

## **THE NEW COVENANT IN THE BOOK OF HEBREWS**

IF THE New Covenant, in no sense of the word, belongs to the Church – that is to say, if we are not under the New Covenant, if it belongs merely to Israel, and through Israel to the world, why does the Apostle have so much to say concerning it in the Book of Hebrews?

To appreciate the necessity for the Book of Hebrews, we must mentally take our stand back in apostolic days and get our bearings as though we were living there under those conditions. Thinking of matters from this sympathetic standpoint the answer to this question is very simple, very plain. The early Church for seven years after our Lord's baptism, for three and a half years after his cross, was composed exclusively of Jews. Not until the end of Israel's promised "seventy weeks" of special favor could the Gospel message go outside of that nation at all. We remember that Cornelius, a just man, who prayed always and gave much alms, was the first one from the Gentiles to be received. In his case we remember how it was necessary for God to specially prepare St. Peter for such a remarkable change in the Divine method of dealing.

We remember that years after this, the question of receiving the Gentiles and eating with them, or in any sense of the word recognizing them as being on equality with the Jews, was one which caused continual disturbance in the Church and amongst the most prominent of the apostles of the time. Years after Cornelius had received the holy Spirit teachers from Jerusalem went to Antioch and found that there Gentiles were received on an equal footing with the Jews in the Church of Christ without in any sense of the word subscribing to Moses and the Law Covenant. They were shocked and expressed themselves in such

positive terms that the Antioch Church sent Paul and Barnabas with others to Jerusalem that a full conference on the question might be had. Guided of the holy Spirit the apostles reached right conclusions, yet even Peter was so little in sympathy with these conclusions that years after we find St. Paul reproving him for dissimulation and refusing to eat with the Gentile brethren when Jewish brethren were in the company – through deference to the Law Covenant, which somehow all Jews felt must be recognized and subscribed to. St. Paul seems to have been one of the apostles who early got the proper focus on this subject.

We find that this Judaizing teaching was not only in the ascendancy in Palestine, but that its influence in considerable measure affected the Gentiles. St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, for instance, shows us how many of them, Gentiles by birth, had been misled into believing that whatever blessings they might enjoy through Christ and the original Abrahamic Covenant, they must also become amenable to the Law Covenant. Note that the Apostle's letter to the Galatians is almost exclusively devoted to this subject, and remember that the Galatians were not Hebrews, or, at least, the majority of them were not. In that epistle he found it necessary to show that he had equal authority with the other apostles as a teacher – that the Galatians might know that he was as well qualified as the others, and as fully authorized to instruct them respecting their obligations; that his word was authoritative; that the Gentiles were not under the Law Covenant, but under the Grace Covenant – the original Abrahamic Covenant. He recounts that he did not get his instruction or his knowledge of the Gospel from the Apostles at Jerusalem, but that, so far as it was concerned, he had under the Lord's Providence been their instructor, rather than they his instructor. – Gal. 2:1-14.

Note carefully the Apostle's appeal in Galatians III., "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the Truth, before whose eyes [of understanding] Jesus

Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith?" etc. His entire argument in this chapter is to show that the Law Covenant never was over or binding upon the Gentiles, but only upon the Jews. He shows also that the Law Covenant, instead of advantaging the Jew, condemned him, so that the Jew needed to be specially redeemed from the curse or sentence of that Law Covenant, by our Lord's death by *crucifixion*. Throughout this chapter St. Paul contrasts the Law Covenant, from which the Jews were desirous to get free, with the original Abrahamic Covenant, which had only free children. He shows that the Gentiles were received under this Abrahamic Covenant of grace (favor), whose blessings are conferred on a basis of faith and not on a basis of works, as under the Law Covenant.

St. Paul shows further that the Law Covenant had Moses for a Mediator, because that Covenant placed binding obligations of obedience to the Law upon all who came under it. But, reasons the Apostle, the original Covenant made with Abraham was not so. It imposed no binding obligations, and therefore it needed no mediator and had no mediator. "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one." (Gal. 3:20.) That is to say, a mediator is not necessary to a Covenant in which only one person is bound. In the case of the Abrahamic Covenant this is so: God is the one person bound by that Covenant; hence there is no need of a mediator for that Covenant to see to the faithful performance of the contract. However, as there was no mediator to guarantee a contract or Covenant on God's side, he gave to Abraham and to all who would be of his faith, the best possible guarantee that God did not make the Covenant lightly, in a trifling manner or thoughtlessly; for, in addition to pledging his Word, God gave his oath – that the Covenant was secure, sure, could not fail. It was this that gave Israel such great hope in that Oath-Bound Covenant.

