

STUDY VII

THE LAW OF THE NEW CREATION

The Giving of a Law Implies Ability to Keep that Law--The Divine Law as Originally Written--A Law of Life Could Not be Given to the Fallen Race--Redemption Not of Law, but of Grace--Law Covenant Fulfilled and New Covenant Sealed by the One Sacrifice of Christ--Sinaitic Law to Fleshly Israel Only--The Law of the New Covenant--The Commandment under which the Saints are Developed--New Creation Separate and Distinct in Divine Relation and in Covenant--Growth in Appreciation of the Perfect Law--Running for the Mark and Standing Fast Thereat--The Golden Rule--The Perfect Law of Liberty.

THE giving of a law by any competent authority implies an ability on the part of the recipient to keep that law, or some arrangement for the condoning of offenses under it. The giving of a law presupposes the possibility of its violation, and, hence, a law always has penalties attached to it. In the case of father Adam, who, we are told, was created in the image and likeness of God, and upon whom came a sentence or curse because of disobedience to the divine will, we reason backward that a law must have been given him, and that it was sufficiently explicit, otherwise he could not have been justly condemned as a transgressor by his Creator. We are distinctly told that the sin of Eden was disobedience to a divine command. The justice of the sentence of death which came upon Adam, and through him in a natural way extended to his posterity, implied his comprehension of the law he was under, and that he knowingly transgressed it: otherwise the fault would have been with the lawgiver. That Adam was in a condition to receive the divine law, and to obey it, is evidenced also by the fact that

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there was no provision for the condoning of that law--no mediator--but as the result of the violation the full penalty came upon him.

We have no record to the effect that the Creator presented to father Adam and mother Eve a code of laws written

in stone or otherwise; and such a codification of laws being common today, because of human weaknesses, many are unable to see in what manner the perfect Adam possessed a perfect law, under which he was tried and, through failure, condemned. It is a mistake to suppose that laws must be written externally--upon paper, stone, etc.--and not to realize that a still higher form of writing the divine Law would be in the creation of man so in harmony with the principles of righteousness that it would be proper to say that the divine Law--an appreciation of right and wrong--was written in the perfect organism. In this manner God's Law is written in his own being and in that of all the angelic hosts, and thus, also, the divine Law was written in the very constitution of Adam and Eve. They were not prone to sin. They were, instead, inclined to righteousness. They were righteous, surrounded by righteous and perfect conditions, and conscious of their obligations to their Creator, and aware of their responsibilities to obey his every command; and they knew, not vaguely, but precisely, what he had commanded. They were, therefore, without excuse in their transgression. Mercy might make apologies for them, claiming their inexperience, etc., in respect to the penalties; but the fact that they may not have fully comprehended what constituted the penalties for sin does not alter the other fact that they knew the right course from the wrong one. They knew that it was right to obey God and wrong to disobey him--entirely apart from an appreciation of what calamities would follow the disobedience. The Apostle confirms the Genesis account in all these particulars, saying that, "Adam was not deceived"--that he committed transgression knowingly, wilfully, and that he thus brought upon himself the curse, or sentence of wilful sin, which his Creator had previously declared, viz., death.

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As we look about us today we find that the world in general has lost to a considerable extent this original likeness of God in which our first parents were created--they have lost much more than intuitive appreciation of right and wrong. The divine law, once clearly and distinctly implanted in the human nature, has been, in a very large measure, effaced during the past six thousand years of the "reign of sin and death." God, through his communications with some of the human family, has to a considerable extent revived the original law in many hearts, retracing more or less deeply the various features of righteousness; and yet, even amongst

the most civilized and most Christianized, none dare trust, unqualifiedly, his own judgment of right and wrong on various questions. We therefore still need to have set before us certain divine standards to which we can go, and according to which we can correct our estimates of right and wrong, and bring them nearer and nearer to the divine mark. Nevertheless, even amongst the most degraded peoples of the heathen world, we frequently find elements of conscience, and certain more or less crude conceptions of right and wrong. These are the warped and twisted remnants of the original law of man's being, in harmony with which he was originally created an "image of God." The Apostle refers to this condition of things amongst the heathen, saying, "Their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or excusing one another." He declares that they thus "show the work of the law written in their hearts"--remnants of the original law, fragmentary proofs that it once was innate in humanity. **Rom. 2:15**

There are amongst men laws for criminals and laws for those who are not criminals--(1) laws of citizenship, which guarantee life, peace, liberty, etc., to the obedient, and which correspondingly threaten violators with a loss of liberty, privileges, etc., in prison. (2) Laws governing convicts with more extreme severity, unless a course of moderation is pursued; but in no sense of the word offering them liberties.

So it is also with the divine law. We have, first, the original law under which Adam was placed on trial. He had

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privileges and blessings to begin with--life, peace, happiness, and every needful thing. These it guaranteed him so long as he would remain obedient to his Creator: and a death penalty was attached to disobedience--"Dying thou shalt die"; and this penalty extended in a natural way to his posterity. Hence, from the time of Adam's transgression, he was a culprit, a convict, deprived of life-hopes previously enjoyed; deprived of his Eden home; deprived of his former fellowship with his Creator. The unprepared earth was his great penitentiary, and the tomb his perpetual prison. The law which reigned over him previously had now come to an end, in the sense that it no longer held out to him any hopes or prospects of life, but had already sentenced him to death. He was no longer under the law of life, nor were any of his children born under that law of life, or with any hope or prospect of attaining everlasting life: they were all prisoners. Sin and death were, figuratively speaking, their captors

and tormentors and prison-keepers.

But if the original law could no longer operate toward them, but had already expressed its vengeance against them, they found themselves, nevertheless, under certain natural laws. They found a law operating in their prison condition by which every violation of their consciences, every plunge deeper into that which they recognized as sin, brought degradation and death the more swiftly to them; and the more carefully they sought to follow that which they recognized as right, the more favorable did they find their imprisoned condition to be, although nothing even hinted at any release.

