

## THE NEW COVENANT

Having considered the covenant of works, I shall now speak of the New Covenant of rich grace, in which the ever blessed God has made a rich provision for the souls of his elect, and rendered their salvation as certain as his own existence. The covenant of grace hath its rise from the eternal favour of the everlasting Father, and is therefore called the everlasting covenant; concerning which I shall first enquire into its author, whom I have said is the everlasting Father. God has loved his people with an everlasting love, Jer. 31:3, which love is not only from eternity, but will abide for ever. Our Lord says to his divine Father, John 17:23,24, 'Thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou has given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world'.

The covenant of grace springs from this love of God, and is as early as that; the purpose of the eternal mind was, that mercy, love, and grace should be built up for ever; and in order to it makes this covenant; the basis and foundation of which are the purposes, decrees, and counsels of his own mind; for he does all things after the counsel of his own mind; and it is absolutely certain that an affair of such importance as the covenant of grace could not be settled but by him whose counsels of old are faithfulness and truth. The Father laid this purpose of his mind before the Son, and proposed to him to engage as mediator of it, to which he voluntarily agreed; and hence it is written, Zech. 6:13, 'And the counsel of peace shall be between them both'. These engagements were sealed in heaven by the Eternal Spirit, who engaged with the Father, and the Son on his part to meten all the chosen of the Father, and the redeemed of the Son, for the kingdom of glory; and so it is written, 1 John 5:7, 'For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost'.

This covenant having that God for its author, whose nature is love, and springing from his love, is therefore composed of love to the elect, and filled with the blessings of it for their happiness in time and felicity for ever. 'He made the pillars thereof of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple, the midst thereof being paved with love, for the daughters of Jerusalem', Song 3:10. The love of God in this covenant is to the elect; they alone now are, or ever will be interested in it, nor can their names be blotted out, or their interest lost, from any or all the events of time: so saith Paul, Rom. 8:38,39, 'For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord'. Some will then say, it is the fault of God, and not the sinner, that many are not saved, seeing they are not chosen: I answer, the procuring cause of eternal damnation is sin, and on that ground will all be lost that are lost; for no one can prove that any one is lost, or ever was, or ever will be for not being the chosen of God, or not having that grace which is the prerogative of God alone to bestow; nor can any prove that any one soul is worsted that is lost; or any of the fallen race that may be lost by the Almighty's choice of his people: his love is sovereign and distinguishing, and perfectly consistent with all the perfections of his nature, as is displayed in the covenant of grace, and loudly says to the proud fallen mortal that rises against his decrees, 'Be still, and know that I am God'; on which account Paul thus argues, Rom. 9:22,23, 'What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory'. Thus we see the author of the covenant is God, acting out his sovereign will of love, mercy, and grace towards his chosen people, whom he foreknew.

Secondly, Its nature may be considered. It evidently appears from the Word of God, that it is an unconditional covenant, having no motive on the creature's side to induce the Lord to make it; for it springs from the everlasting love of God, and all the blessings it contains flow from the same love and free favour of the Eternal Father: This is evident from the purpose of God in the salvation of the chosen before the world was, and the full provision of Grace made for them in the Mediator,

exclusive of their works, before they were born, as saith holy writ, 2 Tim. 1:9, 'Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began': and not only was the purpose of the Lord's grace in this covenant independent of any motive in the creature; but the manifestation of it by the appearing of Jesus Christ, and the calling of the souls of the elect by the powerful operations of the Holy Spirit's grace, without respect to the works of those so saved; and so it is written, Titus 3:4, 'But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour'. But some will say the Lord foresaw who in time would repent and believe, and in consequence thereof choose them, so that repentance and faith are terms or conditions of the covenant. To which I reply, that God has not chosen his people because he foresaw they would believe, but that they should believe, and has made a provision of faith for them in the covenant, as saith the Apostle, 2 Thess. 2:13, 'But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth'; and these as the Lord's own appointed means, and not conditions.