The Apostle proceeds to show that the Law Covenant did a good service for the Jews in that it prepared them and brought them to Christ, the great Teacher; that by hearing his message, his invitation, they might exercise obedient faith, sacrificing faith, and, being baptized into Christ, might put on Christ – become members of his Body. All such, Jew and Gentile, bond or free, male or female, would be members of the one Body, of which Christ Jesus is the Head. This [R4510 : page 340] chapter winds up with that forceful statement, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed and heirs according to the promise" – the Covenant made to Abraham.

All this argument was to show the Galatians that, so far from needing to get under the Law Covenant, they had no need of it whatever, and those who were under it needed to get out from under it, in order to be able by faith to accept Christ as their Redeemer and Justifier, and by faith to consecrate their lives unto death, that they might be acceptable to God as members of the Body of Christ.

The fourth chapter to the Galatians continues the argument, the exhortation against the error of wanting to get under the Law Covenant, until, with tears in his pen, the Apostle writes, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice (to one of sternness), for I stand in doubt of you. Tell me, ye that desire to be under the Law (Covenant), do ye not hear the Law?" Do ye not realize its bondage, its impossible exactions? "Behold, I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised [every Jew], that he is a debtor to do the whole Law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are (trusting that you are) justified by the Law (Covenant); ye are fallen from grace." – Gal. 4:19-21; 5:2-4.

We have, perhaps, said sufficient to prove that the question of the Law Covenant was a burning question in the early Church, not only with the Hebrews, but also with the Gentiles. It seemed impossible, especially for the former, to learn that the Law Covenant, after having been in force, with all the wonderful paraphernalia of the Jewish dispensation, its laws, its sacrifices, etc. – that it, after all, was not necessary and that a Gentile could really have access to the Abrahamic Covenant through Christ easier than could a Jew.

It was to counteract this powerful error of that day that St. Paul wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews. It certainly has been a valuable epistle to the Gentiles, but it was written specially to the Hebrews, and because of their tenacious adherence to the Law Covenant, from the dominating influence of which they seemed not to be able to free themselves.

The Epistle to the Hebrews was written to prove that a totally new dispensation of Grace, and not of Works, had been ushered in through Jesus at Pentecost. He would have them see that Moses' faithfulness as a servant and Head of a typical priesthood, was inferior to Christ and the Royal **[R4511 : page 340]** Priesthood, of which he is the Head. He would have them see that Moses and his house were types and servants or illustrations of good things to come; but that Christ and his "elect" are sons of God, who will minister the real blessings in the future. He would have them see that there was a Canaan rest to which Moses led the willing and obedient priests and people of Israel, and that there is a greater rest which remains for the people of God, to which Christ will lead his people; and that those who by faith accept of Christ now may enter by faith into his rest in advance, now, in their hearts.

Noting that the Hebrews were long accustomed to look to the earthly priests and yearly ministrations for the cleansing away

of sin, the Apostle calls attention to the fact that the Lord Jesus is the High Priest of a new order of priests and that his Church are those under-priests. Answering their objections that Jesus was not of the tribe of Levi, and therefore not entitled to the priesthood, he shows them that God had already foreshown that there would be a new priesthood of a different kind; that Melchizedek was a type of that new priesthood. He gives the intimation that while Jesus and his Church in the flesh in their sacrificing work were typified by Aaron and his sons, nevertheless the real work of this higher priesthood is a future one of glory, when Jesus, the great Priest, and the Church, his Body, an under priesthood, associated with him, will be installed in a kingly, as well as a priestly office, and in ruling, as well as teaching authority. These glories of the Christ in the Royal Priesthood of the Millennial Age were not at all represented in Aaron, but were quite well represented in Melchizedek, who was a king at the same time that he was a priest. His greatness was shown, in that Abraham did him homage and paid tithes to him. And since Levi, the Father of the priestly tribe, was in Abraham's loins at the time that the tithes were paid, therefore he and all his sons inferentially paid tithes to Melchizedek and thus the Melchizedek order of priesthood was recognized as higher than the Aaronic.