The Apostle suggests that it was not possible that God should give to our fallen race a law of life. They were justly sentenced, and so long as that *sentence* remained no law could be given them the keeping of which would secure them release from death. Before any such law of life could be given to the human family, the sentence of the first law must be met, and its curse or condemnation must be lifted; *then* other arrangements might be made, including offers of

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eternal life upon conditions--but not until that atonement for the first transgression, and that cancellation of its sentence, had been effected. The Lord gave intimations of his intention to effect some such atonement for sin, in order to give to mankind another opportunity for eternal life, instead of the one given to father Adam and lost by him for himself and for all of his posterity. But the divine promises were extremely vague, merely enough for a basis of hope; hence, the human family as prisoners under the control of Sin and Death are, on the strength of the divine promises, spoken of as "prisoners of hope."

One of these intimations of an atonement, etc., was given in the Lord's words at the time of pronouncing the sentence, when he declared that the seed of the woman should ultimately bruise the serpent's head. (*Gen. 3:15*) In this dark and figurative language the Lord spoke of the reversal of the powers of evil; of a victory that should come through, as well as to, the Adamic family. This seed of the woman, as we are all aware, reached fulfilment in Christ. Four thousand years after the degradation God sent forth his Son, "born of a woman," and thus a member of, and identified with, the condemned race, "that he by the grace of God should taste *death* for every man"--should meet the *penalty* for every man, should roll back from every man the *curse*, or

sentence of death--should grant to every man, therefore, such a judicial standing as would permit again that a law of life might be given--the keeping of which would bring a reward of life eternal.

But before the time came for God to send forth his Son, and to accomplish through him the redemption of the race from the curse of death, he had a certain peculiar dealing with Abraham and his family, known subsequently as the Israelites. First of all, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob God gave promises of more or less explicitness, informing them of his benevolent intentions to bless all the families of the earth. Such a message to come from the great Judge who had condemned the race meant much: it meant either the

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violation of Justice, in the lifting of the curse, or sentence, or else that the great Supreme Court of the Universe had a plan by which it could be just and, nevertheless, exercise mercy toward such members of the race as should show themselves worthy of it, by coming into harmony with his righteous arrangements. The Patriarchs rejoiced in these promises, and more or less clearly realized a future life by a resurrection of the dead, which should be profitable not only to them and to their posterity, but which should mean eventually a blessing to every creature of the race.

It was in view of this promise to Abraham that the Lord placed a special Law upon his children, the Israelites, at Mount Sinai. That Law was the basis of a Covenant with them. If they would keep that Law, then all the promises should be theirs. That Law was recognized as being perfect, just and good in all of its particulars; but because the Israelites were fallen, depraved, imperfect, it was, therefore, necessary, first, that a mediator should be appointed, viz., Moses; and, secondly, that a means should be found by which the transgressions of the people against this Law could be typically remitted once every year, and they be thus permitted to continue in their efforts to keep the Law from generation to generation. The institution of this mediatorship of Moses and of the typical sacrifices for sins, etc., all show that the people to whom this Covenant and Law were given were recognized as being incapable of absolute obedience to it. This shows sharply in contrast with the original giving of the Law in Eden, where no mediator was provided and no arrangement made for weaknesses of the flesh. This fact alone tells us, in unquestionable language, that the first Adam was perfect in his Creator's image

and likeness, and that he was capable of absolute obedience to the divine Law. It tells us that the race had, in the interim, fallen greatly; because the arrangements made in connection with the Mosaic Law were such as befitted fallen, depraved men.

Moreover, we have the Apostle's assurance that no Jew except our Lord Jesus ever did keep the Law, and that only

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Jesus, therefore, has gained, or could have gained, the rewards of that Law Covenant made with Israel. The Apostle's words are, "By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in his sight." That Law, therefore, served the double purpose (1) of showing that none of the fallen race could keep the divine Law or could be acceptable in God's sight; and (2) it declared our Lord Jesus to be perfect, in that he kept the Law which no imperfect person could keep. In thus keeping the Law he became the sole heir of the Covenant made with Abraham. He was thus designated the foretold Seed of Abraham, in whom all the families of the earth would be blessed. That Covenant, reaching its fulfilment thus in Christ Jesus, terminated, so far as the promised seed of blessing was concerned. Nevertheless, as we look back carefully at the promise, we find that in some respects, at least, it was double--that it included a spiritual seed and also an earthly seed, as implied in the promise: "Thy seed shall be *as* the stars of heaven, and *as* the sand of the sea." **Gen. 22:17**

Our Lord Jesus, having fulfilled the Covenant, has the entire matter of the blessing of the families of the earth at his disposal; but according to the divine plan, under which he is operating and will operate, he will eventually be pleased to use some of the earthly seed, natural Israel, as his earthly instruments or agents in this work of blessing. Hence, the Covenant as respects Israel after the flesh is not entirely set aside; but, as the Apostle declares, a blessing awaits natural Israel after the establishment of the Heavenly Kingdom at the second advent of the Lord. The Apostle's words are, "The gifts and callings of God are without repentance." "As touching the election they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." "Through your [the Church's] mercy they also may obtain mercy." "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." The intimation is that the Deliverer who shall come out of Zion for the blessing of the whole world of mankind will turn away ungodliness from Jacob first, and that thus Jacob --Israel after the flesh--may cooperate eventually in the

blessing of the world." *Rom. 11:26-32*

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We see, then, that up to our Lord's first advent the world was without law, except the general law of nature--the law of our fallen and imprisoned condition; the law which declares that we may hasten our troubles, though it be not in our power to escape them; the law which declares that while death is sure under the original sentence, and while we cannot hope to escape from it, we may, nevertheless, to some extent delay its execution for a time, and somewhat mollify its rigors. We have seen that the only other Law or Covenant was that given to Israel, respecting which Moses so expressly declares that it did not belong to other peoples or nations, saying, "The Lord made not this Covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day." (*Deut. 5:3*) We have seen that so far from that Law justifying the Israelites, and so far from their gaining the blessings of the Covenant attached to that Law, they all failed except one--the man Christ Jesus, our Lord and Redeemer. Let us now trace the matter further, and perceive how the divine Law is now operating.

