

HAVE "THE WATCH TOWER" TEACHINGS CHANGED?

DO THE changes recently made in the teachings of THE WATCH TOWER respecting the Covenants affect any of the fundamentals of doctrine, or any of the features of the Divine Plan of the Ages as previously recognized and presented in SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vols. I. to VI.?

If the word change be understood to signify a repudiation of anything once held as truth, then we deny that any change has occurred in our teaching. As we pass along a roadway over hill and dale, there are continual changes in one sense of the word – changing scenes – but such do not imply a change in the traveler's course – a retracing of his steps. So the "pathway of the just is as a shining light" and those who follow it find it shining "more and more unto the perfect day." They will not need to say, as some have said recently, "For seventeen years we thought we were in the right way, but now must retrace our steps and go back to where we then began, and take a different path." Such as were in the right path of shining light and stay therein will never need to say, "We once thought TABERNACLE SHADOWS OF BETTER SACRIFICES the most clear and only satisfactory solution of the subject in the world, but now we must retrace our steps and must repudiate all that we ever believed respecting the antitypical Atonement Day and its better sacrifices. We must go back and count all of those years as worse than wasted."

In this sense of the word *change*, THE WATCH TOWER publications have been unchangeable from the first until now. What is spoken of as a "change" should not be properly so termed. Nothing is changed. Every step of the journey has been right – not one step needs to be retraced or otherwise repudiated. This is

one of the evidences of Divine leading – of our Lord's supervision of the Father's work during the time of his presence.

As recently shown in THE WATCH TOWER, our presentations on the subject of the Covenants to-day are in fullest accord with those we made a quarter of a century ago. What then is it that our opponents call a "change"? Merely the fact that from the first we used the term New Covenant too slackly – while we claimed that while it belonged to the future, to the Millennial Age, it would not be operative to Israel and the world until then.

We nevertheless held (unscripturally as we now see) that our *justification* was somehow connected with that New Covenant, although we could not explain how or why we should be under two covenants. We still see the necessity for our justification. We still see that it is based upon our Lord's sacrifice. We still see that our share in it is obtained by faith – that we are "justified by faith." But now we see that the New Covenant has nothing whatever to do with this faith or with our justification, and that no Scripture so teaches. Have we lost anything? No. We merely cast aside as useless, unscriptural, unnecessary, the thought that our justification had anything whatever to do with the New Covenant. We now see the force of the Bible presentation of the subject – that we are justified by faith – "faith in his blood" – faith in the sacrifice of Jesus, the Just for the unjust. We now see that the New Covenant is promised – not to us, but to Israel and all *men*. We have turned aside from nothing of any value to us. We have all the actualities which we ever had, and, additionally, the light shines the brighter upon our pathway.

As an illustration: Suppose you were walking into the country to a friend's home and an umbrella were given you to carry to him. Suppose that in the journey you thought that you needed the umbrella either for rain or shine and carried it over you. Suppose that by and by you discovered that you did not need

its covering and let it down and carried [R4492 : page 307] it to your friend for whom it was intended. Would that signify that you had lost your way or *changed* your path or retraced your steps? Assuredly not!

Similarly the Church are "able ministers of the New Covenant," preparing it, carrying forward its various interests to present them to Israel and the world in due time. If for a time we with others thought that Covenant for our use on the way, and got under it, or supposed ourselves under it, was it wrong or a change of our way or path when we got free from the supposition that we needed that New Covenant? Assuredly not! The "twelve stars" (Rev. 12:1) shed the more light upon our pathway by reason of our getting from under the unscriptural delusion.

But have we cast away the New Covenant? By no means. We are still "able ministers (servants) of the New Covenant" – still carrying it forward for Israel and mankind – serving it all the more faithfully because the more intelligently, the more Scripturally. Note well that the "change" of doctrine is on the part of those who are opposing us – they have already so *changed* their course that they are blind to many of the previous things they once saw. They are losing "the secret of the Lord" (Psa. 25:13), "the mystery" – revealed only to the saints and hidden from all others. – Col. 1:26.

But, says another, has not THE WATCH TOWER "*changed*" so that now it denies Jesus as the Mediator between God and men? Does not this mean a repudiation of the ransom and a denial of the necessity and fact of the Atonement? Would not this signify a renouncement of Jesus as the *Savior* or Redeemer? And would not this be a great "*change*" indeed?

Yes, indeed; those would be great changes, surely. But THE WATCH TOWER has made no such changes in its teachings. Such misstatements are merely a part of the Midnight Howl,

designed of the Adversary to stampede the true sheep. Our opponents, blinded by the Adversary (and possibly attempting "to draw away disciples after themselves"), are "howling" and skiting "dust" to cause confusion amongst the Lord's consecrated people. God permits it as a test of the loyalty of his people and their faith in him as the Shepherd of the flock.

THE WATCH TOWER still teaches that all of Adam's children are sinners and all under death-sentence. It still teaches that there is none other name than that of Jesus, given under heaven or among men, whereby we must be saved – through [R4492 : page 308] faith in his blood – in his sacrifice – in his ransom-price – in his atonement for sin. Can any one believe more than this respecting the efficacy of the precious blood? Where did our opponents learn of the significance of the *ransom-price* and the philosophy of the Atonement between God and men, than in THE WATCH TOWER publications? What have our opponents written on this subject, or what has ever been written on this subject, that as strongly teaches the value of the precious blood and its necessity as the *price* of salvation for the Church and the world? We challenge presentation of proof on this subject.

THE WATCH TOWER, as ever, teaches that our Lord Jesus is the great Prophet, Priest, King, Judge and Mediator for Adam and his race, whom God appointed to this service from before the foundation of the world. We still teach that he will fulfil all those offices by the close of the Millennium. We still hold, since 1880, that the Church is a special class "called" to be "copies of God's dear Son" as his Bride and joint-heir in all his offices toward "men," the world. We still hold that these are *members* of the great Prophet, Priest, King, Judge, Mediator; that figuratively our Lord Jesus is the "*Head*" and the Church his "*Body*." We still hold that in the Divine purpose this special class was foreknown, *as well as Jesus*, from before the foundation of the

world. (Rom. 8:29; I. Pet. 1:2.) We still hold that this is the *Mystery* hid from previous ages and now made known only to the *saints*, as a special favor through the Word and by the holy Spirit.

Wherefore, then, the "howl" against us? Because we emphasize, to those permitted to see the "Mystery," what the Scriptures clearly teach, namely, that God deals in a special manner with the elect Church, different from his dealing with the world; because those of us who ever were rebellious have surrendered, and because we desire righteousness and truth, and can and do exercise *justifying faith in Jesus' meritorious sacrifice*. These sacrifice their restitution life-rights and by a consecration vow to the Lord become *dead* as men and *alive* as "new creatures," "*members* in particular of the Body of the Christ" – the great Prophet, Mediator, King, Priest and Judge of the world.

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