Repentance is a covenant blessing known only by the Lord's chosen, to whom he grants repentance unto life, and is bestowed on them by the Prince and Saviour of Israel, Acts 5:31, 'Him (Jesus) hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.' We do not read that repentance leads the Lord to do us good, but that the goodness of God leadeth to repentance, Rom. 2:4. The Lord's grace is bestowed, and the soul effectually called before repentance, and is the cause of repentance, as saith Scripture, Rom. 11:29, 'For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance'; and if this be denied, let any one tell me that can.

If God don't love till man begins,  
How came vile man to hate his sins?  
How came the wretch himself to know  
From whence doth his repentance flow?

Faith also is a covenant blessing, and is the Lord's gracious gift unto as many as shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, Eph. 2:8, 'For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God'. This is not a bare belief of the word of the Lord as a report, for if that was true faith, Simon Magus must have been in a good state instead of a bad one, for he believed Philip's preaching concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ; nevertheless after being baptised with that faith, is told by Peter, who saw and spoke in the light and power of the Spirit, that he was still in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity, Acts 8:12,23. Such is the faith of devils, who have quoted Scripture in the most positive manner, to gain their ends if possible; but such faith appears to be unconnected with salvation in any or all who possess it. What is the faith of the covenant then, say some? I answer, it is the fruit and effect of regenerating grace, and proves them that have it to be the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. There can be no true faith without conversion, and when that work is wrought such an one believeth aright, for then 'with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation', Rom. 10:10. True faith is a living principle in the heart, and is said to be the faith of the operation of God, Col. 2:12. It may be known by its engaging the heart in love to Jesus, and making Jesus precious to the soul, 1 Pet 2:7, 'Unto you therefore which believe he is precious'. To him it leads the soul as its prophet, priest, and king, and lives in him, being itself kept alive by him, as saith Paul, Gal. 2:20, 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God'. And this covenant faith is evidently a appropriating faith, for he saith, 'who loved me and gave himself for me'. It is the privilege of God's elect to enjoy this covenant blessing, and so it is written, Acts 13:48, 'And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed', and no more; nor ever will, but will be damned; 'but he that believeth not shall be damned', Mark 16:16.

Much is said in this day by strangers to the New Covenant and its blessings, of the duty of all men to believe savingly, and the power and ability of the fallen creature to believe, and put them upon doing it instead of telling them it is Christ's own work, and sending the enquiring soul to Jesus for it; and so is the work of the Spirit eclipsed, Christ robbed of his honour, and the fallen helpless creature propped up in pride and self conceit. But this will not do nor will it stand, for the Father saith of his dear Son, whom he delighteth to honour, 'that in all things he might have the preeminence', Col. 1:18. I read of Jesus, Heb. 12:2, that he is the author and finisher of faith; and Paul very earnestly prays for his brethren at Thessalonica, 2 Thess. 1:11, that God would fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power, which he must have been one of the basest of hypocrites to have done, and the greatest of fools to have believed it was in the creature's power. This faith is called the faith of God's elect, Titus 1:1; it being peculiar to them, and bestowed on them by their covenant God; all faith besides this can be no more than legal, and can only produce a legal spirit and legal worship; it stands under the rod of Moses, is driven with fear of wrath and hell, takes shelter in the sand bank instead of hiding in the rock, and is supported by lies, Isaiah 28:15 and 45:20. A deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say that there is not a lie in my right hand. But true faith believes in Jesus, and is connected with eternal salvation, 1 Peter 1:9, 'Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls'. It proves itself genuine, for it works by love, purifies the heart, overcomes the world, rejoices in Christ Jesus, and has no confidence in the flesh, Phil. 3:3, and such are true believers.