With this foundation for his subject the Apostle (Heb. 7:18-22) points out that it evidently was not God's intention to allow the Law Covenant to stand perpetually, nor to allow its priestly arrangements to continue forever. He proceeds to show that prophetically Jesus was made a priest by Divine appointment long before he came into the world – that God said of him, "I have sworn and will not repent; thou art a priest for the age after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. 7:21) – not after the order of Aaron. This oath shows that the priesthood of Jesus was superior to the priesthood of Aaron which was established without any Divine Covenant of this kind. "By this much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament or Covenant." That is to say, the fact that God

by his oath had recognized this higher order of priesthood particularly implied that in due time a New Covenant would supplant the Law Covenant, which the Hebrews felt must be perpetual.

The Apostle does not argue that the New Covenant had been established, nor that the new priesthood had been established in its office of combined kingship and priesthood. He merely points to the fact that such a New Covenant is assured by God's promise, which implied the doing away with the Law Covenant and its priesthood, and the introduction of a better one. He proceeds to show that Israel and the world needed a higher order of priesthood than the Aaronic to inaugurate the reign of righteousness under the New Covenant. He points to the two sacrifices of Leviticus XVI. and intimates that our Lord will fulfil that Day of Atonement type by two offerings; first, for his own sins (not for his individual sins, for he had none), but for the sins of those accepted during this Gospel Age as the under priesthood, the "members of his Body"; and then later a second sacrifice for the sins of the people – the world in general.

He tells us that the typical work of Atonement by the Levitical priest repeated this Atonement work every year (on the Atonement Day), but that our great Priest does it once for all time in the great antitypical Day of Atonement, in which he offers up himself – first individually, and secondly his members, collectively. In this connection we are to remember that as Christ offered himself in sacrifice at Jordan, and not at Calvary, so also he offered his Body, the Church, collectively in sacrifice at Pentecost. As the laying down of the life of the man Christ Jesus proceeded through three and a half years, and was finished at Calvary, so likewise the laying down of the life of the Church has proceeded since Pentecost, and it will not be finished until the last member of the Body shall have suffered with him – been faithful even unto death.

This was shown in the type; for, after the priest had sprinkled the blood of the bullock, he appeared at the door of the tabernacle and laid his hands (power) upon the head of the Lord's goat (which represented his consecrated Church) and slew it. We see, then, how this entire work of sacrificing may have been said to have been accomplished at the time when St. Paul wrote the Book of Hebrews. The Apostle does not proceed to tell of the consummation of this Gospel Age, but drops the matter here by showing the two sacrifices performed. That he does wish us to understand that the second sacrifice of Atonement was offered at Pentecost is evidenced by the fact that he speaks of the Church as under-priests *in* the holy, enjoying the light of the golden candlestick, the table of shewbread and the golden altar privileges, and waiting until the testings shall have been completed and we all shall have passed beyond the veil, even into heaven itself, where the blood of this second sacrifice of Christ will then be offered in the propitiatory on behalf of the world. **[R4511 : page 341]**

### **MEDIATOR OF A BETTER TESTAMENT**

Hebrews VIII. opens with the words, "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister (servant) of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle." Verses 3-5 show that the sacrificial work already referred to was a necessity before he could enter the still higher work of distributing to Israel and the world the blessings of God's favor secured by the "better sacrifices." The glorious High Priest in heaven has a more exalted service (ministry) than the earthly priests and, accordingly, he is the Mediator of a better Covenant or Testament than the Law Covenant. The Apostle is here showing that our Lord's sacrificial work needs not to be continued throughout eternity; but that he has been exalted to the heavenly plane, and has another work to accomplish, namely, as the

Mediator of a better Covenant than the Law Covenant. He is trying to get their minds away from the thought that they are under the Law Covenant. If he can convince them that Christ is the antitype of Moses and the antitype of Aaron, he will thus convince them that there must be a higher Covenant and arrangement for the blessing of the world than the Law Covenant in which they were trusting and which they considered indispensable. The remaining verses of the chapter and Jeremiah 31:31 show that such a better Covenant was in contemplation.

Neither St. Paul nor the Hebrew Christians at Jerusalem and elsewhere to whom he wrote this epistle, had any thought that they were living under the provisions of the New Covenant. As he shows in Chapter 6:19,20, they were all hoping in the Abrahamic Covenant; but some of them had the erroneous thought that they *additionally* needed the Law Covenant and that it would be perpetual. St. Paul's argument is that God never intended it to be perpetual, but merely to prevail for a time as a schooling until Christ should come as the antitype of Isaac – the antitypical heir of the Abrahamic Covenant. He now shows that The Christ is in due time to be the Mediator of the New Covenant with Israel, as a proof that their old Law Covenant was not intended to last forever. Why should they be trusting in the old Law Covenant, when God distinctly tells that "after those days he will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel," and that Messiah (with his members now being selected) is to be the Mediator of that New Covenant, and is merely waiting for the completion of the Church to finish all the ministrations necessary to put that Covenant into operation – the blessing of Israel and all the families of the earth?

