

# The Covenants

by Charles Finney

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*Charles Finney explains the different kinds of covenants, including the Abrahamic and New Covenants, and how they relate to salvation and the moral law.*

**Scripture:** Exodus 34:28, Deuteronomy 9:9, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Matthew 5:17, Romans 4:13, Romans 8:3-4, Romans 13:9, Galatians 3:8, Hebrews 8:13, Hebrews 9:18-20

**Topics:** "Salvation", "Covenants"

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## Description

Charles Finney discusses 'The Covenants,' emphasizing the transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant as outlined in Hebrews 8:13. He explains the nature of covenants, their mutual obligations, and the significance of God's covenants with humanity, including the Adamic, Abrahamic, and Sinai covenants. Finney clarifies that while the Old Covenant is set aside in terms of salvation, its moral precepts remain binding, and the New Covenant fulfills the promises of the previous covenants by writing God's law in the hearts of believers. He urges the congregation to embrace the New Covenant and its implications for their spiritual lives.

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## Transcript

TEXT. Heb. 8:13. --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.

The more experience I have in preaching the gospel, the more ripe are my convictions, that ministers take it for granted their hearers are much better instructed on religious subjects than most of them really are. They therefore take many things for granted as already understood by their hearers, of which in reality they are ignorant. This sometimes exposes them to misconceptions of what they hear, and often throws them into an unsettled state of mind in regard to the truths they may have heard, so many things having been assumed of which they have no knowledge. From some remarks I have heard, I have thought, that what I have said on the subject of the covenants, has been liable to misconstruction, for want of a somewhat more fundamental examination of the subject of covenants than has been contained in any of my lectures.

In this text and the context, Paul is speaking of the setting aside of the Old Covenant, and the introduction of the New.

In discoursing upon the subject I design to show:

I. WHAT IS IMPLIED IN A COVENANT.

II. THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF COVENANTS.

III. SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL COVENANTS OF GOD WITH MEN.

IV. WHICH OF THEM ARE SET ASIDE, AND IN WHAT SENSE THEY ARE SET ASIDE.

V. THAT THE NEW COVENANT IS THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF WHAT WAS PROPOSED BY THE PRECEDING COVENANTS.

I. I am to show what is implied in a covenant.

1. A mutual promise between two or more parties. A promise of one party not consented to by the other, is not a covenant but a promise. To be a covenant the promise must be mutual.

2. The promise must be made by lawful persons, i.e. they must be, of suitable age, of a sound mind, not lunatics or idiots; and be so circumstanced that it is lawful for them to enter into the proposed covenant. Persons may, in certain circumstances, contract a covenant for their heirs, or those whom they represent. In all such cases, those whom they represent are equally bound with themselves. Thus parents can covenant in respect to their estates binding their heirs. And thus Abraham could covenant with God in relation to himself and his posterity.

3. A covenant is not only a mutual promise by lawful persons but it must be to do a lawful thing. Persons cannot covenant and bring themselves under an obligation to do a thing that is unlawful, or of immoral tendency. In other words such a covenant is void, and can be no covenant at all. No courts of law or equity--nor will the tribunal of God hold such covenants as of any validity whatever.

II. The different kinds of covenants.

1. With respect to the covenants wherein the parties are equal, i.e. where one party is under no special obligation to the other, but where each has an equal right to canvass and dictate the terms of the covenant--this is one kind of covenant and is called by Greek grammarians suntheke. No covenant of this kind, of course, exists between God and his creatures.

2. Where one has the right to dictate the terms of the covenant to the other, and where the parties sustain to each other the relation of sovereign and subject. This kind of covenant is called diatheke, and is synonymous with the Hebrew word berith. Covenants of this kind are the same as laws, institutions, and ordinances of government. All government implies a mutual promise between the sovereign and subjects--a promise of protection on his part and of obedience on theirs. Therefore all laws, ordinances, and institutions dictated by the sovereign and consented to by the subjects, are properly covenants between the parties.

3. Another important distinction which should be made in regard to covenants is,

(1) Where persons covenant to do what they were under previous obligation to do on the ground of natural right or justice. This kind of covenants can never be dissolved by the consent of parties, because they were under obligation to do what they engaged to do previously to any promise.