Thirdly, its provision. This covenant is replete with all manner of blessings suited to the fallen circumstances of God's covenant ones. The elect by nature are children of wrath even as others, and dead in trespasses and sins, Eph. 2:1,3; but in this covenant they are pre-ordained to eternal life; by virtue of which they are quickened here, and made alive; 'and you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins', Eph. 2:1. Jesus, the Mediator of this covenant, being exalted by the right hand of God, and receiving of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, Acts 2:23; that by so doing, the Father might show the exceeding richness of his grace in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus, Eph. 2:7; and so preached Paul, for he saith, 'God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ,' Eph. 2:4,5. And every one that is so quickened, hath in him the spring of eternal life; so saith our divine Lord, 'But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life', John 4:14. This spake he of the Spirit. Thus the elect are quickened and brought to life by the operations of the Spirit to live by the faith of the Son of God. There is a provision of sanctification in this covenant. God's people being by nature unclean and unholy, and it being impossible for the Lord, from his nature, to make a covenant securing salvation that did not equally secure holiness to his people, without which no man can see the Lord; he therefore saith, I will put my laws in their minds and write them in their hearts, I will sprinkle clean water upon them and they shall be clean; I will give them a new heart and a new spirit; I will take away the stony heart and give an heart of flesh, Ezek. 36:25,26. The ever-blessed God designed in the eternal predestination of his people, that they should in time bear the image of his Son, Rom. 8:29; and that they may be partakers of his holiness, we read that many great and exceeding precious promises are given, 2 Peter 1:4. These promises are in the Mediator of the covenant all sure to the chosen of God, that he may be glorified by them, 2 Cor. 1:20, 'For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us'; and from the fullness of this promise in Jesus comes the believer's inward and outward adorning, 1 Cor. 1:30, 'But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption'; and well may we say with David, 'The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold', Psalm 45:13. In this covenant there is a full provision for justification also, a righteousness being provided which the Mediator wrought out; Daniel 9:24, we read of the designed end of the Messiah's being cut off to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. The Lord imputes this righteousness unto his covenant ones freely, without any prerequisite, Rom. 14:6; even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. The Divine Spirit reveals this righteousness unto the elect,

and brings it near, 'I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off', Isaiah 46:13, and enables them to put it on by faith and wear it with infinite satisfaction, without seeking a covering by the deeds of the law; and so we find, Rom. 3:21,22; 'but now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe'. This righteousness is given freely as a covenant blessing of grace, that the chosen may go to the kingdom in this dress, as it is written, Titus 3:7, 'That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life'; that we might be justified in Christ's righteousness from all things by which we never could by the law of Moses, we read the Father made his Son to be sin for us who knew no sin (himself) that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. The erroneous Arminian in denying this imputation of Christ's righteousness for his people's justification wholly and alone, denies that Scripture truth without which no soul can be saved; and no doubt but such as receive from this covenant abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ, Rom. 5:17. Here is also a provision for the saints persevering to eternal glory.

The perseverance of the chosen appears plain from their being surrounded with the power of God and kept by it on every hand, as in a garrison; 1 Peter 1:5, 'Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation'; the eternal God being a wall of fire round about them, strength being also promised equal unto their day, Deut. 33:25, 'and as thy days, so shall thy strength be'; so that if they are in the waters they shall not overflow them, or in the fire the flame shall not kindle upon them to hurt them; the Lord hath said, 'He will never leave them, nor forsake them', Heb. 13:5; the eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms to hold them up, Deut. 33:27; and in them power of grace to complete its work, and to bring its subjects to glory, Phil. 1:6, 'Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ'.

