



The Two Covenants  
in Galatians

A.T. Jones

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## Introduction

It was an incredible joy to discover the Father and Son relationship as expressed in 1 Cor 8:6 provided the key to unlocking so many complexities of Scripture that had previously been shrouded in mystery or simply were unknown. That key which is described in the booklet *Divine Pattern of Life* reveals the Father as the source of all things and the Son as the channel of all things. This source and channel relationship has its signature upon many elements that are coupled together: Man and wife, Old and New Testament, Holy and Most Holy Place, Sabbath and Feasts, Sun and Moon; all of these things have found greater clarity in light of the Divine Pattern. It makes complete sense that knowing the relation of God and His Son would open for us the key to unlocking many mysteries in Scripture.

In 2015 I pondered whether the two covenants mentioned in Scripture operated in this divine pattern where one covenant led to the other. Operating in an oppositional system, the Old Covenant that leads to death is placed in opposition to the New Covenant which leads to life. This framework gives the sense that the Old Covenant is bad and the New Covenant is good. The Old should be avoided and the New embraced. But was that how it worked in a divine pattern system?

As I pondered these things, the text in 2 Cor 3:7 was suddenly illuminated where Paul states that “the ministration of death written and engraved in stone was *glorious*”. If it was glorious, then it was a good thing. It then became apparent that in order to be born again *one must first die* and then be born again. This places death and life in a sequence where one follows the other. This means that the Old Covenant, which is the ministration of death, is the channel through which one must enter into the New Covenant. Both covenants actually work together where one brings you to the other.

In the following year, while conducting meetings in Northern Germany, I was reading the book *Studies in Galatians* by A.T. Jones. Within this book I found the confirmation I had been looking for.

Thus the covenant from Sinai brought them to the covenant with Abraham. The first brought them to the second covenant. The old covenant brought them to the new covenant. And thus the law, which was the basis of that covenant, —the broken law, —was the schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, that they might be justified by faith. A.T. Jones RH July 17, 1900

The significance of this fact cannot be overstated. The process of the Old Covenant leading to the New Covenant is the process of the schoolmaster bringing the soul to

Christ. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." Galatians 3:24

It is this thought that gives power and meaning to a key passage that was used by A.T. Jones in Sermon 18, 1893 – Romans 5:20

Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: Rom 5:20

Now let us read right on in Rom. 5: "Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Then did the law come alone, making sin to appear alone, and that alone? [Congregation: "No."] It is simply the means to another end--the means to an end by which to attain another object beyond the knowledge of sin. Is that so? [Congregation: "Yes."] So then, where sin abounds--where is it that grace abounds? [Congregation: "In the same place."] Right there? [Congregation: "Yes."] But does it read that way, "Where sin abounded grace abounded"? [Congregation: "No. 'Much more.'"] That would be pretty good wouldn't it, if it was only where sin abounds there grace abounds? That would be pretty good, but that is not the way the Lord does things, you know. He does things absolutely well--entirely good, just as good as God could do. A.T. Jones, Sermon 20, 1893

The law that enters into our experience through the Old Covenant causes sin to abound. It causes us to see how sinful we are. What is the purpose of this? It is to bring us to Christ in the New Covenant. Both Covenants are working together. The Old Covenant has the letter that kills the old man in order for the new man to be raised in newness of life each day. Thus the Divine Pattern of Father and Son provides the key for how to relate the Old Covenant to the New Covenant. The Old leads to the New and shows they work together to give to the soul the complete experience of righteousness by faith.

May you be as blessed as I have been reading the precious truth contained in this series of articles that form part of the most precious message sent from heaven to lighten the earth with its glory.

Adrian Ebens

# 1. The Two Covenants - Galatians 4:21-31

Review and Herald, May 29, 1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Hagar. For this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem, which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she, which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free” (Gal. 4:21-31).

“These are the two covenants.” Then what are the two covenants? —These two women, because since the covenant from mount Sinai is represented by Hagar, the other covenant is represented by Sarah. The Revised Version of verse 24 reads: “For these women are two covenants.”

These two women were the mothers of the two sons of Abraham. One son was by a bondwoman: the other was by a freewoman. Hagar was the bondwoman: Sarah was the freewoman. The two sons of these two women represent the children of the two covenants.

“These are the two covenants.” It is then settled that the subject of the Two Covenants began in the family of Abraham.

“These are the two covenants.” Whoever, therefore, would study the Two Covenants, must study these.

“These are the two covenants.” Any study therefore, of the Two Covenants, that is not a study of these, is not truly a study of the Two Covenants.

“These are the two covenants.” With these the subject of the Two Covenants begins, and whoever would study the Two Covenants must begin where the subject begins. Therefore this is where we shall begin the study of the Two Covenants.

And that we may all begin it together to the best advantage, we ask that all will read between now and this time next week Genesis 15, 16, 17, and 21:1-21—at least seven times.

## 2. The Life of Abraham - Galatians 4:21-24

Review and Herald, June 5, 1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Hagar” (Gal. 4:21-24).

Thus the two covenants were in the family of Abraham. For “these women are two covenants.” Verse 24, R.V.

But how did the two covenants get into the family of Abraham, and one of these even the covenant from Mount Sinai? “For these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Hagar.”

Since Hagar is one of the two covenants, —the one from Sinai, and the one that genders to bondage, —the story of Hagar in the family of Abraham is the story of the covenant from Sinai.

But God had made a covenant with Abraham himself, before ever Hagar was heard of. And this covenant was confirmed in Christ, before ever any mention was made of Hagar.

This covenant was the covenant of God’s promise to Abraham and to his seed—not “seeds, as of many: but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” This was the covenant of God’s righteousness, —the righteousness of God which is by faith, —for when God had made promise to Abraham, Abraham “believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness” (Gen. 15:6).

This promise was to Abraham, that in him should all families of the earth be blessed, —that to his seed would he give the land of promise, which is the world to come; and that his seed should be as the stars of heaven.

This Seed, to whom the promise was made, being Christ, this covenant was made in Christ; and, when Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness, this covenant was confirmed in Christ. This is, therefore, the everlasting covenant, which answers to Jerusalem, which is above; for, in that covenant, because of that promise, Abraham “looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Heb. 11:10).

All this came to Abraham when as yet he had no child; and the promise was to be accomplished in his seed. Several years had passed after the first mention by the Lord of Abraham's seed when as yet he had no child. Abraham was already old when the thought of his seed was first suggested, and was growing older without seeing any seed. Accordingly, he said: -

“Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me thee hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. “And behold, the word of the Lord came unto him saying, This shall not be thine heir, but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness. And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it” (Gen. 15:2-7).

