

## THE NEW COVENANT.

God's first effort to have an obedient people seemed a failure. Adam and Eve were evidently perfect in body, soul and spirit, having been created in the Divine image. Why, then, did they not withstand temptation? It looks like everything was in their favor. There was no trouble, no pain, no error, no death. All was beautiful and peaceful and joyous. God, Himself, visited them in the "cool of the day," and their fellowship with Him was natural and pleasant. Why, oh why, did they fail and bring such ruin and suffering on the human race?

If we look deep enough we shall see the reason. It was not because of the many cares and sorrows, for they had none. Nor was it because they lacked the good things of this life, because they had all that heart should wish. This teaches us one useful lesson: that favorable surroundings and outside influences cannot cause us to triumph in our spiritual life. It is not the Bible student who argues that "we all are the creatures of circumstances; we are what our environment makes us." No, our first parents in spite of living in "heaven upon earth," fell and introduced the history of a world so sinful that at the time of Noah, "it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and grieved Him at His heart."

God's second effort to have an obedient people was by the call of Abraham and the giving of the law to Moses. That this was an improvement on the first glorious scheme I have no doubt. Here, in the wilderness, outward circumstances were adverse in the extreme, affording God opportunity to supply their needs in a miraculous way. For forty years they ate "angels' food" while "their clothes waxed not old." The pillar of cloud by day and fire by night was constantly before their eyes, speaking of God's protection, guidance and presence, while the ten great plagues of Egypt followed by the final overthrow of Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea, was a theme of daily conversation. God Himself descended in fire and a thick cloud on Mount Sinai, and they heard His voice pronounce all the words of the ten commandments, afterwards written on the tables of stone. What more could man ask?

Favorable environment in Eden even with daily visits from the Creator, had failed to fortify the soul of man against temptation. Now a different plan was tried. God was constantly with them in visible presence, while not a day passed without the manifestation of some miracle. Yet God himself found "fault" with this marvellous scheme and promised a "new covenant," better than that given to Moses on the mount (Heb. 8:8-10). Here again is a lesson for us, not to place too much confidence in demonstration or miracle as a means to obedience. One must keep one's eyes not upon manifestations or even transfigurations, but upon Jesus only.

That the "law, given by Moses," without the "grace and truth," that "came by Jesus Christ," is a failure is clearly shown by Jewish history. Sinning, being punished, repenting, only again to fall into deeper sin is their history briefly

told. This continued from the first until the coming of their Messiah found them in what might be called their darkest ages, when, for more than four hundred years, they had not heard from heaven.

Then, about forty years after they had rejected and crucified their countryman and Saviour the Christ, they were dispersed among all nations to bear silent testimony to the truth of the Bible, until "the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." At that time, near at hand we hope, they as a nation, will be restored and grafted in as a "natural olive branch." They are to come back to Palestine (which is now taking place) and when Jesus returns to reign during the millenium, He will be their long expected king.

Thus, though the chosen people and the giving of the law seemed a complete failure, yet in the wisdom of God, all this serves a great purpose in his complete plan for mankind. Even the first Eden represents the second when God's people shall have been restored to his image and shall have had their original weakness remedied.

The only cure for sin is Jesus. We read "His name shall be called Jesus, for He shall save his people from their sins." "If the law," says Paul, "could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." "He is our life." "In him is all the fulness of the God head bodily," and "ye are complete in Him." God's third effort to have an obedient people is not a failure. Outside circumstances, though adverse, can not "separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus." The Holy Spirit writes God's law of love upon our hearts and in our minds (Heb. 10:16). The Comforter abides fulfilling God's wonderful prophecy in Eze. 36:27. "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and ye shall keep my judgment and do them."

In the days of Moses, God took of the Spirit that was upon him and put it upon the seventy elders, but not upon the masses, as at Pentecost. So Joel, in prophecy, shows that God had reserved His new covenant for the last days. This is the real core of the experience. Christ within, spoken of in Col. 1:26, as the "mystery which hath been so hid from ages and from generations." This blessed experience is now for all who believe and accept Jesus. See John 7:39 and Acts 2:39.

The way is not complex but simple: the receiving of a gift. Jesus was the "unspeakable gift" of God to a lost world. Some received and crowned Him, while the majority crucified him. All who hear the gospel must answer that question, "What will you do with Jesus?" Every individual must receive Christ or reject him; must crown Him or crucify Him.

When we receive and crown Him Lord of our whole being, then it is that we have the vital, moral strength that was the lack of our first parents and the disciples of Moses. The one thing they needed was the Holy Spirit within. We should praise God that we live in the 'last days,' instead of in Eden or among those who crossed the Red Sea and Jordan.

After crowning Christ within, it is easy to learn of Him and find Him being made unto us "wisdom, righteousness, sanctifi-

cation and redemption." Even the peace that rules our hearts as well as the "joy unspeakable and full of glory" is His and from Him. All we have and all we are is His. As we yield to Him we find Him working in us "to will and to do His good pleasure." Constant victory is ours for we are fortified by the "law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," which hath "made us free from the law of sin and death." This is the secret of our success and answers the question, "Why did they in Eden fall?" The second Adam, the mighty victor, who was manifested to destroy the works and power of the devil, lives "within," imparting His life, making us overcomers where the disciples of Moses failed. His incoming is that of an abiding King and Lover. His strength and virtues are manifested by our daily life, so that "He that saith He abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as he walked."

This life is "as the days of heaven upon earth, because in this union we find our elements, the end for which we were created. We have partaken of the tree of knowledge of good and evil with the first Adam; but found forgiveness and redemption in the second Adam, who has given us "to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God," where we shall live forever and reign with Him.

H. C. SAUNDERS.

## THE WILL OF GOD.

Thou sweet, beloved will of God,  
My anchor or ground, my fortress hill,  
My spirit's silent, fair abode,  
In Thee I hide me, and am still.

O will, that willest good alone,  
Lead Thou the way, Thou guidest best;  
A little child, I follow on,  
And, trusting, lean upon Thy breast.

Thy beautiful, sweet will, my God,  
Holds fast in its sublime embrace  
My captive will, a gladsome bird,  
Prisoned in such a realm of grace.

Within this place of certain good  
Love evermore expands her wings,  
Or nestling in Thy perfect choice,  
Abides content with what it brings.

Oh, lightest burden, sweetest yoke,  
It lifts, it bears my happy soul,  
It giveth wings to this poor heart;  
My freedom is Thy grand control.

Upon God's will I lay me down,  
As child upon its mother's breast;  
No silken couch, nor softest bed,  
Could ever give me such deep rest.

Thy wonderful grand will, my God,  
With triumph now I make it mine;  
And faith shall cry a joyous "Yes!"  
To every dear command of Thine.

—Madame Gpyon.

Don't go around mourning because you haven't some one else's gift. Take the armor God has given you, and if He has given you a sling and a little stone, go out and do your work.—D. L. Moody.