In this covenant we have the blessing of eternal life secured by promises, and made sure to the elect as a free grace gift; so saith our blessed Lord, John 10:28, 'I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand'. In this the Lord's people are in hope, nor shall their hope be put to shame for it is upon the safest grounds, God having secured that by promise unto them in the covenant before they were born, as it is written, Titus 1:2, 'In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began'. It is hid for them in Christ, and when he appears they will find it there, Col. 3:3,4, 'Your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory'. Thus we find this covenant contains free and full salvation in all its parts with immortal glory; nor is there any salvation but what is here. Here are also things that accompany salvation, as the spirit and grace of prayer, as saith the Lord, Zech. 12:10, 'And I will (mark that, it is God's covenant language) pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications'. Souls possessing this are covenant children. Every sincere praying person has evidence of being in the covenant of grace; and wherever the Lord bestows the spirit and grace of prayer, there he has covenant blessings in design to bestow on that soul, and therefore he has put it upon praying; for we read, 'for these things will I be sought unto by the house of Israel'. In this covenant Omnipotence has purposed to give way to prayer; and so it is that his people wrestle with him and prevail, and the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much. In this covenant we have also the ministry of the Word. Ministers are covenant blessings, and according to the order of this covenant they are called, qualified, authorised, and sent forth, Acts 9:15, 'For he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel'; and Jesus saith, Acts 26:16, 'I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister'; Such the Lord promises protection to, verse 17, and success verse 18, for they are sent to open the eyes of the blind, 'to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me'; and happy for such churches as have elect ministers, for such the Lord will bless and prosper in their labours, and make and keep them faithful in preaching the preaching that he hath bid them, while hirelings with their strange voice can serve none but hypocrites, for the true sheep will not hear them, and their labours will fall as water to the ground, never to be gathered up again but to their ruin. Christ's ministers are not man-made

parsons nor men pleasers, but soul profitters under God; their ministry they received of the Lord, as saith Paul, Gal. 1:12, 'For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ'; and I am as sure as I had mine there as ever Paul could be, let mortals think as they may of my saying it: I know what I say, and whereof I affirm, and can make it plain to any one. The Gospel itself is designed for the profit of the elect, and Paul in preaching it endured all things for their sakes, 2 Tim. 2:10; and the preached Word is unto them the power of God unto salvation, and Christ revealed it in the wisdom of God and the power of God, 1 Cor. 1:18,24. The true churches of God are of the same stamp with true ministers, they are chosen of God, they are engaged with the Lamb here, 'and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful', Rev. 17:14. God bids them contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, Jude 3. The Lord bids them be faithful unto death, and promises to give them a crown of life, and blessed is that servant whom the Lord when he cometh shall find faithful. Unfaithful churches are not the Lord's; and if one amongst them is found an unfaithful soul it is not right with God. 'Behold', saith God, 'I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie', Rev. 3:9. Persecution is in this covenant also, and left as a legacy by the Mediator of it. Our Lord tells us there is no man that has left any thing for his sake and the gospel, but shall receive abundance more in this life with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life, Mark 10:30. People that are not persecuted are not the Lord's, for he saith, John 15:19, 'If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you'.

This covenant contains blessings suitable to every case. The chosen are in here. If they are bewildered in darkness, Christ is appointed to give them light, Isaiah 42:6, 'and I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles'. If they are bowed down under sin and sorrow he promises rest, Matt. 11:28; if they have but weak desires, he will increase them, Matt. 12:20, 'A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgement unto victory'. If they are tempted, he will succour them; and if they fall into sin and despair, he will raise them up again, as Jonah out of the belly of hell, and David out of the horrible pit. There is a parental provision made with fatherly kindness in this covenant, so that if his children break his statutes and keep not his commandments, 'Then will I (saith the Lord) visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail', Psalm 89:31-33.

