

## **THE NEW COVENANT. IT IS FOR GOD'S FRIENDS.**

God's law is that righteous arrangement which God's unerring wisdom has established for regulating the affairs of his creatures for their good and his pleasure. God's will is his law, which is as unchangeable as he is all-wise and unchangeable. God's law is, therefore, the only covenant or *agreement* he ever makes with his creatures. When man was created and placed under favorable conditions in Eden, OBEDIENCE (fullest acquiescence with the perfect will of his Creator) was made the condition of his continued enjoyment of life and all its attendant favors and blessings. This was not a *covenant* but a *condition*, because a covenant signifies a contract or agreement between two parties, and we know that Adam could not have been consulted about his own creation or asked to agree to any covenant regarding the continuance of his existence. While it would have been neither kind nor just to have so created Adam that life would have been an injury and a burden, or to have brought him into conditions wherein an eternity of misery might have been risked, it was both kind and just for God to do what he did do, viz., to create him perfect in the midst of Eden's perfections and to give him the privilege of perpetual life and blessing under his Creator's favor upon *condition* of his full and hearty obedience to his benefactor's wise, just, loving and necessary laws, plans and regulations. Otherwise his communion and fellowship with God, his pleasures in Eden and even life itself, were to be withdrawn from him, as one unworthy of them. And his as yet unborn race, in his loins and represented by him, were involved in that penalty with him, when he knowingly and willingly violated the condition of life.

Since God and his law and regulations, which represent his character, are unchangeable, a careful scrutiny and study of this first transaction between God and man reveals clearly the fact that *as* God did not prepare Eden and its favors for his enemies, nor even for one who without enmity would refuse or neglect to comply with his perfect, righteous laws, *so* he need not be expected, either, to prepare the earth as the Paradise of God and to redeem and restore and grant everlasting life to any who, *when fully informed*, would have a disposition to oppose him or to infract or evade the least of his wise, benevolent and just laws and regulations. In a word, whatever favors God ever has, or shall extend are for his loyal friends; and *none of them* are for his enemies.

But, while thus clearly noting that the enemies of God are the enemies of his righteous laws and regulations and the friends of God are those who do whatsoever he commands (John 15:14); and while noticing also that his desire toward his friends is that they may have everlasting life in the enjoyment of his fellowship and favor, and his determination and decree toward his enemies is that they shall be cut off from life and from all his favors as mere cumberers of the ground; let us not make the too common mistake of supposing that the friends of righteousness – friends of God – can all be easily recognized now. By no means; under the present reign of Sin and evil the service of Sin brings at least a transient reward of pleasure or gratification, while the service of Truth and Righteousness brings at least a transient pain or reproach. Doubtless many now serve Sin because of its present gratification of inherited weaknesses, who really detest it and would rejoice in righteousness, if they were as favorably circumstanced as Adam was. Such, therefore, are not really the enemies of righteousness and of God.

Many now stand with the open wilful enemies of righteousness and sit in the seat of the scornful, because of

ignorance of God's plan and character; because blinded by Satan (2 Cor. 4:4; Psa. 1:1); **[R1175 : page 3]** and because their ideas of right and wrong are badly warped and twisted, through various false doctrines and theories. We might not always be able to tell which of our fellow-men are friends of righteousness and unwilling sinners, and which the willing ones – which under *favorable* circumstances would prove to be friends of righteousness, friends of God, and which would prove to be enemies of righteousness, enemies of God. But God, who reads the thoughts and intents of the heart, knoweth well. Yea, he foreknew that there would be such, before he created Adam; and in his wonderful plan, arranged before the foundation of the world, the Lamb slain had a place, and was his provision, – not for those whom he foresaw would, under full light and opportunity, be wilful sinners, enemies of himself and his righteous government, but for those whom he foresaw would, when they would have full opportunity, become his friends, because at heart always willing and preferring righteousness rather than sin. It was for such *ultimate* "friends" that God provided the sacrifice of his Son, the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and *not for those* who shall ultimately prove themselves enemies.

All mankind are *enemies* or opposers of God and righteousness, so far as their imperfect conduct or works are concerned, though all are not such at heart. Thus Christ died only for his *friends* (those at heart the friends of righteousness) while in fact those friends were all, more or less, opposing righteousness (unintentional enemies) by reason of the weaknesses and imperfections of their fallen state. Thus seen, two texts seemingly contradictory are in perfect accord: "While we were yet *enemies* we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son," and "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life *for his friends* – ye are my *friends*" – whoever will

render heart-obedience to God's perfect, righteous law. – Rom. 5:10; John 15:13.

