

# A BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY, BOOK 4

by John Gill

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*The fourth book of Gill's systematic theology, treating the person and work of Christ as Mediator, including His incarnation, offices, and atoning sacrifice. A detailed Christological study from the Particular Baptist perspective.*

7 Chapters

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## 04-01 Of the Manifestation and Administration

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A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 4—Chapter 1 Of the Manifestation and Administration of the Covenant of Grace

Having treated of the sin and fall of our first parents, and of the breach of the covenant of works by them, and of the sad effects thereof to themselves, and of the woeful consequences of the same to their posterity; of the imputation of their sin, and of the derivation of a corrupt nature unto them; and of actual sins and transgressions flowing from thence, and of the punishment due unto them: I am now come to the dawn of grace to fallen man, to the breakings forth and application of the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it to the spiritual seed of Christ among the posterity of Adam.

I have considered the covenant of grace in a former part of this work, as it was a compact in eternity, between the three divine persons, Father, Son, and Spirit; in which each person agreed to take his part in the economy of man's salvation: and now I shall consider the administration of that covenant in the various periods of time, from the beginning of the world to the end of it. The covenant of grace is but one and the same in all ages, of which Christ is the substance; being given for "a covenant of the people", of all the people of God, both Jews and Gentiles, who is "the same" in the "yesterday" of the Old Testament, and in the "today" of the New Testament, and "for ever"; he is "the way, the truth, and the life", the only true way to eternal life; and there never was any other way made known to men since the fall of Adam; no other name under heaven has been given, or will be given, by which men can be saved. The patriarchs before the flood and after, before the law of Moses and under it, before the coming of Christ, and all the saints since, are saved in one and the same way, even "by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ"; and that is the grace of the covenant, exhibited at different times, and in divers manners. For though the covenant is but one, there are different administrations of it; particularly two, one before the coming of Christ, and the other after it; which lay the foundation for the distinction of the "first" and "second", the "old" and the "new" covenant, observed by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews (Hebrews 8:7, Hebrews 8:8, Hebrews 8:13; Hebrews 9:1, Hebrews 9:15; Hebrews 12:24), for by the first and old covenant, is not meant the covenant of works made with Adam, which had been broke and abrogated long ago; since the apostle is speaking of a covenant waxen old, and ready to vanish away in his time: nor was the covenant of works the first and most ancient covenant; the covenant of grace, as an eternal compact, was before that; but by it is meant the first and most ancient administration of the covenant of grace which reached from the fall of Adam, when the covenant of works was broke, unto the coming of Christ, when it was superseded and vacated by another administration of the same covenant, called therefore the "second" and "new" covenant. The one we commonly call the Old Testament dispensation, and the other the New Testament dispensation; for which there seems to be some foundation in 2 Corinthians 3:6, 2 Corinthians 3:14 and Hebrews 9:15 these two covenants, or rather the two administrations of the same covenant, are allegorically represented by two women, Hagar and Sarah, the bondwoman and the free (Galatians 4:22-26), which fitly describe the nature and difference of them. And before I

proceed any farther, I shall just point out the agreement and disagreement of those two administrations of the covenant of grace.

1. First, The agreement there is between them.

1a. They agree in the efficient cause, God: the covenant of grace, in its original constitution in eternity, is of God, and therefore it is called his covenant, being made by him; "I have made a covenant--my covenant I will not break", #Psalms 89:3, Psalms 89:34 and whenever any exhibition or manifestation of this covenant was made to any of the patriarchs, as to Abraham, David, &c. it is ascribed to God, "I will make my covenant—he hath made with me an everlasting covenant" (Genesis 17:22; Sam. 23:5) so the new covenant, or new administration of it, runs in this form, "I will make a new covenant" &c. (Hebrews 8:8).

1b. In the moving cause, the sovereign mercy, and free grace of God, which moved God to make the covenant of grace at first (Psalms 89:2, Psalms 89:3). And every exhibition of it under the former dispensation, is a rich display of it, and therefore it is called, the "mercy promised to the fathers" in his "holy covenant" (Luke 1:72), and which has so largely appeared in the coming of Christ, which is ascribed to "the tender mercy of our God", that "grace" and "truth", in the great abundance of them, are said to come by him; by which names the covenant of grace, under the gospel dispensation, is called, in distinction from that under the Mosaic one (Luke 1:78; John 1:17).

1c. In the Mediator, who is Christ; there is but one Mediator of the covenant of grace, let it be considered under what dispensation it will; even Christ, who under the former dispensation was revealed as the seed of the woman that should bruise the serpent's head, and make atonement by his sufferings and death, signified by the expiatory sacrifices, under the law; the Shiloh, the peaceable One, and the Peace Maker, the living Redeemer of Job, and of all believers under the Old Testament. Moses, indeed, was a Mediator, but he was only a typical one. There is but "one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus"; there never was any other, and he is the "Mediator of the new covenant" (1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 12:24).

1d. In the subjects of these covenants, or administrations of the covenants of grace, the elect of God, to whom the blessings of it are applied. It was with the chosen people of God in Christ, the covenant of grace was originally made; and according to the election of grace are the spiritual blessings of it dispensed to the children of men (Psalms 89:3; Ephesians 1:3, Ephesians 1:4), so they were under the former dispensation, from the beginning of the world, to the seed of the woman, in distinction from the seed of the serpent; to the remnant according to the election of grace among the Jews, the children of the promise that were counted for the seed; and election, or elect men, obtain the blessings of the covenant in all ages, and under the present dispensation, more abundantly, and in greater numbers.

1e. In the blessings of it; they are the same under both administrations. Salvation and redemption by Christ is the great blessing held forth and enjoyed under the one as under the other (2 Samuel 23:5; Hebrews 9:15). Justification by the righteousness of Christ, which the Old Testament church had knowledge of, and faith in, as well as the new (Isaiah 45:24, Isaiah 45:25; Romans 3:21-23). Forgiveness of sin through faith in Christ, all the prophets bore witness to; and the saints of old, as now, had as comfortable an application of it (Psalms 32:1, Psalms 32:5; Isaiah 43:25; Micah 7:18;

Acts 10:43). Regeneration, spiritual circumcision, and sanctification, were what men were made partakers of under the first, as under the second administration of the covenant (Deuteronomy 30:6; Php 3:3). Eternal life was made known in the writings of the Old Testament, as well as in those of the New; and was believed, looked for, and expected by the saints of the former, as of the latter dispensation (John 5:39; Hebrews 11:10, Hebrews 11:16; Job 19:26, Job 19:27). In a word, they and we eat the same spiritual meat, and drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ (1 Corinthians 10:3, 1 Corinthians 10:4).

2. Secondly, In some things there is a disagreement between these two administrations of the covenant of Grace.

2a. Under the first administration saints looked forward to Christ that was to come, and to the good things that were to come by him, and so were waiting, expecting, and longing for the enjoyment of them; but under the second and new administration, believers look backwards to Christ as being come, before whose eyes he is evidently set forth in the word and ordinances, as crucified and slain; and they look to the blessings of the covenant through him as brought in; to peace, pardon, atonement, righteousness, redemption, and salvation, as wrought out and finished.

2b. There is a greater clearness and evidence of things under the one than under the other; the law was only a shadow of good things to come; did not so much as exhibit the image of them, at least but very faintly. The obscurity of the former dispensation, was, signified by the veil over the face of Moses, when he spoke to the children of Israel; so that they could not see to the end of what was to be abolished; whereas, believers under the present dispensation, with open face, with faces unveiled, behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord clearly and plainly (Hebrews 10:1; 2 Corinthians 3:13, 2 Corinthians 3:18), then, comparatively, it was night, now broad day; the day has broke, and the shadows are fled and gone.

2c. There is more of a spirit of liberty, and less of bondage, under the one, than under the other; saints under the one differed little from servants, being in bondage under the elements of the world; but under the other are Christ's freemen, and receive not the spirit of bondage again, to fear; but the spirit of adoption, crying Abba, Father; which is a free spirit, and brings liberty with it; and for this reason the two different administrations of the covenant, are signified, the one by Hagar, the bondwoman, because it engendered to bondage, and those under it were in such a state; and the other by Sarah, the free woman, an emblem of Jerusalem, which is free, and the mother of us all (Galatians 4:1-3, Galatians 4:24-26; Romans 8:15).

2d. There is a larger and more plentiful effusion of the Spirit, and of his gifts and graces, under the one than under the other; greater measures of grace, and of spiritual light and knowledge were promised, as what would be communicated under the new and second administration of the covenant; and accordingly grace, in all its fulness and "truth", in all its clearness and evidence, are "come by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17; see Jeremiah 31:31-34).

2e. The latter administration of the covenant extends to more persons than the former. The Gentiles were strangers to the covenants of promise, had no knowledge nor application of the promises and blessings of the covenant of grace, except now and then, and here and there one; but now the blessing of Abraham is come upon the Gentiles, and they are fellow heirs of the same grace and privileges, and partakers of the promises in Christ by the gospel (Ephesians 2:12;

Ephesians 3:6; Galatians 3:14).

2f. The present administration of the covenant of grace, will continue to the end of the world; it will never give way to, nor be succeeded by another; it is that which remains, in distinction from that which is done away, and so exceeds in glory: the ceremonial law, under which the former covenant was administered, was "until the time of reformation", until Christ came and his forerunner; "The law and the prophets were until John", the harbinger of Christ, the fulfilling end of them; (see 2 Corinthians 3:11; Hebrews 9:10; Luke 16:16).

2g. The ordinances of them are different. The first covenant had ordinances of divine service; but those, comparatively, were carnal and worldly, at best but typical and shadowy, and faint representations of divine and spiritual things; and were to continue but for a while, and then to be shaken and removed, and other ordinances take place, which shall not be shaken, but remain to the second coming of Christ; and in which he is more clearly and evidently set forth, and the blessings of his grace (Hebrews 9:1, Hebrews 9:10; Hebrews 12:27).

2h. Though the promises and blessings of grace under both administrations are the same, yet differently exhibited; under the former dispensation, not only more darkly and obscurely, but by earthly things, as by the land of Canaan, and the outward mercies of it; but under the latter, as more clearly and plainly, so more spiritually and nakedly, as they are in themselves spiritual, heavenly, and divine; and delivered out more free, and unclogged of all conditions, and so called "better promises", and the administration of the covenant, in which they are, a "better testament"; God having "provided" for New Testament saints some "better thing", at least held forth in a better manner; that Old Testament saints might not be "made perfect" without them (Hebrews 8:6; Hebrews 7:22; Hebrews 11:40).

## 04-02 Of the Exhibitions of the Covenant of

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A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 4—Chapter 2 Of the Exhibitions of the Covenant of Grace in the Patriarchal State

Through the administration of the covenant of grace may be considered in a three fold state; as in the patriarchal state, before the giving of the law; and then under the Mosaic dispensation; and last of all under the gospel dispensation: yet more agreeable to the apostle's distinction of the first and second, the old and the new covenant, observed in the preceding chapter, I shall choose to consider it in the distinct periods under these two; and I shall begin with the administration of it under the first testament, as reaching from the fall of Adam to the coming of Christ, and consider it as held forth in the several periods in that long interval of time.

1. The first period shall be from Adam to Noah. And those in this period to whom the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it were manifested and applied, were,

1a. Our first parents themselves, Adam and Eve, and that both by words and actions. By words, and these spoken not directly to them, nor by way of promise to them; but to the serpent, and threatening-wise to him; and yet were the first dawn of grace to fallen man (Genesis 3:15), from whence it might be at once concluded by Adam and Eve, that they should not immediately die, but that a seed should be of the woman who would be the ruin of Satan, and the Saviour of them; which must spring light, life, and joy, in their trembling hearts: and though these words are short and obscure, yet contain some of the principal articles of faith and doctrines of the gospel; as the incarnation of the Son of God, signified by the "seed of the woman," who should be made of a woman, born of a virgin, unbegotten by man, and without father as man; the sufferings and death of Christ for the sins of men, signified by the serpent's "bruising his heel," bringing him to the dust of death in his inferior nature, sometimes expressed by his being bruised for the sins of his people; and may hint at the manner of his death, and crucifixion, since his feet could not well be pierced with nails without bruising his heel; also the victory he should obtain over Satan signified by "bruising his head," destroying his power and policy, his schemes and works, his authority, dominion, and empire; yea, him, himself, with his principalities and powers; and may express the bruising him under the feet of his people, the deliverance of them from him; the taking the captives out of the hand of the mighty, and the saving them with an everlasting salvation. Which is the sum and substance of the gospel, and matter of joy to lost sinners. The grace of the covenant, and the blessings of it, were manifested and applied to our first parents, by certain actions and things done; as by the Lord God making "coats of skin," and "clothing them with them," which were emblems of the robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, Christ has wrought out; that righteousness which God imputes without works; and is unto all, and upon all them that believe, as their clothing and covering: and those coats being made of the skins of slain beasts, very probably slain for sacrifice, which man was soon taught the use of; may have respect to the sacrifice of Christ, the woman's seed, which should be offered up, as was agreed on in the covenant of grace, and by which atonement would be made for sin, and upon which justification from it proceeds; all

which are momentous articles of faith. The "cherubim" and "flaming sword," placed at the East end of the garden of Eden, to keep the way of the tree of life, were not for terror, but for comfort; and were an hieroglyphic, showing that God in succeeding ages would raise up a set of prophets, under the Old Testament, and apostles and ministers of the gospel, under the New Testament, who should hold forth the word of light and life; that word which is quick and powerful, sharper than any twoedged sword; that has both light and heat in it; and who should show to men the way of salvation, and observe unto them the true tree of life, and the way to it; even Christ, the way, the truth, and the life;(see Genesis 3:21, Genesis 3:24).

1b. Abel, the Son of Adam, is the next person to whom an exhibition of the covenant and of the grace of it, was made; he was an instance of electing grace, according to which the blessings of the covenant are dispensed: a hint was given in the serpent's curse, that there would be two seeds in the world, the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman; this distinction took place in the first two men that were born into the world. Cain was of the wicked one, the seed of the serpent; Abel was one of the spiritual seed of Christ, a chosen vessel of salvation; and, in virtue of electing grace, was a partaker of the blessings of grace in the covenant; particularly of justifying grace: he is called righteous Abel, not by his own righteousness, but by the righteousness of faith, by the righteousness of Christ received by faith; for he had the grace of faith, which is a covenant grace, bestowed on him; by which he looked to Christ for righteousness and eternal life; "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain; by which he obtained witness that he was righteous" (Hebrews 11:4). His sacrifice was a more excellent one; not only as to its kind, being a lamb, and so typical of the Lamb of God; but as to the manner in which it was offered, by faith, in the view of a better sacrifice than that; even the sacrifice of Christ, by which transgression is finished, sin made an end of, reconciliation for it made, and an everlasting righteousness brought in; all which Abel, by faith, looked unto, and God had respect to him, and to his offering; which he testified in some visible way; perhaps by sending down fire upon it; which drew the envy of his brother upon him, who could not rest until he had slain him: in this Abel was a type of Christ, as well as in his being a keeper of sheep; who, through the envy of the Jews, who were in some sense his brethren, was delivered to the Roman governor, to be put to death; so that they are justly said to be the betrayers and murderers of him; and a like punishment of their sin came on them as on Cain; as he was drove from the presence of God, was an exile from his native place, and wandered about in another land; so they were carried captive by the Romans, and dispersed throughout the nations of the world, among whom they wander about to this day. Abel was a type of Christ also in his intercession; for as he "being dead, yet speaketh;" so Christ, though he was dead, yet is alive, and ever lives to make intercession, to speak on the behalf of his people, and be an Advocate for them; and his blood has a speaking voice in it, and speaks better things than that of Abel; it calls for peace and pardon.