Our Lord Jesus kept--that is, fulfilled--the Sinaitic statement of the divine Law by his death. A summary of the requirements of the Sinaitic Law is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy being, and with all thy strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The heavenly Father so arranged matters that his well-beloved Son, having left the glory of the spiritual condition, and become a perfect man amongst imperfect men, first of all appreciated the Father's will--that he should become man's redeemer. This was not made compulsory, and he was quite at liberty, if he chose, to please himself; but in so doing he would not have been fulfilling the Law, which declares that all under it must love God supremely--more than they love themselves--and must so delight to do the divine will that they would gladly sacrifice their own wills, yea, life itself.

This is implied in the words, "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart and mind and being and strength." Such

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a love for God would not hesitate to lay down life, being, strength, a willing sacrifice to the divine plan. And so, as the Apostle declares, being found in fashion as a man, and realizing

clearly the divine program, our Lord Jesus gave himself unreservedly to be man's sacrifice. Yes! it is declared that he did it joyfully, as we read, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is within my heart." (*Psa. 40:8*) Love to men, with whom he had become related by his earthly birth, was also a factor in the case; yet to have loved them as himself would not have implied self-sacrifice on their behalf. Such a sacrifice was loving men more than himself. It was obedience to the first part of this Law that involved the sacrifice of the man Christ Jesus. All this we see, then, was incidental to the keeping of the Law Covenant, for he was born under the Law Covenant, and obligated to all of its conditions. He could not have become the heir of the Abrahamic promise except by this obedience, even unto death.

But another thing was accomplished by his death--another thing besides his proving himself worthy to be the promised Seed of Abraham, competent and worthy to bless the world. That other thing was the *redemption* of Adam and his race from the original death sentence. In the divine arrangement the two things were effected simultaneously--by the same sacrifice; nevertheless, we need to distinguish clearly between the two. Our Lord not only *fulfilled* the Law Covenant in his obedience unto death, but, additionally, by the divine arrangement, he *suretied* a New Covenant by the same death. The Law Covenant, as we have seen, proved his personal worthiness, but the New Covenant relates to mankind. The death sentence was upon the race, and permanent blessing could not have come to the race except, first of all, that original sentence had been met and canceled. Not until then could anyone bless the race or have authority to bless it and lift it out of death up to life; because up to that time the divine sentence of death was against it, and God could by no means clear the guilty at the expense of his own Law. How beautiful the divine economy

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which, in the one act, not only tested the Redeemer as to his worthiness to be the deliverer and uplifter of the race, but paid the ransom for father Adam and thus, incidentally, for all of his children, who, in a natural way, had shared his entail of sin and death! We have already treated this subject, and will not here* go into it in further detail.

Our study here is respecting the divine Law. We have seen that the Sinaitic Law extended only to the natural posterity of Abraham; that the remainder of the world was

left without God, without hope, without incentives, without encouragements, without promises--aliens, strangers, foreigners. (*Eph. 2:12*) We see that the Sinaitic Covenant is at an end as respects the great test and its prize. We have also seen that a new Covenant has been suretied (*Heb. 7:22*), made efficacious by the blood of Christ; and we now inquire whether or not this New Covenant has gone into force, and if so, whether or not a new Law accompanies it, as the Sinaitic Law accompanied the Law Covenant. We answer that the New Covenant has not gone into effect, so far as the world is concerned; that it will not go into effect fully and completely until the second advent of Christ; and that, as we have just seen, Israel after the flesh will be amongst the first of mankind to profit by the New Covenant.

The New Covenant will not only speak peace as respects the original curse, and declare it fully met by the Redeemer, and that all coming unto the Father through him may by a possible obedience have restitution from the original condemnation, but it will, moreover, speak mercy toward fleshly Israel, additionally condemned under the Law Covenant. It will make known to every creature that not only has redemption been provided as concerns the sins that are past, but that all the weaknesses and imperfections under which the race still labors will be condoned, and that they will be treated henceforth according to what they actually are, and will be helped by the laws of Christ's Mediatorial

*See Vol. V, Chaps. xiv, xv.

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Kingdom to rise more and more out of present conditions of mental, moral and physical death, up, up, up, to the full perfection of human nature, in which they will be able to stand trial before the Almighty, and able to demonstrate character and worthiness of eternal life under the laws of his Kingdom. This new Covenant, therefore, includes *all* the mercy and favor of God intended for the whole world of mankind during the Millennial age. It is the Covenant of forgiveness and blessing and restitution to all those who, when their eyes and ears shall be opened, shall avail themselves of this grace of God in Christ Jesus.

The Law of the New Covenant

There will be a Law conjoined to that New Covenant. It will be the same Law of God which changes not, but which has had various more or less explicit statements at different times. It will still be the Law that declares divine opposition to sin, and divine favor and blessing for the righteous. This absolute standard will always be before the world during the Millennial age, and each will be required to come as nearly up to the perfect standard as possible; but *allowances* will be made for each who is endeavoring to obey, according to the measure of his weakness which, under those blessed restitution conditions, will be gradually disappearing, as step by step he advances in obedience. Thus it is written, "This is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my Laws in their mind, and in their hearts will I write them;... and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." **Heb. 8:10; Jer. 31:33,34**

Here we have the blotting out of past sins and iniquities, a gradual work during the Millennial age; and here, also, we have the gradual work of retracing, rewriting, the divine Law in the hearts of men--of whomsoever will. This rewriting of the divine Law in the characters of men is simply another method of telling us of the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets," to be accomplished in that great day of the reign

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of Christ. And we are not to forget the explicit statement-- "It shall come to pass that the soul that will not obey that Prophet [the soul that will not submit itself to this rewriting of the divine Law in its character] will be cut off from amongst the people." **Acts 3:23**

But now let us come back: We have been considering the operation of the New Covenant during the Millennial age--during the time when he who redeemed the world will be exercising his power and authority as the great Prophet, the great Teacher, blessing the world by restitution processes, rewriting in the hearts of men the divine character. Now, however, we inquire respecting the interim--between the cancellation of the Law Covenant in its fulfilment in Christ Jesus our Lord, and the inauguration of the New Covenant conditions of the Millennial age--what about this interim? Is there any Covenant in operation here? and if so, is there any Law connected with it? We answer, that

during this interim of the Gospel age the Lord is selecting the members of the New Creation, and that a Covenant is now in force, in operation, and that it has a Law. In order to appreciate this we must remember the Apostle's words, "The Law was added because of transgression, until the promised Seed should come." The Law Covenant given at Sinai, then, we see was an addition to a previous Covenant; and looking back we see that the Abrahamic Covenant was the original one, and that it had stood for four hundred and thirty years before the Law Covenant was *added*. The Apostle calls attention to this, saying that "the Law, which was four hundred and thirty years after," could not disannul the original Covenant or make it ineffective.