Having considered its provision, we will speak of its order. It is said to be a covenant ordered in all things, 2 Sam. 23:5, ordered in all things to bring eternal glory to the ever-blessed Three in One, jointly concerned therein; the Father's choice being well secured; and his elect put into a sure and certain state of salvation in this covenant. Ordered in all things to secure the glory and praise of the Son, he is herein appointed to build the temple, and bear the eternal praise and glory; the Father chose him for this end as Mediator, set him up in his eternal purpose, Prov. 8:23; made him strong for himself, Psalm 80:17; prepared him a body, as he himself saith, and by the sufferings of death he is appointed to bring the heirs of glory to the rest above. By the order of this covenant he is the Saviour of Israel, and the only one, for God would not trust a matter of such great concern with any but his Son; and woe be eternally to them that trust their souls any where else, for God has not revealed any other name, nor ever will, in which salvation is to be found: 'Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved', Acts 4:12. All things are ordered for the Spirit's glory equal with the Father and the Son for ever, and Saints will for ever own the life of their souls, their conversion to God, their meetness for heaven, was not by their might in whole or in part, but by the Spirit of the Lord it is ordered in all things for the good of the chosen, 'And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose', Rom. 8:28.

We will now consider its stability. This covenant is eternally established by the eternal Three. The Son has confirmed it with his own blood, and the Father ratified it by bringing him from the dead, Heb. 13:20, 'Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant'; and the Divine Spirit shows

it to the elect, leads them to it, and enables them to trust the grace of it, and to take shelter in it, Heb. 6:18, 'That by two immutable things, (God's covenant and oath) in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us', and the eternal Three in One declare, Isaiah 54:10, 'For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee'.

Lastly, this covenant hath Jesus for its Mediator; as such he was viewed by the Divine Father from everlasting, and is said to be a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. As Mediator he laid down his life for the sheep, rose from the dead, and ascended on high, and the elect in him, as their head and representative; he is entered into the holy of holies, there to appear in the presence of God for us, Heb. 9:24. By him we have access unto God, enjoy his smiles, delight in his love, and receive forgiveness for all sin, even that eternal forgiveness of the new covenant promised by the Father, Heb. 8:12, 'For I will merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more'. From Jesus every want is supplied, and all suitable blessings given: 'It hath pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell', Col. 1:19, 'and of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace', John 1:16. His blood cleanseth from all sin, and speaketh better things than that of Abel.

From what has been said, how unspeakably happy are the people of God circumstanced by eternal love; what abundant reason to give all the glory to Father, Son, and Spirit, and to say, 'Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the praise eternal God'. Well may the redeemed of the Lord return to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, Isaiah 35:10, seeing the everlasting love of God in the covenant of grace has made so rich a provision of divine consolation for them. 'Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee: and thou shalt tread upon their high places', Deut. 33:29; 'No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgement thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord', Isaiah 54:17.

From what I have said, daubers with untempered mortar, blind guides, hirelings, legalists, universalists, and hypocrites will spurn and rave against the preacher who enforces the Spirit's work on the soul, that preaches down human merit, will, and power, and insists on the application of truth to the heart by the Spirit of God; and even dumb dogs that cannot bark will growl; but let them all say what they will, Christ says, 'The servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed', John 8:35,36. I add no more; may God add his blessing. Amen and Amen.

Hail sovereign Love that first began  
The scheme to rescue fallen man;  
Hail matchless, free eternal Grace,  
That gave my soul an hiding place.

When wrapt in thick Egyptian night,  
And fond of darkness more than light,  
Madly I ran the sinful race,  
Secure without an hiding place.

But thus Jehovah schemed the plan;  
In mercy said, arrest that man:  
I felt the arrows of distress,  
And found I had no hiding place.

Indignant Justice stood in view,  
to Sinai's fiery mount I flew;  
But justice cried with frowning face,  
This mountain is no hiding place.

Ere long an heavenly voice I heard,  
And mercy from the Lord appear'd:  
He led me on with pleasing pace,  
To Jesus as my hiding place.

On him almighty vengeance fell,  
That must have sunk a world to hell;  
He bore it for the chosen race,  
And so became their hiding place.

Should storms of seven-fold thunder roll,  
And rend the globe from pole to pole,  
No flaming bolt should daunt my face,  
For Jesus is my hiding place.

A few more rolling suns at most  
Will land me on fair Canaan's coast,  
There shall I sing the song of grace,  
And see the Lord my hiding place.