1c. Seth, the other seed appointed in the room of Abel, whom Cain slew, is not to be overlooked; since the appointment of him was of grace, and to fill up the place of righteous Abel, and be the father of a race of men that should serve the Lord; and was put, set, and laid as the foundation, as it were, of the patriarchal church state, as his name signifies; and was a type of Christ, the foundation God has laid in Zion: and in the days of his son Enos, as an effect of divine grace, and the displays of it, "Men began to call upon the name of the Lord" (Genesis 4:25, Genesis 4:26), not but that they called upon the Lord personally, and in their families, before; but now being more

numerous, families joined together, and set up public worship; where they met, and socially served the Lord, and called upon him in the name of the Lord, in the name of Christ, who, as Mediator, might be more clearly manifested; or they called themselves by the name of the Lord, of the Lord's people, and the sons of God, in distinction from the sons of men, the men of the world, irreligious persons, profane and idolatrous; which distinction took place before the flood, and perhaps as early as the times of Enos; (see Genesis 6:2).

1d. Enoch is the only person in this period besides, who is taken notice of for the grace of God bestowed on him; though, no doubt, there were thousands who also were made partakers of it. He was "trained" up in a religious way, as his name signifies; he was eminent for his faith, and was high in the favor of God: he had a testimony that he pleased God, which could not be without faith, by which he drew nigh, had much nearness to, fellowship and familiarity with him; he "walked with God," enjoyed much communion with him, and had large communications of grace, light, and knowledge from him; was even favored with a spirit of prophecy, and foretold a future judgment, and the coming of Christ to it; and as he was made acquainted with the second coming of Christ, so, no doubt, with his first coming to save lost sinful men: and as Abel was a type of Christ in his low estate, in his sufferings and death, Enoch was a type of him in his ascension to heaven; for he "was not" on earth any longer than the time of his life mentioned; "for God took him," translated him from earth to heaven took him to himself; so Christ, when he had finishes his work on earth, was taken to heaven, a cloud received him out of the sight of his apostles, and he ascended to his God and their God, to his Father and their Father.

2. Secondly, The next period of time in which an exhibition of the covenant of grace was made, is that from Noah to Abraham. And Noah is the principal person taken notice of in it. His father, at his birth, thought there was something remarkable in him, and designed to be done by him, and thus expressed himself; "This same shall comfort us concerning our work" &c. (Genesis 5:29), and therefore called his name Noah, which signifies comfort, and is derived from Mxn, to "comfort," the last letter being cut off. And in this Lamech has respect, not so much to things temporal, and to that benefit that should be received through Noah's invention of instruments for the more easy cultivating of the earth, and by bringing agriculture to a greater perfection, as he did; whereby the curse of the earth was, in a great measure, removed, which made it very difficult, through great toil and labour, to get a livelihood; but not so much to these as to things spiritual, respect is had by Lamech; and if he did not think him to be the promised Seed, the Messiah, the Consolation of Israel; yet he might conclude, that he would be an eminent type of Christ, from whom all comfort flows, the Saviour of men from their sins, their evil works, and from the curses of the law, on account of them; and who has eased them from the toil and labour of their hands, to get a righteousness of their own for their justification, having wrought out one for them. However, in this person, Noah, there was a rich display of the grace of the covenant.

2a. In his person, both in his private and public capacity. He found grace in the eyes of the Lord; that is, favour and good will, which is the source of all the blessings of grace, of electing, redeeming, justifying, pardoning, adopting, and sanctifying grace; of all the graces of the Spirit, as faith, hope, love, &c. all which Noah was a partaker of, and this in the midst of a world of ungodly men; which showed it to be free and distinguishing: he was a just, or righteous man; not by his own works, by which no man can be justified, but by the righteousness of faith, of which he was an heir (Hebrews 11:7), even the righteousness which is by the faith of Christ: and he was "perfect in

his generations;" not in himself, but in the righteousness of Christ, by which he was justified, and was a truly sincere and upright man, and walked with God, as Enoch did, and was favored with much communion with him: and in his public capacity he was a "preacher of righteousness;" of righteousness to be done between man and man; of the righteousness of God in bringing a flood upon the world to destroy it; and also of the righteousness of Christ; for no doubt he was a preacher of that of which he was an heir, and so had knowledge of and faith in it: the persons to whom he preached, or Christ in him by his Spirit, were the spirits that are now in prison; but then in the days of Noah, while he was preparing the ark, were on earth; to whose ministry they were disobedient, and so it was without success; (see 2 Peter 2:5; 1 Peter 3:19, 1 Peter 3:20).

2b. There was a display of the grace of God in the ark which Noah was directed to make for the saving of his family (Hebrews 11:7), which may be considered either as an emblem of the church of God, which is to be formed in all things according to the pattern given by God himself, as that was; and which weathers the storms and tempests, and beatings of the waters of affliction and persecution, as that did in a literal sense; and in which are carnal professors, hypocrites, and heretics, as well as God's chosen people, and truly gracious souls; as there were all sorts of creatures in the ark: or else the ark may be considered as a type of Christ, the cover and shelter from the storm and tempest of divine wrath and vindictive justice, and in whom spiritual rest is to be had for weary souls; just as the dove let out of the ark found no rest until it returned to it again; and as in the ark few souls were saved, only Noah and his family, and none but those that were in the ark; so there are but few that seek and find the way of salvation, and eternal life by Christ; and there is salvation in no other, but in him; nor are there any saved, but who are saved in and by him.

2c. This sacrifice of Noah, after he came out of the ark, was typical of the sacrifice of Christ, both with respect to the matter of it, clean creatures; expressive of the purity of Christ's sacrifice, who is the Lamb of God without spot or blemish; and who offered himself without spot to God; and who, having no sin himself, was fit to be a sacrifice for the sins of others: and also with respect to the acceptance of it; "God smelled a sweet savour;" that is, he was well-pleased with, and graciously accepted of Noah's sacrifice; and the same phrase is used of the acceptance of Christ's sacrifice (Ephesians 5:2; Genesis 8:20, Genesis 8:21).

2d. The covenant made with Noah, though it was not the special covenant of grace, being made with him and all his posterity, and even with all creatures; yet as it was a covenant of preservation, it was a covenant of kindness and goodness in a temporal way; and it bore a resemblance to the covenant of grace; inasmuch as there were no conditions in it, no sign or token to be observed on man's part; only what God himself gave as a token of his good will, the rainbow in the cloud; and seeing that it is a covenant durable, lasting, and inviolable; (see Isaiah 54:9, Isaiah 54:10). The rainbow, the token of it, showed it to be a covenant of peace, which is one of the titles of the covenant of grace in the text referred to. So Christ, the Mediator of it, is said to have a rainbow upon his head; and a rainbow is said to be round about the throne, signifying, that access to the throne of grace is only through the peacemaker Jesus Christ (Revelation 10:1; Revelation 4:3). To which may be added, that if this covenant of preservation had not taken place; but mankind had been now destroyed; the covenant of grace would have been made void, and of no effect; since the promised Seed, the great blessing of that covenant, was not yet come, and if so, never could, in the way promised.

2e. Noah's blessing of Shem is not to be omitted; "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem!" in which is a display of covenant grace; for to be the Lord God of any person, is the sum and substance of the covenant of grace, which always runs in this style, "I will be their God," Moreover, Noah foretold spiritual blessings of grace which should be enjoyed by his posterity in future time; "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem" (Genesis 9:26, Genesis 9:27). The tents of Shem signify the church of God in its tabernacle state; and which continued among the Jews who were of the race of Shem, until the coming of Christ; and then God sent the gospel into the Gentile world, among the posterity of Japhet, and enlarged, or "persuaded" them, as some choose to render the word, to come and join with the believing Jews in the same gospel church state; whereby they became of the same body, and partakers of the same promises and blessings of the covenant; by which the above prophecy was in part fulfilled, and will be more completely in the latter day; (see Isaiah 60:1-8).

3. Thirdly, The next period of time in which an exhibition was made of the covenant and of the grace of it, is that from Abraham to Moses. And,

3a. Abraham himself stands foremost in it; he was an eminent instance of the grace of God, of the electing and calling grace of God. He was born in an idolatrous family, and lived in an idolatrous land; and he was called from his own country, and his father's house, to forsake it, and go elsewhere and serve the Lord; and to be separate from them, and the rest of the world; as the people of God are, when effectually called: he was an eminent instance of justifying grace; he was justified, but not by works, and so had not whereof to glory before God; but he was justified by faith in the righteousness of Christ; "He believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness" (Genesis 15:6). Not the act of faith, but the object of it, what he believed in, the Lord and his righteousness; for what was imputed to him, is imputed to all that believe in Christ, Jews or Gentiles, in all ages; now whatsoever may be said for Abraham's faith, being imputed to himself for righteousness; it can never be thought, surely, that it is imputed to others also for the same. Besides, it is the "righteousness of faith," the righteousness of Christ received by faith, which Abraham, when uncircumcised, had; and which is imputed to them also that believe, whether circumcised or uncircumcised (Romans 4:2, Romans 4:3, Romans 4:11, Romans 4:13, Romans 4:22-24). To which may be added, that the gospel was preached to Abraham; the good news of his spiritual seed, those that walk in the steps of his faith, whether Jews or Gentiles, being blessed with all spiritual blessings in the Messiah, who should spring from him (Galatians 3:8). But what more especially deserve attention, are the various appearances of God unto Abraham, and the manifestations of the covenant of grace then made unto him. The first appearance was at the time of his call from his idolatrous country and kindred, when the covenant of grace was broke up to him, and he was assured of the blessings of it (Genesis 12:1-3), as it is to the chosen ones in effectual calling; and that it was this covenant that was then made known to Abraham, is clear from Galatians 3:17 where it is said to be "confirmed before of God in Christ;" which certainly designs the covenant of grace; for what else could be said to be thus "confirmed?" and which indeed was made with him, and confirmed in him in eternity, and was now made manifest to Abraham; and from the time of the manifestation of it to him at his call from Chaldea, to the giving of the law on mount Sinai, were four hundred and thirty years there mentioned. The next appearance of God to him I shall take notice of, (for I propose not to consider everyone) is that which is recorded in Genesis 15:1 where in a vision God said unto him, "I am thy shield, and thy

exceeding great reward;" his shield, to protect him from all enemies, temporal and spiritual; his reward, portion, and inheritance in this life and that to come; and which is an exceeding great one, and is the sum and substance of the covenant of grace. Another appearance of God to Abraham was, when he was ninety nine years of age; when, besides the covenant of circumcision, God gave to him, and his natural seed of the male gender, and a promise of the land of Canaan to his posterity, as he had done before, he made himself known to him as the almighty God, or God all sufficient; whose power and grace were sufficient to support him in his walk before him, and bring him to a state of perfection (Genesis 17:1), and particularly in Genesis 17:4 he said to him, "As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations;" which the apostle explains of his being the father of all that believe, whether circumcised or uncircumcised; even of all that walk in the steps of his faith, and believe unto righteousness, as he did; these are blessed, with faithful Abraham, with all the blessings of the covenant of grace, as he was (Romans 4:9-17; Galatians 3:9, Galatians 3:29). Once more, the Lord appeared to him in the plains of Mamre. Three appeared to him in an human form, two of them were angels, and one was Jehovah, the Son of God; who not only foretold the birth of a son to Abraham, but made known to him the design to destroy Sodom; and gave an high encomium of his piety and justice; and allowed him to expostulate with him about the destruction of Sodom; admitted him to stand before him, and he communed with him. All which showed him to be a friend of God, and interested in the covenant of his grace (Genesis 18:3, Genesis 18:10, Genesis 18:17, Genesis 18:22, Genesis 18:33). At the time of the offering up of his son Isaac, by the command of the Lord, he appeared to him, and restrained him from the actual performance of it; upon which he called the name of the place Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord will see, or will appear in the mount of difficulties, as he had to him; and when he made a further manifestation of the covenant of grace in that important article; "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 22:14-18), meaning the promised Seed, the Messiah, that should spring from him, as he did, and is called the Son of Abraham (Matthew 1:1), in whom all the elect are blessed with all spiritual blessings, the blessings of the everlasting covenant. Not to omit the interview Abraham had with Melchizedek, who met him upon his return from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him in the name of the most high God; this man was an eminent type of Christ; his name and title agree with his, king of righteousness, and king of peace; the righteous and peaceable king; a priest continually, and of whose order Christ was; and whose eternity is shadowed forth in his genealogy being unknown, in which he was made like unto the Son of God, the eternal Son of the eternal Father: it may be our Lord has respect to this interview, when he says, "Abraham saw my day, and was glad;" saw him in the promise, and saw him in this type (John 8:56; Hebrews 7:1-3; Genesis 14:18, Genesis 14:19).

3b. Isaac, the son of Abraham, is the next instance of covenant grace in this period of time; in his line from Abraham it was promised the Messiah should come, and did: the same covenant of grace that was exhibited to Abraham, was manifested to Isaac in the same words (Genesis 26:3, Genesis 26:4). And he was himself an eminent type of Christ, the promised Seed, and the great blessing of the covenant, both in his sacrifice and in his resurrection. Isaac was Abraham's own son, his only son, his beloved son, whom he took to offer on mount Moriah; Isaac went with him without reluctance, carrying the wood on which he was to be laid, and was laid; by which it appeared that Abraham withheld him not. So Christ, who has been offered a sacrifice by the will of God, is his own Son, his begotten Son, his only begotten Son, and his beloved Son, when it was his pleasure to make his soul an offering for sin, he willingly went, as a lamb to the slaughter,

bearing on his shoulders the cross on which he was crucified; and was not spared by his divine Father, but delivered up for us all. And though Isaac died not, yet he was reckoned by Abraham as dead; who accounted that God was able to raise him from the dead; from "whence also he received him in a figure" (Hebrews 11:19), a ram caught in a thicket being shown him, and which he offered in his room; and so Isaac was delivered, and went home alive to his father's house; and this was on the third day from the time Abraham reckoned him as a dead man. So Christ was "put to death in the flesh," signified by the ram in the thicket; and "quickened in the Spirit," typified by Isaac saved alive; who, after his resurrection, went to his God and our God, to his Father and our Father; and his resurrection was on the third day, according to this scripture type of him.

3c. Jacob, the son of Isaac, is another instance in whom there was a display of covenant grace, in the period of time between Abraham and Moses. He was an eminent and illustrious instance of electing grace, according to which the blessings of the covenant are dispensed. He and Esau were brothers, twins, and if any, Esau had the precedence; yet before their birth it was notified to Rebekah, that "the elder should serve the younger" (Genesis 25:23) which the apostle makes use of to illustrate and exemplify the grace of God in election (Romans 9:11-13). The same covenant of grace that was manifested to Abraham and Isaac, was repeated and made known to Jacob (Genesis 28:13-15). Christ also was represented to him by a ladder, whose top reached to heaven, and on which he saw the angels of God ascending and descending (Genesis 28:12). The same is said of Christ (John 1:51), who in his divine nature reached to heaven, and was in heaven when in his human nature he was here on earth; and to whom angels ministered, and who is the only Mediator between God and man, and the way of access to God, and communion with him. Christ in an human form appeared to Jacob, and wrestled with him, with whom Jacob had so much power as to prevail, and obtain the blessing from him, and got the name of Israel (Genesis 32:24-28). The Messiah was prophesied of by him, under the name of Shiloh, the prosperous and the peaceable; in whose hands the pleasure of the Lord prospered, and who made peace for men by the blood of his cross; and that he should spring from his son Judah, and out of his tribe, as he did; and that he should come while civil government, in some form or another, was in Judah; and that when he came, there should be a great gathering of the Gentiles to him; all which have been exactly fulfilled: and for Christ, as the author of salvation, provided and promised in the covenant of grace, did the patriarch Jacob wait (Genesis 49:10, Genesis 49:18).