Gal. 3:19,17

Thus we see that when the Law Covenant was fulfilled by our Lord Jesus it left the original Abrahamic Covenant just as it was before the Law Covenant was added. This Abrahamic Covenant is the one under which the New Creation is being developed. That Abrahamic promise or Covenant reads, "In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families

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of the earth be blessed." The Apostle explains that this Seed of Abraham referred to in the promise is Christ--Christ Jesus our Lord; and he adds, "If ye be Christ's [if ye become members in particular of the body of Christ] then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" or Covenant. ***Gal. 3:16,29***

Now, then, we have our bearings, for again the Apostle says, "Ye, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise" --in a totally different sense than were the Jews under the Law. He points out clearly the distinction between this spiritual Israel and natural Israel, telling us that the children of Jacob according to the flesh are not the children of Abraham meant in the promise; but that the children of faith are counted for the Seed. He explains that Abraham typified the heavenly Father; that Sarah, his wife, typified this original Covenant, from which so much blessing ultimately is to proceed; but that as Sarah was barren for a time, and failed to bring forth the seed of promise, just so God's Covenant was barren for nearly two thousand years, and only began to bring forth the Seed of promise in our Lord's resurrection from the dead. There the Head of the Seed of Abraham was born, and ultimately the entire body of Christ, the antitypical Isaac, will be *delivered* ("born from the dead") into the spiritual condition. Then the Seed having

come, the promise, or Covenant, will have its fulfilment --all the families of the earth will be blessed.

It was during the barrenness of this, the original Covenant, that another Covenant was *added*, viz., the Sinaitic or Jewish Covenant, or Law Covenant. It brought forth children--a fleshly seed, not according to the promise, not suitable to fulfil the original promise. The Apostle points out that this Law Covenant was typified by Sarah's maid, Hagar, and that the Jews under that Law Covenant were typified by Ishmael, her son; and that as God said that the son of the bondwoman (Hagar) should not be heir with the son of the free woman (Sarah) it meant antitypically that the Jew under the Law Covenant would not inherit the

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original Abrahamic promise, which must go to the spiritual Seed. This is all beautifully and elaborately detailed by the Apostle in his letter to the *Galatians. (Chap. iv)* The Apostle's argument is against the false teaching that Christians must become Jews, and come under the Mosaic Law in order to be inheritors under the original Abrahamic promise.

Paul shows that, on the contrary, all who are under the Law are in bondage, and that the spiritual Seed of Abraham must be free, as Isaac was--as Ishmael was not. His argument further is that if any Gentile, not originally under the Law, shall put himself under the Sinaitic Law Covenant, he is thus separating himself from the true Seed of Abraham, and making himself an antitypical Ishmaelite. The Apostle's words are, "I, Paul, say unto you that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing; for I testify again to every man that is circumcised that he is a debtor to do the whole Law; Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law--ye are fallen from grace." Opposing this, he urges those Jews who have become free from the bondage of the Law Covenant through the death of Christ, and those Gentiles who were never under the Law Covenant, but who have now accepted of Christ and the Grace Covenant, saying, "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." *Gal. 5:1-4*

We see, then, that it is the "New Creation," with Christ at its head, that constitutes the Seed of Abraham according to this original, or Abrahamic Covenant, and that is to bless the world through redemption and restitution. We are not

surprised, either, that in the type, as in the figures used by the Lord and the apostles, this New Creation is represented sometimes as *a man* of full stature--the head representing Christ Jesus, and the members representing the Church, members in particular of his body. (*Eph. 4:13; Col. 1:18*) Thus, "Ye, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise"

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--members of the antitypical Isaac, of which Jesus is the Head. Our Lord also represents himself as the Bridegroom, and his faithful Church as his espoused, waiting for the marriage, that she may become the Bride. The Apostle uses the same figure, declaring, "I have espoused you as a chaste virgin unto one husband, which is Christ." (*Rev. 21:2; 2 Cor. 11:2*) And this same figure of the marriage relationship between Christ and the Church is represented in the type also, for Abraham sent his servant, Eliezer (who typified the holy Spirit), to seek a bride for Isaac--and Rebecca, gladly accepting the proffer, was guided ultimately to Isaac, and became his wife, even as we are called to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, in the inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Whichever of these pictures we examine, the lesson is the same--that the Christ, Head and Body, Bridegroom and Bride, made one, is the heir of the Abrahamic Covenant, and all the promises and good things included therein.

The Apostle declares that Mount Sinai and the earthly Jerusalem symbolized and typified natural Israel, who failed to attain to the spiritual blessing. The remnant of natural Israel, found worthy of the spiritual blessing, were separated from Israel after the flesh, and became members of the true Israel of God, joint-heirs with the risen Christ in the heavenly things which God hath still in reservation for them that love him; and both that remnant from fleshly Israel, and the others of the same spiritual class which God has since called from the Gentiles, have higher symbols than Sinai and Jerusalem; viz., Mount Zion and the heavenly Jerusalem, whose symbolical picture in glory is furnished to us in *Revelation 21*.

Having clearly established the fact that the New Creation is in the divine arrangement and covenants separate and distinct, not only from the world in general, but also separate and distinct from fleshly Israel, and having established also the fact that the New Creation is not under the

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Sinai or Law Covenant, but under the original Covenant, we inquire, What Law, then, is connected with the Abrahamic Covenant; what Law is over the New Creation? The Apostle answers, saying, "Ye are not under the Law but under grace." What! Is it possible? Are the New Creatures in Christ Jesus not placed under any Law of commandments? Are not the Ten Commandments of the Decalogue binding upon these? In reply, we ask another question: Were the Ten Commandments binding upon Abraham or upon Isaac? If the reply is, No, that they were not given to them, and that therefore, they were not under that Law, our answer is that neither were those commandments given to the New Creation; and that all who come into relationship with God as members of the spiritual class called "the Body of Christ" and "New Creatures in Christ Jesus" are free from condemnation and free from the Law Covenant.