Chapter IX. contrasts the typical arrangements made for the service of the Law Covenant and the making of its blessings effective to Israel, with the arrangements for the service of the New Covenant to make its blessings effective to Israel and all

people who shall eventually avail themselves of its privileges. All the paraphernalia of the Tabernacle and the work incidental to the typical sacrificing, were so much necessary to the putting of that Law Covenant into effective operation for all the people of Israel. And similarly on a spiritual plane there are antitypes, including better sacrifices, all of which are incidental to the putting of the New Covenant into operation for Israel and that all mankind may avail themselves of its privileges. The antitypical priest has appeared – "Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come." Those future good things represent the glorification of the Body of Christ, the blessing of Israel and all the families of the earth.

All those blessings on a higher plane are abundantly provided for in God's arrangement. For if the typical arrangements of the Law Covenant needed a cleansing from sin by blood, and if the blood of bulls and goats, etc., typically accomplished this, how much more full of value should we esteem the sacrifice of Christ – how much more able to purify our consciences! Shall we not esteem the blood of Christ aside from the Law Covenant sufficient for our sins? And, as believers in his merit, shall we not conscientiously drop dead works of the Law Covenant and trust to something [R4512 : page 341] higher, even to the merit of the antitypical High Priest? It is for this cause, or to this end, that he is the Mediator of the New Covenant, so that eventually all Hebrews condemned to death under the Law Covenant may be released from it (as in Romans 11:27 he declares will be the case as soon as the elect, the Body of the great Deliverer, the great Mediator, the great Priest, shall have been completed).

In Hebrews 9:15 St. Paul shows that there is a special work of Christ on behalf of the Jews: they being under the death sentence of the Law Covenant, Christ's death *on the tree* was necessary for them, because that was the special "curse" of the

Law. Thus a basis is laid, whereby all the transgressions of the Hebrews under the Law Covenant may be fully cancelled, under the provisions of the New Covenant when it shall become effective. (Rom. 11:27.) Not only so, but this special redemption of the Hebrews enabled those called of God from that nation during this Gospel Age to receive a share in the promise of the eternal inheritance – as members of Christ under the original Abrahamic Covenant.

Then follows a statement of the general principle – that where a Will or Testament is made, the death of the testator is implied, and only after the death of the testator could its blessings be enjoyed. Our Lord having earned a right to human perfection and human life by obedience to the Law Covenant conditions, laid down those earthly rights in sacrifice, in harmony with the Father's will. And, when raised from the dead a New Creature of the Divine nature, he possessed those earthly rights which he laid down as a ransom-price for mankind, with the right to dispose of them. His Testament or Will disposing of those earthly rights could have been so made as to give them at once to fleshly Israel by sealing for them the promised New Covenant. But instead the Testator gave those earthly blessings to the household of faith, those called out from the nominal Jewish Church during and after his earthly ministry, and to "us" of the Gentiles since, on condition that they *join in his sacrifice*, "suffer with him," "be dead with him," participate with him in the glorious privileges of the Abrahamic Covenant for the blessing of the world under the New Covenant provision.

The brethren understood that they were called to be "members of the Body of Christ" and that it would be after the completion of this "Body" that the Lord's favor would return to natural Israel, and that he would build again the tabernacle of David which had fallen down; that through them as members of the great Benefactor or Mediator of the New Covenant, a blessing

might go to the world and "that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom God's name is called." (Acts 15:16,17.) The brethren addressed were reminded that the death of the Testator was necessary to these: not only the death of Jesus as the original testator to give the blessing to the Church, his Body, but also the death of the Church, his members, under his Headship, to again serve as Testator, and to die, so as to leave those restitution rights for the benefit of Israel and the world under the New Covenant.

Let us never lose sight of the central purpose for which this Book was written – that it was to prove that the Law Covenant must give way, give place, to the New Covenant. Hence all the things connected with the typical Law Covenant should be expected to have antitypes in connection with the antitypical New Covenant. Thus the sacrifices of the Law, which came at the beginning of their year on the Day of Atonement, before the sins of the people could be forgiven, must here find parallel in "*better sacrifices*" than the bullock and the goat. The New Covenant cannot go into effect until these antitypical sacrifices are accomplished. He thus proved the inferiority of everything Jewish and connected with the Law Covenant; that all Christians might see that instead of going back to that or holding on to it, they should rather be grasping, looking forward to the antitypes, and grasping their share in the "better sacrifices."