3d. Within this period of time, about the time the children of Israel were in Egypt, and before the times of Moses, lived Job, and his three friends: who, though they were not of Israel, but of the race of Esau, yet the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it, were made known to them, as a pledge and earnest of what would be done in later times. Job was an eminent instance of the grace of God; his character, as given by God himself, is, that he was "a perfect and upright man;" perfect, as justified by the righteousness of Christ; upright and sincere, as sanctified by the Spirit; and who, in his walk and conversation, appeared to be "one that feared God and eschewed evil" (Job 1:8), and as he was a man of great knowledge of natural and civil things, so of things divine, spiritual, and evangelical; of the impurity of nature; of the insufficiency of man's righteousness to justify him before God; and of the doctrine of redemption and salvation by Christ. How many articles of faith, and doctrines of grace, are contained in those words of his; "I know that my Redeemer liveth?" &c. from whence it appears, that he knew Christ as the Redeemer, and as his Redeemer, provided and promised in the covenant of grace; that he then existed; that he would be

incarnate, and dwell among men on earth; and come a second time to judge the world; and that there would be a resurrection of the same body, and a beatific vision of God in a future state; (see Job 9:2, Job 9:20, Job 9:30, Job 9:31; Job 14:4; Job 19:25-27). Job's three friends, though they mistook his case, and misapplied things to him, yet were men that knew, much of divine things; of the corruption of nature; of the vanity of self-righteousness; this, indeed, was their quarrel with Job, imagining, though wrongly, that he was righteous in his own eyes: and how gloriously does Elihu speak of the great Redeemer as the "Messenger" of the covenant, the uncreated Angel, Christ; as "an Interpreter" of his Father's mind and will; One among a thousand, the Chiefest of ten thousand, whose office it is "to show unto men his uprightness," his own righteousness, to declare and preach it (Psalms 40:9). And as a Ransom found in council and covenant; a proper Person to give his life a ransom for men: (Job 4:17, Job 4:18; Job 15:14-16; Job 25:4-6; Job 33:23, Job 33:24). Thus the covenant of grace was exhibited, held forth, displayed, and manifested in the grace and blessings of it in the times of the patriarchs.

## 04-03 Of the Exhibitions of the Covenant of

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A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 4—Chapter 3 Of the Exhibitions of the Covenant of Grace Under the Mosaic Dispensation

Having traced the manifestation and application of the Covenant of Grace from the times of our first parents, through the patriarchal state, to the times of Moses; I shall now consider it as exhibited in his time, and unto the times of David and the prophets; and shall begin,

1. With Moses himself, who was a great man of God; and though the law was by him, he had large knowledge of Christ; of his person, offices, and grace; of the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it. "Had ye believed Moses," says Christ to the Jews, "ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me" (John 5:46). Moses was an eminent type of Christ, in whom the grace of Christ, and of the covenant, was eminently displayed. The apostle in Hebrews 3:1-14 runs the parallel between Moses and Christ, though he gives the preference to Christ, as it was just he should; they were both, he observes, concerned in the house of God; both faithful therein; with this difference, Moses as a servant, and Christ as a Son in his own house. Moses was a mediator when the covenant on Sinai was given, at the request of the people of Israel, and by the permission of God; and stood between God and them, to deliver his word to them (Galatians 3:19; Deuteronomy 5:5), in which he was a type of Christ, the Mediator of the new and better covenant, and the Mediator between God and man. He was a prophet, and spoke of Christ as who should be raised up a prophet like unto him, and was to be hearkened to; and who has been raised up; and God has spoken by him all his mind and will to the sons of men. When Moses and Elias were with Christ on the mount, which showed harmony and agreement between them; a voice was heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him," as the great Prophet of the church; (see Deuteronomy 18:15; Hebrews 1:1, Hebrews 1:2; Matthew 17:5). Moses was a priest, and officiated as such before Aaron was appointed to that office; and he, indeed, invested him with it by the offering of sacrifices (Exodus 29:1; Psalms 99:6), in which he prefigured Christ in his priestly office, who became man, that he might be a merciful and sympathizing one; and being holy, harmless, and separate from sinners, was fit to be one, and to offer a pure sacrifice for sin. Moses was also a king and a lawgiver under God; a ruler and governor of the people of Israel (Deuteronomy 33:4, Deuteronomy 33:5). Christ is King of Zion and King of saints; by the designation of his Father, and with the acknowledgment of his people, who own him, and submit to him as such; and of whose government there will be no end (Psalms 2:6; Isaiah 33:22; Isaiah 9:7). Once more, Moses was a deliverer or redeemer of the people of Israel, out of that state of bondage in which they were in Egypt (Acts 7:35), and in this bore a figure of Christ the Redeemer of his people, from a worse than Egyptian bondage, the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law; and herein and hereby through him were held forth the grace of the covenant, and the blessings of it in Christ to the faith of God's people.

There were many things done by him, and under him, and in his time, which exhibited and showed forth the covenant of grace, and the things contained in it. The whole ceremonial law was nothing

else than a shadowy exhibition of it; it was a shadow of good things to come by Christ, the great high Priest, which are come by him; as peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation. The priests, their garments, and their sacrifices, with other numerous rites, all prefigured Christ, and the grace of the covenant, which is by him: the ceremonial law was the gospel of the Israelites, it was their pedagogue, their schoolmaster, that taught them the A B C of the gospel in their infant state. Christ was the mark and scope it aimed at, the end of it, and in whom it had its full accomplishment; the Israelites, by reason of darkness, could not see to the end of those things, which are now abolished, and which we with open face behold. It would be too tedious to go over the various particulars in the former dispensation, which held forth the grace of Christ, and of the covenant to the faith of men. It may be sufficient to instance in three or four of them, which were for a time, or of longer continuance; and were either stated ordinances, or extraordinary works of providence, which typified spiritual things. The passover, which was instituted at the time of Israel's going out of Egypt, was kept by faith; not only of deliverance from Egyptian bondage, but in the faith of a future redemption and salvation by Christ; hence he is called "Christ our passover" (1 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:23). The passover was a lamb without blemish, slain by the congregation of Israel, between the two evenings; it was then roasted with fire, and eaten whole with bitter herbs, and its blood was sprinkled upon the doorposts of the houses of the Israelites; that when the destroying angel passed through Egypt, to destroy their firstborn, seeing the blood where it was sprinkled, passed by the houses in which the Israelites were, and left them unhurt; and hence the institution had the name of the passover; (see Exodus 12:1-51). All which was typical of Christ, who is the Lamb of God, without spot or blemish; who was taken by the Jews and crucified and slain; who endured the fire of divine wrath, whereby his strength was dried up like a potsherd; is to be, and is fed upon by faith; even a whole Christ, in his person, and offices, and grace, attended with repentance and humiliation for sin; believers in him, when they look to him by faith, mourn; and a profession of him is, more or less, accompanied with bitter afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions; and his blood, which from hence is called the blood of sprinkling, that being shed and sprinkled on the hearts of men, not only purges their consciences from dead works, but secures them from the wrath and justice of God; who, looking upon this blood, which is ever in sight, is pacified towards them, and passes by them, when he takes vengeance on others. The manna was another type of Christ; that was typical bread, Christ is the true bread; hence Christ, speaking of the manna, and of himself, says, "My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven" (John 6:32), meaning himself, the truth of the type; the manna was only a shadow, Christ is the substance, the solid and substantial food, signified by it, and therefore is called "the hidden manna" (Revelation 2:17), which every believer in Christ has a right to eat of, and does; so the Old and New Testament saints "all eat of the same spiritual meat" (1 Corinthians 10:3). The Israelites being in the wilderness, and hungry, complained for want of food, and murmured; God promised to give them bread from heaven, which he did: this when they first saw, they knew not what it was; and asked one another, What is it? it was small in bulk, white in color, and sweet in taste; this they gathered every day for their daily food, as they were directed; and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans: and on this they lived while in the wilderness, until they came to the land of Canaan; (see Exodus 16:1-36 and Numbers 11:1-35 and Joshua 5:12). All which pointed to Christ and his grace, the food of faith; who, when he came into the world, the world knew him not; nor is he known to the Israel of God before conversion; they are without Christ, without the knowledge of him while unregenerate; until it pleases God to call them by his grace, and reveal his

Son in them. And he is entirely hidden from the men of the world; in whose eyes, and in the eyes of carnal professors, he is little, mean, and contemptible; yet white and ruddy, comely and beautiful, pure and holy, and desirable, to truly gracious souls; to whose taste his fruits, the blessings of his grace, his doctrines, his word, and ordinances, are sweet and pleasant; and a crucified Christ, whose sufferings are signified by the manna being ground, beaten, and baked, is the food of believers in this present state; what is their daily food, and which they live upon while they are in the wilderness, till they come to Canaan's land, and eat of the "old corn," the things which God from all eternity has prepared for them that love him. The water out of the rock the Israelites drank of in the wilderness, was another emblem and representative of Christ and his grace; hence called "spiritual drink," and the rock a "spiritual rock; and that Rock was Christ," (1 Corinthians 10:4). The Israelites wanting water in the wilderness, murmured, when Moses was ordered by the Lord to smite a rock at two different times and places, from whence water gushed out for the supply of them, their flocks, and herds. Christ was signified by the rock, who may be compared to one for height, shelter, strength, and duration; and with which they are followed and supplied while they are in this world: and as it was by the rod of Moses the rock was smitten; so Christ was stricken and smitten in a legal and judicial way, being the surety and representative of his people, by which means the blessings of grace flow unto them; as justification, pardon, &c. just as the blood and water sprung from his side when pierced with the spear; and this rock being thus smitten for believers, they have a never failing supply of grace through the wilderness. The brazen serpent was another figure of Christ and his grace. The Israelites being bitten with fiery serpents, of which many died; Moses was ordered by the Lord to make a fiery serpent of brass, and set it on a pole, that whoever was bitten might look unto it and live; which was done accordingly, and the promised effect followed (Numbers 21:6-9). Our Lord takes notice of this very significant type himself, and applies it to himself (John 3:14, John 3:15). The serpent Moses made had the form of a serpent, but not the nature of one: Christ was in the likeness of sinful flesh, but his flesh was not sinful; he was without the poison of the serpent, sin, original or actual: it was a fiery one, denoting either the wrath of God sustained by Christ, or the vengeance he took on his and our enemies when on the cross; or rather, it may denote his flaming love to his people, expressed in his sufferings and death. It being of brass, denoted not only his lustre and glory, but his strength; who, being the mighty God, is able to save to the uttermost all that come and look unto him for salvation. The situation of the serpent of Moses on a pole, may signify the crucifixion of Christ, which he himself expressed by being lifted up from the earth (John 12:32), or his exaltation at the right hand of God; or rather, the setting of him up in the ministry of the gospel, where he is erected as an ensign and standard to gather souls to him; and where he is held forth evidently as crucified and slain, as the object and ground of hope. And as the end of the erection of the serpent was, that such who were bitten by the fiery serpents might look to it and live; so the end of Christ's crucifixion, and of the ministration of him in the Gospel is, that such who are envenomed with the poison of the old serpent, the devil, and whose wound is otherwise incurable, might, through looking to Christ by faith, live spiritually, comfortably, and eternally; as all such do who are favored with a spiritual sight of him (John 6:40).

2. Besides Moses, there were others in his time, in whom the grace of the covenant was remarkably displayed and manifested; particularly Aaron, his brother, called "the saint of the Lord" (Psalms 106:16), the Holy One, with whom were the Urim and Thummim (Deuteronomy 33:8), a type of Christ, in whom all lights and perfections are; and though Christ, as a priest, was not of the

order of Aaron, but of another; yet Aaron, in his priestly office, prefigured him; he was taken from among men, from among his brethren, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sin, and did not take this honour to himself, but was called of God to it; "so Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest;" but was made so by his divine Father (Hebrews 5:4, Hebrews 5:5), and has offered up a sacrifice for the sins of his people, of a sweet smelling savour to God; which the sacrifices of Aaron and his sons were typical of, by which the faith of believers in those times was led to the great and better sacrifice of Christ. Aaron was also a type of Christ in his intercession, as well as in his sacrifice; he could speak well, and therefore was appointed the spokesman of Moses unto the people (Exodus 4:14-16). Christ is an advocate for his people; he can speak well to their case for them, and ever lives to appear in the presence of God, and to make intercession for them, and is always heard.

3. Joshua, the successor of Moses, was also a type of Christ, and in him the grace of Christ, and of the covenant, was evidently displayed. Their names agree, both signify a Saviour; Joshua is called Jesus (Hebrews 4:8). Moses conducted the people of Israel through the wilderness, to the borders of the land of Canaan, but was not allowed to lead them into it; intimating, that it is not by the works of the law, or by the works of righteousness, done by men, that they are or can be saved; that a man must have a better righteousness than his own, or he will never enter into the kingdom of heaven; there is no salvation but in and by the name of Jesus, the antitype of Joshua: as Joshua led the people of Israel into the land of Canaan, and settled them there; so Christ, by his blood and righteousness, has opened a way for his people into the heavenly state, and gives them an abundant entrance into his kingdom and glory. Joshua did not give the true rest in Canaan; for then another would not have been spoken of; it was only a typical one he gave; but Christ, our spiritual Joshua, gives spiritual rest here, and eternal rest hereafter. The scarlet thread which Rahab the harlot was ordered by the spies in the times of Joshua, to bind at her window, that her house might be known by them, in order to save her, and all in it, when Jericho was destroyed, was an emblem of the blood of Christ, by which are peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation for the chief of sinners; for Gentile sinners, as well as Jews; and through which is security from wrath, ruin, and destruction. Joshua was favored with an appearance of Christ unto him, with a sword drawn in his hand, who declared unto him, that he came as the Captain of the host of the Lord, to animate, encourage, and assist him. Christ is the Captain of salvation, who has fought the battles of his people for them; conquered all their enemies, and made them more than conquerors through himself. There were later appearances of Christ to others in this period of time, as to Manoah and his wife, who declared to them his name was "Pele," a Wonder, or Wonderful, which is one of the names of Christ (Isaiah 9:6), and to Gideon, Samuel, and others, I shall take no further notice of.