The position of this New Creation toward God, toward his Law, etc., is separate and distinct from that of others. They have a new and reckoned standing with God--by faith--a standing of justification or reckoned rightness, as we have already seen. This reckoned rightness, imputed to them through the merit of Christ's sacrifice, not only covers the imperfections of the past, but continues with them, a covering and justifying robe of righteousness, through whose merit every unwilful defect and blemish of word, thought or deed is covered. As New Creatures, they are all figuratively clothed in white raiment--the righteousness of the saints, the imputed righteousness of the Redeemer, their Head. These New Creatures are accepted to their standing and relationship as members of the Body of Christ upon their profession of Love. The declaration of their consecration is that they so appreciate God's mercy and grace, manifested in the death of his Son, and their justification through him, and so *love* the Giver of all their favors, that they have pleasure in presenting their bodies living sacrifices, in harmony with the divine invitation.

This consecration, or sacrifice of earthly interests and hopes and aims and ambitions, is prompted, not by fear nor

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by selfish love of reward, but by a pure love--by appreciation of the divine love, and a responsive love which desires to manifest itself toward God and in cooperation with all of

his wonderful plan. These confessions of love and devotion being accepted by the Lord, his Spirit is imparted, and such are counted as sons of God, begotten of the holy Spirit. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be [how much of a change we shall experience when we shall receive the new resurrection bodies, which the Lord has promised us], but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is [and this thought is satisfactory to us]."

1 John 3:2

Has the heavenly Father put his angelic sons under the Sinaitic Law? Does he warn them that they shall have no other gods; that they shall not make images and worship them; that they shall not covet, nor steal, nor bear false witness, nor murder, etc.? We answer, No; assuredly he has not put such a law upon his angelic sons. Then why should we expect that such a law would be given to the New Creation? Has not the heavenly Father accepted these New Creatures as his sons? and has he not given them of his Spirit, and could it be necessary to give such laws to those who have received the holy Spirit as instead of their own natural selfish disposition, or will? We can see the appropriateness of putting servants under laws, because they are not vitally interested in the general welfare, and may not have the spirit or disposition of their master in full; but supposing a perfect master and supposing perfect sons, thoroughly infused with his spirit, and delighting to do his will, and rejoicing to be co-workers with him in all of his gracious plans, how could it be necessary for such a father to put such sons under such laws?

"Moses verily was faithful as a servant over all his house," and that household of servants was properly under the Mosaic Law, "added because of transgression, until the promised Seed should come." Jesus, according to the flesh, made himself of no reputation and became a bondman, a

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servant, under the Law, that he might demonstrate not only that the Law was just, but might demonstrate also his own perfection according to the flesh, and that he might redeem the world. It was when he arose from the dead, and became "the first-born from the dead," that he became the first-born of many brethren--the Head of the New Creation. According to the flesh he was under the Law, but the New Creature, the risen Lord, is not under the Law, and he it is who has become the Head of the new house of sons;

"Christ as a Son, over his own house [of sons], whose house are we if we hold fast," etc. And although we are still *in* the flesh, as New Creatures, we are not *of* the flesh, and are not treated as though we were flesh--not treated of God as the remainder of the world is treated; but as New Creatures, who for the time being are sojourning in the flesh as in a tabernacle or tent, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of our entire body, to be with and like our already glorified Head. "Ye are not [considered of God as being] in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of Christ dwell in you." **Rom. 8:8,9**

None can realize this subject clearly except they take this, the divine standpoint, in viewing it. These New Creatures, all begotten of the holy Spirit, could not think of having any other god than one; they could not think of making images or worshipping them; they could not think of blaspheming God's name; they could not think of stealing from others--very much would they prefer to give; they could not think of bearing false witness against another--much rather would the love which is in them seek to cover and to hide the blemishes, not only of the brethren, but of the world in general; they could not think of killing a fellow-creature --much rather would they give life to others and that more abundantly--yea, their holy spirit would prompt them rather to lay down their lives for the brethren, as the same holy Spirit prompted the Captain of our salvation to give himself a ransom for all. Do we not see, then, that if God had given a law to the New Creation, to the house of sons, such as he gave to the house of servants, it would have

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been entirely a misfit--wholly unsuitable? The members of this "house of sons" could not be amenable to such a law without losing the holy Spirit, without ceasing to be of the New Creation; "For if any man have not the *spirit* [mind, disposition] of Christ he is none of his." **Rom. 8:9**

But how can these New Creatures be without a law--without some regulations? We answer that the highest statement of the divine Law is Love. God's commands are so comprehensive, so searching, so dividing between the joints and the marrow, that they cannot be fulfilled in the complete, absolute sense except by Love. If we could suppose every item of the Law performed strictly, and yet the *spirit* of loving devotion to God absent, the divine Law would not be satisfied. On the contrary, Love is the fulfilling of the Law, and where Love reigns every item and every

feature of the divine arrangement will be sought after and heartily obeyed to the best of the ability of the creature; not of constraint, but of joy, of love.

Such love for God and his righteousness the New Creation professed at consecration; and Love there became its Law, and it is firmly bound by that Law of Love--even unto death. Any failure to obey that Law is a violation, to that extent, of the Covenant relationship. As obedience to that Law of Love, to the extent of knowledge and ability, means self-sacrifice and victory over the spirit of the world and the weaknesses of the flesh and the oppositions of the Adversary--the Lord's grace compensating for unintentional blemishes, and bringing such off conquerors through his own name and merit--so, on the other hand, wilful disobedience to it, deliberate and persistent violation of this Law of Love, would mean a forfeiting of the spirit of adoption --would mean the quenching of the holy Spirit, would mean that the New Creature had died, *had ceased to be*.