And when Abram asked: “Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?” the Lord “said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.” Then it was that the Lord, by passing between those pieces, “made (cut) a covenant with Abraham,” a blood covenant, in which he pledged himself to the fulfillment of every promise that had yet been made to Abraham. (Gen. 15:8-10, 18).

Here, then, was God's own heavenly, everlasting covenant, made and confirmed with Abraham, with God's own life pledged that everything promised should be accomplished, so that nothing promised could any more fail than that the Lord should cease to exist.

But still the time passed, and no child was seen, for “Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children.” But Sarai “had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her” (Gen. 16:1, 2). Thus Hagar comes upon the scene, and is brought into the story.

But how was it that Hagar was brought into the story at all? Was it by trusting the promise of God? —No. It was altogether because of distrust. Was it by faith? —No. It was altogether because of unbelief. This is confirmed by the fact that when this part of the program had all been carried through, it all had to be repudiated, and the promised



seed had still to be expected by Sarah herself, and “through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised” (Heb. 11:11).

This being so at the last, why was it, then, at the first, that “Sarai Abram’s wife bore him no children”? —It was simply because of her unbelief, and her not judging “him faithful who had promised.”

Then it was that, in this distrust of God, this unbelief, Sarai invented the scheme, which brought in Hagar. And this scheme, springing from distrust of God, and unbelief in him, was altogether a scheme of the natural mind—an invention of the flesh—to fulfill the promise of God.

The important consideration in this scheme of Sarai’s is that it was to fulfill the promise of God. The thought was not merely that the Lord had not fulfilled his promise, but that he had refused to fulfill it. For Sarai said plainly, “Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing.” This straightly charged unfaithfulness on the part of the Lord. And since it was held that the Lord had failed to fulfill his promise, it was naturally concluded that they were to fulfill it themselves, by an invention altogether of their own, springing from distrust and unbelief in God.

And even Abram swerved from his trust in God, from his faith in the Lord’s promise. Abram fell in with this scheme of distrust and unbelief, this invention of the flesh. “Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.”

“And Sarai Abram’s wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife. And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived.” “And Hagar bare Abram a son” (Gen. 16:3, 4, 15).

“But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh.” How could he be born of anything else? The whole scheme, by which he was ever born at all, was altogether of the natural mind, in distrust and unbelief of God, —an invention of the flesh.

“Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Hagar. For this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia” (Gal. 4:24, 25).

The covenant, therefore, for which Hagar stands, —the covenant from Mount Sinai, —is a covenant in which people, in distrust of God and unbelief of his promise, knowing only the natural man and the birth of the flesh, seek by their own inventions,

and their own efforts, to attain to the righteousness of God, and to the inheritance which attaches to that righteousness.

But the righteousness of God, with the accompanying inheritance in all its fullness, is a free gift.

### 3. Hagar and Sarah - Galatians 4:21-25

Review and Herald, June 12, 1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Hagar. For this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia” (Gal. 4:21-25).

Hagar represents the covenant from Sinai. Hagar was a bondwoman, and an Egyptian. Her son, therefore, was a bondson. He was a bondson, by whatsoever means he might have been born: because his mother was a bondwoman. As we have seen, the means by which Hagar’s son was born was altogether out of distrust of God and of unbelief in his promise—was only a scheme of the flesh; and, therefore, “he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh.” But, “The minding of the flesh, the carnal mind, is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God” (Rom. 8:7, 8).

Accordingly, the covenant for which Hagar stands—the covenant from Mount Sinai—is a covenant in which people, knowing only the natural man and the birth of the flesh, seek, by their own inventions and their own efforts, to attain to the righteousness of God, and to the inheritance which attaches to that righteousness. This, because, as we have also seen, Sarai and Abram had the fullness of the promise of God, and of his righteousness, in God’s covenant confirmed in Christ, before ever the scheme concerning Hagar was invented. And this scheme was invented, and could be invented, only by forsaking that promise and covenant. And to forsake that promise and covenant was to trust only in the flesh.

Did, then, the people at Sinai have any promise of God, or any covenant, in which they could trust, before they entered into the covenant of Sinai? —They had. They had the Abrahamic covenant, exactly as had Abram and Sarai before they entered into the scheme which brought in Hagar.

Not simply did they have this covenant with Abraham, as a far-distant thing, bedimmed by the lapse of time between Abraham and them: but they had it repeated to them, directly by the Lord, and made with them, as with Abraham; and all this before they ever left Egypt at all. Read, “And God spoke unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord: and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them. And I

have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers. And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered My covenant. Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: and I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God, which brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear [“lift up my hand,” margin] to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it to you for an heritage; I am the Lord” (Ex. 6:2-8).

Here was given to the children of Israel, in Egypt, all that was ever given to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. The same covenant precisely that was “made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac,” and which was “confirmed” unto Jacob, was made with Israel, while they were yet in Egypt, when God came down to deliver them from Egypt.

How, then, could it come about that Israel must enter into a covenant at Sinai? —Just as the scheme concerning Hagar had come about. How could another covenant be brought in at all? —Just as Hagar was brought in—altogether because of distrust of God’s covenant; altogether because of unbelief of the promise of God confirmed by his oath. For if they had trusted the promises of God which he had made to them in Egypt, they would have had all that Abraham or any other person ever could have, they would have had the righteousness of God, his everlasting salvation, and the inheritance promised to Abraham: and this all in Christ; for this is how Abraham had it.

True, they had sung the song of triumphant faith at the Red Sea, after crossing; and if they had continued in this faith, they would have continued in God’s everlasting covenant which he gave them in Egypt: and there never would have been any covenant at Sinai.

But they did not continue in that faith; for, immediately afterward, when in their journey they came to Marah, they murmured against the Lord. And when the Lord had delivered them from those fears, they came into the Wilderness of Sin and, “the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured” again. “And the children of Israel said unto them [Moses and Aaron]. Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots, and when we did eat bread to the full: for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly

with hunger” (Ex. 17:3). And when the Lord had delivered them from their fears that time, and they had left the Wilderness of Sin, and had come to Rephidim, again they murmured, and said: “Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, What shall I do unto this people? They be almost ready to stone me” (Ex. 17:3, 4).