## 04-04 Of the Covenant of Grace, as Exhibited

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A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 4—Chapter 4 Of the Covenant of Grace, as Exhibited in the Times of David, and the Succeeding Prophets, to the Coming of Christ

Christ, the great blessing of the covenant, was spoken of by all "the holy prophets which have been since the world began;" by the patriarch prophets; by Moses and others; but more abundantly by the prophets of a later date; God, who at sundry times, in different ages of the world; "and in divers manners," as by angels, by vision, by dreams and impulses on the mind; "spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets," concerning his mind and will, the covenant of his grace, and the blessings of it; to which dispensation of things is opposed that which is by Christ; "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Luke 1:70; Hebrews 1:1, Hebrews 1:2). From whence it appears, that the first administration of the covenant of grace, as has been observed, reached from the beginning of the world, or near it, to the coming of Christ; and now having traced it from Adam to Noah, from Noah to Abraham, from Abraham to Moses, and from Moses to David; I shall next consider it as more clearly manifested in the times of David, and by succeeding prophets, to the coming of Christ. And begin,

1. First, with David, who was a prophet, and by whom the Spirit of God spake concerning Christ, and the covenant of grace made with him (Acts 2:30; Acts 1:16; 2 Samuel 23:2-5). The grace of the covenant was displayed in him, the blessings of it were bestowed on him, the covenant itself was made with him; not only the covenant of royalty, concerning the succession of the kingdom of Israel in his family; but the special covenant of grace, in which his own salvation lay; a covenant ordered in all things and sure, and an everlasting one (2 Samuel 23:5). This was made with him, as he declares, that is, made manifest and applied unto him, and he was assured of his interest in it. He was an eminent type of Christ, who is therefore often called by his name (Psalms 89:3, Psalms 89:20; Ezekiel 34:23, Ezekiel 34:24; Ezekiel 37:24; Hosea 3:5). In his person, in the comeliness of it; in his character and employment, as a shepherd; in his offices, of prophet and king; in his afflictions and persecutions; and in his wars and victories. And great light and knowledge he had of things respecting Christ and his grace, as the book of Psalms, written by him, under divine inspiration, abundantly shows; as, of the person of Christ; of his divine and eternal sonship; of his being the eternal begotten Son of God, to whom this was first, at least, so clearly made known (Psalms 2:7). From whence are taken all those expressions in the New Testament, of Christ's being the only begotten Son, the only begotten of the Father, his own and proper Son: phrases expressive of Christ's co-essentiality, co-eternity, and co-equality with his Father. David speaks of the humanity of Christ, of a body being prepared for him in covenant, of the formation of it in the womb of the virgin; of his being of his seed, and springing from him as man, as he did (Psalms 40:6; compared with Hebrews 10:5; Psalms 139:15, Psalms 139:16; Psalms 132:11, Psalms 132:17; Acts 13:23). He speaks very expressly of his sufferings and death in (Psalms 22:1-31), uses the very words Christ uttered on the cross; exactly describes the persons that surrounded him, and mocked at him when on it, as well as the manner of his death, by crucifixion, signified by his hands and feet being pierced; and also the dreadful pains and agonies was then in,

by which he was brought to the dust of death; yea, some minute circumstances of his sufferings are observed, as casting lots on his vesture, and parting his garments; and elsewhere, the giving him gall and vinegar to drink (Psalms 69:21). He foretells his burial in the grave, which should not be so long as to see corruption, and his resurrection to an immortal life (Psalms 16:10, Psalms 16:11; Acts 2:25-31). His ascension to heaven (Psalms 68:18 compared with Ephesians 4:8-10). His session at the right hand of God (Psalms 110:1; Hebrews 1:13). He treats of his suretyship engagements, and of his offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King (Psalms 40:6-9; Psalms 110:4; Psalms 2:6; Psalms 89:27; Psalms 72:8).

2. Secondly, Solomon, the Son of David, and his successor in the kingdom, had not only the covenant of royalty established with him, but the special covenant of grace was made with him, or made known unto him; "I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son" (2 Samuel 7:14). He was both a preacher and king of Israel; and, no doubt, a good man, notwithstanding his fall; his prayer at the dedication of the temple shows it; as well as his being the amanuensis of the Holy Spirit, in various writings: an eminent type he was of Christ, who is therefore called Solomon (Song of Solomon 3:7, Song of Solomon 3:9, Song of Solomon 3:11; Song of Solomon 8:11, Song of Solomon 8:12), in his name, which signifies peaceable, and agrees with Christ, the Prince of peace; in his scent, the Son of David; in his wisdom, in which Christ is greater than Solomon; in his wealth and riches; and in the peaceableness and extent of his kingdom. Much of Christ, and the blessings of grace through him, were made known unto him. He writes of him under the name of Wisdom, as a divine Person, the same with the Logos, the Word, and Son of God; of his eternal existence; of the eternal generation of him; of his being brought forth, and brought up as a Son with his Father from everlasting, as is declared in the eighth of Proverbs; which when one reads, might be tempted to think he was reading the first chapter of John, there being such a similarity, yea, sameness of diction, sentiment, and doctrine. Solomon or Agur speaks of Christ under the names of Ithiel and Ucal; the one signifies, "God is with me;" as he always was with Christ, and Christ with him: the other, "the mighty One," or, "I am able," I can do all things; as he could, being the Almighty. He speaks in the same place of the infinite, omnipresent, and omnipotent Being, whose name, that is, his nature is incomprehensible and ineffable; and to whom he ascribes a Son, as a divine, distinct Person from his Father; as of the same incomprehensible and ineffable nature with him, and so co-essential, co-eternal, and co-equal with him (Proverbs 30:1, Proverbs 30:4). The book of Canticles, written by Solomon, is a rich display of the glories and excellencies of Christ, of his great love to his church, and of the covenant blessings of grace bestowed upon her. Pass we on now.

3. Thirdly, To the prophets who lived in the succeeding reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah; as Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c. who were holy men of God, and spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit; the Spirit of God was in them, and spoke by them; and the sure word of prophecy they delivered, was as a light or lamp in a dark place; the gospel day not as yet being broke, nor the shadows of the ceremonial law fled, nor Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, yet up and risen. These,

3a. Speak much of the covenant of grace. Of it as a covenant of life and peace, in which provision is made for the spiritual and eternal life of the covenant ones; and in which the plan and model of their peace and reconciliation by Christ was formed (Malachi 2:5; Isaiah 54:10). Of it as an everlasting one, which should continue for ever, and never be altered, nor removed (Isaiah 55:3; Isaiah 54:10). Of the persons who engaged and entered into it, Jehovah and the branch, that

should build the temple of the Lord, between whom the council of peace was; yea, Jehovah the Father, the Word of God, and his Spirit, who were each of them concerned in the covenant of grace (Zechariah 6:12, Zechariah 6:13; Haggai 2:4, Haggai 2:5). Of Christ, as the sum and substance of it, said to be the covenant of the people, in whom are all the blessings and promises of it, called the sure mercies of David; and whose blood is said to be the blood of the covenant, by which it is ratified and confirmed; and he is spoken of as the messenger of it (Isaiah 42:6; Isaiah 49:8; Isaiah 55:3; Zechariah 9:11; Malachi 3:1). Mention is made by them of the persons on whose account the covenant of grace was made, the elect of God, both Jews and Gentiles (Isaiah 49:5, Isaiah 49:6, Isaiah 49:8), yea, they speak of the new covenant, or of the administration of it under the New Testament dispensation, and give the several articles of it; which would be more clearly known, and more powerfully have their effect (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Which may lead on to observe,

3b. That the prophets in this period of time speak very plain of the blessings of the covenant of grace, even more plainly and fully than heretofore. As of,

3b1. The blessing of pardon of sin through Christ, which is a blessing of the covenant (Hebrews 8:10, Hebrews 8:12). Not only Moses relates, that God appeared to him, and caused his goodness to pass before him, and proclaimed his name, a God gracious and merciful, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin; and David describes the blessedness of the man whose iniquities are forgiven, and instances in himself (Exodus 34:6, Exodus 34:7; Psalms 32:1, Psalms 32:2, Psalms 32:5). But the apostle Peter observes, that to Christ "give all the prophets witness," that "through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43). They speak of it as belonging to God, and him only, even every act of it, and as flowing from his mercy; on which account there is none like unto him (Daniel 9:9; Micah 7:18), and of his being abundant in it, or abundantly pardoning, even all that apply to him for it; and all their sins and transgressions, thou ever so many and great (Isaiah 55:7; Isaiah 1:18), and of the freeness of pardon, as the effect of the free favour, love, grace, and mercy of God, which is very strongly expressed in Isaiah 43:25 after so many aggravated sins of omission and commission are observed; and yet they speak of it as founded upon the sufferings of Christ, and redemption, reconciliation, atonement, and satisfaction procured thereby (Zechariah 3:9; Isaiah 44:22; Daniel 9:24). They also describe the persons that share in this blessing, even such whom God has reserved for himself in election, and in the covenant of grace, and who are the remnant of his heritage, his portion, and the lot of his inheritance (Jeremiah 50:20; Micah 7:18).

3b2. The blessing of justification by the righteousness of Christ; which though a doctrine more clearly revealed under the gospel dispensation, yet is "witnessed by the law and prophets" (Romans 3:21, Romans 3:22). The prophets speak of the righteousness by which men are justified as an everlasting righteousness, that was then to be brought in by Christ, the Surety and Saviour of his people (Daniel 9:24), and as "well pleasing to God," because by it the "law is magnified," all its demands answered, and it made "honorable," and more so than it could have been by the most perfect obedience of angels and men (Isaiah 42:21). They speak of Christ as the author of it; and hence he is called by them, "The Lord our Righteousness;" and "the Sun of Righteousness;" because righteousness is wrought out by him, and springs from him, as light from the sun (Jeremiah 23:6; Malachi 4:2). They speak of Christ as the justifier of them that know him, and believe in him (Isaiah 53:11). And of the seed of Israel being justified in him, and glorying of him, as the Lord their Righteousness, even all the elect of God, both Jews and Gentiles; and the church

is represented by them as expressing her strong faith of interest in the righteousness of Christ, as her justifying one; "Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength" (Isaiah 45:24, Isaiah 45:25). Under the emblem of Joshua, the high priest, accused of, and charged with sin and guilt, yet acquitted by Christ, the Angel of the Lord is represented an elect sinner, charged with sin by law and justice, by Satan and his own conscience; but cleared from all by the application and imputation of the righteousness of Christ, to him expressed by those strong terms, "causing his iniquity to pass from him, and clothing him with change of raiment" (Zechariah 3:1-4). The same with the garments of salvation, and robe of righteousness, the church declares she was clothed and covered with, and in which she rejoiced (Isaiah 61:10).

3b3. The blessing of adoption is another covenant blessing, spoken of by the prophets; not national adoption, included in the national covenant made with the people of Israel; but adoption by special grace. The prophets speak of God's putting some among the children that were unlovely, unworthy, and deserving of his displeasure, and yet were the objects of his love and delight; his dear sons and pleasant children, and whom he owned in such a relation (Jeremiah 3:19; Jeremiah 31:20), of some that were given to Christ as his children, and to whom he stood in the relation of an everlasting Father (Isaiah 8:18; Isaiah 9:6; Hebrews 2:13). And though the saints under the former dispensation for the most part had not such a measure of the Spirit of adoption, as under the New Testament, yet they were then heirs, and so children; and some of them had a strong assurance of their interest in God, as their Father; "Doubtless, thou art our Father" (Isaiah 63:16). And the prophets also speak of a large number of adopted sons and daughters of God, as in the latter day, in each of the parts of the world, both among the Gentiles and among the Jews (Isaiah 43:6; Isaiah 45:11; Hosea 1:10).

3b4. Salvation, spiritual and eternal, in general, is the great blessing of the covenant of grace (2 Samuel 23:5), and this the prophets inquired after, and diligently searched into and spoke of; of the author of it, declaring it was not in hills and mountains, nor to be expected from thence, but in the Lord God only; they affirm that Christ was appointed as God's salvation to the ends of the earth; that he would come and save, and as having salvation; they represent him as mighty to save, yea as if salvation was then already wrought out by him (Jeremiah 3:23; Isaiah 49:6; Isaiah 35:4; Isaiah 63:1, Isaiah 63:5; Zechariah 9:9). They speak of the nature of it as an everlasting salvation, and describe the persons interested in it as the Israel of God, both Jews and Gentiles; even such who are at the ends of the earth, and who are encouraged to look to Christ for salvation (Isaiah 45:17, Isaiah 45:22), and they speak of the time when it should be wrought out (Daniel 9:24; 1 Peter 1:10, 1 Peter 1:11).

3c. There are various things relating to Christ, his person, office and grace, which are copiously and frequently spoken of by the prophets in this period of time; as his incarnation, which though not till many hundred years after, is spoken of as if then done, because of the certainty of it in the purpose and promise of God, "to us a child is born" (Isaiah 9:6), his birth of a virgin, with the name given him, Immanuel, God with us; and which is represented as wonderful, new and unheard of, as it justly might (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; Jeremiah 31:22; Daniel 2:45). The place of his birth, Bethlehem Ephrathah (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:4-6; John 7:41, John 7:42). Some things following his birth, as the murder of the infants about Bethlehem; his being carried to Egypt, and called again from thence, and residing in Nazareth (Jeremiah 31:15; Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:13-23). The parts where he should chiefly live, converse, and minister (Isaiah 9:1; Matthew 4:13, Matthew 4:14). His

state of humiliation, sufferings, and death, which are particularly described in Isaiah 53:1-12. The circumstances of his being sold for thirty pieces of silver by one of his disciples, forsaken by them all, and his side pierced with a spear (Zechariah 11:12, Zechariah 11:13; Zechariah 13:7; Zechariah 12:10; Matthew 27:3-10; Matthew 26:31; John 19:34-37). The prophets also speak of the time of his coming and of his sufferings: Daniel fixes the exact time of them, from a date given; and Haggai and Malachi declare he should come into the second temple, and give it a greater glory than the former; so that he must come and suffer as he did, before the destruction of that (Daniel 9:24,26; Haggai 2:7, Haggai 2:9; Malachi 3:1). And the same prophets, with Zechariah, who were the last of the prophets, speak of his near approach, that he was just at hand, and would soon, Suddenly, and at unawares, come into his temple; and of his forerunner (Zechariah 3:8; Zechariah 6:12; Zechariah 9:9; Haggai 2:6; Malachi 3:1; Malachi 4:5), but though the prophets mentioned were the last of the inspired writers, prophecy did not wholly cease with them; as appears by the instances of Zechariah the father of John the Baptist, who prophesied of him, and of the Messiah; and good old Simeon, to whom it was revealed by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ; and Anna the prophetess, who spoke of him to those that looked for redemption in Jerusalem (Luke 1:67; Luke 2:25, Luke 2:26, Luke 2:36, Luke 2:38). So true it is what our Lord says, that "the law and the prophets were until John;" which finishes the Old Testament dispensation, and the first and old administration of the covenant of grace; after which the kingdom of God, or gospel of Christ, was preached more clearly and fully, and God spake no more by the prophets, but by his Son (Luke 16:16; Hebrews 1:1, Hebrews 1:2), when the second and new covenant, or administration of it, took place; of which we shall treat in the next chapter. And from what has been observed it appears, that the former administration of the covenant of grace, reaching from the fall of Adam to the coming of Christ, was by types and figures, by shadows and sacrifices, and by promises and prophecies of future things, which are now fulfilled; Christ, the sum and substance of all, being come, the great blessing of the covenant of grace, and in whom all are included.

## 04-05 Of the Abrogation of the Old Covenant

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A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 4—Chapter 5 Of the Abrogation of the Old Covenant, Or First Administration of it, And the Introduction of the New, Or Second Administration of it. When we speak of the Abrogation of the Covenant this is to be understood, not of the covenant of grace, as to the matter and substance of it, which remains invariably the same in all periods of time; it is an everlasting covenant; it is ordered in all things and sure; it can never be broken and made void; every promise of it is unalterable, and every blessing irreversible; the covenant of peace can never be removed; it will stand firm to all generations; but with respect to the form of the administration of it only, even the form of it, under the former, or Old Testament dispensation, before described; and in order to set this in its true and proper light,

1. First, Let it be observed, that it was never designed that the first administration of the covenant of grace should continue always in that form; it was foretold that there should be a cessation of it, and therefore it might be expected.