The Apostle takes up this point of how grace compensates for all of our imperfections, and asks and answers a supposititious question, saying: "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein?" (**Rom. 6:1,2**) In our

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acceptance of forgiveness in Christ, we professed that we were weary of sin, and that so far as our *wills* were concerned they had died to sin and had begun a new life of righteousness. As our alive-ness toward God and righteousness, as New Creatures, implied our death to sin, so if we should ever become alive to sin to the extent that our wills, our hearts, our love, would be for sin and unrighteousness, it would surely signify that we had died as New Creatures; that we were no longer to be reckoned of God or of his people as New Creatures in Christ Jesus, from whom old things have passed away, and to whom, so far as the will, at least, is concerned, all things have become new.

It is proper, however, that we pause here to notice a difference between such a mere stumbling of the flesh, and a *wilful* fall from grace, after we had tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come, and become partakers of the holy Spirit--a fall from which it would be impossible to be recovered. (**Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26**) We should clearly distinguish between these, for they are totally different. A stumbling of the flesh signifies merely that our mortal

bodies were overtaken in a fault through weakness of heredity, or through besetment of the Adversary; but that the will, the heart, did not at all consent, or did not fully consent with the flesh. True, such stumblings are to be deplored, to be striven against, etc.; yet, by the grace of God, they sometimes become an assistance in character-development. We thus learn not to trust ourselves, not to boast of our own strength; but to realize that the victory that overcometh the world is obtained through faith; hence, when with sorrow the New Creature finds that to some extent his flesh has stumbled, he is to fortify along the line of weakness thus indicated, and to become stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might, and less liable to stumble again in connection with the same besetment.

Thus, step by step, we learn, as New Creatures, not to place our confidence in the flesh, but to look unto the Lord, from whom cometh our help in every time of need--remembering always that we are still New Creatures, and that because

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we are still abiding under the merit of Christ's sacrifice by faith, and still striving to fulfil our Covenant of Love unto self-sacrifice that, as the Master said, "The Father himself loveth you." We are to be of good courage, and to remember that the New Creature sinneth not--that sin is not charged up to the New Creature, and that so long, therefore, as we are striving against sin no one can lay anything to the charge of God's elect--because, "It is God that justifieth,...It was Christ that died." *Rom. 8:33,34*

Growth in Appreciation of the Perfect Law

While the Law of Love was the foundation of our Covenant with the Lord, under which we became New Creatures, nevertheless we did not at first fully comprehend that Law. We have since been in the school of Christ, learning the real meaning of Love in its fulness, in its completeness, growing in grace, and growing in knowledge, adding to our faith the various elements and qualities of love--gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness, etc. We are being tested along the lines of Love, and our graduating examination will be specially on this point. Only those who attain the perfect Love, self-sacrificing Love, will be counted worthy to be of the New Creation, members of the Body of Christ.

Running for the Mark, and Standing Fast Thereat

The Apostle, in another illustration, represents our present experiences as a racecourse; and exhorts that we lay aside every weight and every besetting sin, every weakness of the flesh, and every earthly ambition, that we may run with patience the race set before us in the Gospel--that we may attain unto the *mark* of the prize; and that having done all we should *stand*--faithful at that mark, complete in Christ. (*Phil. 3:13,14; Heb. 12:1; Eph. 6:13*) This gives us the thought of a racecourse, with its first, second, third and fourth quarter-marks, and the besetments and difficulties and oppositions and allurements en route, and of ourselves starting into this race, desiring to attain the mark of perfect Love--knowing that unless we do attain that

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mark we will not be copies of God's dear Son, and cannot, therefore, in the largest sense please God; and hence cannot be joint-heirs with Jesus in the Kingdom. The whole racecourse is Love, from gate to finish. As we enter the gate it is with grateful Love toward God for his favor toward us in Christ, in the forgiveness of our sins. It is this *duty-love* which at the beginning leads us to present our bodies living sacrifices. We say to ourselves that if God has done so much for us, we *ought* to show our appreciation: Christ laid down his life on our behalf, and we *ought* to lay down our lives for the brethren.

This ought-to, or duty-love, is quite proper, reasonable, true, but it is not sufficient. It must in turn lead us on to a still higher kind of Love, and by the time we have run to the first quarter-mark, we still have duty-love, but beyond it have attained a love of appreciation. We learn better to appreciate divine Love--to see that God's Love was in no sense of the word selfish, but the outworking of his grand, noble character. We come to appreciate something of divine justice, divine wisdom, divine power, divine love; and as we behold these qualities of our Creator we come to love them, and thenceforth we practice righteousness, not merely because it is our duty, but because we love righteousness.

Pressing along the racecourse still further, we attain to the second quarter-mark, and find that by this time we have not only learned to love righteousness, but proportionately are learning to hate sin; and we find in our hearts a growing sympathy with the divine program of rolling back the great wave of sin which has submerged the world

and brought with it its wages of death. This second quarter-mark begets in us an energy, a "quickenings," an activity for righteousness and against sin.

Our Love is growing, and we press along for the third quarter-mark. By the time we reach it, our duty-love, plus love for the principles of righteousness, has extended, not only to the divine character, and included dislike for every wicked thing doing injury to mankind, and contravening the divine character and plan, but at this mark we have attained

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a position of broader sympathy for others--we begin to share God's sentiment, not only of opposition to sin, but also of love for, and sympathy with, all who are seeking the way of righteousness and holiness. By this time we are able to recognize the brethren in a somewhat different light than ever before. We can now see them as New Creatures, and differentiate between *them* and their mortal bodies, whose imperfections are obvious to us. We learn to love the brethren as New Creatures, and to sympathize with them in the various weaknesses, misjudgments, etc., of their flesh. So keen becomes our Love for them that we have pleasure in laying down our lives on their behalf--daily, hourly, sacrificing our own earthly interests or pleasures, or conveniences, giving of our time, our influence, or what-not, to assist or serve them.