(2) Where parties covenant to do what was not before obligatory, but the whole obligation arises out of their mutual promise. This kind of covenants may be dissolved by the consent of all parties. In regard to those laws and institutions which require only what is obligatory on the principles of natural justice, they cannot be repealed or set aside by either or by both parties, e.g. The law of God requiring his creatures to love him with all the heart can never be repealed by him, or its obligation in any way dispensed with, because it is plainly right in itself, and a dictate of natural justice. Those laws and institutions which are of a ceremonial character, and are not in their own nature obligatory, may be set aside, at any time, at the will of the lawgiver. Let it be understood then, that in the sense of diatheke, all laws, institutions and ordinances are covenants, and imply the mutual consent of the sovereign and subjects, and mutual obligations devolve upon each. In this sense the laws and ordinances of God are covenants.

III. I will notice some of the covenants of God with men.

1. The Adamic covenant, or the covenant made with Adam. This must have been in substance the moral law, as epitomized by the Savior in the two great commandments. The test of this covenant was the refusing the forbidden fruit. If he abstained wholly from this fruit, it was sufficient evidence that his love to God was supreme, and that he regarded the authority of God above the indulgence of his constitutional appetites. But if he partook of this fruit it was conclusive evidence, that his regard to God was not supreme; but that the indulgence of appetite was with him superior to the authority of God. That this was properly a covenant and consented to by Adam, is manifest from the fact, that for a time he obeyed it.

This was strictly and properly a covenant of works, and proposed to save him on the ground of his perfect and perpetual obedience to God.

2. Passing by the covenant with Noah, I notice the covenant made with Abraham, as recorded in the 12, 15, and 17 chapters of Genesis. This was a covenant of grace in opposition to the Adamic covenant. It proposed a new way of salvation. Salvation by works of the law had become impossible, as Adam and all his posterity had disobeyed the law. God therefore, in the Abrahamic covenant, proposed to save mankind by grace through faith. The substance of this had been intimated to Adam immediately after the fall, and was, no doubt, understood and embraced by all the saints from Adam to Abraham. We find Abel offering a sacrifice in faith, and his sacrifice was typical of the Atonement of Christ. This covenant, made more fully with Abraham, is said by the Apostle in Gal. 3:8 to be the gospel: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed." That it was a covenant of grace in opposition to a covenant of works is evident from the passage just quoted, and from the 16th verse of the same chapter: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds as of many, but as of one, 'And to thy seed,' which is Christ." Also from Rom. 4:13, 16: "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not unto Abraham, or his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be of grace; to the end the promise might be sure to the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all." These and many other passages show that this covenant with Abraham was a gracious in opposition to a legal covenant or a covenant of works.

We have an account of the solemn ratification of this covenant, according to the custom of those times by dividing beasts and the parties passing between the pieces, in Gen. 15:8-12, 17: "And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? And he said unto him, take me an heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon. And he

took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another; but the birds divided he not. And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away. And when the sun was going down a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him. And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces." Here the lamp is the symbol of the divine presence. In the 17th chap. we have an account of the seal's being added to the covenant to which Abraham fully consented on his part, by circumcising himself and all the males of his household. This covenant was made with Abraham and with all believers in the God of Israel whether Jews or Gentiles. If they would receive this covenant they were to acknowledge his authority by affixing its seal to themselves and all the males of their household. Thus the proselytes to the Jew's religion, before they were allowed to eat of the passover, were required to be circumcised with all their males. Ex. 12:48, 49: "And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and to the stranger who sojourneth among you."

3. The Sinai covenant, or the law given at Mount Sinai. It appears that all the laws and ordinances given at Mount Sinai taken together, made up this covenant. In the following passages the ten commandments are called the covenant. Heb. 9:4: "Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant--"; Ex. 34:28, "And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread nor drink water. And He wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments." Deut. 9:9, 11, 15: "When I was gone up into the mount, to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the Lord made with you, then I neither did eat bread nor drink water. And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the Lord gave me the two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant. So I turned and came down from the mount, and the mount burned with fire; and the two tables of the covenant were in my hands."