All this shows confirmed distrust of God, and unbelief of him, on the part of Israel. And this distrust and unbelief hid from them the blessings and the power given to them in the covenant with Abraham, which God had given to them when they were in Egypt.

They could not trust God for the inheritance to which they were coming, not for the righteousness, which alone would entitle them to that inheritance. This they thought that they themselves could earn. And, that they might see how far short of earning it they would come, the Lord gave to them the widest possible opportunity to try. Accordingly, he said: “Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice INDEED, and keep my covenant, THEN ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine; and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. [“So shall ye be my people, and I will be your God” (Jer. 11:4).] These are the words, which thou shall speak unto the children of Israel. “And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, all that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord” (Ex. 19:4-6).

They had not yet heard his voice; but, when they did hear it, the Ten Commandments were spoken. And so they had agreed to obey the Ten Commandments indeed. And, even after they had heard his voice in such majesty that they feared and “removed and stood afar off,” they declared, “All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient” (Ex. 24:7).

But they corresponded to the child of Hagar the bondwoman, who “was born after the flesh.” They knew only the birth of the flesh; and so had only the mind of the flesh, which “is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be;” (Rom. 8:7) and they could no more obey that law “indeed” than Ishmael, the child of the flesh in the family of Abraham, could fulfill the promise to Abraham. In that condition they could no more keep God’s covenant than the scheme of Sarai in bringing in Hagar was the keeping of that covenant.

How, then, could such a covenant ever be brought in? Why did they enter into such a covenant? —“They had no true conception of the holiness of God, of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts, their utter inability, in themselves, to render obedience to God’s law, and their need of a Saviour. All this they must be taught . . . The people did not realize the sinfulness of their own hearts, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God’s law; and they readily entered into covenant with God. Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, they declared, ‘All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient’” (Patriarchs and Prophets, pages 371, 372).

They were already in the bondage of sin and self-righteousness; and in that bondage, with minds “not subject to the law of God,” and which indeed could not be, they promised to obey the law of God “indeed.” But in the condition in which they were, it was inevitable that they would break their promise: they simply could not keep their promise. It was not in them to do it. Thus, in that covenant, they were breakers of the law, and breakers of their promise not to break the law.

And this is all that they could be, in that covenant, or by virtue of anything in that covenant. Accordingly that covenant, AS HAGAR, gendered, and could gender, only to bondage. And this, all simply because of their distrust of God and their unbelief of his promise as revealed in the covenant with Abraham, which covenant was given to them directly, before they ever started from Egypt at all.

“These are the two covenants; the one from Mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Hagar. For this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem, which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all . . . Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.”

## 4. Of Which Covenant Are You? - Galatians 4:21-25

Review and Herald, June 19, 1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants” (Gal. 4:21-25).

Ishmael was the son of Abraham, born after the flesh. And what was his disposition? Before he was born the Lord described it: “He will be a wild ass man.” The Revised Version translates it: “He shall be as a wild ass among men.” “His hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him.”

Remember that this child of Hagar, this son that was born after the flesh, this “wild ass among men,” was the fruit of the invention of Sarai’s, which sprang from her distrust of God and unbelief of his promise to give a son. Accordingly, bear in mind that this son was intended by Sarai to fulfill the promise of God. It was really intended, and even expected by Sarai, and even by Abraham, that this child of the flesh, this wild man, should be accepted by the Lord as the son whom he intended in his promise; and that the promises to Abraham should be fulfilled in him. This is certain, by the fact that, afterward, when the Lord told Abraham that he would give him a son by Sarai, Abraham answered; “O that Ishmael might live before thee!” (Gen. 17:18).

Now remember that Hagar, the mother of this “wild ass man,” represents the covenant from Sinai; and her son, who was born after the flesh, —this wild man, —represents the children of that covenant from Sinai. And just as, in the invention which brought forth Ishmael, it was intended that he should fulfill the promise of God, and that the Lord’s covenant with Abraham should be fulfilled through him, so these children of the covenant at Sinai, like Ishmael, born after the flesh, expected that they could fulfill the promise of God, and that the Lord’s covenant with Abraham should be accomplished in its fullness through them; that is, through the flesh.

But Abraham kept the commandments of God. The righteousness of God is an essential part of the covenant with Abraham; for, without it, no one can attain unto the inheritance given to Abraham in the covenant. But how would Ishmael, born after the flesh, keep the commandments of God, when the minding of the flesh is only enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, and neither indeed can be? How could that wild ass man keep the commandments of God, with his hand against every

man, when one of the two principles of the whole law of God is, “You shall love thy neighbor as thyself”?

And this child of Hagar the bondwoman corresponds to the children of that covenant at Sinai, which genders to bondage. As Ishmael, they know only the birth of the flesh, and only “the minding of the flesh,” which is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, they covenanted to keep the law of God “indeed”!

But Ishmael was not the son intended by the Lord: he could not fulfill the promise of God, nor could the promise of God be fulfilled in him. So far as God’s promise and covenant with Abraham was concerned, Ishmael’s birth was no more than as if he had never been born at all.

Accordingly, when Abraham said to the Lord: “O that Ishmael might live before thee!” “God said, Nay, but Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son; and thou shall call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year” (Gen. 17:19-21).

At this time Sarai had become a believer in God’s promise, and trusted God alone, and the Lord had changed her name to Sarah. And so, “through faith Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed”; and according to the promise Isaac was born.

Now what was Isaac’s disposition? —It is illustrated in his conduct at the time that Abraham and he supposed that he was to be offered as a sacrifice. He submitted, as a lamb, to be offered. It is further illustrated in the record in Genesis 26: After Abraham had died, and Isaac was the heir of the covenant, he dwelt for a time in the land where the Philistines were. “Now all the wells which his father’s servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth. And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we. And Isaac departed thence, camped in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac dug again the wells of water, which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them. And Isaac’s servants dug in the valley, and found there a well of springing water” (Gen. 26:15-19).

These wells were doubly Isaac’s. Abraham had dug them, and they therefore belonged to Abraham. And when Isaac became heir of Abraham, these wells became his by



inheritance. And now he had dug them again, which was the same as if he had dug them new. Thus they were doubly his. Yet by even more than this they were his, because the Philistines, when the wells were open, had filled them with earth, showing in the strongest possible way that they did not wish them at all.

Yet the Philistines came now to Isaac and claimed the wells that he had opened; which by full right were his: “The water is ours” (Gen. 26:20). Isaac let them have it. But what would Ishmael have done? And what would you do? Which of the “two sons” of Abraham are you? “These are the two covenants.” Of which covenant are you?