1a. It was only intended to continue for a certain time, called, "The time of reformation" (Hebrews 9:10), when there would be a reform from burdensome rites and ceremonies; or "of correction," when what was faulty and deficient would be corrected, amended, and become perfect; or "of direction," when the saints would be directed to look to Christ, the substance of types and figures, and for perfection in him; the same with "the time appointed of the Father," until which time, children, though heirs, are under tutors and governors; so the Israelites were under the elements of the world, the ceremonies of the former dispensation, under the tutorage and pedagogy of the law: for the "law," the ceremonial law, was their "schoolmaster unto Christ," that led them to him, and instructed them in him; but when he came, they were no longer under a schoolmaster; and this was when "the fulness of time was come," agreed on between the Father and the Son; at which time the Son was sent, "that they might receive the adoption of children," and be no more considered as in their nonage, and as needing the instructions of a schoolmaster (Galatians 3:1-4; Galatians 3:24, Galatians 3:25).

1b. The ancient form of the administration of the covenant of grace, in a course of time, was limited to a certain people in a certain country, worshipping at a certain place, and sacrificing on the same altar. The word, worship and service of God, peculiarly belonged to the Jews, which was their distinguishing privilege above all the nations of the world (Psalms 147:19, Psalms 147:20; Romans 3:1, Romans 3:2; Romans 9:4). All their males were obliged three times in the year to appear at Jerusalem and worship together; and all their offerings and sacrifices were to be brought and offered on the altar there, and no where else (Deuteronomy 12:11, Deuteronomy 12:14; Deuteronomy 16:16). Now such a state of things was never designed to continue always; since when Shiloh, the Messiah, should come, there would be a gathering of the people to him, of people out of all nations of the world, who were to be blessed in him; he was to be set up as an ensign to them, to whom they would seek; from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, his name was to be great among the Gentiles, and incense to be offered to it in every place

(Genesis 49:10; Isaiah 11:10; Malachi 1:11). Now to such a dispensation the former state of things could never suit, and therefore could not be intended to be continued; the people of all nations could never be convened into one country, and worship at one place, and sacrifice on one altar.

1c. It is expressly foretold, that there would be "a new covenant," or a new administration of it; and that the former, in course, would cease (Jeremiah 31:31, Jeremiah 31:32), and it is upon this the apostle reasons, and proves the abrogation of the former covenant, "in that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old" (Hebrews 8:8, Hebrews 8:13). Particularly it was foretold, that sacrifices should cease, and be no longer acceptable to God; which were a considerable branch of the administration of the old covenant. These were from the beginning, as early as the first manifestation of the covenant of grace to fallen man: indeed, while they were in use by divine appointment, they were not in such high esteem with God as moral obedience and spiritual services (1 Samuel 15:22; Psalms 69:30, Psalms 69:31; Hosea 6:6). And plain hints were given, that the time would come when they should be no more practiced and regarded David had knowledge, by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, of what Christ, the surety of his people, said to his divine Father in the council and covenant of peace, and what he would say again when he came into the world to be their Saviour; "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire," &c. "Then said I, Lo, I come" &c. (Psalms 40:6, Psalms 40:7; Hebrews 10:5-7). Christ's coming into the world to offer up himself a sacrifice for the sins of his people, was virtually saying, that God would have legal sacrifices no longer ordered up, and would no more accept of them. And Daniel expressly says, that the Messiah would "cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease;" the daily sacrifice, and every other offering according to the law (Daniel 9:27). And the Jews themselves say [1], "that all sacrifices will cease in time to come (in the time of their vainly expected Messiah) but the sacrifice of praise."

According to prophecy, the Levitical priesthood, with which so many rites and ceremonies were connected, and upon which sacrifices were established, and in the exercise of which they were performed, was to be changed; the Messiah was to come, an High Priest of another order of priesthood than that of Aaron; "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (Psalms 110:4), which are the words of God the Father to Christ, and from whence the apostle argues the imperfection of the Levitical priesthood, and the change of it; and also of necessity the change of the whole law, on which it was founded (Hebrews 7:11, Hebrews 7:12; Hebrews 7:15-17). The ark was something very remarkable in the former dispensation; in it was the Decalogue, and on the side of it the whole body of the Jewish laws; it was a token, and indeed the place of the divine presence, and a type of Christ, a symbol of the covenant; and therefore called the ark of the covenant, and included the whole of the ceremonial law; and is put for the whole service and worship of that dispensation. Now of this it is foretold, that there would be a time when it should be no more, and should not be so much as thought of any more (Jeremiah 3:16). The ecclesiastical, as well as civil state of the Jews, was to be shaken and removed; the one is signified by the shaking of the heaven, as the other by the shaking of the earth, in Haggai 2:6 which the apostle explains of "the removing of things shaken, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain" (Hebrews 12:26, Hebrews 12:27), even of the immovable kingdom after spoken of; the second administration of the covenant of grace, which is to remain, and the ordinances of it, until the second coming of Christ; whereas the ordinances of divine service under the first covenant were so shaken as to be removed; and which were made to be removed, as they have been, according

to the above prediction.

Prophecy was another considerable way and means by which the covenant of grace was administered, throughout the whole Old Testament dispensation; and it was foretold that this should be sealed up, finished, and cease; for one part of the Messiah's work, when come, was to seal up the "vision and prophecy" (Daniel 9:24), all the visions and prophecies of the Old Testament were to have, and had their accomplishment in Christ; were to be sealed up and fulfilled in him, the sum and substance of them; or to "seal up the vision and prophet;" the prophets were to be till John, the forerunner of Christ, and no longer: after Christ, the great Prophet to be raised up, like unto Moses, there was to be no other, he only is to be heard; whatever scheme of things, either as to doctrine or worship, is set up, through pretended vision and prophecy, is to be disregarded; nor has any prophet risen up since prophecy, as foretold, was at an end. From all this now it might be expected, that the first and old administration of the covenant would in time cease.

2. Secondly, There are reasons to be given why the first covenant should and must cease.

2a. It was a typical covenant; the people on whose account it was made, was a typical people, typical of the whole Israel of God, consisting of Jews and Gentiles; of the spiritual Israel, chosen of God, redeemed by Christ, and who shall be saved with an everlasting salvation; the works, duties, and services enjoined them, and required of them with so much strictness, rigor, and severity, were typical of the obedience of Christ, the surety of the spiritual Israel; of that righteousness he was to fulfil and bring in, by which they are made righteous in the sight of God. The blessings promised unto them were typical ones; they were only shadows of good things, of spiritual blessings that were to come by Christ (Hebrews 10:1; Hebrews 9:11). As the earthly Canaan was a type of the heavenly inheritance, obtained in him; the sacrifices offered under that covenant were typical ones; the priests that offered them, the garments they offered them in, and the gifts and sacrifices offered by them, "served to the example and shadow of heavenly things" (Hebrews 8:4, Hebrews 8:5; Hebrews 9:23). The mediator of it, Moses, was a typical mediator, typical of Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant; the blood with which the first testament, or covenant, was dedicated and confirmed, was typical blood, typical of the blood of Christ, called, "The blood of the everlasting covenant" (Hebrews 9:18; Hebrews 13:20). Now when the Antitype of all this came, the types must cease; when Christ, the body, the sum and substance appeared, these shadows must flee away, and disappear, in course (Colossians 2:17).

2b. It was a faulty covenant, and therefore it was proper it should give way to a new and better covenant; so the apostle reasons; "for if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second" (Hebrews 8:7, Hebrews 8:8). Not that there was anything sinful or criminal in the first covenant, but it was defective; there were some deficiencies in it, which made the abrogation of it necessary.—

2b1. It did not exhibit Christ present, only in figure, in promise, and in prophecy; it only signified, that he would come and save his people; but it did not hold forth salvation as wrought out by him; it gave an intimation of the righteousness of Christ, that he was to bring in, but not as brought in; under it the propitiation, reconciliation, and satisfaction for sin, were not made, nor redemption from it obtained; wherefore Christ became the propitiation "for the remission of sins that are past;" and he suffered death "for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament" (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:15).

2b2. The sacrifices then offered were imperfect; for some sins there were no sacrifices appointed, as for sabbath breaking, murder, adultery, &c. and those that were appointed, could not really take away sin; at most they only made a typical expiation, not a real one; they sanctified only "to the purifying of the flesh;" but could not remove sin from the conscience, and "purge that from dead works;" that only the blood of Christ could do (Hebrews 9:13, Hebrews 9:14).

2b3. There was but a small measure of the gifts and graces of the Spirit bestowed on men under the first covenant; for though there were here and there one on whom great gifts, and much grace were bestowed, as Abraham and David, &c. yet in common, it was but a scanty measure of grace, light, knowledge, and holiness, that was given to ordinary saints; and the communication was made, for the most part, only to Israelites, and but to a few among them, a remnant, according to the election of grace.

2b4. It was a state of darkness and obscurity under that covenant; it was like a night season, in which lamps are lighted, and torches used; such was the sure word of prophecy; it was like a light or lamp in a dark place; there was light in some particular persons, as in the prophets, and it was held forth by them; but in general there was but little among the people, who "could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished," the ceremonial law; under which the mysteries of grace were couched, were clouded, and lay hid; they could not clearly see the end, design, and scope of them; though there were glorious promises of grace, these were covered with the veil of ceremonies, of which the veil, on the glory of the face of Moses, was a type (2 Corinthians 3:7, 2 Corinthians 3:13).

2b5. It was a state of bondage; this covenant was signified by Hagar the bondwoman, and by mount Sinai, which engendered to bondage, and answered to Jerusalem, as it was in the apostle's time; to the state of the Jews then, who were in bondage with their children: and the Israelites, while in their nonage, while children, were in bondage, under the elements of the world, which brought upon them a spirit of bondage to fear; for such a number of laws and ordinances being given them, to the breach of which death was annexed without mercy; and they so liable to break them, they, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Galatians 4:3, Galatians 4:24, Galatians 4:25; Romans 8:15; Hebrews 2:15).

2c. The rites and ceremonies by which this covenant was greatly administered, are by the apostle called, "weak and beggarly elements;" and being "weak" and "unprofitable," there was, therefore, a "disannulling" of them (Galatians 4:9; Hebrews 7:18, Hebrews 7:19). The sacrifices, which were a principal part of them, could not make, neither them that did them, nor the comers unto them, perfect, as to the conscience; they could not purge the worshippers, or those that attended ceremonial services, so as that they should have no more conscience of sin; they could not take away sin, neither from the sight of God, nor from the conscience of the sinner; nor so as that there should be no remembrance of them; for notwithstanding the daily sacrifices, morning and evening, and others on particular accounts, there was an annual remembrance made of them all, on the day of atonement (Hebrews 9:9; Hebrews 10:1-4). And especially when the great high priest was come, and his sacrifice was offered, they were quite impotent and useless, to answer any end at all: and therefore of right ought to cease, and be no more used; which leads,

3. Thirdly, To the abrogation of the first covenant, or of the administration of it; which was signified by the rending of the veil between the holy place and the holy of holies, at the death of Christ;

whereby the way into the holiest of all was made manifest, and all within exposed to open view; as are the mysteries of grace, the veil of ceremonies being removed; and now, with boldness and freedom, entrance is had into the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, consecrated through the veil of his flesh, which the former veil was a type of. The abrogation of the old covenant is expressed by "breaking down the middle wall of partition," which stood between Jews and Gentiles; such the ceremonial law was, and is so called in allusion to the enclosure of the court of the Israelites, in the temple, over which the Gentiles might not pass; and by abolishing and slaving the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; the same ceremonial law, which had this name; because it indicated the hatred of God against sin, and irritated the hatred of natural men to it, by its numerous and wearisome rites; and because it was the occasion of enmity between Jew and Gentile (Ephesians 2:14-16). It is moreover expressed by a disannulling of the commandment, the commandment of the priesthood, and of sacrifices and rites belonging to it; and even the whole ceremonial law, as to be of no more force, nor any longer binding; so that no man, henceforward, ought to "judge" another, with respect to them, nor take upon him to command an observance of them, and require obedience to them (Hebrews 7:19; Colossians 2:16, Colossians 2:17). It is likewise expressed by "a blotting out the hand writing of ordinances that was against us;" being an accusation for sin, containing a charge of sin, and implying an acknowledgment of it; as if they had given it under their hands, and showing and owning that satisfaction for sin, and that expiation were not yet made; wherefore when Christ came and paid the debt, he took up his bond, and cancelled it, and blotted out this handwriting against his people, that it might not be read any more, and nailed it to his cross; where law and justice are directed to go for satisfaction (Colossians 2:14). Once more, the abolition of the first covenant, and its form of administration, is signified by the fleeing away and disappearance of shadows. The law and its ceremonies were only shadows of good things to come by Christ; when he, the Sun of Righteousness, arose, these shadows fled; when he, the body, sum, and substance appeared, these disappeared: to this the church has respect (Song of Solomon 2:17; Song of Solomon 4:6).

Now the abrogation of the first and old covenant, or of that form of administration of the covenant of grace, was made, not at once, but gradually; and which the apostle suggests, when he says; "In that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old; now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away" (Hebrews 8:13). It began to decay, and there were some symptoms of a decay of it at the Babylonish captivity, and under the second temple; when the land of Canaan, a type of the heavenly inheritance, was seized upon by the Chaldeans, the inhabitants carried captive, a governor appointed over it by the king of Babylon, and people left in it to till it for his use; the temple was burnt, and temple worship and service ceased for many years, and the vessels of it were carried to Babylon; and though after a term of years there was a return of the people to their own land, and the temple was rebuilt, and worship restored; yet, as the Jews themselves own [2], the ark and many other things were wanting in that temple; great declensions there were, both in doctrine and worship; the sect of the Pharisees arose, and set up their own traditions upon a level with the written word, if not above it; and great confusion there was in the priesthood, that and the civil government being blended together; and men were put into it, especially towards the close of this period, that were very unfit for it; and oftentimes obtained it by corruption and bribery; all which showed a decay, and foreboded a change of things as near.