### **MAN'S FREE WILL.**

Returning to Adam and his family, outcasts from Eden and from all that it represented of divine favor and communion and the conditionally-promised life everlasting, let us study for a moment their mental attitudes toward God. Were they friends or enemies?

Legally they were all *enemies* – violators of God's just and good laws, condemned to death therefor by their good and just Creator. But if their wills, their hearts, be examined to see whether they were still *wilfully* and maliciously opposed to God and righteousness, determinedly wilful opposers, as Satan for instance, we find some of each sort – some who would rejoice in iniquity and feel and act maliciously toward the right, and others who would fain be back again in full fellowship and communion with God, desiring and delighting to do his will and sorrowful for the past.

Everything connected with the narrative in Genesis tends to show that both Adam and Eve were deeply penitent and looked longingly to the Lord for the reconciliation and restoration to his favor hinted at in the statement that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head – crush evil. Seemingly this hope was associated with the birth of each of Eve's sons. Their names seem to indicate this. The name of her first-born son, Cain, in the Hebrew much resembles in meaning the word *Eureka* – "I have found it" – or I have got the expected one. Abel, the name of the second son, indicates doubt or uncertainty; Cain in the meantime, no doubt, having manifested the evil disposition, afterward so clearly marked in his history. The godly character of Abel seems to have revived her hope, that of her offspring one should arise who would somehow vanquish Satan and evil, and bring back the

fellowship and blessing of God; consequently when her third son was born Eve named him *Instead* (i.e., Seth), for she said, "God hath appointed me another *seed* INSTEAD of Abel whom Cain slew." (Gen. 4:25.) And, indeed, the hope that she might be the mother of the long promised "seed of the woman" seems to have filled the heart of Eve's daughters through the line of the family of godly Seth, all the way down to and including Mary, our Lord's mother. – Luke 1:41-55.

In Adam and Eve and their first three sons we have a clearly marked showing of the human *will*, and the fact that God does not give us our *wills* but that each individual is accountable for his own *will*; while God only influences our *wills* to the extent of setting before us certain information, upon which each one's will must decide or act for himself. (Thus God works or operates in us, the church, who have already *willed* to serve and obey him, by continued unfoldings of his Word and plan, so that we, already right-willed, may *continue* to will and *continue* to do his good pleasure, more and more. – Phil. 2:13.) As increasing light shows the propriety of increasing zeal and sacrifice, it also shows with increasing clearness the grandeur of the things which God hath in reservation for them that *love him* – his "friends, who do whatsoever he commands." We need not question God's power; we know that he could have created man without a will; but he did not do so; he created him in this as well as in some other respects in his own likeness or image – with ability to *will* for himself. And we have never found a member of the human family fallen so low that he had no *will of his own* – except idiots, who are clearly not accountable. Even those who are fallen so low that they seem to have no *power* to control their conduct by their wills, still have the will. "To *will* is present with me, but how to *perform* I find not," not only represented the Jew's condition but that of all fallen men. A thief may have the organ of acquisitiveness large and the organ of conscientiousness small and may therefore by reason of this mental unbalance have a

predisposition to steal. Yet he has, at least, some conception of the wrong he commits, and he steals with a certain amount of wilfulness or unwillingness. A will in the matter he must have, even though it be so weak (because unsupported by good elements of organization and because opposed by bad elements of organization) that he cannot carry out his will but is continually falling into sins which, when out of the heat of temptation, he may mourn over. Hence, we repeat, there is in every man a *will*.

That God delights in the freedom of will in all his creatures is evident, also, from the fact that he has given this faculty to them all, even to the very smallest insects. Go to the ant – consider her ways, and see how much *will* power she evidences. Take a drop of water and examine with a microscope its living creatures; that even they have *wills* of their own, must be apparent to all. Much more man, made to be God's representative in the earth, and its king, – man has a *will*, and to it God appeals; and in harmony with its laws and liberties, which he gave it, God and his laws always operate.