Isaac “dug another well,” and the Philistines “strove for that also.” But Isaac, instead of striving with them for this, which was by such large right altogether his own, “removed from thence, and dug another well.” But what would Ishmael have done? And what would you do? Which of the “two sons” of Abraham are you? “These are the two covenants.” Of which covenant are you?

When Isaac had dug this last well, for it the Philistines “strove not: and he called the name of it Rohoboth: and he said, For now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land” (Gen. 26:22).

But how was it that the Lord made room for him? —Simply by Isaac’s refusal to strive with the Philistines, by his yielding to them all that they claimed, even when it was his by every possible right. But could the Lord have ever “made room” for Ishmael and those Philistines? Does the Lord “make room” for you and the envious opposers? Which of the “two sons” of Abraham are you? “These are the two covenants.” Of which covenant are you?

“And he went up from thence to Beersheba. And the Lord appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father; fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham’s sake. And he built an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac’s servants dug a well” (Gen. 26:23-25).

“Then Abimelec went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phicol the chief captain of his army. And Isaac said unto them, “Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?” And they said, “We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee . . . You art now the blessed of the Lord” (Gen. 26:26-29). But it was only by Isaac’s continual yielding before them that they ever had any opportunity to see that the Lord was with him, and that he was the blessed of the Lord. But what would Ishmael have done? And what would you do? What do you do?

Which of the “two sons” of Abraham are you? “These are the two covenants.” Of which covenant are you?

And so “it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the TWO COVENANTS: the one from the Mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Hagar. For this Hagar is Mount Sinai, and answers to Jerusalem, which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.” “Now WE, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise” (Gal. 4:22-26, 28). Are you?

## 5. Cast Out the Old Covenant - Galatians 4:21-31

Review and Herald, July 3, 1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Hagar. For this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem, which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, [thou] barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she, which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free” (Gal. 4:21-31).

The scheme invented by Sarai, and agreed to by Abram, which brought forth Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman, who was born after the flesh, proved unsatisfactory to the whole company, from the first step taken toward carrying it out.

“And Sarai Abram’s wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife. And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes” (Gen. 16:3, 4). And although, as the record says, Sarai was the first to propose this plan, and that “Sarai . . . took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, . . . and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife,” yet, as soon as she found herself despised by Hagar, and this because of the success of Sarai’s own plan, she turned in reproach upon Abram, and said: “My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes” (Gen. 16:5).

“But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleases thee.” And when Sarai dealt “hardly with her” she ran away. (Gen. 16:6). And though the Lord told Hagar, “Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands,” it is evident that all was not peaceful and pleasant afterward. (Gen. 16:9).

Further, as we have seen, when, after Ishmael was born, Abram said to the Lord, “O that Ishmael might live before thee!” he was not heard; but Ishmael was plainly set

aside, and Abram was told that Sarai his wife should bear him a son indeed, and that he should call his name Isaac; “and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him” (Gen. 17:18, 19).

“Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.” “And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned. And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham’s sight because of his son. And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called” (Gen. 21:2, 8-12).

But not yet was the record clear. Abraham had swerved from the clear promise of God, and had put dependence in the flesh; and not only must the bondwoman and her son be cast out, but every item of that whole scheme which had brought in the bondwoman and her son must be utterly renounced and abandoned. Accordingly, the Lord said to Abraham: “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of” (Gen. 22:2).

Isaac was the child of promise. There was no other promise of a child, there could be no other such promise; and there could be no other child without another promise. And now for Abraham to offer Isaac for a burnt offering was, so far as could be seen, to take away all that had been promised. But when Abraham had looked thus far, he looked yet further, even back to the original promise of God, and trusted and expected that when he should offer Isaac, God would certainly fulfill his promise by raising him from the dead—by bringing him back from the ashes when he should have been burned in sacrifice.

This call of the Lord, therefore, to Abraham to offer Isaac for a burnt offering, brought Abraham back to the night of the original promise, when God had said to him: “Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him. So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness” (Gen. 15:5, 6).

Thus Abraham was brought to depend upon and trust in the naked promise of God alone, for all that the promise contained. And if Abraham had stood there from the

first and refused Sarai's suggestion with regard to Hagar, there would have been no such family trouble as came between Sarai and Hagar; Ishmael never would have been born; and Abraham would never have been called to offer Isaac. Had he from the first "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief" (Rom. 4:20), but been strong in faith, giving glory to God, fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform, righteousness might have been imputed to him throughout.

"These are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Hagar." The covenant at Sinai was the fruit of the flesh, of distrust and unbelief in God, just as was the plan that introduced Hagar and brought forth Ishmael. And just as Hagar and Ishmael, the bondwoman and her son, had to be cast out, and the whole scheme that brought them in had to be utterly repudiated, so the covenant from Mount Sinai had to be cast out, and all that brought it in had to be utterly repudiated.

As Abraham and Sarah had to cast out Hagar and Ishmael, and repudiate the whole scheme that had brought them in, and themselves come back to the original promise of God, to depend wholly upon that for all that was in it, so must the covenant from Sinai be cast out, and all that brought it in must be utterly repudiated by Israel and everybody else, and God's original covenant with Abraham be depended upon and trusted in, wholly and alone, for all that it promises. And so we read: —

"In delivering them from Egypt, God sought to reveal to them his power and his mercy, that they might be led to love and trust him. He brought them down to the Red Sea—where, pursued by the Egyptians, escape seemed impossible—that they might realize their utter helplessness, their need of divine aid; and then he wrought deliverance for them. Thus they were filled with love and gratitude to God, and with confidence in his power to help them. He had bound them to himself, as their deliverer from temporal bondage.

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

"God brought them to Sinai; he manifested his glory; he gave them his law, with the promise of great blessings on condition of obedience: "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then . . . ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Ex. 19:5, 6). The people did not realize the sinfulness of their own hearts, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God's law; and they

readily entered into covenant with God. Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, they declared, “All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient” (Ex. 24:7).

“They had witnessed the proclamation of the law in awful majesty, and had trembled with terror before the mount; and yet only a few weeks passed before they broke their covenant with God, and bowed down to worship a graven image. They could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant, which they had broken, and NOW, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Savior revealed in the Abrahamic covenant, and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. NOW by faith and love they were bound to God as their deliverer from the bondage of sin. NOW they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of THE NEW COVENANT” (Patriarchs and Prophets, pages 371, 372).