These commandments however were only a part of the covenant as other passages clearly show, Heb. 9:18-20 compared with Ex. 24:3-8.

"Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined upon you." "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people; and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words." In these passages we learn that every precept of the law was included in the Sinai covenant. In the passage quoted above from Ex. we have a solemn ratification of this covenant, which is mentioned also in the passage quoted from Hebrews. As these are no where called two covenants, and as the law upon the two tables had already been given and was so important in its nature, and is so often

itself called the covenant, I conclude that all the laws given at Mt. Sinai were included in this covenant. Upon this covenant I remark:

(1.) That it did not set aside the Abrahamic covenant, and introduce again the covenant of works. This is asserted and fully argued by Paul in Gal. 3:17-19: "And this I say, That the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred years after cannot disannul, that it should become of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator."

Some have understood the Sinai covenant as united with the covenant of Abraham in such a sense as to make the whole a covenant of works. Now there can be no greater mistake than this, as is evident from the whole drift of the Apostle's reasoning in the 4th chapter of Romans and the 3d chapter of Galatians.

(2.) This covenant or dispensation was a school-master to bring us to Christ instead of being a covenant of works: Gal. 2[3]:24, "Wherefore the law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." The moral precepts were to convict us of sin, and cut us off from self-righteous efforts and expectations; and the whole system of sacrifices and types were a shadow of the gospel, or a typical representation of good things to come, i.e. of the great blessings of the gospel of Christ. All those who were saved under this dispensation were saved by faith in the atonement of Christ, as dimly shadowed forth in this typical dispensation. That all the ancient patriarchs were saved by faith is perfectly certain from the whole Bible, and is particularly declared in the 11th chapter of Hebrews.

(3.) This covenant became a stumbling block to the Jews by being mistaken by the great mass of them for a covenant of works. They were so earthly and sensual as to overlook the spiritual truth taught by those ordinances, and to understand conformity to them to entitle them to salvation on the ground of their own works.

(4.) Thus failing to secure the sanctification, and consequently the salvation of the people, God foretold, and published at various times, and expressly by Jeremiah, that at a certain future time he would make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and Judah, i.e. with the whole Church of God. Which brings me to remark:

4. That the New Covenant mentioned in Jeremiah was according to the words and tenor of it to consist in writing the moral law in the hearts of his people. By the moral law I mean the moral precepts, as comprised and summed up by our Savior in the two great precepts on which, he affirms, hang all the law and the prophets. Jer. 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws in their inward parts, and write them in their hearts; and will be their God and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more." On this I remark:

(1.) This covenant implied,

(a.) so full a revelation of God,

(b.) so much of the Holy Spirit

(c.) such an efficacious dispensation, as to beget true holiness of heart in the people of God. The substance of this promise of the New Covenant is to be found in a great many places in the Old Testament, and from the quotation of it by the Apostle in his epistle to the Hebrews, we learn when this promise of the New Covenant became due--and that the New Covenant dispensation was actually introduced by the first publishers of the Gospel. To my mind, it seems plain, that the day of Pentecost was regarded by Christ and the Apostles as the commencement of the new dispensation. Christ seems to intimate to his disciples that that was the occasion on which the promise of his Father, so often repeated, and which they had heard of him should be fulfilled.

(2.) This writing the law in the heart, is called a covenant, because it implies, in the fullest manner, the consent of him who enters into this covenant with God. As the writing this law in the heart consists in begetting the spirit and temper required by the law, it implies of course the fullest consent on the part of him who receives it.

(3.) I have said the promise of this covenant became due at the day of Pentecost. The extent to which it has been fulfilled, and will be fulfilled, has depended, and will continue to depend upon the extent to which it is understood, believed, and embraced by the Church. From the nature of the case, it is a covenant to be made with individuals. No one can receive it but by faith. And as the promise is now due, it is the privilege and duty of every soul to lay hold on full salvation.

IV. I am to show which of the covenants are set aside, and in what sense.

1. The Adamic, or covenant of works, is set aside as a method or condition of salvation. As a rule of duty it is not and cannot be set aside. The particular test of the forbidden fruit given to Adam is of course nothing to us. But the substance of the covenant, the requisition, i.e. perfect love to God and men is not and cannot be set aside, because it is a covenant of that kind where the thing to be performed is right in itself, and obligatory on the ground of natural justice.