While Adam and Eve and their second son Abel, and their third son Seth, developed *wills* which desired righteousness and reconciliation with God, Cain, their first-born son, developed a will opposed to righteousness; proud and self-willed, he had no desire to submit his will to God's will, and did not aspire to the reconciliation promised to be provided; he, no doubt, regretted the loss of Eden and would have liked to be restored to it, but not upon God's conditions of absolute obedience to God's righteous will and arrangements. He would have *loved the reward* of obedience and righteousness, but was unwilling to accept the terms; he did not *will* to be God's friend upon the only conditions God offered, or ever will offer, his friendship and communion. He consequently opened his heart to unbounded ambition and selfishness which brought in envy, hatred and malice, and led him to murder his brother Abel, because his life and his offering,

submitted more fully to the will of God, were more acceptable to God than his own. Not [R1175 : page 4] having submitted his own *will* to God's will and righteous plan, Cain hated his brother, and from envy deliberately planned and executed his murder.

It cannot be claimed that Cain's will was weakened and depraved by heredity, for he was Adam's first-born. He had plenty of *will*-power, as much as his brother Abel, but he misdirected his will. He willingly copied Satan, while Abel was copying God. Yielding himself to evil, he allowed an evil or sinful will to be begotten in him and then nursed it into a murderous, devilish will or disposition, hating good and loving and doing evil. And so, as those who pattern and conform their wills to God's will are children of God, of Cain it is written that he, willingly copying Satan's disposition, became a son "*of* that wicked one." – 1 John 3:12.

Likewise, our Lord spoke to some of the malicious Pharisees, whose *wills* were set in opposition to the truth, who, instead of seeking God's will and way, were Satan-like, seeking their own exaltation and hating the right and the light, saying: "Ye are [children] of your father the devil." So the Apostle once spoke to a similar character, a wilful evil-doer, saying, "O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil; wilt thou not cease to *pervert the right way of the Lord?*" – Acts 13:10.

### **NO PROVISION FOR GOD'S ENEMIES.**

Notice now that God has never purposed or promised blessings upon *wilful enemies*. Eternal life and kingdom favors are not for such. Had all the race been such characters, no redemption and no restitution would have been provided. God foresaw, however, that many (the vast majority, we doubt not) would, after seeing clearly and in some degree experiencing both good and evil, right and wrong, and their respective consequences under God's law, be glad to recognize and serve God and

the *right* – with all their heart, mind, soul and strength; [R1176 : page 4] and to observe the same law in their dealings with their fellow-creatures – loving their neighbors as themselves. It was because God foresaw these would-be *friends* in the Adamic race that for *such* he provided redemption and reconciliation through the blood of the crucified one. "Greater love hath no man than *this*, that a man lay down his life *for his* FRIENDS. Ye are my FRIENDS, if ye do whatsoever I command you. – Love one another as I have loved you."

We do not forget that the same great Teacher said, "Love your enemies" and "If thine enemy hunger feed him" – help to *keep him alive*. This command to us is very different from what God reveals concerning his own plan of procedure toward his *wilful* enemies, of whom he caused it to be written: – "The enemies of the Lord shall lick the dust;" – shall fall in death – they "shall die;" they "shall be cut off" from life; "all the wicked will he *destroy*." [He will not feed them and continue their lives everlastingly.] "They shall be punished with an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired by all them that *believe in that [Millennial] day*." – Psa. 72:9; Ezek. 18:4; Num. 15:31; Psa. 145:20; 2 Thes. 1:9,10.

And his reason for thus giving us a different rule from that which he himself will follow is readily seen. The enmities and oppositions of the present time among men are mostly attributable to mutual weaknesses and imperfections and misunderstandings; and we who are totally incapable of reading and judging the hearts, the underlying motives, the *wills* of our fellow-men, could not unerringly judge which are the few real enemies of righteousness and which, its many blinded, deceived or only partly informed or over-tempted friends. *Therefore*, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; he is *probably* a deceived friend

of God and hence of yours. As for the few times when by feeding our starving enemy we should really help perpetuate a being unworthy of life and whom God has declared should be and shall be destroyed, the Lord tells us to leave that to him, that he has not yet made us the representatives and executors of his laws. But he does tell us also that no real enemy of his and ours, no informed and really wilful enemy of righteousness, shall escape just punishment because of our exercise of leniency. He declares, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." **Therefore**, dearly beloved "avenge not yourselves" – follow instructions, feed all enemies and trust to the Lord who can and will, in his due time, render "vengeance to his enemies." – Rom. 12:19; Jas. 5:1-6.