## 6. Introduction of “If” and “Then” - Galatians 4:21-24

Review and Herald, July 10, 1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants: the one from the Mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Hagar” (Gal. 4:21-24).

The covenant from Mount Sinai is the covenant that God made with the children of Israel when he took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt.

That covenant was faulty. “For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second” (Heb. 8:7).

That covenant was faulty in the promises: for the second covenant is “a better covenant” than that, in that it “was established upon better promises” (Heb. 8:6).

The fault in that covenant was primarily, in the people. “For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold the days come, saith the Lord when I will make a new covenant” (Heb. 8:8).

Therefore, since the fault of that covenant was in its promises, and the fault was primarily in the people themselves, it follows that the promises upon which that covenant was established were primarily the promises of the people.

What, then, were these promises? —They are in the covenant, which was made with them when they came forth out of Egypt, and here is that covenant: —

“Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” “And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do” (Ex. 19:4-6, 8).

In this agreement, all the people promised to obey the voice of the Lord. They had not yet heard what that voice would speak. But in the twentieth chapter, they heard that voice speaking the words of the Ten Commandments, to which, when the Lord had spoken, “he added no more.” And when they had heard this, they solemnly renewed their promise: “All that the Lord hath said will we do and be obedient.”

That this is the covenant that the Lord made with them when he took them by the hand to bring them out of Egypt, is made certain by the following words: —

“For I spoke not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices; but this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, AND I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you” (Jer. 7:22, 23).

And this certainly is confirmed in the following words: “Thus saith the Lord God of Israel: Cursed be the man that obeys not the words of this covenant, which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you; so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God” (Jer. 11:3, 4).

Note carefully each of these three statements of the covenant, and see how the promises are sequenced. The first one runs, on the part of the Lord: “IF ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, THEN . . . ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation,” etc. By this the Lord’s promises could not come in until they had fulfilled their promises; for the covenant begins with an “if.” “IF ye will” do so and so, “THEN” so and so.

This is the arrangement also in the second statement, “Obey my voice AND I will be your God, AND ye shall be my people.” According to this agreement, he was not to be their God, or they his people, until they had done what they promised; until they had obeyed his voice, as they had promised.

The third statement stands the same: “Obey my voice and do them, according to all which I command you: SO shall ye be my people, and I will be your God.” This makes it perfectly plain, not only that none of the Lord’s part could come in until they had done what they had promised; but that the Lord’s part was to come in BY THE DOING of what they had promised. “Obey my voice,” “and do;” “SO [in this way, by this means] shall ye be my people, and I will be your God.”

Since, then, in this covenant the Lord’s part, what the Lord could do, the Lord’s promises, could come in only in the secondary way as a consequence of the people’s doing what they had promised, it is perfectly plain that covenant rested, was established, only upon the promises of the people.



What, then, were these promises of the people worth? What had they promised? They had promised to obey the voice of the Lord indeed. They had promised to obey his law, —to keep the Ten Commandments, indeed.

But what was their condition when they made these promises? —It corresponded to the condition of Ishmael in the family of Abraham. They corresponded to Ishmael: they had been born only of the flesh, and knew only the birth of the flesh, and so had only the mind of the flesh. But “the minding of the flesh is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither in-deed can be.” “They that are in the flesh cannot please God.”

This being their condition, what could be the worth of any promises that they might make to keep the Ten Commandments indeed? —Any or all such promises could be worth simply nothing at all.

Accordingly, in that covenant, the people promised to do something that it was simply impossible for them to do. And since the Lord, with his promises, could not, in that covenant, come in until they had fulfilled their promises; until they had done what they agreed, it is certain that, for any practical purpose which the people discerned, or designed, that covenant was worth nothing at all, because the promises upon which it rested were worth nothing at all.

In the nature of things that covenant could only gender to bondage; because the people upon whose promises it rested were themselves already subject to the bondage of the flesh, the bondage of sin; and instead of keeping the commandments of God indeed, they would break them. And not only would they break the commandments, which they had promised not to break, but they would inevitably break the promises that they had made not to break the commandments. This simply because they were in a condition in which they were not subject to the law of God and could not be.

And this was demonstrated immediately. For, when Moses had gone up into the mount, to receive a copy of the law, which they had promised to “obey indeed,” he had been gone but forty days when they exclaimed: “Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him” (Ex. 32:1). And they made themselves a golden calf—the god of Egypt—and worshiped it, after the manner of Egypt; which shows that, in heart, they were still in Egyptian bondage, and were indeed as Ishmael, the son of Hagar the Egyptian, “born after the flesh.”

And though all this is written for the understanding of all people who should come afterward, and for our admonition “upon whom the ends of the world are come,” it is a

singular fact that even today there are persons who, knowing only the birth of the flesh, not having been born again, not knowing the birth of the Spirit, yet will enter into exactly such a covenant; and will sign to it, to keep all the commandments of God indeed. But the trouble with these is just the trouble that was with the people at Sinai, as it is always the trouble with people at Sinai: “They had no true conception of the holiness of God; of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts . . . Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, **THEY DECLARED:** ‘All that the Lord hath said will we do and be obedient.’”

Of course the questions arise here, “Why, then, were they allowed of the Lord to enter into such a covenant? Why did the Lord make such a covenant with them?” The answer to these questions will be given next week.

## 7. Old Covenant Leads to New - Galatians 4:21-31

Review and Herald - July 17, 1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Hagar. For this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem, which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not: break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free” (Gal. 4:21-31).

The first covenant was faulty. It was faulty in the promises; because it rested primarily upon the promises of the people wherein the people promised something that it was impossible for them to do.

Why, then, were they allowed of the Lord to enter into such a covenant? Did he not know that the people could not do what they promised? —To be sure, he did.

But the people did not know it. “Living [in Egypt] in the midst of idolatry and corruption, they had no true conception of the holiness of God; of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts; their utter inability, in themselves, to render obedience to God’s law; and their need of a Saviour. ALL THIS THEY MUST BE TAUGHT. God brought them to Sinai; he manifested his glory; he gave them his law, with the promise of great blessings on condition of obedience. The people did not realize the sinfulness of their own hearts, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God’s law; and they readily entered into covenant with God. Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, they declared, ‘All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.’”

Since the people did not know these essential things concerning themselves; —“their utter inability, etc.; --since they would not believe God, so that they could know; — and since “all this they must be taught,” —the only sure means by which they could be caused to learn this which they did not know was to have them try, and fail; and so

learn by experience that they could not of themselves establish their own righteousness as the righteousness of God. Then they would be willing to accept by faith God's righteousness, which is established by faith.