2. The Abrahamic covenant is not done away. I waive the question in respect to that part of it that promised the temporal blessing or the land of Canaan to the Jews, and speak of infinitely the most important part of the covenant, which promised a spiritual blessing through Abraham and his seed to all the nations of the earth, and of which particular blessing or rest, temporal Canaan was only a type. That this part of the covenant is not abolished is evident.

(1.) From the reasonings of the Apostle in the fourth chapter of Romans, and third chapter of Galatians. He shows most fully that the promise made to Abraham is yet to be fulfilled both to Jews and Gentiles. And there are a great many other passages that teach the same truth.

(2.) Because it is not yet fulfilled. It was actually made through Abraham and his seed, i.e. Christ, with all the nations of the earth. And from the very nature of it, it cannot be fulfilled until the end of time.

In my last lecture I said it was never fulfilled in its fullest sense to Abraham, but is to be fulfilled in a fuller sense to Christians under the present dispensation.

(3.) Because the New Covenant spoken of in Jer. is only the carrying out and fulfillment of the covenant made with Abraham, as the Apostle asserts in Gal. 3:14: "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

3. The covenant of Sinai is in one sense abolished; in another sense it still remains. It should be understood, that the covenant of Sinai was a collection of statutes and ordinances, making up as a whole the means of salvation by grace through faith. As the Apostle says in Heb. 10:1: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come" &c. From this and other passages, as well as from the nature of the case, it is manifest, that the old or Sinai covenant is to be regarded as a peculiar method of teaching the substantial truths of the gospel--a still further and more perfect fore-telling of the gospel than had been made to Abraham.

Now this covenant as a dispensation--as a method of teaching the gospel--as the means of sanctification and salvation, is set aside to give place to the reality or anti-type--the fuller and more perfect revelation by Jesus Christ and his Apostles, of which truth, the typical dispensation was only a shadow.

But the moral precepts of this covenant, i.e. those precepts that require what is right in itself, and are obligatory in the nature of things, remain still as a rule of duty in full force. This must be, of course, as the precepts are of the nature of that kind of covenants that cannot be abolished at the pleasure of either or both parties. Nothing is of more importance, than that we should clearly understand in what sense the Old Covenant is done away, and in what sense it is not done away, and in what sense it is not done away. Those precepts that are typical and ceremonial are now of course not to be observed at all, as the revelation of Jesus Christ, and the coming of the great Anti-type has rendered their observance useless and worse than useless. But that the whole substance of the moral precepts, and those that are obligatory on the ground of natural justice, are still binding and of full force and authority, is manifest.

(1.) From the nature of the case. It is impossible that these should cease to be binding, for God has no right to dispense with their obligation.--These precepts whether found among the ten commandments or among the precepts recorded by Moses, are of perpetual obligation, because they belong to the race and are obligatory in the nature of things. Their obligation grows out of, and rests upon the unalterable nature and relations of moral beings.

Were this the place, it would be easy to take up these commands, one by one, and show that they have their foundation in the nature and necessities of man and can never be dispensed with, while the world stands. Especially should I like to show this in respect to the two commands respecting the Sabbath and marriage. I mention these two merely because some have doubted whether these were of perpetual obligation. But to me it seems that this subject may be made as clear as sunlight, that these together with all the other commands of the decalogue, and some other precepts of the Old Covenant are of perpetual obligation, e.g. such as this, "Thou shalt not deliver unto his master him that is escaped from his master unto thee," &c. I must not however enter into this subject in this place, but content myself with saying,

(2.) That the Bible and especially the New Testament every where recognizes all the moral precepts, as of perpetual obligation. Hear what the Apostle says in Rom. 13:9: "For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Here he recognizes the eternal obligation of the moral precepts. This together with the whole of the New Testament, proves conclusively that the moral precepts are as a rule of duty by no

means done away, but the strictest obedience to them is every where insisted upon.