And God, indeed, for a time follows the very rule thus laid down for us. He does not **now** destroy his enemies, but feeds them; sending rain upon the just and upon the unjust and causing the sun to shine upon the evil as well as the good. God waits, as he tells us to do, until his due time arrives, when (during the Millennial age) he shall cause the **knowledge** of his character, his plan and his laws to be clearly and fully made known to all men. Then the real enemies, the wilful evildoers, shall be manifested; and the multitude of present enemies, through inherited weaknesses, deceptions, and misconceptions, whom he foresees will become his friends, shall be manifested also. Then the "friends," the "sheep," shall enter into life – the second life, the non-ending life; while the "enemies," the "goats," shall be cut off from life – enter into death, the second death, non-ending death; – an "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" and from all further opposition to his glory and power. Self-willed Satan, and all his children, all who willingly prefer his course of enmity to God and righteousness, shall go into destruction (symbolized by the lake of fire) "the second death." (Rev. 20:14.) God seeketh not to bend the **unwilling**, but is pleased to receive and help and restore the willing ones. He does not propose to use

his power to chain *unwilling* devils to his throne, but to open through Christ a *way* to life by which *whosoever wills* may come and partake freely. Neither will God *destroy* the wills of the unwilling and make them mere machines; rather than have such children he could and would, as our Lord declared, create men out of stones. (Matt. 3:9.) No; God "seeketh such to worship him [and to enjoy his favors] as worship him [willingly] in spirit and in truth." All the good things which God hath in reservation are for those who *love* him. – 1 Cor. 2:9.

For this purpose of proving and manifesting who are the friends of God, "God hath appointed a day [a time – the Millennial day] in the which he will judge [grant a trial to] the world, in righteousness [It will be a just, fair trial, full, complete, final], by that man whom he hath afore ordained – Jesus Christ, the righteous one." He must reign [and judge, and the Church shall reign and judge with him – 1 Cor. 15:25; 2 Tim. 2:12] until he hath put all *enemies* under his feet" ( – not upon thrones of honor), and until he has liberated all the groaning, travailing and sin-sick creation from the bondage of corruption and death into that *freedom* from pain, sorrow and dying which is the divine provision for all the sons of God. (Rom. 8:21.) Yea, God's Anointed shall not only reign, but reign in righteousness. He will lay justice to the line and righteousness to the plummet, and the hail shall sweep away the refuge and delusions of lies, and he will stamp out evil and *wilful* evil-doers forever. (Isa. 28:17.) The God of peace will introduce lasting peace and blessing by crushing Satan and all his wilful children (his wilful followers, who in spite of full knowledge, will, like him and with his spirit, love evil rather than good) under the feet of *the Christ* – shortly. – Rom. 16:20.

Then, having finished his work, having bought the *sheep* and having found all of this sheep class of mankind who had all been lost in the wilderness of sin, the Good Shepherd, who knows all

his sheep (and who will be known by all of them, when once they clearly and distinctly hear his voice), having destroyed the wolves of sin and the wilful goats, will bring all the sheep safely and happily back to the Eden fold of God, and shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God and his law and his fold may be to such henceforth, forever, their all in all. Thenceforth, there shall be no more pain, nor sorrow, nor sickness, nor dying, nor cause for these; for sin and they that loved sin, and all the former things shall have passed away forever. Thenceforth, all things are new and perfect and right and good.

**WITHOUT THE SHEDDING OF BLOOD THERE IS NO  
REMISSION OF SINS."**

HEB. 9:22.

Having looked at the class whom God desired to restore to his favor, his "friends" (including all those who will ever become his friends, obedient to his righteous regulations), let us look now at the method adopted by divine wisdom for effecting reconciliation or atonement between God and these.

That a number of the patriarchs were quite willing to be reconciled again to God, to be at-one with him and repossess themselves of the blessings of Eden, which he had prepared for those at-one with him, is very evident. It is also evident that God would not and did not permit that full, *complete* reconciliation; that though he did permit those who longed for his friendship and who desired to know and to do his will, to have a measure of his friendship, what he granted was far from full and complete fellowship. He never restored them either to the comforts or the everlasting-life conditions of Eden. Whatever fellowship was granted came to them as they were given to Adam, as loving provisions. And even the limited fellowship, the limited at-one-ment permitted, was so hedged about with typical sacrifices for

sins as to clearly indicate to these would-be-friends of God that they were *unclean* – unfit to be recognized by God, or to be at-one with him, or to have his favors. To appreciate the reason *why* God thus held aloof from men, and *how* full and complete reconciliation has since been accomplished between God and those who are desirous of being at-one with him, and how, ultimately, all the "friends" of God shall be sought and found, and brought to one-ness with him, is to appreciate the philosophy of the plan of Salvation, conceived by God before the foundation of the world, begun at our Redeemer's first advent, and to be completed with the close of his Millennial reign.