This is all perfectly plain from the circumstances of the case.

As we have seen in a former study, before they left Egypt the Lord had said: "I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God" (Ex. 6:7). Now is it not perfectly plain that if they had believed this, they would have known that He was already the Lord their God, and they would not have needed to enter into this bargain to get the Lord to be their God, and to make themselves his people.

If they had believed, by his own word, that he was already their God, and that so they were already his people; and if they had known that he was already the Lord their God (Ex. 6:7), would they have needed to promise that they would keep his law "indeed" so that they might be his people, and he be their God? —Plainly, no.

If they had believed that the Lord would "give" to them "for an heritage" the inheritance that he had sworn to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob (Ex. 6:8), could there ever have been found any place for a bargain into which they would enter, and according to which they would, by works, earn that inheritance? —Plainly, no.

In other words: If they had received God, by faith, in these things which he had promised to them before they left Egypt, would they have needed to undertake to win him to them in those things, by their own works? —Plainly, no.

In other words: If they had known, and had been in, God's covenant with Abraham, the everlasting covenant, would they have ever needed to know, or to enter into, this other covenant at Sinai, which in substance was only their own, because it rested only on their promises? —Plainly, no.

Following back the thought to its original in the parallel, in these verses in Galatians, the parallel question is, —

If Sarai and Abram had believed God's promise and had held fast only to that, would Ishmael ever have found a place in the family of Abraham? Would two sons ever have been born to Abraham? —Plainly, no.

Plainly, then, there never was any need of Abraham's having more than one son, the son that God had promised. Yet, "these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Hagar."

And just as there was never any need of Abraham's having but one son, —the son that God had promised, —so there was no need for Israel ever to have but the one covenant—the covenant of God with Abraham—the everlasting covenant.

Just as there was no need of those two sons, so there was no need of the two covenants.

And as, through unbelief and distrust of God, Hagar and Ishmael were brought in on the side; just so, through unbelief and distrust of God, the covenant at Sinai was brought in on the side.

And as Hagar and Ishmael never had any recognition at all in the promise that God made to give Abraham a son, just so the covenant at Sinai never had any recognition at all in God's promise of salvation to mankind.

As Hagar and Ishmael had to be cast out, and all that had brought them in had to be utterly repudiated, in order that the son whom God had promised should have the place that belonged to him; just so the covenant at Sinai had to be cast out, and all that brought it in had to be utterly repudiated, on the part of the people, upon whose promises alone that covenant rested, in order that God's original covenant—the covenant with Abraham—the everlasting covenant—should have the place that belongs to it, in the life and salvation of men.

Yet, as the troubles and the failure of Sarai and Abram in the scheme that brought in Hagar and Ishmael, were instrumental in bringing them at last to the point where they did trust implicitly in the promise of God alone; so the trouble and the dismal failure that Israel experience in the first covenant brought them to the point where they appreciated, and implicitly trusted in, God's original covenant, —the covenant with Abraham, —his everlasting covenant, —which he had given them before they left Egypt at all.

For, as we have seen, Israel broke both the law of God and their covenant not to break it. And when Moses came down from the mount, having in his hands the table of the law that they had covenanted to obey "indeed," and saw what they had done, "he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount" (Ex. 32:19), "thus signifying that as they had broken their covenant with God, so God had broken his covenant with them" (Patriarchs and Prophets, page 320).

They thus found themselves stranded, and utterly helpless, with all their resources utterly exhausted. For “they could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken; and now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Saviour revealed in the Abrahamic covenant, and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. Now they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant” (Id., page 372).

Thus the covenant from Sinai brought them to the covenant with Abraham. The first brought them to the second covenant. The old covenant brought them to the new covenant. And thus the law, which was the basis of that covenant, —the broken law, —was the schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, that they might be justified by faith.

Please review this study closely and carefully; for, in the next studies, we pass from this to the new covenant.

## 8. The Covenants Contrasted - Galatians 4:21-24, 28

Review and Herald, July 24, 1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants . . . Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise” (Gal.4:21-24, 28).

As Ishmael was born altogether of the flesh, without any promise of God, but from distrust and unbelief of the promise of God, so was the first covenant—the covenant from Sinai.

And as Isaac was born altogether of the promise of God, solely from dependence upon that promise, so is the new covenant—the everlasting covenant.

The first covenant rested upon the promises of the people, and depended solely upon the efforts of the people. The second covenant consists solely of the promise of God, and depends upon the power and work of God.

The first covenant runs: “If YE will” do so and so. The new covenant has neither “if” nor any of men’s doing, but is altogether the doing of the Lord. Look at them as they stand together: —

### The Old Covenant

“If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” “Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.” “Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you: SO shall ye be my people, and I will be your God” (Ex. 19:5, 6; Jer. 7:23; 11:4).

### The New Covenant

“I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people, and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more” (Heb. 8:10-12).

Let us read the new covenant, beginning with at “If ye will,” etc.: “If ye will put my laws into your minds, and write them in your hearts, then I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.” “Put my laws in your minds, and write them in your hearts, that I may be your God, and ye may be my people.”

If the new covenant read thus, how many persons could ever become the Lord’s people? And of how many persons could He ever be their God? —None at all; because no person can write the law of God in his heart; no person can put the law of God into his mind; for “the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Nothing short of the power of God alone, through the eternal Spirit, can ever put the law of God in anybodys mind, or write it in his heart.

Yet, to do just this, was practically what the people of Israel agreed to do at Sinai, in the old covenant. For they agreed to keep the law of God “indeed,” which no person can do without that law being put into his mind, and written in his heart. They agreed to keep the law of God “indeed,” SO that, in order that, they could be his people, and he be their God. Their agreement, therefore, was plainly in effect that they themselves would put the law of God in their minds, and write it in their hearts; and this when, as yet, they knew only the birth of the flesh; when, as yet, they had only the carnal mind, which “is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”

Thus it was by their own efforts that they were to be righteous; and by this righteousness they were to make themselves God’s people, and win him to be their God.

Thus that covenant was altogether one of works; of righteousness by works; of winning the favor of God by works; of salvation by works.

It was a covenant in which, because of their works, the reward was to be not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

It was a covenant by which there was no such thing as the forgiveness of sins: it was of bondage, and gendered only to bondage.