(3.) If they were repealed, neither sin nor holiness could exist at all. Without a rule of duty, no obedience can of course exist. Consequently if the moral law is abolished, there is no sin or holiness in the universe.

V. The New Covenant is the accomplishment of what was proposed by the preceding covenants.

The thing proposed by the preceding covenants was the sanctification and salvation of man. Now that the New Covenant consists in the accomplishment of this end is evident from the words of the covenant itself. Jer. 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."--The thing here promised is sanctification or the writing of the law in the heart. If therefore obedience to law be sanctification, then this is the blessing proposed in this promise of the New Covenant. So far then from the moral law being done away, the New Covenant is nothing else than real obedience to the law. This exactly accords with what the Apostle says in Rom. 8:3, 4: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

#### REMARKS.

1. The two covenants contrasted by the Apostle, in his epistle to the Hebrews, as the Old and New Covenants,--the first and second covenants, &c. are the Sinai covenant and the one promised in Jer.--The Apostle does not here allude to the covenant with Adam or with Abraham. By reading the covenant it will be evident that the covenants contrasted are the Sinai covenant or that which was made with the people when God led them out of the land of Egypt, and the covenant in Jer. 31:31-34, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Heb. 8:7-13; "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For, finding fault with them, he saith, Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be my people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor,

and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. 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."

In Heb. 9:18-20 above quoted, he speaks expressly of this covenant, and so refers to the Old Testament, as to render it certain that it was the law given at Sinai, and not the covenant of Abraham of which he was speaking.

2. The New Covenant and the Abrahamic covenant sustain to each other the relation of a promise to its fulfillment. As I said in my last, and have repeated in this lecture, the New Covenant is nothing more or less than the carrying out and fulfilling the covenant made with Abraham.

3. In the light of this subject, the mistake into which those have fallen who maintain that the Abrahamic covenant is repealed may be seen. They confound the Abrahamic with the Sinai covenant, and suppose that the new dispensation abolishes both together. This appears to me to be a sad mistake.

4. From this subject may be seen the error of some of the modern Perfectionists who seem to suppose that the old dispensation, or Sinai covenant, was a covenant of works. They do not seem to understand that it was only a method of carrying out and accomplishing the promises of grace first intimated to Adam immediately after the fall and more fully afterwards confirmed to Abraham.--This, as a system of means for the sanctification and salvation of men, has been set aside to give place to a fuller revelation, and to the dispensation of the Holy Ghost under the Gospel, retaining at the same time in all its strength, as a rule of duty, the obligation of all the moral precepts. The persons to whom I allude have manifestly mistaken the sense in which the Old Covenant is done away, and understood even the moral precepts to be so abrogated as to be no longer binding. And they seem to be very happy in the idea of being wholly discharged from the obligation of the moral law. Before them the door of licentiousness is fully open, and imagining themselves, as some of them do, to be led by the Spirit to trample upon the great commands of the Decalogue, they most richly deserve, and are likely to receive the execration of God and man.

5. The gospel dispensation is not itself the New Covenant, but simply the means of it. The New Covenant, as I have fully shown in my past lectures, consists in the writing of the law in the heart. This is done by the Spirit through the instrumentality of the gospel.

The design of this lecture is merely to guard against the impression that the moral law only is to be regarded as the Old Covenant, as in quoting passages in my former lectures, to show what the Old Covenant was, I confined myself, if I mistake not, to those that spoke of the ten commandments as constituting that covenant, without particularly noticing the other parts of the covenant. This I did because my main design in those lectures was to dwell upon that part of the Old Covenant which was to be written by the New Covenant in the heart.

Nothing is more important than that the Church should have just and comprehensive views of the covenant dealings of God with his people. It cannot be too distinctly understood that the Adamic covenant, or covenant of works is still binding as a rule of duty, but is not the condition of salvation.--Also that all the covenants of God with the Church have had for their grand object the bringing of man into a state of complete conformity to the law, under which man was originally placed, and under which he must be placed to all eternity.

With respect to this New Covenant, I remark in a word--that the promise of it has been due for more than eighteen hundred years, and I would solemnly ask, shall it lie in your Bibles till they rot and your souls sink down to hell before you lay hold on the salvation from sin which it promises?

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