In verse 24, of the 9th chapter of Hebrews, the Apostle indicates how much of the sacrificing has already been finished; namely, that the High Priest has gone into the "most holy," "now to appear in the presence of God for *us*" – for Spiritual Israel. But he adds we must not expect him to do this every **[R4512 : page 342]** year, as it was done in the type. We must not think that Christ's sacrifice could avail us only in conjunction with the Jewish institutions as additional thereto. To so suppose would imply that such annual sacrifices would have been necessary

from the foundation of the world. But this was not the case: Abraham and others were justified by faith before the Law Covenant was instituted. In the end of the age Christ appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as men-priests are appointed to die, as symbolically represented in the animals they sacrificed, and as they after this passed into the Holy, and were there put on judgment, or tested before they entered the "Most Holy," so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many, and, to them that are looking for him, he shall appear the second time, not as a sin-offering, but to grant the salvation secured by the merit of his sacrifice – to inaugurate the New Covenant, and as its Mediator to set up its Kingdom for the overthrow of sin and death and the establishment of righteousness and life.

Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many, the Apostle says. The type shows us *two offerings*, yet the two were parts of one. The first represented the Head, and the second, the Body. The two sacrifices of the Day of Atonement were really one, because the second was based upon the first. The offering as a whole was evidently for the sins of the whole world. Evidently, as the Apostle says, the next thing to be expected, to be waited for, is his finishing his sacrificial work, finishing the sprinkling of the blood the second time, and then coming out, as typed in the high priest clothed "in garments of glory and beauty," representative of his elements of glory and power. He will stand forth as the Mediator of the New Covenant, the great Messiah, Prophet, Priest, King and Judge.

Only those who recognize that the under-priests are the *members* of the High Priest can appreciate this picture. The Lord by his own blood *justified* us, his Church, his prospective members, when "he ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for *us*" – as our Advocate and High Priest – to sprinkle the Mercy-Seat – to satisfy divine justice *on our behalf*.

He began his secondary offering of his "*members*" as soon as the Father accepted his offering for us – at Pentecost.

There "the Lord's goat" was killed, sacrificed, and the ignominious burning outside the camp commenced. What was done with those ready on Pentecost has continued to be done with their successors since for now nearly nineteen centuries. The sacrificing, burning, etc., have continued, just as in the figure of the High Priest's anointing, the oil ran down to his feet, so antitypically the holy Spirit has come upon each "member" accepted as a joint-sacrificer. The Lord meantime sits at the right hand of Divine favor, awaiting the *consummation* of the burning of his sacrifice – expecting or waiting until then to make the final sprinkling of his blood "for all the people" before Justice shall turn over to him the control or dominion of the world for reconstruction during the Millennium under the terms of the New Covenant.

The *appearing* a second time is to the waiting people – the groaning creation waiting "for the manifestation of the sons of God" in the glory of the Kingdom. (Rom. 8:19,22.) It is wholly different from his coming, or *parousia*, during the harvest time to the Church. His *appearing* will be in power and great glory, yet only to be recognized by Israel and the world as they shall look for and seek for his Kingdom. "When he shall *appear* we also [his members] shall *appear* with him in glory."

In the 10th chapter St. Paul proceeds along the same line, proving that Jesus is the great High Priest. He represents him as saying, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." (V. 9.) Christ there began the taking away of the first, the typical Covenant, that he might establish the second, the antitypical Covenant. Verse ten shows how we, who have become his disciples, are sanctified by accepting his will and saying, as he did, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." We are sanctified through the offering of the Body

of Jesus Christ, because we, accepted as *members of his Body*, are set apart to this great priestly, kingly, mediatorial work with him. Incidentally notice here that previously we were "justified" through the merit of Jesus' sacrifice, but that now we are sanctified through the *offering of the Body*. It is only as we obtain this great privilege of sacrificing as members of his Body that we can have any expectancy of participation with him in his glory. This Body was offered once for all. The individual members of the Church are not offered separately. The one "Lord's goat" represented the one entire Body of Christ, the "little flock," all who, during this Gospel Age will be accepted as members and lay down their lives in sacrifice with him. In verse twelve St. Paul shows that this one sacrifice of Christ (in two parts, Head and Body) having been offered (the Head at Jordan, the Body at Pentecost), our Lord rests from any further sacrificing, knowing that full satisfaction will be effected by the work already accomplished.