And this is why that covenant is brought into this letter of instruction to the Galatians. The Galatians were seeking righteousness by works, by their own efforts. They were seeking to be “made perfect by the flesh.” But whatsoever Christian seeks righteousness, or to be perfect, in that way, has fallen from grace. He has indeed



forsaken grace; because “to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.” And “if it be of works, then it is no more grace” (Rom. 4:4; 11:6).

This was the position and the condition of “the Pharisees, which believed,” who had led the Galatians astray. Into a system of righteousness by works, and of seeking to be made perfect by the flesh, the Pharisees that believed had turned everything that God had given them to save them from the bondage of self-righteousness and the works of the flesh; and they would even have perverted to that false system the very gospel of Christ itself.

On the other hand, the new covenant is wholly of grace, and of the work of God by grace.

It is a covenant in which the work is solely the work of God, and righteousness is the righteousness of God.

It is a covenant in which every one who shares it is born of the Spirit, and who thus receives a new mind and a new heart, in which mind the law of God is put, and upon which heart that law is written by the Spirit of the living God.

It is a covenant in which, by the creative power of the promise of God, each one who submits to that promise is created a child of God. “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10).

It is a covenant in which, solely because of the mercy of God, and by his promise, there is obtained forgiveness of sins, full and free: the sins and iniquities to be remembered no more forever.

It is a covenant by which indeed forgiveness must be found for the sins of the people even under the first covenant. For “he [Christ] is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance” (Heb. 9:15).

Note, again, that in the new covenant there is no mention of any doing on the part of the people. The doing is all of God: “I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts.” “I will be to them a God.” “I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more” (Heb. 8:12).

In the new covenant it is God who is the worker. “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13). It is “through the blood of the everlasting covenant,” that “the God of peace” makes “you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ.” who is the “surety” of this “better testament” (Heb. 13:20, 21; 7:22).

The only way in which the people come into this covenant is passively: they must submit themselves unto the righteousness of God. (Rom. 10:3). They “yield” themselves unto God and their “members as instruments of righteousness unto God” (Rom. 6:13).

Thus, whoever is partaker of this covenant in any way whatever, is partaker of it wholly by the promise of God; and so becomes, “as Isaac was,” a child of promise.

There is no other way to be a partaker of the new covenant than by the promise of God: for there is nothing in the covenant but the naked promises of God. There is no way to be a child of God, but by the promise of God: that promise accepted by faith. Our sins are forgiven, our unrighteousness is pardoned, because God says it, and by the word of that promise we know it. He who accepts and depends only on the promise of God is of the people of God because God has said it. God is his God, because God has said it. The law of God is in his mind, and is written upon his heart, because God has promised that he will put it in his mind and write it on his heart; and he has submitted himself to God to have it done by God. And having so submitted himself to the righteousness of God, he rests securely in the promise of God in Christ, who is the mediator and the surety of the new covenant. And “this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent” (John 6:29).

The old covenant consisted, and ever consists, of the promises and the works, of the people who know only the birth and the mind of the flesh. The new covenant consists forever of the promises and the works of righteousness of God in those who know the birth of the Spirit by the promise of God.

## 9. Self or Christ? - Galatians 4:21-31; 5:1

Review and Herald, July 31, 1900

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Hagar. For this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem, which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now, we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Gal. 4:21-31; 5:1).

The first covenant depended upon the promises of a people, who knew only the birth of the flesh. These promises were that they would keep the Ten Commandments “indeed.” But, knowing only the birth of the flesh, they were, at the time, transgressors of the law of God, and so were in bondage to sin. And knowing only the birth of the flesh, and having only the mind of the flesh, their promise to obey the law of God “indeed,” was worthless, because “the minding of the flesh is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom. 8:7).

If they had made no promise at all to obey the law, they would have broken it; because they knew only the birth of the flesh, and “they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Therefore, without any promise to keep the law, without the new birth, they would have continued in the bondage of sin. And when they promised to keep the law “indeed,” and then broke their promise (which, having only the mind of the flesh, it was inevitable that they would do), this brought them only yet deeper into bondage, because to “vow a vow unto the Lord,” and then “slack to pay it,” is “sin in thee” (Deut. 23:21).

Therefore, that covenant being entered into by those who were already in bondage, and being a covenant which, by its terms, gendered to bondage, it was only a covenant of bondage—a covenant in which their very efforts to deliver themselves from the bondage in which they already were, brought them only deeper into bondage, the

bondage of sin, the bondage of their own works and broken promises, which were only sin.

Consequently, all that was seen, or could be seen, in the first covenant was, and is, the broken law. And that this should be forever so plain that no one could fail to see it, when Moses came down from the mount and saw their idolatry, he, having the tables of the law of God in his hands, “cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount” (Ex. 32:19).

They were at first breakers of the law. They promised never more to break the law. They again broke both the law and their promise not to break it. And when, therefore, because of this, Moses cast out of his hands the tables of the law of God, and broke them, this was to give to them, and to all people forever, a divine object lesson, that in the first covenant, in all their efforts at self-righteousness, and in all their promises not to break the law, no one can ever see anything but THE BROKEN LAW.

But, there was then and there present the Abrahamic covenant, the covenant of faith, God’s everlasting covenant, to deliver them from the bondage and the yoke of bondage that was upon them because of the covenant of works, of unbelief, into which they had entered. “They could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken” —through a covenant in which nothing could be seen but the broken law of God. “And now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Saviour, revealed in the Abrahamic covenant and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings.”

It was the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which Moses pleaded to God, for mercy to the people worshipping the golden calf at the foot of the mount, while he was yet in the mount, before he had come down the first time. Notice: in Ex. 32:1-6 is given the account of the people’s making the golden calf and worshipping it. In verse seven “the Lord said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou brought out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it . . . Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them” (Ex. 32:7-10).

“And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? . . . Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swore by thine own self, and said unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of

heaven, and all this land I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever. And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.” (Ex. 32:11-14).

Thus it was the Abrahamic covenant, God’s everlasting covenant that saved the people from the bondage and the curse of their sins, in the first covenant. And so it is ever. (Heb. 9:15.)

Then Moses came down from the mount, with the tables of the law in his hands, and cast out of his hands the tables of the law, and broke them, thus “signifying that as they had broken their covenant with God, so God had broken his covenant with them;” and signifying that in that covenant there was nothing to be seen but the broken law; and that they “could not hope for the favor of God through a covenant which they had broken.” And “now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought to feel their need of the Saviour revealed in the Abrahamic covenant, and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings. Now by faith and love they were bound to God as their deliverer from the bondage of sin. Now they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant” (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 373).