Obedience to his Creator is not only the proper and reasonable course for man, but it is the course essential to his happiness; for disobedience is not only sinful ingratitude, but it is injurious to man, who has not the experience and wisdom essential to a proper guidance of his own affairs. God's regulation, therefore, is that his wisdom, his power, his care and his love, must be trusted in implicitly by all; and his will must be the only law, if harmony, peace and blessing to all would prevail. He will have nothing short of this; hence he would not countenance the slightest disobedience on the part of the perfect Adam and would not excuse disobedience. He would, instead, illustrate, to all his intelligent creatures, how imperative and unalterable are his laws, how disastrous and far-reaching are the consequences of disobedience, and how necessary his laws are to the general well-being of all his creatures.

Notwithstanding, therefore, God's loving sympathy for Adam, and his foreknowledge of all the dreadful consequences upon his posterity, God determined to make an example of the sinner and of the natural consequences of sin, and so the penalty of sin went into effect. He cast Adam out from the garden of Eden and all its favors; he no longer treated him as his loved creature and friend but as one who had *rebelled*; he virtually said, **[R1177**

**: page 4]** you have chosen your own path, now walk in it, take the consequences, use your own will and see where it will land you, and how much more joy and liberty you will have than if you had remained under my easy yoke and light burden – my easy requirement of *obedience*.

Yet, while treating mankind thus, on the lines of justice, God had already planned for the recovery of all such of the human family as would desire to render *full obedience* to his just laws and arrangements. He could not change his laws to suit the imperfect, fallen, weak condition of such as desired to return to full obedience and favor; he could not accept as perfect that which was far from perfection. To do so would bring confusion into God's kingdom, and for him to recognize sin and affiliate with sinners and in any degree countenance their sins and weaknesses would be to *partake* of sin and be a partner in it with sinners.

It is asked, Why did God not restore men from death – from sickness, pain and mental and moral imperfection, and from the tomb – and then let them show their harmony and obedience? We answer, that was impossible! It is impossible for God to lie or to deny himself, or his own sentence against sin. (Heb. 6:18; 2 Tim. 2:13.) God's sentence against sin was that "the *soul* that sinneth, it shall die;" and even God himself could not now change that sentence; hence God could not restore the condemned and dying and dead race and offer them another trial: Adam had been tried and had failed, and the sentence was passed and could never be altered, because God's law, like himself, changes not, forever.

But some will inquire, Did not the *death* of Adam meet the penalty? and could not God justly have made him alive and perfect again the next moment after life had become extinct – the next moment after the penalty had been fully inflicted? No; you misunderstand the penalty of sin. You seem to think of the matter

as though the penalty of sin read, The being who sins shall cease to exist for a moment, or more, as a penalty for his sin: or, The wages of sin is a temporary suspension of existence: or, The body of [R1177 : page 5] the person who sins shall die. But none of these properly represent the penalty, which was that the *soul* should die – the *being* should cease to exist. When this penalty is fully studied and realized, it will be seen that utter extinction of *being* was the penalty, and that a merely temporary suspension of animation would not be a fulfillment of it.

How, then, could any hope of a future and everlasting life be entertained for any? From a human standpoint there was no room for hope, because there could be no room for expecting God to break his word or change his righteous law. But nevertheless, God held out a hope to such as desired and endeavored to return to his favor, though he did not explain the process by which he would recover them, but left that for faith to reason upon. And faith reasoned that if God could not break his word about the penalty, he could not break it with reference to the recovery from it.