But still we press along the line and toward the "mark," for there is still a higher Love than this which we must attain --the fourth and last quarter-mark--"the mark of the prize." What Love is this? How can it be greater than self-sacrificing love for the brethren, in full devotion to God and to the principles of righteousness and Love? We answer that still greater Love is the kind which the Lord has stipulated, when he says that we must learn to love even our enemies also. It was while we were enemies, aliens, strangers from God through wicked works, that "God so loved the world"; it was while we were yet sinners that he gave his Only Begotten Son on our behalf. This is the standard of *perfect love*, and we must not stop short of it. Whoever would be accepted of the Lord as a member of the New Creation in glory must attain to this love of enemies.

Not that he is to love his enemies *as* he loves the brethren, for this is not the pattern set us--God does not love his enemies *as* he loves his sons, his friends; and Jesus did not love his enemies *as* he loved his disciples. But God loved his enemies so as to be ready and willing to do for them whatever

could be justly done; and Jesus loved his enemies so that he was heartily willing to do good to them--he bears no enmity or grudge toward them in return for their hatred,

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but is ready to pour out upon them in due time his Millennial blessings, that they may all come to the knowledge of the truth, and that even those who pierced him may look upon him and weep when God shall pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, in due time. (*Zech. 12:10*) We must have the love for enemies which our Lord describes, saying, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you." (*Matt. 5:44*) We must let no bitterness, animosity or rancor of any kind dwell in our hearts. They must be so full of Love that not even an enemy could stir up in our hearts an evil or malicious sentiment.

Oh, what long-suffering and brotherly kindness is implied in such an attainment of character as would find nothing, even in an enemy, to stir it to malice, hatred or strife! And this is the "mark" for which we are to run, as New Creatures. We have professed appreciation of this spirit of Love; we have professed devotion to it; we have consecrated our lives in accord with its principles; and now we are being tested to see to what extent our professions were truthful. The Lord very graciously gives us time to run this race, to develop this character. "He knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust." Nevertheless, it is essential to us that we conform to these arrangements if we would be joint-heirs with God's dear Son, as members of the New Creation.

Our Lord Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, did not need to run this race; did not need to develop these various features of Love; for being perfect he had these in perfection at the beginning of his career. His testing was whether or not he would stand firmly by these principles, characteristics, would continue to love God and righteousness supremely, and continue to love the brethren so as to lay down his life for them, and continue to love his enemies so as to delight to do them good; whether he would stand firm at the standard of perfect Love. We know how he demonstrated his loyalty to Love in all its degrees, in that

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he laid down his life, not only for his friends, but also for his enemies, who crucified him. This experience also must be ours. We must *attain* to the standard of perfect Love in our hearts even though in our flesh we may not always be able fully to express the sentiments of our hearts.

Some may run the race very quickly--passing one after another these quarter-mile marks, they may speedily reach the position of perfect Love. Others imbued with less zeal, or looking less intently to the Author of our faith, make slower progress in the race, and for years content themselves with duty-love, or perhaps go a little further to love of the divine character and the principles of righteousness. Remarkably few have gone beyond this to attain further the love of the brethren, which would make them rejoice in self-denials, if thereby they might serve the household of faith; and still fewer have gone to the point of perfect Love--love for their enemies, which would not only refrain from injuring them, by word or deed, but additionally would delight in their blessing. If the Lord has been very patient with us, giving us abundant opportunity to reach the "mark," we should rejoice in his compassion, and should be the more energetic now to attain to the "mark of the prize," remembering that the time is short, and that nothing less than this character of perfect Love will be accepted of the Father in the New Creation.

As our Lord was tested at the "mark" of perfect Love, so all of us are to be tested after we reach it. We are not, therefore, to expect to reach that "mark" merely with the last gasp of life; but as quickly as possible. The measure of our zeal and love will be indicated to God and to the brethren by the speed with which we attain to this "mark."

The Apostle's words, "Having done all, stand" (*Eph. 6:13*), imply that after we have reached the "mark" of perfect Love there will still be plenty of trials for us--trials of faith, trials of patience, trials of all the various elements of Love. The world is not a friend to grace, to help us onward in the right direction; Satan is still our Adversary, and will be able to stir up plenty of opposition--to force us back

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from the position attained. This is our testing. We must hold fast to all to which we attain; we must "press down upon the mark" until it shall cost us our earthly life--laying down our lives in God's service for the brethren, and in doing good unto all men as we have opportunity. "Faithful

is he who called us," who promises us succor and every needed assistance in this way. His grace is sufficient for us.

1 Thess. 5:24; 2 Cor. 12:9

This Law of Love, we have already seen, is the law of the angelic sons of God also--their obedience to the divine will and their harmony with each other being all based upon it. And although during the Millennial age laws and ordinances, regulations and exactions, will be laid upon the world of mankind to bring them forward under the blessed arrangements of the Millennial Kingdom, nevertheless those who, at the close of the Millennial age, shall be accounted worthy of *life everlasting*, we may be sure will have reached beyond mere obedience to laws and requirements --will have written in their hearts the original Law of God, obedience, and the Law of Love, which is a part of the divine character. These restitution sons of God, on the human plane, then accepted of him, will also all have this spirit of Love, without which it would be impossible for them to be pleasing to God; for he seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth. Thus we see that while heaven as well as earth must have a law, and must require obedience to it, yet the divine standard of obedience is so far superior to our earthly and imperfect ideas and standards that the one word, Love, expresses the entire Law of God to which all of his sons on every plane of life will be subject. How wonderful and how glorious is the character and plan of our God! Love is the fulfilling of his Law, and we can conceive of no higher Law than this.

We have dealt with the subject thus far in the abstract. We want now to notice that the New Creation, while still tabernacling in the flesh, and subject more or less to its weaknesses, oppositions, etc., are to regulate themselves,

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their conduct toward each other and toward the world, by this Law of Love, the New Commandment, which the Lord gave to all those who become his followers, and which surpasses even the requirements of

The Golden Rule.

