepts of the Decalogue. The people had shown themselves so easily led astray that He would leave no door of temptation unguarded. Moses was commanded to write, as God should bid him, judgments and laws giving minute instruction as to what was required. These directions relating to the duty of the people to God, to one another, and to the stranger were only the principles of the Ten Commandments amplified and given in a specific manner, that none need err. They were designed to guard the sacredness of the ten precepts engraved on the tables of stone. **(PP 364.1)**

If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign, they would never have been seduced into idolatry, nor would it have been necessary for them to suffer a life of bondage in Egypt; they would have kept God's law in mind, and there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai or engraved upon the tables of stone. And had the people practiced the principles of the Ten Commandments, there would have been no need of the additional directions given to Moses. **(PP 364.2)**

The sacrificial system, committed to Adam, was also perverted by his descendants. Superstition, idolatry, cruelty, and licentiousness corrupted the simple and significant service that God had appointed. Through long intercourse with idolaters the people of Israel had mingled many heathen customs with their worship; therefore the Lord gave them at Sinai definite instruction concerning the sacrificial service. After the completion of the tabernacle He communicated with Moses from the cloud of glory above the mercy seat, and gave him full directions concerning the system of offerings and the forms of worship to be maintained in the sanctuary. The ceremonial law was thus given to Moses, and by him written in a book. But the law of Ten Commandments spoken from Sinai had been written by God Himself on the tables of stone, and was sacredly preserved in the ark. **(PP 364.3)**

There are many who try to blend these two systems, using the texts that speak of the ceremonial law to prove that the moral law has been abolished; but this is a perversion of the Scriptures. The distinction between the two systems is broad and clear. The ceremonial system was made up of symbols pointing to Christ, to His sacrifice and His priesthood. This ritual law, with its sacrifices and ordinances, was to be performed by the Hebrews until type met antitype in the death of Christ, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Then all the sacrificial offerings were to cease. It is this law that Christ "took ... out of the way, nailing it to His cross." Colossians 2:14. But concerning the law of Ten Commandments the psalmist declares, "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven." Psalm 119:89. And Christ Himself says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law.... Verily I say unto you"—making the assertion as emphatic as possible—"Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matthew 5:17, 18. Here He teaches, not merely what the claims of God's law had been, and were then, but that these claims should hold as long as the heavens and the earth remain. The law of God is as immutable as His throne. It will maintain its claims upon mankind in all ages. **(PP 365.1)**

Concerning the law proclaimed from Sinai, Nehemiah says, "Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them *right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments.*" Nehemiah 9:13. And Paul, "the apostle to the Gentiles," declares, "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Romans 7:12. This can be no other than the Decalogue; for it is the law that says, "Thou shalt not covet." Verse 7. **(PP 365.2)**

While the Saviour's death brought to an end the law of types and shadows, it did not in the least detract from the obligation of the moral law. On the contrary, the very fact that

it was necessary for Christ to die in order to atone for the transgression of that law, proves it to be immutable. **(PP 365.3)**

Those who claim that Christ came to abrogate the law of God and to do away with the Old Testament, speak of the Jewish age as one of darkness, and represent the religion of the Hebrews as consisting of mere forms and ceremonies. But this is an error. All through the pages of sacred history, where the dealings of God with His chosen people are recorded, there are burning traces of the great I AM. Never has He given to the sons of men more open manifestations of His power and glory than when He alone was acknowledged as Israel's ruler, and gave the law to His people. Here was a scepter swayed by no human hand; and the stately goings forth of Israel's invisible King were unspeakably grand and awful. **(PP 365.4)**

In all these revelations of the divine presence the glory of God was manifested through Christ. Not alone at the Saviour's advent, but through all the ages after the Fall and the promise of redemption, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. Christ was the foundation and center of the sacrificial system in both the patriarchal and the Jewish age. Since the sin of our first parents there has been no direct communication between God and man. The Father has given the world into the hands of Christ, that through His mediatorial work He may redeem man and vindicate the authority and holiness of the law of God. All the communion between heaven and the fallen race has been through Christ. It was the Son of God that gave to our first parents the promise of redemption. It was He who revealed Himself to the patriarchs. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses understood the gospel. They looked for salvation through man's Substitute and Surety. These holy men of old held communion with the Saviour who was to come to our world in human flesh; and some of them talked with Christ and heavenly angels face to face. **(PP 366.1)**