John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, came and proclaimed the near approach of the Messiah; he declared, that "the kingdom of heaven was at hand" (Matthew 3:2). The gospel dispensation, the new administration of the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it: his father, at his birth, called him "the prophet of the Highest," who was to prepare his way, and give knowledge of salvation to his people; and when he entered upon his office, he directed the people to believe on Christ, who was to come; and quickly pointed him to them, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29), which the lambs of the daily sacrifice, and all other sacrifices, could not do. Christ himself appeared, and preached the same as John had done, and began his ministry with the same words; but during his life the ceremonies of the law continued in use: he himself was circumcised the eighth day; his mother purified herself according to law, at the proper time, and presented him in the temple, according to the usual manner; at twelve years of age he went up with his parents to Jerusalem, to keep the passover; and when he had entered on his public ministry, he attended synagogue and temple worship; when he healed the leper he sent him to the priest to offer his gift; and one of the last actions of his life, was keeping the passover with his disciples; but at his death, of right, though not in fact, all ceremonies ceased, and even the whole dispensation or administration of the covenant, as it had been before in use; all things now concerning him had an end (Luke 22:37), all types and figures, shadows, sacrifices, promises, and prophecies; he by his sacrifice, by his sufferings and death, caused the sacrifice and oblation to cease, of right; nor should any afterwards have been offered up (Daniel 9:27), nor any other rite and ceremony observed: yet, through the influence of Judaizing teachers over weak minds, it was thought advisable to continue the use of some of the ceremonies, at least for a time; after it was known by Peter and others, that they were no longer in force, yet because of the many thousands of Jews, who were all zealous of the law, it was judged proper that compliances should be made, and charity and prudence to be exercised, that weak minds might not be offended, until they were better instructed in the doctrine of Christian liberty; which, when that was done, the use of them was strongly opposed against the obstinate and self-willed, who were resolved to retain them at any rate; and the saints were exhorted to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, and not to be entangled with the yoke of bondage; by which means the Christian churches were freed from those burdensome rites and ceremonies. But still the carnal Jews continued them, and even sacrifices, until the destruction of Jerusalem, which put an end to them; for according to the law of God, no sacrifice might be offered but at Jerusalem, and upon the altar there; so that when the city, temple, and altar were destroyed, they ceased to offer any sacrifice, and never have offered any since; whereby that prophecy is remarkably fulfilled; "the children of Israel shall abide many days without a sacrifice" (Hosea 3:4), as they have for nineteen hundred years, and still do; not even a passover lamb is slain by them, as well as no other sacrifice offered; which yet they would gladly offer, in defiance of Christ, the great Sacrifice, were it not for the above law, which stands in their way, and by which they are awed; and which is no small instance of the wisdom and goodness of God in providence. Now it was a little before the destruction of Jerusalem the apostle wrote the epistle to the Hebrews, and therefore, with great propriety, he says of the old covenant, that it was not only decayed, and waxen old, but was "ready to vanish away" (Hebrews 8:13). This being the case,

4. Fourthly, The new covenant, or the new administration of the covenant of grace, took place; and as the one was gradually removed, the other was gradually introduced; and this observation will serve to reconcile the different areas fixed by different persons, for the beginning of the new

dispensation; some placing it at the birth of Christ; offsets at the ministry of John the Baptist; others at the death of Christ, and his resurrection from the dead; and others at his ascension, and the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost; whereas these were so many gradual manifestations of it: at the birth of Christ, undoubtedly, "the fulness of time" was come for the redemption of his people from the law who were under it; and on which very day the gospel was first preached by the angels to the shepherds, and afterwards more clearly and fully by John, by Christ and his apostles: Mark the evangelist, seems to make the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God, to be with the ministry of John the Baptist (Mark 1:1-3), and which agrees with what Christ says; "the law and the prophets were until John;" they terminated in him, his ministry put a period to them; "since that time the kingdom of God is preached" in a clearer manner, and attended to by more than it was before (Luke 16:16). Christ appeared, and preached the gospel as never man did; grace and truth came by him in a clearer and fuller manner than it ever had: he not only preached that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, as John did, but that it was already come; though not with pomp, with outward show and observation, and was actually among the people (Luke 17:20, Luke 17:21). At his death, and by the shedding of his blood, the New Testament was sealed, ratified, and confirmed by him, as the Testator of it; and therefore called, "the blood of the New Testament, and the blood of the everlasting Covenant" (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 13:20), of that new administration of the covenant which should always continue; but this new dispensation more clearly appeared at his ascension, and by the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the apostles at the day of Pentecost; at his resurrection he gave them a commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; and ordered them to wait at Jerusalem until they were endued with the Holy Spirit, as they were on the above day; whereby they were furnished and qualified to carry the gospel, and preach it among all nations, as they did. And now it may be observed, that the new administration of the covenant, under the gospel dispensation, lies in the following things:

4a. In an exhibition of Christ as come, and as become the author of eternal salvation; in it he is set and held forth as incarnate; as having obeyed, suffered, and died, and has made peace and reconciliation, and full satisfaction for sin; and has obtained eternal redemption; has risen from the dead, and ascended to heaven, and has received for and given gifts to men to preach his gospel; these various articles of grace are comprised in the "great mystery of godliness" (1 Timothy 3:16), and in those words, which are the sum of the gospel declaration, "this is a faithful saying," &c. (1 Timothy 1:15).

4b. In a more clear and extensive ministration of the gospel: it first began to be spoken by Christ in the clearest and fullest manner it possibly could be; and then by his apostles, who received it from him, and gifts to minister it; and who by his orders carried it throughout the world, and preached it to every creature under heaven, first to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles; and is, "according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations, for the obedience of faith" (Romans 16:25, Romans 16:26). so that the administration of the covenant is no longer restrained to a certain people, but men of all nations have the benefit of it.

4c. In a freedom from all bondage and servitude: not from the bondage of sin and Satan, common to all believers under every dispensation; but from the rigorous exaction of the law, as a covenant of works; from the yoke of the ceremonial law, and from the judicial laws, as peculiar to the Jews; and which further lies in the free use of things indifferent, and in the enjoyment of the privileges

and immunities of the gospel church state: this is the glorious liberty of the children of God, the liberty with which Christ has made them free; and who receive the Spirit of adoption, by whom they cry, Abba, Father; and who is a free Spirit, and where he is, there is liberty.

4d. In a large communication of the gifts and graces of the Spirit: of extraordinary gifts, which in the first part of this administration were bestowed, not only upon the apostles, but upon common Christians, men and women, sons and daughters, servants and handmaids, according to the prophecy of Joel (Joel 2:28, Joel 2:29), of common and ordinary gifts, to fit men for the ordinary ministry of the word; and of the special graces of the Spirit, in a greater degree to saints in common; as a larger measure of faith, peace, joy, and comfort, and of light and knowledge; for according to this covenant, and the administration of it, all know the Lord from the least to the greatest; and though John was greater than the prophets, the least in this kingdom of heaven, or gospel dispensation, is greater than he (Jeremiah 31:34; Matthew 11:11).

4e. In ordinances more spiritual than the ordinances of divine service under the first covenant were, which are called "carnal" ones; but these, which are Baptism and the Lord's Supper, do in a very lively and spiritual manner represent the sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; and hold forth the blessings of the covenant of grace in a comfortable way, and are the means of applying them to believers, to the increase of their joy and peace; and these will continue throughout the present administration of the covenant, even to the end of the world (Matthew 28:19, Matthew 28:20; 1 Corinthians 11:26). Of these ordinances I shall particularly treat elsewhere.

Now as the former administration of the covenant was carried through the various periods of time from the first exhibition, after the fall of Adam, to the first coming of Christ; so this second and new administration of the covenant is carried through various successive periods, unto his second coming. The book of the Revelation exhibits the state of the church from the resurrection of Christ to his personal coming; and particularly the seven churches of Asia are emblematical of it in each of the successive periods of time within that interval; and represent it in its various changes and vicissitudes, as sometimes in prosperity and sometimes in adversity; sometimes in the freer use and enjoyment of the ministry of the word and ordinances, and sometimes as under clouds, darkness, and discouragements, through persecutors and false teachers, until the spiritual reign of Christ takes place; when the whole earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord, and be enlightened with his glory; when the gospel will be in its purity everywhere, and the ordinances kept as they were first delivered, and gospel churches set up, and gospel discipline maintained everywhere; which will be followed with the personal reign of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the last judgment, and the ultimate glory: of each of which in their proper place.

#### ENDNOTES:

[1] Vajikra Rabba, s. 9. fol. 153. 1. and s. 27. fol. 168. 4.

[2] T. Bab. Yoma. fol. 21. 2.

## 04-06 Of the Law of God

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### A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 4—Chapter 6 Of the Law of God

It appears by what has been observed, that there was an intermixture of law and gospel under the former dispensation, as there also is in the present one; they are interspersed in both testaments; though the law was more largely held forth than the gospel, under the former dispensation; and therefore we commonly call it the legal dispensation; and there is more of the gospel than of the law under the present dispensation; for which reason we call it the gospel dispensation; yet there are of each in both; and here will be a proper place to treat of law and gospel distinctly, which will connect what has been already said to what is yet to be said; and by the latter I shall be naturally led to the great and glorious truths of the gospel, I intend to treat distinctly of. And shall begin with the law. The word law is variously used, sometimes for a part of the Scriptures only, the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses; as when it is mentioned in the division of the Scripture by Christ (Luke 24:44), and along with the prophets, and as distinct from them (John 1:45; John 8:5). Sometimes for all the books of the Old Testament, which in general go by the name of the Law, as does the book of Psalms on that account, as the places quoted out of it, or referred to in it, show (John 10:34; John 12:34; John 15:25). Sometimes it signifies the doctrine of the Scriptures in general, both legal and evangelical (Psalms 19:7), and the doctrine of the gospel in particular, even the doctrine of the Messiah (Isaiah 2:3; Isaiah 42:4), called in the New Testament "the law," or doctrine "of faith" (Romans 3:27), and sometimes it signifies the whole body of laws given from God by Moses to the children of Israel, as distinct from the gospel of the grace of God (John 1:17 and which may be distinguished into the laws ceremonial, judicial, and moral.

1. The ceremonial law, of which little need be said, since much has been observed concerning it already; this concerns the ecclesiastical state of the Jews, their priests, sacrifices, feasts, fasts, washings, &c. and though some of these rites were before the times of Moses, as sacrifices, the distinction of clean and unclean creatures, circumcision, &c. yet these were renewed and confirmed, and others added to them; and the whole digested into a body of laws by Moses, and given by him under a divine direction to the people of Israel. This law was a shadow of good things to come by Christ, of evangelical things, and indeed was no other than the gospel veiled in types and figures; the priests served to the example and shadow of heavenly things; the sacrifices were typical of the sacrifice of Christ; the festivals were shadows, of which Christ was the body and substance; the ablutions typified cleansing by the blood of Christ; and the whole was a schoolmaster to the Jews, until he came; but when faith came, that is, Christ, the object of faith, they were no longer under a schoolmaster, nor had they need of the law as such; there was a disannulling of it, because of its weakness and unprofitableness; for it became useless and unnecessary, having its accomplishment in Christ.

2. The judicial law, which respects the political state or civil government of the Jews, and consists of statutes and judgments, according to which the judges in Israel determined all causes brought before them, and passed sentence; in which sentence the people were to acquiesce

(Deuteronomy 17:8-11). Such as related to any injuries done to their persons or property, and to the punishment of offences, both of a greater and of a lesser kind; these were given by Moses, but not made by him; they were made by God himself. The government of the Jews was a very particular form of government; it was a theocracy, a government immediately under God; though he is King of the whole world, and Governor among and over the nations of it, yet he was in a special and peculiar manner King over Israel; and he made laws for them, by which they were to be ruled and governed: nor had the commonwealth of Israel a power to make any new laws; nor any of their judges and rulers, not even Moses, their lawgiver under God: and therefore, when any matter came before him, not clearly determined by any law given by God, he suspended the determination of it until he knew the mind of God about it; see (Leviticus 24:12; Numbers 15:34). And when the people of Israel were desirous of a king, after the manner of neighboring nations, it was resented by the Lord, and reckoned by him as a rejection of him from being their King; and though he gave them a king, or suffered them to have one, it was in anger; and so far he still kept the peculiar government of them in his hands, that their kings never had any power to make new laws; nor did their best and wisest of kings make any, as David and Solomon; and when a reformation was made among them, as by Hezekiah and Josiah, it was not by making any new regulations, but by putting the old laws into execution; and by directing and requiring of the judges, and other officers, to act according to them.

It may be inquired, whether the judicial laws, or the laws respecting the Jewish polity, are now in force or not, and to be observed or not; which may be resolved by distinguishing between them; there were some that were peculiar to the state of the Jews, their continuance in the land of Canaan, and while their polity lasted, and until the coming of the Messiah, when they were to cease, as is clear from (Genesis 49:10), such as related to inheritances, and the alienation of them by marriage or otherwise; the restoration of them when sold at the year of jubilee; the marrying of a brother's wife when he died without issue, &c. the design of which was, to keep the tribes distinct until the Messiah came, that it might be clearly known from what tribe he sprung. And there were others that were peculiarly suited to the natural temper and disposition of that people, who were covetous, cruel, and oppressive of the poor, froward and perverse, jealous and revengeful; hence the laws concerning the manumission of servants sold, at the end of the sixth year; the release of debts, and letting the land rest from tillage every seventh year; concerning lending on interest; leaving a corner in the field for the poor, and the forgotten sheaf;--and others concerning divorces, and the trial of a suspected wife, and the cities of refuge to flee to from the avenger of blood: these, with others, ceased when the Jewish polity did, and are not binding on other nations. But then there were other judicial laws, which were founded on the light of nature, on reason, and on justice and equity, and these remain in full force; and they must be wise as well as righteous laws, which were made by God himself, their King and Legislator, as they are said to be (Deuteronomy 4:6, Deuteronomy 4:8). And they are, certainly, the best constituted and regulated governments that come nearest to the commonwealth of Israel, and the civil laws of it, which are of the kind last described; and where they are acted up unto, there what is said by Wisdom is most truly verified, "By me kings reign, and princes decree judgment;" and if these laws were more strictly attended to, which respect the punishment of offences, especially capital ones, things would be put upon a better footing than they are in some governments; and judges, in passing sentences, would be able to do that part of their office with more certainty and safety, and with a better conscience. And whereas the commonwealth of Israel was governed by these laws for many hundreds of years,

and needed no other in their civil polity, when, in such a course of time, every case that ordinarily happens, must arise, and be brought into a court of judicature; I cannot but be of opinion, that a digest of civil laws might be made out of the Bible, the law of the Lord that is perfect, either as lying in express words in it, or to be deduced by the analogy of things and cases, and by just consequence, as would be sufficient for the government of any nation: and then there would be no need of so many law books, nor of so many lawyers; and perhaps there would be fewer law suits. However, we Christians, under whatsoever government we are, are directed to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, and for conscience sake; even to everyone that is not contrary to common sense and reason, and to religion and conscience; (see Romans 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13, 1 Peter 2:14).