Even the shadowy sacrifices and typical services of the Law-Covenant, made with the seed of Abraham, but slightly disclosed what would be God's method of *meeting* the penalty inflicted upon Adam and his family and canceling it, so far as it would work injury and loss of existence to those of the race whom God *loves* and calls his "friends" – even all who love righteousness, and God the King of the righteous, and also all who would do so if they fully and clearly understood the truth. We, however, who live since the great Redeemer came and gave his life for "his sheep" [not for the "goats"], and who are of his sheep, are privileged to *understand* these "mysteries" of Jehovah's plan (Matt. 13:11; John 16:13), so that we may not only fully and clearly comprehend the portion of it already accomplished, viz., the ransom given for the life of Adam and all

who lost life through his disobedience, but listening to the great Shepherd's voice, gradually, more and more, the length and breadth and height and depth of that plan are revealed to us; showing us that the results of Christ's obedience to the Father's plan, in the voluntary sacrifice of himself (the man Christ Jesus) as Adam's substitute or ransom-price, will fully and completely *offset* and cancel the penalty upon Adam and his children.

How, now, does the case stand in view of the ransom given by our Redeemer at Calvary – Did it secure *everlasting life* for that entire race of sinners?

No; it did not secure everlasting life, nor even a right to it, either for Adam or for a single one of his posterity.

What then did Christ's death accomplish for men?

It merely and only canceled and set aside the penalty upon Adam for that first disobedience; – which penalty, as long as it remained against the race, prohibited their ever returning to perfection and life. Now, they *may return* to divine fellowship and favor, and thence to perfection and everlasting life, *if they can do so*.

But men are unable to recover themselves "out of the horrible pit and out of the miry clay" of sin, which has become a great cancer upon the bodies and minds and morals of our race, which, however loathsome and abhorrent to those who long for purity and righteousness, has become a part of our very being and is sapping and drawing the life forces daily and hourly. And these cry out, Oh! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this corrupt state and set me free so that I might do right and be in harmony with God and have his blessing and favor and gift of everlasting life!

The ransom opened the way for the powerful Mediator to establish the New Covenant with all desirous of reconciliation. Before that sacrifice for Adam's sin was made, God could not enter into covenant relations with those under death-sentence for violating his laws. Nor could Christ as Mediator offer pardon or restore to perfection of life those under divine sentence, without opposing God's perfect law; which he could not and would not do.

As an illustration, Suppose that a bookkeeper in governmental employ had proven dishonest and had been legally sentenced and imprisoned for the offense; and suppose the penalty was one that could be met by the payment of a money fine; suppose that the man had thoroughly repented and reformed and made such restitution as he could for his embezzlements; suppose that a friend of his, a physician, knowing all about the case, should pay the fine and secure his release; suppose, too, that the government officials were willing that he should return to his old position and former salary, but suppose that the man had during his confinement become paralyzed and lost his ability to write and to calculate. All will see that a payment of his fine [his ransom] could not restore him to his former work and pay, if he could not fill the requirements. But if the physician who redeemed him from the condemnation of the law by paying his fine should also be skillful in treating his disease and restoring him to his former condition and thus to his former employ and its wages, the two-fold work of Christ as Redeemer and Restorer would be illustrated in him.

Christ's death as man's ransom sets free from condemnation, fully, entirely; but the effect of sin has paralyzed all mankind, mentally, morally and physically, so that the good that we would we often cannot do. We are, therefore, notwithstanding the ransom, wholly unable to fill the original place in God's service designed for us, and are unable, therefore, to get the wages of

righteousness – everlasting life. Mankind must still look to Christ, the Redeemer, and, earnestly desiring it, put themselves under the treatment of this Great Physician for the restoration of all the lost powers. And such as come to him, he will not refuse, but will put them under the strict regimen of the New Covenant, and so long as they continue thereunder he will treat their cases, correcting, instructing, exercising them, etc., until they are fully cured and restored to the lost portion and favors.

Praise God for the all-important work accomplished at the cross, by which the sentence of *extinction* was lifted from the race! yet it is very evident that since God's law continues the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, and since he still must and does refuse full communion and fellowship with sinners, and since we cannot recover ourselves from the plague of sin, it is very evident, indeed, that some great physician, able to cure our malady and to restore us to mental, moral and physical health and perfection, must be sent to us by our gracious Creator or our case would still be hopeless.