Christ was not only the leader of the Hebrews in the wilderness—the Angel in whom was the name of Jehovah, and who, veiled in the cloudy pillar, went before the host—but it was He who gave the law to Israel. [See Appendix, Note 7.] Amid the awful glory of Sinai, Christ declared in the hearing of all the people the ten precepts of His Father's law. It was He who gave to Moses the law engraved upon the tables of stone. **(PP 366.2)**

It was Christ that spoke to His people through the prophets. The apostle Peter, writing to the Christian church, says that the prophets "prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the *Spirit of Christ* which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:10, 11. It is the voice of Christ that speaks to us through the Old Testament. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Revelation 19:10. **(PP 366.3)**

In His teachings while personally among men Jesus directed the minds of the people to the Old Testament. He said to the Jews, "Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of Me." John 5:39, R.V. At this time the books of the Old Testament were the only part of the Bible in existence. Again the Son of God declared, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." And He added, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Luke 16:29, 31. **(PP 367.1)**

The ceremonial law was given by Christ. Even after it was no longer to be observed, Paul presented it before the Jews in its true position and value, showing its place in the plan of redemption and its relation to the work of Christ; and the great apostle pronounces this law glorious, worthy of its divine Originator. The solemn service of the sanctuary typified the grand truths that were to be revealed through successive generations. The cloud of incense ascending with the prayers of Israel represents His righteousness that alone can make the sinner's prayer acceptable to God; the bleeding victim on the altar of sacrifice testified of a Redeemer to come; and from the holy of holies the visible token of the divine Presence shone forth. Thus through age after age of darkness and apostasy faith was kept alive in the hearts of men until the time came for the advent of the promised Messiah. **(PP 367.2)**

Jesus was the light of His people—the Light of the world—before He came to earth in the form of humanity. The first gleam of light that pierced the gloom in which sin had wrapped the world, came from Christ. And from Him has come every ray of heaven's brightness that has fallen upon the inhabitants of the earth. In the plan of redemption Christ is the Alpha and the Omega—the First and the Last. **(PP 367.3)**

Since the Saviour shed His blood for the remission of sins, and ascended to heaven “to appear in the presence of God for us” (Hebrews 9:24), light has been streaming from the cross of Calvary and from the holy places of the sanctuary above. But the clearer light granted us should not cause us to despise that which in earlier times was received through the types pointing to the coming Saviour. The gospel of Christ sheds light upon the Jewish economy and gives significance to the ceremonial law. As new truths are revealed, and that which has been known from the beginning is brought into clearer light, the character and purposes of God are made manifest in His dealings with His chosen people. Every additional ray of light that we receive gives us a clearer understanding of the plan of redemption, which is the working out of the divine will in the salvation of man. We see new beauty and force in the inspired word, and we study its pages with a deeper and more absorbing interest. **(PP 367.4)**

The opinion is held by many that God placed a separating wall between the Hebrews and the outside world; that His care and love, withdrawn to a great extent from the rest of mankind, were centered upon Israel. But God did not design that His people should build up a wall of partition between themselves and their fellow men. The heart of Infinite Love was reaching out toward all the inhabitants of the earth. Though they had rejected Him, He was constantly seeking to reveal Himself to them and make them partakers of His love and grace. His blessing was granted to the chosen people, that they might bless others. **(PP 368.1)**

God called Abraham, and prospered and honored him; and the patriarch's fidelity was a light to the people in all the countries of his sojourn. Abraham did not shut himself away from the people around him. He maintained friendly relations with the kings of the surrounding nations, by some of whom he was treated with great respect; and his integrity and unselfishness, his valor and benevolence, were representing the character of God. In Mesopotamia, in Canaan, in Egypt, and even to the inhabitants of Sodom, the God of heaven was revealed through His representative. **(PP 368.2)**

