**“The Two Covenants” The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald 75, 41.**

E. J. Waggoner

“These are the two covenants.” Galatians 4:24. What are the two covenants?-The two women, Hagar and Sarah; for we read that Hagar is Mount Sinai, “which gendereth to bondage.” That is, just as Hagar could not bring forth any other kind of children than slaves, so the law, even the law that God spoke from Sinai, can not beget free men. It can do nothing but hold them in bondage. “For by the law is the knowledge of sin.” The same is true of the covenant from Sinai, for it consisted merely of the promise of the people to keep that law, and had, therefore, no more power to make them free than the law itself had. Nay, rather, it gendered to bondage, since their making it was simply a promise to make themselves righteous by their own works, and man in himself is “without strength.” {ARSH October 11, 1898, p. 647.1}

“Then did not God himself lead them into bondage?”-Not by any means; since he did not induce them to make that covenant at Sinai. Four hundred and thirty years before that time he had made a covenant with Abraham, which was sufficient for all purposes. That covenant was confirmed in Christ, and, therefore, was a covenant from above. See John 8:23. It promised righteousness as a free gift of God through faith, and it included all nations. All the miracles that God had wrought in delivering the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage were but demonstrations of his power to deliver them and us from the bondage of sin. Yes, the deliverance from Egypt was itself a demonstration not only of God’s power, but also of his desire to lead them from the bondage of sin,-that bondage in which the covenant from Sinai holds men,-because Hagar, who is the covenant from Sinai, was an Egyptian. {ARSH October 11, 1898, p. 647.2}

The fact that the children of Israel, in their self-sufficiency rashly took the whole responsibility upon themselves, does not prove that God led them into making that covenant, but the contrary. He was leading them out of bondage, not into it, and the apostle plainly tells us that covenant from Sinai was nothing but bondage. {ARSH October 11, 1898, p. 647.3}

Note the statement which the apostle makes when speaking of the two women, Hagar and Sarah: “These are the two covenants.” So then the two covenants existed in every essential particular in the days of Abraham. Even so they do to-day; for the Scripture says now as well as then, “Cast out the bondwoman and her son.” We see then that the two covenants are not matters of *time*, but of *condition*. Let no one flatter himself that he can not be under the old covenant, because the time for that is passed. The time for that is passed only in the sense that “the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revelings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries.” 1 Peter 4:3. {ARSH October 11, 1898, p. 647.4}

The difference between the two covenants is just the difference between a freewoman and a slave. Hagar’s children, no matter how many she might have had, would have been slaves, while those of Sarah would necessarily be free. So the covenant from Sinai holds all who adhere to it in bondage “under the law;” while the covenant from above gives freedom, not freedom from obedience to the law, but freedom from disobedience to it. The freedom is not found *away from* the law, but *in* the law. Christ redeems from the curse, which is the transgression of the law. He redeems us from the curse, that the blessing may come on us; and the blessing is obedience to the law. “Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.” Psalm 119:1. This blessedness is freedom. “I will walk at liberty; for I seek Thy precepts.” Verse 45. {ARSH October 11, 1898, p. 647.5}

The difference between the two covenants may be put briefly thus: In the covenant from Sinai we ourselves have to do with the law alone, while in the covenant from above, we have the law in Christ. In the first instance it is death to us, since the law is sharper than any two-edged sword, and we are not able to handle it without fatal results; but in the second instance we have the law “in the hand of a mediator.” In the one case it is what we can do; in the other case it is what the Spirit of God can do. Bear in mind that there is not the slightest question in the whole epistle to the Galatians as to whether or not the law should be kept. The only question is, How shall it be done? Is it to be our own doing, so that the reward shall not be of grace but of debt? or is it to be God working in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure? {ARSH October 11, 1898, p. 647.6}

Sarah answers to the covenant which is from above, because she is free. But the freedom which that covenant gives is the freedom of the Spirit, for Isaac was born of the Spirit. See Galatians 4:29. “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” 2 Corinthians 3:17. “If ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.” Galatians 5:18. But this does not mean that the Spirit gives one license to break the law; for “the law is spiritual.” Romans 7:14. There is no liberty in sin, and “sin is the transgression of the law.” So the liberty of the covenant from above is that perfect liberty that belongs alone to those who are law-abiding. We become law-abiding only by having the law written in our hearts by the Spirit. {ARSH October 11, 1898, p. 647.7}

“Stand fast therefor.” Stand where?—“In the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.” And what freedom is that?—It is the freedom of Christ himself, whose delight was in the law of the Lord, because it was in His heart. Psalm 40:8. “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” Romans 8:2. We stand only by faith. {ARSH October 11, 1898, p. 648.1}

Let it not be imagined that there is any trace of bondage in this freedom. It is liberty of soul, liberty of thought, as well as liberty of action. It is not that we are simply given the ability to keep the law, but we are given the mind that finds delight in doing it. It is not that we comply with the law because we see no other way of escape from punishment; that would be galling bondage. It is from such bondage that God’s covenant releases us. No; the promise of God, when accepted, puts the mind of the Spirit into us, so that we find the highest pleasure in obedience to all the precepts of God’s word. The soul is as free as a bird soaring above the mountain-tops. It is the glorious liberty of the children of God, who have the full range of “the breadth, and length, and depth, and height” of God’s universe. It is the liberty of those who do not have to be watched, but who can be trusted anywhere, since their every step is but the movement of God’s own holy law. Why be content with bondage, when such limitless freedom is yours? The prison doors are open; walk out into God’s freedom. {ARSH October 11, 1898, p. 648.2}

**“The Secret of the North” The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald 75, 43.**

E. J. Waggoner

***Present Truth.***

The magnetic needle points to the north. Everybody knows the facts, but nobody knows why. There is a mysterious attraction in the north. Mysterious indeed; for the Hebrew word for “north” means, “concealed,” “hidden.” What is this power, which men arbitrarily call “magnetism,” which fills the whole earth, and by which matter is kept from becoming a chaotic mass and going to destruction?-It is God’s own personal influence, for “there is no power but of God.” His secret dwelling-place is “Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the Great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge.” Psalm 48:2, 3. Lucifer, in his mad ambition to set his throne above the stars of God, and to be like the Most High, said: “I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.” Isaiah 14:12-14. {ARSH October 25, 1898, p. 679.1}

“He stretched out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.” Job 26:7. The earth hangs upon nothing, upheld by that mighty power that emanates from “the secret place of the Most High,”-the north. That power pervades every particle of matter in the universe, and holds it in its place. In Christ “are all things created, ... for He is before all things, and in Him all things consists,” or “cohere.” Colossians 1:16, 17. He upholds “all things by the word of His power.” Hebrews 1:3. {ARSH October 25, 1898, p. 679.2}

The mind cannot grasp such mighty power. It is but the working out of “the love of God which passeth knowledge,” which is devoted to the well-being of mankind. “The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord” (Psalm 33:5), and it his loving-kindness that draws us to him. All the force in nature, by whatever name men know it, whether cohesion, chemical attraction, magnetism, gravitation, or what not, is simply the influence of the Spirit of God, from whose presence none can flee, whether he ascend to heaven, or descend into the depths of the earth, or dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea. {ARSH October 25, 1898, p. 679.3}