

# Murray, Andrew The Two Covenants

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## (1) A Covenant God

**Blessed is the man** who truly knows God as his Covenant God; **who knows what the Covenant promises** him; what **unwavering confidence of expectation it secures**, that **all its terms will be fulfilled to him**; what a claim and hold it gives him on the Covenant-keeping God Himself. ... The one secret of man's **happiness** was to be a trustful surrender of his whole being to the willing and the working of God.

... the Covenant was to be **the anchor of the soul, pledging the Divine veracity and faithfulness and unchangeableness for the certain performance of what had been promised**. ... The whole dispensation of the Spirit, the whole economy of grace in Christ Jesus, the whole of our spiritual life, the whole of the health and growth and strength of the Church, has been laid down and provided for, and secured in the New Covenant.

If we will begin to examine into **the terms of the Covenant, as the title deeds of our inheritance**, and the riches we are to possess even here on earth; if we will think of the certainty of their fulfilment, more sure than the foundations of the everlasting mountains; if we will turn to the God who has engaged to do all for us, who keepeth covenant for ever, **our life will become different** from what it has been; it can, and will be, all that God would make it.

All that God has ever done for His people in making a covenant was always to bring them to Himself as their chief, their only good, to teach them to trust in Him, to delight in Him, to be one with Him. It cannot be otherwise. **If God indeed be nothing but a very fountain of goodness and glory, of beauty and blessedness**, the more we can have of His presence, the more we conform to His will, the more we are engaged in His service, the more we have Him ruling and working all in us, **the more truly happy shall we be. If God indeed be thereby Owner and Author of life and strength, of holiness and happiness, and can alone give and work it in us, the more we trust Him, and**

*depend and wait on Him, the stronger and the holier and the happier we shall be.* And that only is a true and good religious life, which brings us every day nearer to this God, which makes us give up everything to have more of Him. No obedience can be too strict, no dependence too absolute, no submission too complete, no confidence too implicit, to *a soul that is learning to count God Himself its chief good, its exceeding joy.*

## (2) The Two Covenants: their Relation

They indicate two stages in God's dealing with man; two ways of serving God, a lower or elementary one *of preparation and promise*, a higher or more advanced one *of fulfilment and possession*.

## (3) The First Covenant

[The Old Covenant] was God's grace that gave Israel the law, and wrought with the law to make it work out its purpose in individual believers and in the people as a whole. The whole of *the Old Covenant was a school of grace*, an elementary school, to prepare for the fulness of grace and truth in Christ Jesus. A name is generally given to an object according to its chief feature. And so the Old Covenant is called a ministration of condemnation and death, *not because there was no grace in it* - it had its own glory - but because *the law with its curse was the predominating element*.

## (4) The New Covenant

*We have been so accustomed to, separate what God has joined together*, the objective, outward work of His Son, and the subjective, inward work of His Spirit, that we consider the glory of the New Covenant above the Old to consist chiefly in the redeeming work of Christ for us, and not equally in the sanctifying work of the Spirit in us. It is owing to this ignorance and unbelief of *the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, as the power through whom God fulfils the New Covenant promises*, that we do not really expect them to be made true to us.

Do let us turn our hearts away from all past experience of failure, as caused by nothing but unbelief; do let us admit fully and heartily, what failure has taught us, the absolute impossibility of even a regenerate man walking in God's law in his own strength, and then turn our hearts quietly and trustfully to our own Covenant God.

He will prove that ***what He has done for us in Christ is not one bit more wonderful than what He will do in us every day by the Spirit of Christ.***

#### Note B

***We sometimes speak of an old and a new heart. Scripture does not do so.*** It speaks of the old, the stony, heart, being taken away, the heart, with its will, disposition, affections, being made new with a Divine newness. This new heart is placed in the midst of what Scripture calls the flesh, in which there dwelleth no good thing. We shall find it a great advantage to adhere as closely as possible to Scripture language. It will greatly help our faith even to use the very words God by His Holy Spirit has used to teach us. And it will greatly clear our view for knowing what to think of the sin that remains in us if we think of it and deal with it in the light of God's truth.