So to the people of Egypt and of all the nations connected with that powerful kingdom, God manifested Himself through Joseph. Why did the Lord choose to exalt Joseph so highly among the Egyptians? He might have provided some other way for the accomplishment of His purposes toward the children of Jacob; but He desired to make Joseph a light, and He placed him in the palace of the king, that the heavenly illumination might extend far and near. By his wisdom and justice, by the purity and benevolence of his daily life, by his devotion to the interests of the people—and that people a nation of idolaters—Joseph was a representative of Christ. In their benefactor, to whom all Egypt turned with gratitude and praise, that heathen people were to behold the love of their Creator and Redeemer. So in Moses also God placed a light beside the throne of the earth's greatest kingdom, that all who would, might learn of the true and living God. And all this light was given to the Egyptians before the hand of God was stretched out over them in judgments. **(PP 368.3)**

In the deliverance of Israel from Egypt a knowledge of the power of God spread far and wide. The warlike people of the stronghold of Jericho trembled. "As soon as we had heard these things," said Rahab, "our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for Jehovah your God, He is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath." Joshua 2:11. Centuries after the exodus the priests of the Philistines reminded their people of the plagues of Egypt, and warned them against resisting the God of Israel. **(PP 369.1)**

God called Israel, and blessed and exalted them, not that by obedience to His law they alone might receive His favor and become the exclusive recipients of His blessings, but in order to reveal Himself through them to all the inhabitants of the earth. It was for the accomplishment of this very purpose that He commanded them to keep themselves distinct from the idolatrous nations around them. **(PP 369.2)**

Idolatry and all the sins that followed in its train were abhorrent to God, and He commanded His people not to mingle with other nations, to "*do after their works*" (Exodus 23:24), and forget God. He forbade their marriage with idolaters, lest their hearts should be led away from Him. It was just as necessary then as it is now that God's people should be pure, "unspotted from the world." They must keep themselves free from its spirit, because it is opposed to truth and righteousness. But God did not intend that His people, in self-righteous exclusiveness, should shut themselves away from the world, so that they could have no influence upon it. **(PP 369.3)**

Like their Master, the followers of Christ in every age were to be the light of the world. The Saviour said, "A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house"—that is, in the world. And He adds, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:14-16. This is just what Enoch, and Noah, Abraham, Joseph, and Moses did. It is just what God designed that His people Israel should do. **(PP 369.4)**

It was their own evil heart of unbelief, controlled by Satan, that led them to hide their light, instead of shedding it upon surrounding peoples; it was that same bigoted spirit that caused them either to follow the iniquitous practices of the heathen or to shut

themselves away in proud exclusiveness, as if God's love and care were over them alone. **(PP 370.1)**

As the Bible presents two laws, one changeless and eternal, the other provisional and temporary, so there are two covenants. The covenant of grace was first made with man in Eden, when after the Fall there was given a divine promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. To all men this covenant offered pardon and the assisting grace of God for future obedience through faith in Christ. It also promised them eternal life on condition of fidelity to God's law. Thus the patriarchs received the hope of salvation. **(PP 370.2)**

This same covenant was renewed to Abraham in the promise, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Genesis 22:18. This promise pointed to Christ. So Abraham understood it (see Galatians 3:8, 16), and he trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of sins. It was this faith that was accounted unto him for righteousness. The covenant with Abraham also maintained the authority of God's law. The Lord appeared unto Abraham, and said, "I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect." Genesis 17:1. The testimony of God concerning His faithful servant was, "Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." Genesis 26:5. And the Lord declared to him, "I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an *everlasting covenant*, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee." Genesis 17:7. **(PP 370.3)**

Though this covenant was made with Adam and renewed to Abraham, it could not be ratified until the death of Christ. It had existed by the promise of God since the first intimation of redemption had been given; it had been accepted by faith; yet when ratified by Christ, it is called a *new* covenant. The law of God was the basis of this covenant, which was simply an arrangement for bringing men again into harmony with the divine will, placing them where they could obey God's law. **(PP 370.4)**