3. The moral law, which lies chiefly in the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:3-17), and which our Lord has reduced, even both tables of the law, to two capital ones, love to God, and love to our neighbor (Matthew 22:36-40), as the apostle has reduced the commands of the second table to one, that is, love, which he calls the fulfilling of the law (Romans 13:9, Romans 13:10). And this law, to love God and our neighbour, is binding on every man, and is eternal, and remains invariable and unalterable; and concerning which I shall treat more largely. And shall consider,

3a. First, The author and giver of this law; God was the author and maker of it; Moses the giver and minister of it from God; it was God that first spoke the ten words, or commands, to the children of Israel; and it was he that wrote and engraved them on tables of stone; the writing was the writing of God, and the engraving was by the finger of God; it was from his right hand this fiery law went: the ministry of angels was made use of in it; it is called, the word spoken by angels; it was given by the disposition of them; it was ordained by them in the hands of a mediator, who was Moses, who stood between God and the people, received the lively oracles from him, and delivered them to them. There was a law in being before the times of Moses; or otherwise there would have been no transgression, no imputation of sin, no charge of guilt, nor any punishment inflicted; whereas death, the just demerit of sin, reigned from Adam to Moses; and besides the positive law, which forbid the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; and was given as a trial of man's obedience to the whole moral law, and in the form of a covenant, in which Adam stood as a federal head, to all his posterity; and which covenant he broke, and involved himself and his in misery and ruin. Besides this, there was the law of nature, inscribed on his heart by his Maker, as the rule of his obedience to him; and by which he knew much of God, and of the nature of moral good and evil; and which; though much obliterated by the fall, some remains of it are to be discerned in Adam's posterity; and even in the Gentiles (Romans 1:19, Romans 1:20; Romans 2:14, Romans 2:15), and which is reinscribed in the hearts of God's people in regeneration, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace (Jeremiah 31:33). Now the law of Moses, for matter and substance, is the same with the law of nature, though differing in the form of administration; and this was renewed in the times of Moses, that it might be confirmed, and that it might not be forgotten, and be wholly lost out of the minds of men; of which there was great danger, through the great prevalence of corruption in the world: and it was written, that it might remain, "litera scripta manet;" and it was written on tables of stone, that it might be the more durable; the apostle says, "it was added because of transgressions," to forbid them, restrain them, and punish for them; and it "entered that the offence might abound," the sin of Adam; that the heinousness of it might appear, and the justness of its imputation to all his posterity might be

manifest; as well as all other offences might be seen by it to be exceeding sinful, and righteously punishable: (see Galatians 3:19; Romans 5:20; Romans 7:13). It was not delivered as a pure covenant of works, though the self-righteous Jews turned it into one, and sought for life and righteousness by it: and so it engendered to bondage, and became a killing letter; nor a pure covenant of grace, though it was given as a distinguishing favour to the people of Israel (Deuteronomy 4:6, Deuteronomy 4:8; Psalms 147:19, Psalms 147:20; Romans 9:4) and much mercy and kindness are expressed in it; and it is prefaced with a declaration of the Lord being the God of Israel, who had, of his great goodness, brought them out of the land of Egypt (Exodus 20:2, Exodus 20:6, Exodus 20:12). But it was a part and branch of the typical covenant, under which the covenant of grace was administered under the former dispensation; and of what it was typical, has been observed before; and a principal end of its being renewed was, that Christ, who was to come of the Jews, might appear to be made under the law, as the surety of his people, the righteousness of which he was to fulfil, and, indeed, all righteousness; being the end of the law, the scope at which it aimed, as well as the fulfiller of it.

3b. Secondly, The epithets of this law, or the properties of it, may be next considered; such as the scriptures expressly give to it; and which will lead into the nature and quality of it. As,

3b1. That it is perfect. "The law of the Lord is perfect" (Psalms 19:7), which is true of the moral law, by which men come to know "what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2), what it is his will should be done, and what not be done; it takes in the whole duty of men, both to God and man; for to fear God, and keep his commandments, is the whole duty of man; it includes love to God, and love to our neighbour; and which are comprehensive of every duty to both: it is very large and capacious; it is the commandment which is exceeding broad; it is so complete and perfect, that as nothing is to be detracted from it, so nothing is to be added to it, nor can be added to it, to make it more perfect: the papists talk of counsels, exhortations, &c. as additions; but these belong either to law or gospel. And the Socinians say, that Christ came to make the law more perfect; which they infer from some passages in (Matthew 5:1-48), where Christ observes, that it had been said by some of the ancients of old, thus and thus; but he said, so and so; which is not to be understood of any new laws made by him, but as giving the true sense of the old laws, and vindicating them from the false glosses and interpretations of the Scribes and Pharisees: and when the apostle John speaks of a new commandment, he means the old commandment to love one another, as he himself explains it (1 John 2:7, 1 John 2:8), and which he calls new, because enforced by a new instance and example of Christ's love in dying for his people, and by new motives and arguments taken from the same.—

3b2. It is spiritual; We know that the law is spiritual, says the apostle (Romans 7:14), which is to be understood of the moral law; for as for the ceremonial law, that is called, "The law of a carnal commandment;" and is said to stand in "carnal ordinances" (Hebrews 7:16 9:10), which only reached the flesh, and the sanctifying of that: but the moral law is so spiritual in its nature and requirements, that so holy and spiritual a man as the apostle Paul when he compared himself with it, and viewed himself in the glass of it, thought himself "carnal, and sold under sin". The law reaches to the thoughts and intents of the heart, and the affections of the mind, and forbids and checks all irregular and inordinate motions in it, and the lusts of it. Thus, for instance, the sixth command not only forbids actual murder, but all undue heat, passion, anger, wrath, malice, resentment and revenge, conceived in the mind, and expressed by words. So the seventh

command not only prohibits the outward acts of uncleanness, as fornication, adultery, &c. but all unclean thoughts, impure desires, and unchaste affections, as well as looks and words. The law directs, not only to an external worship of God, but to an internal, spiritual one; as to love the Lord, to fear him, and put trust and confidence in him, suitable to his nature as a Spirit; it requires of a man to serve it with his own mind and spirit, with his whole heart, as the apostle did (Romans 7:25), and the assistance of the Spirit of God is necessary to the observance of it; and God in covenant has promised his people, that he "will put his Spirit within them, and cause them to walk in his statutes," and "keep his judgments, and do them" (Ezekiel 36:27).

3b3. The law is "holy;" so it is said to be (Romans 7:12), and the commandment holy; it comes from an holy God, from whom nothing unholy can proceed; for holiness is his nature, and he is holy in all his works; and the law is a transcript of his holy will; the matter of it, or what it requires, is holy; even sanctification of heart and life; and it directs to live holily, soberly, righteously, and godly, in this evil world.

3b4. It is also "just," as well as holy and good (Romans 7:12). There are no laws so righteous as the laws of God; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether (Deuteronomy 4:8; Psalms 19:9). It is impartial unto all, and requires the same of one as of another, and renders to every man according to his works; it is just in condemning wicked men for sin, and in justifying those that have a righteousness answerable to its demands; for God is just, according to his law, while he is the justifier of those that believe in Jesus.

3b5. The law is good; the author of it is good only, essentially, originally good; from whom every good and perfect gift comes, and nothing that is evil and bad. The law is materially good, it is morally good; as God by the light of nature, so much more by the law of Moses, does he show to men that which is good; in it he sets before them the good they are to do; and the evil they are to avoid: it is pleasantly good; not to an unregenerate man, whose carnal mind is enmity to all that is good, and so to the law of God; but to a regenerate man, who, as the apostle, delights in the law of God after the inner man, and loves it, as David did, and meditates on it, as every good man does (Romans 7:22; Psalms 119:97; Psalms 1:2). And it is also profitably good; not to God, for when men have done all they can, they are, with respect to God, unprofitable servants (Luke 17:10), but to men, their fellow creatures, and fellow Christians, to whom they are serviceable, by their good works (Titus 3:8), and also to themselves; for though not "for," yet "in" keeping the commands there is great reward, as peace of conscience (Psalms 19:11; Psalms 119:165). The law is good, "if a man use it lawfully" (1 Timothy 1:8). There is a lawful and an unlawful use of the law; it is used unlawfully when men seek to obtain life and righteousness by it; for the law cannot give life, nor is righteousness by it; nor can then be justified by the works of it, in the sight of God; for no man can perfectly keep it; there is not a just man that does good and sins not: but it is lawfully used when obeyed in faith, from a principle of love, with a view to the glory of God, without any selfish and sinister ends. Which leads me to consider more particularly, 3c. Thirdly, The uses of the law both to sinners and saints.

3c1. To sinners.

3c1a. To convince of sin. Sin is a transgression of the law, by which it is known that it is sin, being forbidden by the law; "By the law is the knowledge of sin;" not only of gross actual sins; but of the inward lusts of the mind; "I had not known lust," says the apostle, "except the law had said, Thou

shall not covet" (Romans 3:20; Romans 7:7). Yet only as it is used by the Spirit of God, who holds it up to a mind enlightened by him, whereby it sees the sinfulness of it; for it is the Spirit's work savingly to convince of sin; which he does by means of the law.

3c1b. To restrain from sin; of this use are the laws of men; hence civil magistrates are terrors to evildoers: so the law, by its menaces, deters men from sin, when they are not truly convinced of the evil of it, nor humbled for it; though by such restraints, it does but rise and swell, and rage the more within, like a flood of water stopped in its course.

3b1c. To condemn and punish for sin; for sinners it is made, and against them it lies, to their condemnation, unless justified in Christ (1 Timothy 1:9, 1 Timothy 1:10). It accuses of sin, charges with it; brings evidence of it; stops the sinner's mouth from pleading in his own cause; pronounces guilty before God; and curses and condemns: it is the ministration of condemnation and death; and its sentence takes place where the righteousness of Christ is not imputed.

3c2. It is of use to saints and true believers in Christ.

3c2a. To point out the will of God unto them; what is to be done by them, and what to be avoided; to inform them of, and urge them to their duty, both towards God and man; for in that the whole of it lies.

3c2b. To be a rule of life and conversation to them; not a rule to obtain life by; but to live according to; to guide their feet, to direct their steps, and preserve them from going into bye and crooked paths. The wise man says, "The commandment is a lamp, and the law is light" (Proverbs 6:23). And the wise man's father says, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalms 119:105).

3c2c. It is as a glass, in which a believer, by the light of the Spirit of God, may see his own face, what manner of man he is; how deformed, how carnal and corrupt, when compared with this law; and how far short of perfection he is in himself; "I have seen an end of all perfection," says David; "Thy commandment is exceeding broad;" to which the imperfect works of men are not commensurate; hence good men are sensible that their own righteousness is insufficient to justify them before God, it being but as rags, and those filthy ones. Hence,

3c2d. They are led to prize and value the righteousness of Christ, since that is perfectly agreeable to the holy and righteous law of God; yea, by it the law is magnified and made honorable; wherefore they desire to be found in Christ, not having on their own righteousness, but his; who is the end of the law for righteousness, to everyone that believes. Now,

3d. Fourthly, The law of God continues under the present dispensation for the said uses; Christ came not to destroy it, and loosen mens obligations to it; but to fulfil it: nor is the law made null and void by faith; by the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ; so far from it, that it is established by it [See a Sermon of mine called, "The Law established by the Gospel."]: there is a sense in which the law is "done away," and saints are "delivered" from it; "that being dead wherein they were held," as in a prison; and they "become dead to it by the body of Christ," by his obedience and sufferings in it (2 Corinthians 3:11; Romans 7:4, Romans 7:6).

3d1. It does not continue as a covenant of works; and, indeed, it was not delivered to the children of Israel as such strictly and properly sneaking, only in a typical sense; though the Jews turned it

to such a purpose, and sought righteousness and life by it: but God never made a covenant of works with men since the fall, in order to their obtaining life and salvation by it; for it never was in the power of man since to perform the conditions of such a covenant; however, it is certain, believers are not under the law as a covenant of works; but under grace as a covenant of grace.

3d2. Nor does it continue as to the form of administration of it by Moses; it is now no longer in his hands, nor to be considered as such; the whole Mosaic economy is broke to pieces, and at an end, which was prefigured by Moses casting the two tables of stone out of his hands, and breaking them, when he came down from the mount: the law, especially as it lies in the Decalogue; and as to the form of the administration of that by Moses, was peculiar to the Jews; as appears by the preface to it, which can agree with none but them; by the time of worship prescribed them in the fourth command, which was temporary and typical; and by the promise of long life in the land of Canaan, annexed to the fifth command.

3d3. It continues not as a terrifying law to believers, who are not come to mount Sinai, and are not under that stormy and terrible dispensation; but they are come to mount Sion, and to all the privileges of a gospel church state: nor are they brought into bondage by its rigorous exactions; on a strict compliance to which, or perfect obedience thereunto, their peace and comfort do not depend: nor are they awed and urged by its menaces and curses, to an observance of it; but are constrained, by the love of God and Christ, to run with cheerfulness the way of its commandments; they are made willing to serve it with their mind and spirit, through the power and efficacy of divine grace upon them; and they do serve it, not in the oldness of the letter but in the newness of the spirit; or, as they are renewed by the free Spirit of God.

3d4. Nor is it a cursing and condemning law to the saints. As sinners and transgressors of it, they are subject to its curses; but Christ has redeemed them from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them; and so there is no more curse to them here or hereafter; they are out of the reach of its curses, and of condemnation by it; there is none to them that are in Christ: Who shall condemn? it is Christ that died; and who by dying has bore their sentence of condemnation, and freed them from it; and having passed from death to life, they shall never enter into condemnation (Galatians 3:10, Galatians 3:13; Romans 8:1, Romans 8:33; John 5:24).

3d5. Yet it continues as a rule of walk and conversation to them, as before observed; and is to be regarded by them as in the hands of Christ [See another Sermon of mine, called, "The Law in the hand of Christ."]; by whom it is held forth as King and Lawgiver, in his church; and who, and not Moses, is to be heard, and his voice hearkened to, as the Son and Master, in his own house. Believers, though freed from the law, in the sense before declared, yet are "not without law to God, but under the law to Christ," and obliged to regard it; and the rather, as it was in his heart, and he was made under it, and has fulfilled it; and therefore may be viewed and served with pleasure (1 Corinthians 9:21).

## 04-07 Of the Gospel

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### A Body of Doctrinal Divinity Book 4—Chapter 7 Of the Gospel

There was Gospel in the former dispensation, though called the legal dispensation; it was preached to Adam, to Abraham, and by Isaiah, and other prophets, as has been observed. Yet there is a clearer revelation and ministration of it under the present dispensation; as the law was by the ministration of Moses; "Grace and truth," the word of grace and truth, the gospel, "came by Jesus Christ," in a clearer and fuller manner than it had been made known before (John 1:17). Concerning which the following things may be noted.

1. First, The name and signification of it. The Greek word euaggelion, used for it throughout the New Testament, signifies, a good message, good news, glad tidings; such the gospel is; a message of good news from God, from heaven, the far country, to sinners here on earth: such was the gospel Christ was anointed to preach, and did preach, even good tidings (Luke 4:18 compared with Isaiah 61:1), and which his ministers bring, whose feet are beautiful upon the mountains (Isaiah 52:7; Acts 13:32, Acts 13:33). The Hebrew word used for the gospel, and the preaching of it, signifies good tidings also; and it is observed by some, to have the signification of "flesh" in it, which has led them to think of the incarnation of Christ; which is, undoubtedly, good news to the children of men; and a considerable branch of the gospel of Christ; what has given Isaiah the character of an evangelic prophet is, because he so clearly spoke of the incarnation of Christ, as well as of his sufferings and death, as if then present in his time: "To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given" (Isaiah 9:6; Isaiah 7:14). And when the angel proclaimed the birth of Christ to the shepherds, he is said, "to bring good tidings of great joy to all people" (Luke 2:10, Luke 2:11). And this is one principal part of the gospel, the great mystery of godliness; "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16). Our English word "gospel," is of Saxon derivation; in which language "spel" signifies speech; and so gospel is either "good speech," which carries in it the same idea with the Greek and Hebrew words; or God's speech, which he has spoken by his Son, by his prophets, and by his ministers; and is the voice of God the Son, the voice of Christ speaking in his ministers, and the voice of the Holy Ghost also.

Now this word is variously used; sometimes it is put for the history of Christ's birth, life, and actions; such are the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Mark begins his history thus; "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God" (Mark 1:1). And Luke calls his Gospel; "The former treatise" he had made, "of all that Jesus began, both to do and teach" (Acts 1:1). And hence these four writers are commonly called evangelists; though this title is sometimes given to others, as distinct from apostles (Ephesians 4:11), and even to ordinary ministers of the word, when they do the work of an evangelist, or preach the gospel faithfully, and make full proof of their ministry (2 Timothy 4:5). Sometimes the gospel is to be taken in a large sense, as including the word and ordinances (Matthew 28:19, Matthew 28:20; Mark 16:15, Mark 16:16). And sometimes strictly, for the doctrine of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; hence gospel ministers, who bring good tidings of good, are said to publish peace, and to

publish salvation (Isaiah 52:7), the sum of which is expressed by the apostle, when he says, "This is a faithful saying," &c. (1 Timothy 1:15). Hence,

1a. The gospel is called, the gospel of salvation, the word of salvation, and salvation itself (Ephesians 1:13; Acts 13:26; Acts 28:28), because it gives an account of Christ, the author of salvation; of his appointment to it; of his mission, and coming into the world, to effect it; and of his actual performance of it; of his being the able, willing, and only Saviour; and of the salvation itself, as great and glorious, perfect and complete, spiritual and everlasting; and because it describes also the persons that share in it, sinners, sensible sinners, and who believe in Christ; and who, according to the declaration of it, shall certainly be saved (Mark 16:16; Acts 16:30, Acts 16:31), and because it is, not only the means of revealing, but of applying salvation; for it is to them that believe "the power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16).