<http://andrewgroves.wordpress.com/2011/01/08/make-no-provision-for-the-flesh/>

## **(5) Two Covenants - In Christian Experience**

A careful study of the Epistle shows us that the difference between the two Covenants is seen in three things. ***The law and its works is contrasted with the hearing of faith, the flesh and its religion with the flesh crucified, the impotence to good with a walk in the liberty and the power of the Spirit.***

They(the Galatians) had not understood that, equally with the beginning, the progress of the divine life is alone by faith, that it day by day receives its strength from the Christ alone and that in Jesus Christ nothing benefits but faith working by love.

At his conversion, the Christian generally has no idea of the terrible evil of his nature and ***the subtlety with which it offers itself to take part in the service of God. It may be most willing and diligent in God's service for a time.*** It

may devise numberless observances for making His worship pleasing and attractive. And yet this may all be only what Paul calls “mak(ing) a good showing in the flesh” (Gal6:12), “Boasting in the flesh” (Gal6:13), in man’s will and man’s efforts. This power of the religious flesh is one of the great marks of the Old Covenant religion. ***It misses the deep humility and spirituality of the true worship of God—a heart and life entirely dependent on Him.***

## **(6) The Everlasting Covenant Of The Spirit**

***No New Covenant could be of any profit unless provision were made for securing obedience.*** Obedience there must be. God as Creator could never take His creatures into His favor and fellowship, except they obeyed Him. The thing would have been an impossibility. If the New Covenant is to be better than the Old, if it is to be an everlasting Covenant, never to be broken, it must make ***some sufficient provision for securing the obedience of the Covenant people.***

Here is the inmost secret of the New Covenant. It deals with the heart of man in a way of Divine power. It not only appeals to the heart by every motive of fear or love, of duty or gratitude. That the law also did. But it reveals God Himself, cleansing our heart and making it new, changing it entirely from a stony heart into a heart of flesh, a tender, living, loving heart, putting His Spirit within it, and so, by His Almighty Power and Love, breathing and working in it, making the promise true, "I will cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments."

## **(7) The New Covenant: A Ministry Of The Spirit**

***And be sure that all that God calls thee to be, Christ through His Spirit will work in thee.***

## **(8) The Two Covenant: The Transition**

***THE transition from the Old Covenant to the New was not slow or gradual, but by a tremendous crisis.*** Nothing less than the death of Christ was the close of the Old. Nothing less than His resurrection from the dead, through

the blood of the everlasting Covenant, the opening of the New. ***The path of preparation that led up to the crisis was long and slow; the rending of the veil, that symbolised the end of the old worship, was the work of a moment.*** By a death, once for all, Christ's work, as fulfiller of law and prophets, as the end of the law, was for ever finished. By a resurrection in the power of an endless life, ***the Covenant of Life was ushered in.***

## **(9) The blood of the covenant**

***The blood of the New Covenant is redemption blood, a purchase price and ransom from the power of Sin and the Law. In any purchase made on earth the transference of property from the old owner to the new is complete. ...***

We have been rescued, ransomed, redeemed out of our old natural life under the power of sin, utterly and eternally. Sin has not the slightest claim on us, nor the slightest power over us, except as our ignorance or unbelief or half-heartedness allows it to have dominion. Our New Covenant birthright is to stand in the freedom with which Christ has made us free. Until the soul sees, and desires and accepts, and claims the redemption and the liberty which has the blood of the Son of God for its purchase price, and its measure, and its security, it never can fully live the New Covenant life.

***As wonderful as the blood-shedding for our redemption is the blood-sprinkling for our cleansing.*** ... this blood of the New Covenant is known, and trusted, and waited for, and received from God, in the Spirit's mighty operation in the heart ...

***The outpouring of the blood for us was to prepare the way for the outpouring of the Spirit on us.*** It is the Holy Spirit, and He alone, who can minister the blood of the everlasting Covenant in power. Just as He leads the soul to the initial faith in the pardon that blood has purchased, and the peace it gives, He leads further to the knowledge and experience of its cleansing power.