The great Priest has since waited until the Father's time for putting all things of earth into subjection under him; because by the one offering (in its two parts) he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. That is to say, the first part of his offering justified his members and their participation in the second part effected their sanctification and secured for them a share in the First Resurrection. Moreover, the perfecting of all mankind who shall eventually be saved during the Millennium will be as the result of Christ's **[R4513 : page 342]** one sacrifice in its two parts (bullock and goat). As a result of these "better sacrifices," eventually all mankind shall have an opportunity of becoming sanctified, holy, perfect. The Apostle says that the holy Spirit through Jeremiah's prophecy (31:31) witnessed to this, testified to this ultimate efficacy of the antitypical priest's work. Then he quotes this reference of the New Covenant, "after those days," and assures us that when the time of remission of sins shall have come, there will be no more offering for sin. Thank God that with

the end of this Age, when the sufferings of the Body of Christ will be finished, then, all sacrificing opportunities being ended, the opportunities for blessing mankind through the merit of those sacrifices will be only beginning!

## **UNDER-PRIESTS NOW ENTERING THE HOLIES**

In verse nineteen the Apostle reverts to the fact that while this great work is still *incomplete*, we, brethren [prospective under-priests], may have the boldness [courage] to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a *new* and living way, which he has consecrated *for us, through the vail*, that is to say, his flesh; we may by faith realize ourselves as under-priests, members of the High Priest's Body, joint-sacrificers with him and under his ministration. We may enjoy now the privileges and blessings of the Holy and be assured that, as *members* of the great High Priest, and Mediator, we may ultimately go beyond the vail, even into heaven itself, entering that glorious plane of life *through sharing with him in his death*. This special way he consecrated for us as the High Priest, by making the merit of his death, typified by the blood of the bullock, applicable to us, permitting us in the strength of that justification to sacrifice with him and to become his members in glory.

St. Paul exhorts all these fellow-members to hold fast to their faith, to provoke one another to love, to not forsake the assembling of themselves, etc. If Moses' Law inflicted a death penalty, assuredly the one who would willingly transgress under greater light would suffer a more severe punishment. The punishment of those under Moses' Law was death, but not Second Death, because they had not secured release from the first death; but for us who have been released by "faith in his blood" and who have been consecrated, joined with him in sacrifice – for us to do despite to all these favors and privileges of God's grace; for us to ignore the great High Priest, for us to count as a common thing

our engagement, our consecration to share with our Lord in his death, in his sacrifice, in the blood of the New Covenant, this would mean the taking of ourselves completely out of all of the Divine arrangements intended for our blessing. Verse thirty shows that this is no idle suggestion of the Apostle. We are to remember him with whom we have been dealing, him through whose mercy in Christ we have been justified [R4513 : page 343] and him whose holy Spirit we received as an earnest of our inheritance when we presented our bodies living sacrifices, in harmony with his call, that we might become joint-heirs with Jesus in glory. To forfeit all this would be a fearful thing – the Second Death.

However, the Apostle urges, let us not be discouraged, but remember our past experiences, our illumination, and the afflictions which we then endured, and let us not cast away our confidence, and faithfulness, for the reward will be great. Chapter eleven deals with the faithfulness of God's people during the past ages and dispensations, and, closing, tells us that there is a reward for all of those faithful ones in God's great plan, but something far better still for us, the members of the Body of the Messiah, the Mediator, Priest and King, so that they, without us, should not be made perfect; or, as St. Paul says in Rom. 11:31, "Through your mercy they also may obtain mercy." And then, through them under the New Covenant, Israel and all the nations will receive their intended share of the same Divine mercy, passed through Christ and then through the Church, his Body.

Chapter twelve still addresses this consecrated priestly class. It suggests that these servants and handmaids, specially begotten of the holy Spirit, specially called, having the "high calling," specially devoted to sacrifice, should think of the Ancient Worthies and the faithful witness for God and the Truth which they bore – to which they witnessed by their martyrdom, that these may strengthen us and encourage us to run faithfully in the

race that is set before us. He urges that these prospective kings and priests look away from the afflictions and persecutions incidental to their sacrifice and loyalty to Christ; that they look to Jesus, the author of their faith, who is also to be its finisher; that they remember his example and what he endured and that everyone whom the Father accepts into the house of sons under this call must expect to have chastisings, disciplines and various testings of faith and obedience for the development and crystallization of character. He exhorts (V. 15) that we shall watch diligently, lest any fail of attaining to the full privilege of God's grace. And he warns that roots of bitterness may come and defile, and also that, yielding to the pleasures of sin for a season, would signify the selling of this great birthright – that Esau got the mess of pottage, but that Jacob got the birthright by his self-denial, and that similarly we are to endure.