Another compact—called in Scripture the "old" covenant—was formed between God and Israel at Sinai, and was then ratified by the blood of a sacrifice. The Abrahamic covenant was ratified by the blood of Christ, and it is called the "second," or "new," covenant, because the blood by which it was sealed was shed after the blood of the first covenant. That the new covenant was valid in the days of Abraham is evident from the fact that it was then confirmed both by the promise and by the oath of God—the "two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie." Hebrews 6:18. **(PP 371.1)**

But if the Abrahamic covenant contained the promise of redemption, why was another covenant formed at Sinai? In their bondage the people had to a great extent lost the knowledge of God and of the principles of the Abrahamic covenant. In delivering them from Egypt, God sought to reveal to them His power and His mercy, that they might be led to love and trust Him. He brought them down to the Red Sea—where, pursued by the Egyptians, escape seemed impossible—that they might realize their utter helplessness, their need of divine aid; and then He wrought deliverance for them. Thus they were filled with love and gratitude to God and with confidence in His power to help them. He had bound them to Himself as their deliverer from temporal bondage. **(PP 371.2)**

But there was a still greater truth to be impressed upon their minds. Living in the midst of idolatry and corruption, they had no true conception of the holiness of God, of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts, their utter inability, in themselves, to render obedience to God's law, and their need of a Saviour. All this they must be taught. **(PP 371.3)**

God brought them to Sinai; He manifested His glory; He gave them His law, with the promise of great blessings on condition of obedience: "If ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ... ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." Exodus 19:5, 6. The people did not realize the sinfulness of their own hearts, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God's law; and they readily entered into covenant with God. Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, they declared, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." Exodus 24:7. They had witnessed the proclamation of the law in awful majesty, and had trembled with terror before the mount; and yet only a few weeks passed before they broke their covenant with God, and bowed down to worship a graven image. They could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken; and now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Saviour revealed in the Abrahamic covenant and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. Now by faith and love they were bound to God as their deliverer from the bondage of sin. Now they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant. **(PP 371.4)**

The terms of the "old covenant" were, Obey and live: "If a man do, he shall even live in them" (Ezekiel 20:11; Leviticus 18:5); but "cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them." Deuteronomy 27:26. The "new covenant" was established upon "better promises"—the promise of forgiveness of sins and of the grace of God to renew the heart and bring it into harmony with the principles of God's law. "This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, *I will put my law* in their inward parts, *and write it in their hearts*.... I will *forgive* their iniquity, and will remember their sin no more." Jeremiah 31:33, 34. **(PP 372.1) 2 I**

The same law that was engraved upon the tables of stone is written by the Holy Spirit upon the tables of the heart. Instead of going about to establish our own righteousness we accept the righteousness of Christ. His blood atones for our sins. His obedience is accepted for us. Then the heart renewed by the Holy Spirit will bring forth "the fruits of the Spirit." Galatians 5:22. Through the grace of Christ we shall live in obedience to the law of God written upon our hearts. Having the Spirit of Christ, we shall walk even as He walked. Through the prophet He declared of Himself, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psalm 40:8. And when among men He said, "The Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him." John 8:29. **(PP 372.2)**

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

sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that *the righteousness of the law* might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 5:1; 3:31; 8:3, 4. **(PP 373.1)**

God’s work is the same in all time, although there are different degrees of development and different manifestations of His power, to meet the wants of men in the different ages. Beginning with the first gospel promise, and coming down through the patriarchal and Jewish ages, and even to the present time, there has been a gradual unfolding of the purposes of God in the plan of redemption. The Saviour typified in the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law is the very same that is revealed in the gospel. The clouds that enveloped His divine form have rolled back; the mists and shades have disappeared; and Jesus, the world’s Redeemer, stands revealed. He who proclaimed the law from Sinai, and delivered to Moses the precepts of the ritual law, is the same that spoke the Sermon on the Mount. The great principles of love to God, which He set forth as the foundation of the law and the prophets, are only a reiteration of what He had spoken through Moses to the Hebrew people: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.” Deuteronomy 6:4, 5. “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Leviticus 19:18. The teacher is the same in both dispensations. God’s claims are the same. The principles of His government are the same. For all proceed from Him “with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” James 1:17. **(PP 373.2)**