1b. It is called, "The gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24), because the various doctrines of it are doctrines of grace, or which exhibit blessings as flowing from the grace of God; as election, redemption, pardon, justification, adoption, and eternal life; and particularly, that salvation, from first to last, is all of grace, and not of works (Ephesians 2:8).

1c. It is called, "The gospel of peace," the word of reconciliation, the word preaching peace by Christ (Ephesians 6:15; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Acts 10:36), because it relates the steps taken in, council and covenant; to form the scheme of man's peace with God; to lay the foundation of it; and to bring it about; hence called the council of peace, and the covenant of peace (Zechariah 6:13; Isaiah 54:10). And also relates the actual making of it; by whom, and by what means; by Christ, who is our peace; by the chastisement of our peace being laid on him; by the shedding of his blood on the cross; and by his suffering of death (Ephesians 2:14; Isaiah 53:5; Colossians 1:20; Romans 5:10).

1d. It is called, "The gospel of the kingdom" (Matthew 4:23), because it treats both of the kingdom of grace here, showing wherein it lies; and of the kingdom of glory hereafter, pointing out the proper meetness for it, regeneration by the Spirit of God; and the right and title to it, the righteousness of the Son of God; and that itself, as the Father's free gift to his people, flowing from his good will and pleasure (John 3:5; Matthew 5:20; Luke 12:32).

2. Secondly, The author and origin of the gospel.—

2a. It is not of man, a device and invention of men; a system of things schemed and formed by the art and wit of men; says the apostle, "I neither received it of men, nor was I taught it;" that is, by men, as human arts and sciences are (Galatians 1:11, Galatians 1:12). It is not discoverable by the light of nature and reason; the law, and the things of it, may be known thereby, as what is morally good and evil, as were by the Gentiles (Romans 2:14, Romans 2:15), but not the things of the gospel; they are what eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive of; as for instance, that fundamental doctrine of the gospel, that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God, believed and confessed by Peter, was declared by our Lord to be what "flesh and blood had not revealed" to him, but his "Father in heaven" (Matthew 16:16, Matthew 16:17). Hence the gospel is frequently called, a mystery; the wisdom of God in a mystery; the hidden wisdom; and the doctrines of it, the mysteries of the kingdom; which are only known by those to whom it is given by the Spirit and grace of God to know them (Matthew 13:11), and when

they are externally revealed, and men have got some little notion and idea of them, they are disapproved of by them; for natural men receive not with approbation, and a good liking, the things of the Spirit of God, the doctrines of the gospel, which he searches and reveals; for they are foolishness, insipid things to them; for which they have no taste; as the doctrine of a crucified Christ, and salvation alone by him (1 Corinthians 2:14; 1 Corinthians 1:18, 1 Corinthians 1:23).

2b. The gospel is from heaven; it is good news from a far country, which far country is heaven: the gospel is, with the Holy Ghost, sent down from heaven; and Christ that spoke it, is He that speaketh from heaven: the question put concerning the baptism of John; "Whence was it? from heaven, or of men?" may be put concerning the gospel, and answered as that; that it is from heaven, and not of men (1 Peter 1:12; Hebrews 12:25; Matthew 21:25). It comes from God, Father, Son, and Spirit; from God the Father, and is therefore called the gospel of God; that is, the Father, concerning his Son Jesus Christ (Romans 1:1, Romans 1:3), which he ordained before the world was; and in time committed into the hands of men to preach, whom he made, and makes, able ministers of it, and which he blesses and succeeds. It comes also from Christ, the Son of God; and is called, the gospel of his Son, the gospel of Christ, the word of Christ, and the testimony of our Lord (Romans 1:9, Romans 1:16; Colossians 3:16; 2 Timothy 1:8), of which Christ is the subject, sum, and substance, as well as the author; even his person, offices, and grace; and of which he was the preacher when here on earth; for which he was qualified by the Spirit without measure, and spake and preached it as never man did; and by whom it was revealed and brought to light in the clearest manner; hence the apostle says, he received it "by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:12). It may be said likewise, to come from the Holy Spirit of God, the inciter of the scriptures, wherein it lies; who searches the deep things of it, and reveals them to men; who leads the ministers of it into all the truths thereof; and makes their ministrations of it powerful and successful; and whereby he and his grace, comparable to the golden oil, are conveyed and received into the hearts of men. The instruments of declaring, publishing, and proclaiming the gospel, and its truths, to the children of men, are the prophets of the Old Testament, who made a report of it, though believed but by few; the angels, who descended at the birth of Christ, and brought the good news of it; John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, who pointed him out as the Son of God, and as the Lamb of God that took away the sin of the world; the apostles of Christ, who had a commission from him to preach the gospel to every creature; and all ordinary ministers of the word, whose business it is to publish good tidings of good things.

3. Thirdly, The effects of the gospel when attended with the power and Spirit of God.

3a. The regeneration of men, who are said to be born again by the word of God, and to be begotten again with the word of truth (1 Peter 1:23; James 1:18), hence ministers of the gospel are represented as spiritual fathers (1 Corinthians 4:15).

3b. As in regeneration souls are quickened by the Spirit and grace of God, this is ascribed to the gospel as an instrument, hence it is called the Spirit which giveth life, and said to be the savior of life unto life (2 Corinthians 2:16; 2 Corinthians 3:6).

3c. The gospel is frequently spoken of as a light, a great light, a glorious light; and so is in the hands of the Spirit a means of enlightening the dark minds of men into the mysteries of grace, and the method of salvation; "the entrance of thy word giveth light, it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Psalms 119:130). The Spirit of God gives the gospel an entrance into the heart, being

opened by him to attend unto it; and when it has an entrance, it gives light into a man's self, his state and condition, and into the way of life by Christ; it is a glass in which the glory of Christ, and of the riches of his grace, may be seen.

3d. By it faith in Christ comes, and is ingenerated in the heart by the Spirit of God attending it; hence among other reasons, it is called "the word of faith;" and ministers, by preaching it, are instruments of confirming and increasing faith, and of perfecting what is lacking in it (Romans 10:8, Romans 10:17; 1 Thessalonians 3:10).

3e. When faith is wrought in the soul, the righteousness of Christ is revealed unto it in the gospel; and not at first believing only but at after times; for it is revealed therein "from faith to faith," from one degree of it to another, giving thereby clearer views of it, and of interest in it (Romans 1:17), hence it is called the word of righteousness, and the ministration of righteousness (Hebrews 5:13; 2 Corinthians 3:9).

3f. It affords spiritual food, and is the means of feeding and nourishing souls unto everlasting life; it contains words of faith and good doctrine, even the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus; it has in it milk for babes, and meat for strong men; and when it is found by faith, it is eaten by it with pleasure, and fills with spiritual joy (1 Timothy 4:6; 1 Timothy 6:3; Hebrews 5:13, Hebrews 5:14; Jeremiah 15:16), which—

3g. Is another effect of it in gracious souls, it yields much spiritual peace, joy, and comfort; the doctrines of it are calculated for such a purpose; it is good news and glad tidings of good things; as of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ, which, when applied, cannot fail of producing spiritual joy in sensible sinners; when Philip preached Christ and his gospel in Samaria, there was great joy in that city (Acts 8:5, Acts 8:8), all this must be understood of the gospel, not as producing these effects of itself, but as it comes, not in word only, but with the power and in the demonstration of the Spirit; when it is sent forth out of Zion as the rod of God's strength, and it becomes the power of God unto salvation (1 Thessalonians 1:5, 1 Thessalonians 1:8; Psalms 110:2; Romans 1:16).

4. Fourthly, The properties of the gospel.

4a. It is but one, there is not another, as the apostle says (Galatians 1:6, Galatians 1:7), the same gospel which was in the beginning, and will be to the end of the world, the same under the Old Testament as under the New; the subject of it, Christ and salvation by him; the doctrines of it, of justification, remission of sins, &c. the same, only now more clearly revealed; then it was in types and figures, now more plainly set forth, and more clearly and fully expressed; the same was preached by Christ and his apostles, and by all faithful ministers since, and will be to the end of time; for it is true of the gospel what is said of Christ, it is "the same yesterday, today, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8).

4b. It is called, from the objects of it, the gospel of the circumcision, and the gospel of the uncircumcision (Galatians 2:7), not that the gospel of the one is different from that of the other; it is the same gospel, only dispensed to different persons, the circumcised Jews and the uncircumcised Gentiles; it was first ordered to be preached to the Jews, and to them only, in Christ's lifetime; after his death and resurrection he enlarged the commission of his disciples, and sent them forth to preach the gospel to every creature, both Jews and Gentiles; yet the special

revelation and application of it are made only to some; to some it is the savor of life unto life, to others the savour of death unto death; there are some to whom God would make it known; it was his determinate pleasure to make known the riches of the glory of the mystery of it; to others it is hid, even to the wise and prudent, while it is revealed unto babes; of which no other reason can be given, but the sovereign will and pleasure of God (2 Corinthians 2:16; 2 Corinthians 4:3; Colossians 1:27; Matthew 11:25, Matthew 11:26).

4c. It is a glorious gospel: so it is called (2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 Timothy 1:11 it has a glory in it exceeding that of the law, and the dispensation of it (2 Corinthians 3:11), for the clearness, fullness, and suitableness of its doctrines to the state and condition of men; and in which the glory of the person of Christ as the Son of God, and of his officers as mediator, and of the blessings of grace that come by him, is held forth in great splendor and brightness.

4d. It is an everlasting gospel, which is the epithet given it (Revelation 14:6), it was ordained in the council and covenant of God before the world was, of which it is a transcript, and so was from everlasting (1 Corinthians 2:7), and "the word of the Lord endureth for ever, and this is the word which by the gospel is preached" (1 Peter 1:25), and which will continue until all the elect of God are gathered in, maugre all the craft and cunning, force and power of earth and hell.

5. Fifthly, I shall close this chapter with a brief answer to some queries relating to faith, repentance, and good works; as, to what they belong, whether to law or gospel.

5a. Whether faith is a duty of the moral law, or is to be referred to the gospel? to which it may be answered, that as the law is not of faith, so faith is not of the law. There is a faith indeed which the law requires and obliges to, namely, faith and trust in God, as the God of nature and providence; for as both the law of nature, and the law of Moses, show there is a God, and who is to be worshipped; they both require a belief of him, and trust and confidence in him; which is one part of the worship of him enjoined therein: moreover the law obliges men to give credit to any revelation of the mind and will of God he has made, or should think fit to make unto them at any time; but as for special faith in Christ as a Saviour, or believing in him to the saving of the soul; this the law knows nothing of, nor does it make it known; this kind of faith neither comes by the ministration of it, nor does it direct to Christ the object of it, nor give any encouragement to believe in him on the above account; but it is a blessing of the covenant of grace, which flows from electing love, is a gift of God's free grace, the operation of the Spirit of God, comes by the hearing of faith, or the word of faith, as a means, that is, the gospel; for which reason, among others, the gospel is so called; and it is that which points out Christ, the object of faith; and directs and encourages sensible sinners under a divine influence to exercise it on him; its language is, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

5b. Whether repentance is a doctrine of the law or of the gospel? the answer to which is, that such who sin ought to repent of sin; this God has commanded, the law of nature teaches; and so far as this is to be considered as a duty incumbent on men, it belongs to the law, as all duty does; but then the law makes no account of repentance for sin; nor does it admit of it as a satisfaction for it; nor gives any encouragement to expect that God will receive repenting sinners into his grace and favor upon it; this is what the gospel does, and not the law; the law says not, repent and live, but do and live. Moreover, there is what may be called a legal repentance and contrition; for by the law is the knowledge of sin, without which there can be no repentance; and it works a sense of wrath

in the sinners conscience, and a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation from an incensed God; but if it stop here, it will prove no other than a worldly sorrow, which worketh death. The Spirit of God may make use of this, and go on and produce spiritual repentance, such a repentance as is unto life, even life eternal; and unto salvation, which needeth not to be repented of: but such a repentance is not the work of the law; for life and salvation come not by any work of the law; but true repentance, which has salvation annexed to it, is, as faith, a blessing of the covenant of grace; a grant from God, a gift of Christ as a Saviour, and with it remission of sins; a grace produced in the soul by the Spirit of Christ, by means of the gospel, which only encourages to the exercise of it; (see Acts 5:31; Acts 11:18; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Galatians 3:2). And so is a doctrine of the gospel, and not of the law, as appears from the ministry of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, who exhorted and encouraged to repentance from gospel motives; and preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins (Matthew 3:2; Mark 1:4). But what has the law to do either with baptism or the remission of sins? His ministry was evangelical, and ran in the same strain with the apostles, as appears from their answer to a question put to them; "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" A serious question, put upon thought and reflection by persons upon the bottom of a covenant of works, as the Jews rally were; and especially under a sense of guilt, as those were, desirous to know what must be done by them, that they "might be saved;" as it may be supplied from the jailor's words, when in the same case; or whereby they might make atonement for, and obtain the pardon of so great a sin, of which they were guilty: to which a proper answer is returned, putting them off of legal works for such purposes, and directing them to evangelical ones; "repent and be baptized, everyone of you, for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:37, Acts 2:38). And this is also clear from the story of Christ himself; who came, not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance; which was not a legal, but evangelical repentance. He began his ministry thus; "repent, and believe the gospel" (see Matthew 9:13; Mark 1:15). With which agrees the ministry of the apostles in general; who, by the direction of Christ, preached repentance and remission of sins in his name; which most certainly was the gospel; the one, as well as the other, a doctrine of the gospel (Luke 24:47). And the apostle Paul, who was a most evangelical preacher, divides his whole ministry into these two parts; "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21).

5c. Whether good works belong to the gospel, or to the law? or rather, whether there are any works that belong to the gospel distinct from the law? to which it may be replied, That the gospel, taken in a large sense, as has been observed in the beginning of this chapter, includes both the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel; and the one, as well as the other, are taught, and directed to be observed; yea, all good works, which the law requires, are moved and urged unto in the ministry of the gospel, upon gospel principles and motives: the gospel of the grace of God, which brings the good tidings of salvation, instructs and urges men to do good works, and to avoid sin (Titus 2:11, Titus 2:12; Titus 3:8). But the gospel, strictly taken, is a pure declaration of grace, a mere promise of salvation by Christ. All duty and good works belong to the law; promise and grace belong to the gospel; the works of the law, and the grace of the gospel, are always opposed to each other (Romans 3:20, Romans 3:24, Romans 3:28; Ephesians 2:8). And if there were any works distinct from the law, and not required by it, which, if not performed, would be sin; then the apostle's definition of sin, as a transgression of the law, would not be a full and proper one (1 John 3:4), since then there would be sins which were not transgressions of the law; wherefore, as all evil works are transgressions of the law, all good works are required and enjoined by it.

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