God knew this all along, and so provided that the obedient one who, willingly, for our redemption left the heavenly nature and glory and became a man, that as a man he might give himself a ransom (a *corresponding* price) for and instead of the first man, the transgressor (1 Tim. 2:6; 1 Cor. 15:21), should be the one who, as the great Physician, Savior and Life-giver, should not only redeem Adam and his children from the sentence and penalty of extinction, but should "*save HIS PEOPLE* from their sins;" and delivering these, his people, from sin and death, should finally present them perfect, blameless, unprovable before the Father, fit objects of his love and communion, restored to the divine likeness, in which they will be able, as father Adam was in Eden, to fully comprehend and fully perform all the divine requirements. And in addition to what Adam had, they will have the valuable experiences of the present time, proving to them the

love of their Creator and Lord and giving assurance that he and all his laws seek only their permanent blessing and joy.

### **CENTRE AND CIRCUMFERENCE.**

The hope of the world, then, has a circumference as well as a centre; the centre is the Redemption or Ransom, the circumference the Deliverance, the [R1178 : page 5] Life-giving, the Restitution to the divine favors; and the various provisions and conditions of the New Covenant connect this centre with its circumference as spokes do in a wheel.

Only by following the New Covenant provisions can any of the redeemed reach the grand limits of perfection. Its provisions, however, are ample for the bringing of all the willing ones to a condition, mental, moral and physical, where God can recognize them as worthy of his favor and communion. Those who recognize the sacrifice of Christ as the Ransom-price of the race have it as an *assurance* of the sincerity of God's promises of deliverance, and as a practical demonstration of his sympathy and love which amounts to a *conviction* that he will in his own due time do all that he ever promised; – "exceeding abundantly more than we can ask" or at present imagine. – Eph. 3:20.

As the long delay of over 4000 years until the Ransom was given perplexed the Lord's faithful among the Jews, so the long delay of the Great Physician, as the Life-giver, the Restorer, since his giving of the Ransom, since the release from the sentence of extinction (Rom. 4:17-19), has greatly perplexed many of the Lord's faithful ones during the Gospel age. But now, as his due time comes for the further explanation of his plan to his people (Dan. 12:9,10; Luke 12:37), it is all made clear and plain. We now see that the past six thousand years were used in God's plan for the multiplying of the race, sufficient to fill the earth when as a whole it is made a Paradise, fit for perfect men in fellowship with God; and that during this period, long to us as measured by

the short measure of present existence, but short to the great Eternal, each generation played its noble or ignoble part and got its lessons and experiences with sin and its consequences, and was laid away in the dust. There they await the coming of the great Deliverer, fully authorized by the satisfaction of the sentence upon us, secured by his own payment of the penalty against us; and fully *competent*, by reason of his own resurrection and high exaltation to the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4), to "save *unto the uttermost*" all who will come unto the Father by him. He shall come in power and great dignity, and, opening the prison doors of the tomb, shall call back to being, in orderly succession, the generations of the dead, and offer to each and to all fullest opportunity to demonstrate their willingness to come into full harmony and covenant relationship with God, upon the *only conditions* which God can or will or ought to make, viz., absolute, prompt and willing *obedience* to his righteous government, which is wisely instituted for man's eternal happiness.

God's people see, further, that the delay since the payment of the ransom-price has been utilized by God for the call and testing and selecting of a "little flock" of specially zealous and earnest lovers of righteousness; whose testing is specially severe, because accomplished during the period in which error and wrong and sin are permitted to triumph and hold sway in the world; in a time when it costs the sacrifice of much that is convenient and pleasurable. But if called to endure more than will be exacted of the world in general, during the Millennial reign of the great Deliverer, they have also *exceeding great* and precious promises, of divine favor and honors, far beyond those given to Adam and to be restored to all the willing ones of his posterity.

While the obedient world, in general, will have human life and honors and every earthly good restored to them by the great Mediator of the New Covenant, as the reward of obedience to

God's regulations under favorable conditions, the "little flock," selected during the Gospel age, are to have a new nature given to them; they are to be "changed," from human to divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4), and to have correspondingly changed bodies, no longer flesh and blood and bones, but immortal spirit-bodies. Now begotten of God's spirit through his word of promise, they pledge themselves to *sacrifice* the earthly, human interests, blessings, honors and pleasures (to which they, in common with the lovers of righteousness, friends of God, of the whole world, are heirs according to the New Covenant), that instead they might obtain the still higher favor of *joint-heirship* with Christ Jesus, the Redeemer, under the Abrahamic Covenant; to be the Seed of blessing, through whom the divine plan of the New Covenant shall be extended to *whosoever wills*, and shall save all of God's "friends," his "sheep," "his people, from their sins." – Matt. 1:21.

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