Gold, as we have already seen, is a symbol of that which is divine; hence, the Golden Rule is the divine rule. This is really a rule of Justice rather than of Love. The nearest approach to this Law of Justice that the natural man can now appreciate--the very highest standard known to the natural

man, is "Thou shalt not do unto thy neighbor that which thou wouldest not have thy neighbor do unto thee." This is negative goodness, at very most; but the Golden Rule which no others than the New Creation can at present appreciate, or even understand, is of a positive kind--"Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you." This is positive goodness, but merely Justice. If members of the New Creation fail at times to comply with every feature of this Golden Rule, the simple law of Justice, it must be to their serious regret and chagrin unless they are merely "babes" in the new way. And if any violation of this rule brings pain and regret, it is a sure sign that the violation was not wilful, not of the heart, not the New Creature's violation of principle, but, at most, a violation connived at or stumbled into by the flesh, contrary to the desires of the spirit or intention. However, in proportion as the new mind is alive toward God, and zealous to do his will, in that same proportion it will be quick, alert and energetic in guarding the "earthen vessel" in which it resides. It will put on the armor of God, that it may be able to fight a good warfare against the weaknesses of the flesh. It will insist that if an error has been committed, either in word or deed, a restitution, with good interest, shall, if possible, be quickly rendered: that thus the "earthen vessel," finding itself opposed and put to shame, may become less active in its opposition to the new mind.

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This divine law affects the New Creature's relationship to God. He recognizes the meaning of the expression, "Love the Lord with *all* thy heart, with *all* thy mind, with *all* thy being, with *all* thy strength." He finds no room for self here, except as self shall be fully in accord with God. This affects his relationship with the brethren, for how could he love God, whom he has not seen (except with the eye of faith), if he does not love the brethren who have God's Spirit and whom he has seen with the natural sight? (*1 John 4:20,21*) As he learns to consider carefully in his dealings with them, to do for them and toward them as he would that they should do for him and toward him, he finds that it effects a great transformation in life; that this is not at all the rule or law under which he himself and others have been accustomed to live, to think, to act, to speak.

He finds that as he would like brethren to act kindly toward him, and speak gently to him, so he should speak and act kindly and gently to them. As he would like to have

them be patient with his imperfections and weaknesses, and to draw the mantle of charity over these human defects, so he should do toward them. He finds that as he would not like to have the brethren speak evil of him, even if the evil were true, so he should be kindly affectioned toward them, and "speak evil of no man," but "do good unto all men," especially to the household of faith. As he would not like to have others expect of him more than he could reasonably do, so he would not expect of others more than they could reasonably do. The same principle would operate also in respect to the world and its affairs. The whole course of life is thus gradually changed; and, as the Apostle suggests, this change comes in proportion as we "behold the glory of the Lord"--in proportion as we come to appreciate and learn to copy the grandeur of the divine character ruled by this Golden Rule of perfect Justice, coupled with abounding Love.

As our new minds, new wills, begotten of the holy Spirit, develop, they are gradually "changed from glory to glory" of heart quality; and thus changed in our hearts, our minds, our wills, our intentions (and so far as possible also

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outwardly), we become fit or "meet," according to the divine promise, for the great and final resurrection *change*, when that which is sown in weakness and corruption shall be raised in power and glory, a spiritual New Creation--the Christ of God. Various good and helpful advices, admonitions and suggestions are given us by the apostles and repeated and indorsed by various of the brethren, as profitable for reproof, for correction, etc.; but the Law, the blessed Law, under which the New Creation is placed, is a Law of Love, surpassing the Golden Rule. Rightly appreciated, it would mean that many things now done by the New Creation would be done no longer; and many things now neglected by them would be performed with zeal and assiduity.

The Perfect Law of Liberty

If any were at first disposed to think of the New Creation as being left of the Lord too free, without proper restraints and rules, they undoubtedly experienced a change of mind as they came to see the lengths and breadths and general comprehensiveness of this Law of God, briefly summed up in this one word, Love. "A law of liberty," the Apostle calls it (*Jas. 1:25*); but God makes this law of liberty applicable

only to the New Creation, begotten of his Spirit. It could be applicable to no others. Others are still under either the Mosaic Law, as servants not fit for "the liberty wherewith Christ makes free" the sons, or else they are under the condemnation of the original law--the condemnation of death, and as condemned sinners are still treated as strangers, aliens, and foreigners, who are without God and who have no hope in the world--they do not even know of the grace of God which bringeth salvation eventually to the world in general, but which at present has been manifested only to a comparative few, the great mass being hindered by the Adversary from hearing the message of divine love and redemption. He blinds the minds and stops the ears of the majority of mankind with doctrines of devils, etc. **2 Cor. 4:4;** **1 Tim. 4:1**

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Liberty is not for the evilly disposed, as society witnesses when it imprisons them; and so the perfect Law of Liberty is not appropriate to the evilly disposed, but to the well disposed --to the perfect. The world will not be left to a Law of Love during the Millennium, but will be ruled with Justice and Mercy under a law of obedience to the Kingdom. Not until the close of the Kingdom (when the wilful evildoers shall have been cut off in the Second Death) will the race--proved perfect and fully in accord with the divine standard --be put under the Law of Liberty--Love, and its Golden Rule. So long as they are minors they will be treated much as servants. (**Heb. 13:17**) The New Creation, now under the Law of Liberty, is so dealt with because to them "old things have passed away, all things have become new"--they now hate sin and love righteousness and use their liberty, not as an opportunity to gratify the flesh, but to mortify it--not to revel in sin, but to sacrifice earthly interests in cooperation with the Lord in putting away sin and ridding the world of it and its wages of death. Those begotten again to this new spirit or disposition--the Spirit of God--and who have become pupils in the school of Christ to learn of him and walk in his steps--these, and these alone, can be safely put under the Law of Liberty. And if they lose the spirit of their adoption, they cease to be sons, cease to be under this Law of Liberty.

Those who now learn to use the liberty wherewith Christ makes free--those who by consecration come under this perfect Law of Love, and who, under it, lay down their lives for the brethren and for the truth's sake, and for righteousness'

sake--these faithful ones will be counted worthy to be the Lord's agents and joint-heirs with his Beloved Son in the great work of blessing the world. And how necessary this qualification for their work--how necessary it evidently is that those who would be the teachers and helpers and judges and rulers of the world--thus blessing all the families of the earth during the Millennial age--should develop to the full and be tested in this qualification of Love, in order to be merciful and faithful Royal Priests!

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