### **THE INAUGURATION OF THE LAW COVENANT TYPED THE INSTITUTION OF THE NEW COVENANT**

The reason for all this carefulness on the part of the consecrated under-priests is that they have not come to (have not approached) Mt. Sinai and the wonderful sights and scenes incidental to the inauguration of the Law Covenant, but they have approached (Strong's lexicon, *come near*) to Zion, a Mountain and City of the living God – the Heavenly Jerusalem. We have come so near to the antitypical Mount, the Kingdom of God, so near to the antitypical New Jerusalem that we already by faith behold that New Jerusalem, that glorified Church, the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, from which the blessings are to flow to Israel and the world, as figuratively coming down from heaven to earth. We are surely nearer to that glorious consummation than was the Apostle. If he could say that the Church of Christ, following him, their leader, had approached or were approaching or coming near to that heavenly Kingdom condition, how truly may we assent to this today. "Evidently now is our salvation nearer than when we

first believed" – nearer than when the first members of the Body of Christ walked in this narrow way of self-sacrifice.

The Apostle proceeds to contrast the things which we may soon expect at the inauguration of the New Covenant with Israel with those things which occurred as types in the inauguration of the Law Covenant. He continues: –

Not only are we approaching or *coming nearer* every day to the heavenly Jerusalem, the Kingdom condition, but also *coming nearer* to our association with the holy angels, whose numbers are innumerable, whereas ours are limited – 144,000. More than this, we are approaching, *coming near*, to the "general assembly of the Church" by participation in the "First Resurrection" – "His Resurrection" (Phil. 3:10), for we are "members of his Body." Additionally we are approaching God, the Judge of all; soon we shall be ushered into the presence of the great King Eternal. As the Apostle declares, our Lord, our Redeemer, our Advocate, having had charge of us during the period of our schooling and sacrificing, and as the Father's representative, having raised us from the dead to glory, honor and immortality, "will present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." (Jude 24.) He is the Judge of all. To fall into his hands now, during the sacrificing period and before we have finished our course, would mean to fall out of the hands of our Redeemer and Advocate and to insure condemnation to the Second Death. But, then, to be presented before him faultless will signify that the great Judge will approve us, even as he approves all the holy angels.

Additionally we are approaching, or *coming near*, to the "spirits of just men made perfect." This would seem to apply to the "great company," who will be justified in spirit through destruction of the flesh, though they fail in their sacrificing agreement and will not, therefore, be of the Body of the Christ,

Priest, Mediator, King of glory. Next we read that we have *come near* to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant. He was prophesied from of old to be the Messiah of Israel and the Messenger or Mediator of Israel's Covenant. He is our Bridegroom, our Advocate, our Head. We, his members, shortly will be forever with our Lord and see him as he is and share with him the glorious work of his Mediatorial Kingdom, by which Israel first, and through Israel all the nations, will receive the blessing of the Spiritual Seed of Abraham.

Then the New Covenant, having been sealed, so far as Divine Justice is concerned, by the application of the precious blood, passed through the Church and made effective "for *all the people*," the time will come for the application of the blood of sprinkling to all the people – during the Millennium.

In the type we read that in instituting the Law Covenant, Moses sprinkled first the Book of the Law, representing Divine Justice, and then, on the basis of this satisfaction, his Mediatorial work began toward the people, and was typically represented by the sprinkling of them with the same blood of the Covenant. So in the antitype. Our Lord's blood (the blood of the bullock, Leviticus XVI.) was applied on our behalf – on behalf of his Body and his house, and secured the forgiveness of our sins and opened the "new and living way" for our sanctification – for our privilege of sharing with him in "*his death*," partaking of "*his cup*." Finally, when the Church shall have finished using the blood, and, by God's grace through it, shall have attained to Divine nature in glory, that same merit (as the blood of the Lord's goat) will **[R4514 : page 343]** be applied "for all the people" at the close of this Age by sealing the New Covenant.

This second application for the people, "For the sins of the whole world," will settle completely all the claims of Divine Justice against every member of Adam's race and put the future

interests of all into the hands of the Mediator – Jesus, and the Church, his Body. Forthwith the work of reconciliation manward will begin. This is represented as the sprinkling of the people with the blood of the New Covenant.