Thus the covenant from Sinai brought them to the covenant with Abraham. The first covenant brought them to the second covenant. The old covenant brought them to the new covenant. And thus the law, which was the basis of that covenant, —the broken law, —was the schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, that they might be justified by faith.

Thus “the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these table the words that were in the first tables, which thou breakest” (Ex. 34:1). And, says Moses, “I made an ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand. And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the Ten Commandments, which the Lord spoke unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the Lord gave them unto me. And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the Lord commanded me” (Deut. 10: 3-5).

There was then established among the people the sanctuary service, with “the Saviour shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings;” and with Christ, “the Mediator of the new covenant,” the “one Mediator between God and men,” represented by the high priest in his ministration in the sanctuary. To that sanctuary they brought, in penitence and faith, their offering, and confessed their sin. The blood of their offering was taken by

the high priest into the sanctuary, atonement was made for them, and the sin was forgiven. And in the great Day of Atonement the blood of the offering for all the people was sprinkled upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat, which was upon the top of the ark, over the tables of the law.

Thus between the sinner and the law there was always the sacrifice, representing Christ (and which, in his faith, was Christ, the Surety of the “better testament”), by which was brought to the sinner the forgiveness of sins, and the righteousness of God, which satisfied all the demands of the law. And thus, through faith in Christ, in this covenant in which Christ is Mediator, and of which he is the Surety, there is seen only the unbroken law.

Such was, and is, the true meaning of the new order of things at Sinai, after the breaking of the table, and after the complete nullification of the first covenant. It was the way of faith, the way of the “righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe” (Rom. 3:22).

But, behold, in their unbelief Israel afterward turned all this into a system of works, precisely as was the first covenant. And those sacrifices and offerings, and the ceremonies connected therewith, were given by the Lord to be altogether the expression of faith. But Israel, in their unbelief, missed all this, and made it only a system of works, of ceremonialism. Instead of righteousness coming by faith, and the sacrifices and offerings being but the expression of the faith, they expected righteousness by means of the offering itself, and because of their good work in making the offering.

Thus it was in the time of Christ on earth, and in the time of Paul and the Galatians. Thus it was with “the Pharisees, which believed,” who had confused the Galatians and driven them back from righteousness by faith to righteousness by works and ceremonialism. And, therefore, Paul could write, and did write, “that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Hagar. For this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children” (Gal. 4:22-25).

Thus the very means that God had given to deliver them from the bondage of the old covenant they, through unbelief, had turned into a system of bondage, which corresponded exactly to that bondage of the old covenant. They had, indeed, perverted

the new covenant as then expressed, into the very principle of the old covenant—righteousness by works. That which was the gospel as expressed in the sacrifices, offerings, and ministry of that time, they perverted to the bondage of righteousness by works, and ceremonialism, exactly as among the Galatians the “Pharisees, which believed” were perverting the gospel as expressed in the sacrifice and ministry of Christ himself.

And just as Hagar and Ishmael were cast out, that God’s covenant with Abraham might be fully enjoyed; and just as the covenant at Sinai had to be repudiated and cast out, that the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, the new covenant, might be enjoyed; so when Christ came, and, by the sacrifice and offering of himself and by his own ministration, brought in the fullness of the gospel, —in order that this should be fully enjoyed, there must be repudiated and cast out that system of ceremonies and ceremonialism, that system of righteousness by works, into which Israel had perverted that which in its time was indeed the expression of the true gospel, of righteousness by faith. “Jerusalem which now is . . . is in bondage with her children . . . Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman.” “Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all . . . Now, we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.”

And thus was cast out forever the very principle of ceremonialism, —the very principle of the bondage of righteousness by works in whatever form it might present itself; and there was established in its place the principle of divine liberty in righteousness by faith. “So then, brethren, we are not the children of the bondwoman, but of the free.” And because of this there is sounded to all people forever the blessed rallying cry, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Gal. 5:1).

The old covenant, the covenant from Sinai, is summed up in the word “SELF.” The new covenant, the everlasting covenant, is summed up in the word “CHRIST.”

The old covenant is self and his righteousness. The new covenant is Christ and the righteousness of God.

The old covenant is self and the bondage of sin and works of law. The new covenant is Christ and the liberty of righteousness, which is by faith.

The old covenant—self—must be cast out, and utterly repudiated, that the new covenant—Christ—may have its proper place and may manifest its saving power, for the son of the bondwoman can never be heir with the son of the free.

## *The Two Covenants In Galatians*

It was an incredible joy to discover the Father and Son relationship as expressed in 1 Cor 8:6 provided the key to unlocking so many complexities of Scripture that has previously been shrouded in mystery or simply were unknown. That key which described is the booklet *Divine Pattern of Life* reveals the Father as the source of all things and the Son as the channel of all this. This source and channel relationship has its signature upon many elements that are coupled together. Man and wife, Old and New Testament, Holy and Most Holy Place, Sabbath and Feasts, Sun and Moon, all of these things have found greater clarity in light of the Divine Pattern. It makes complete sense that knowing the relation of God and His Son would open for us the key to unlocking many mysteries in Scripture.

In 2015 I pondered whether the two covenants mentioned in Scripture operated in this divine pattern where one covenant led to the other. Operating in an oppositional system the Old Covenant that leads to death is placed in opposition to the New Covenant which leads to life. This framework gives the sense that the Old Covenant is bad and the New Covenant is good. The Old should be avoided and the New embraced. As I pondered these things the text in 2 Cor 3:7 was suddenly illuminated where Paul states that the ministration of death written and engraved in stone was *glorious*. If it was glorious then it was a good thing. It then became apparent that in order to be born again that one must first die and then be born again. This places death and life in a sequence where one follows the other. This means that the Old Covenant is the channel through which one must enter into the New Covenant. Both covenants actually work together where one brings you to the other.

In the following year while conducting meetings in Northern Germany I was reading the book *Studies in Galatians* by A.T. Jones and within this book I found the confirmation I had been looking for.

Thus the covenant from Sinai brought them to the covenant with Abraham. The first brought them to the second covenant. The old covenant brought them to the new covenant. And thus the law, which was the basis of that covenant, —the broken law, —was the schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, that they might be justified by faith. A.T. Jones RH July 17, 1900

The significance of this fact cannot be overstated. It is the process of the Old Covenant leading to the New Covenant that causes the process of the schoolmaster that brings the soul to Christ that they might be justified by faith.