Each one of Adam's race, as he comes into proper relationship with the Lord, will receive his share of the sprinkled blood until, by the close of the Millennial Age, when the great Mediator shall turn over his Kingdom to the Father, every member of Adam's race will have had fullest opportunity to enjoy his share in this sprinkling. Does that symbolical sprinkling in any sense of the word imply condemnation, responsibility for the blood of Christ, as in Abel's case, when his blood figuratively was said to call to God for vengeance upon his murderers? Oh, no! While the death of Christ and of many of his members has been by violence, yet this fact will not call for vengeance, because the life was voluntarily surrendered a *sacrifice for the sins of the world*. The sprinkling of the blood of the New Covenant upon all the people during the Millennial Age, then, will mean the impartation to each one of his share in the great blessing secured by the sacrifice accomplished by our Lord, "the Lamb of God which taketh away [eventually] the sin of the world." **page 344**

### **"HIM THAT SPEAKETH FROM HEAVEN"**

**[R4514 : page 344]**

The Apostle intimates that our ascended and glorified Lord is to speak from heaven at the time indicated, the time to which we approach or come near. The prophet tells us that all the blind eyes shall be opened to see him, to recognize his dominion; and that all the deaf ears shall be unstopped to hear, to comprehend, his message. And St. Peter, speaking of that same time, declares, "It shall come to pass that the soul that will not obey that Prophet (Jesus the Head and the Church his Body raised up during this

Gospel Age) shall be destroyed from amongst the people." – Acts 3:23.

The Apostle interrupts his argument respecting the future, to throw out a cautionary suggestion to the under-priests, the members of the Body of Christ, saying, "See that *ye* refuse not him that speaketh." Our eyes and our ears have been opened in advance of the world's. We have been greatly blessed by this Divine favor. But our responsibility is proportionate to our favor. If we refuse the instructions of our Head, our Lord; if we submit ourselves not to the disciplines in the School of Christ; if we neglect to share in his death and to present our bodies living sacrifices, in harmony with our covenant; if we, as the branches, do not bear the fruit of the Vine, our trial for eternal life may end adversely.

Resuming his narrative of the great thing to which we approach, or come near, the Apostle continues to contrast between these coming things pertaining to the New Covenant with the inauguration of the typical Law Covenant. He says, "Whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven" – the earth symbolizing society, and the heaven symbolizing ecclesiasticism. The Apostle comments on the prophecy, saying that this expression *yet once more* implies such a thorough work of the shaking that everything that is temporary, out of accord with the Divine order, shall be shaken out, so that, at the beginning of the Mediatorial Kingdom and the administration of the New Covenant nothing will remain in power or organization except those things which *cannot be shaken*, because of their harmony with God.

Continuing this thought that then we shall be with our Lord as his members, participating in his Mediatorial work, we read, that Since, therefore, we are to receive an unshakable Kingdom,

with reverence and godly fear we are to hold fast to the grace of God bestowed upon us, which will permit us to serve God acceptably (not only now sacrificially, but also in the administration of the Kingdom), for, gracious as our God is, he is consuming fire towards all unrighteousness.

The Apostle concludes the Epistle with exhortations to the Royal Priesthood, giving helpful suggestions as to brotherly love, hospitality, contentment, submission to those whom we believe to be over us in the Lord. (Chapter XIII., Vs. 7-17.) He tells us to avoid new Gospels and to remember that as the earthly priesthood were nourished by the things of the altar, so we have a right to eat of a spiritual altar, of which others may not eat. He then calls attention to the sin-offering (V. 10), that they were all burned outside the camp. Jesus, as the antitype of the bullock, was not only crucified outside the gate of Jerusalem, but suffered as an outcast from the social and religious systems of the time. St. Paul urges that we, as the Royal Priesthood (typified by the Lord's goat of Leviticus XVI.), shall also go forth sacrificially outside the camp to suffer with Christ social ostracism, and with deadness toward the world. He fixes by this passage our identity with "the Lord's goat" of Leviticus XVI by assuring us that only the blood of the sin-offerings is taken within the veil – to sprinkle the mercy-seat. He also identifies this sin-offering by suggesting that the *bodies* of those beasts whose blood propitiated for sin were *burned* outside the camp. In exhorting the Church to follow the Lord in this experience, he clearly identifies our Lord with the bullock of the Day of Atonement and the Church with the Lord's goat, which followed all of the bullock's experiences.

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