

THE NEW COVENANT

(A study by a few brethren in Chicago who prefer to remain anonymous.)

"What God has thus distinctly separated in His Word, we do well to keep separate in our thoughts and words, else our poor heads will become confused over terms, even while holding to certain facts." (R4355-top)

Regarding the time in which the New Covenant will come into being:

"Hence the New Covenant cannot be sealed, finished, made operative, until all the 'members of the body' shall have died, when the Great High Priest's 'better sacrifice' shall be finished." R4310-5

"God has not yet put his laws into the hearts of the house of Israel, and they are not his people, as he states they will be at the proper time in the end of this age when the New Covenant becomes operative." R4321-15

"The blood of the New Covenant is the blood prepared in advance of the covenant, wherewith to seal it and make it obligatory—make it a covenant." R4331-6

"Take an illustration: Suppose the Declaration of Independence or some important document were about to be signed and sealed. The document itself might be printed and while in the process of being signed might be spoken of as the covenant, agreement or declaration, although it would not be such a document, even after being printed, until duly signed and sealed. . . Similarly those of his suite, who would accompany him as assistants and who would need certain preparation before they would engage in this service, might be spoken of as ministers or servants of that covenant, even though it had not yet been signed and really made a covenant. . . We serve it by laying down our lives as Joint-Heirs with our Redeemer for its sealing, and subsequently putting it in to operation." R4332-1, 2

"The sacrifice of this antitypical Isaac (Head and body) yields the blood of the New Covenant, which will shortly seal or ratify it and make it operative to Israel as a New (Law) Covenant, as instead of their Old Law Covenant." R4334-9

"We still have the New Covenant and still appreciate its every feature just the same, but perceive that it was misplaced; that it is the New (Law) Covenant which will be sealed or made effective with the blood of Christ, by the merit of Christ's death, at the close of this Gospel age, instead of at its beginning. We now see clearly that the Scriptures everywhere teach that the New Covenant is to be made 'With the House of Israel and the House of Judah,' and not with Spiritual Israel." R4334-11

"A mediator is one who stands between the parties to an agreement or contract, whose duty it is to see that both parties fulfill their parts of the covenant." R4370-4

"A covenant is a ratified, unalterable agreement." R4370-2

"Whatever covenant of agreement may be had, it awaits a final sealing or completion by the death of the testator. . . The fact that Israel is still outcast from God's favor is merely an evidence that the body of Christ is not yet completely sacrificed, for bear in mind that the covenant is of no validity until the death of the testator. . . As soon as the last member of the church shall have died as a member of his body, the New (Law) Covenant with Israel will be sealed. . . Thus the Apostle shows that the New (Law) Covenant promised to Israel, in which their sins will be cancelled and remembered no more, comes at the close of the Gospel age and not at its beginning." R4453-3, 4, 10

"We pointed out that the Apostle could have referred only to the New Covenant promised to that nation, and the fact that their sin should be taken away at the time when that Covenant is sealed—made operative. St. Paul points out that as soon as the church, the deliverer, shall have come out of Zion and their New Covenant has begun to operate the effect will be, not only to 'Save' them from their blindness, but also to 'turn away their ungodliness.' . . But the covenant under which these are to be given to them will be their New (Law) Covenant—instituted by the better Mediator—the Christ, Head and body. . . We reminded the friends of the prophecy which declares that after the time of trouble and after the ancient worthies shall have been established as the rulers of natural Israel, and after God's blessings and the New Covenant shall have begun to operate toward them, the other nations of the world will begin to take notice." R4464-6, 8, 9.

"He there began to serve the New Covenant by providing the price, the blood, which should ultimately seal the New Covenant or make it effective. . . He there became the 'surety' or guarantor that in due

time the New Covenant would be sealed and made effective. . . These called, chosen, spirit-begotten, are 'able ministers of the New Covenant', after the same manner as their Lord—walking in his steps. They minister or serve the New Covenant as an attorney serves in drawing up an agreement or covenant. It will not be a covenant until sealed." R4496-1, 6.

"By the end of this Gospel age, after having selected the spiritual seed of Abraham, the New Covenant with Israel will go into effect. . . In # Jeremiah 31:33 we read, 'after those days,' as setting a date for the New Covenant. Why is this? And what days must precede the making of the New Covenant? . . . These are the 'Days' referred to in Jeremiah's prophecy respecting the New Covenant, 'after those days,'—after the 'seven times' of Israel's chastisement will come the time of God's favor under the New Covenant. . . According to the type a second sin-offering was to be made; 'the Lord's goat' was also to be sacrificed by the priest and the blood sprinkled upon the Mercy Seat, not for the household of faith, but 'for all the people.' . . This secondary application of the merit of our Lord upon the Mercy Seat, on behalf of the world, corresponds to the second sprinkling of the blood on the Atonement Day—'the blood of the Lord's goat'—'his own blood' on behalf of all the people.' sealing for them, consummating the New Covenant." R4497-1, 3, 8, 12; R4498-1.

"So then the reason that the New Covenant promised in Jeremiah's day and assured by our Lord's death has not yet gone into effect and become operative in restitution blessings to Israel and the world is, that the death of the testator has not yet been fully accomplished; . . . the end of this age, and a time of trouble and the establishment of the New (Law) Covenant with Israel for the blessings of all the families of the earth." R4498-3, 8.

"(1) With the end of this age the great High Priest will antitypically offer the blood of 'the Lord's goat for the sins of all the people'; and this will include the sins of Israel. And then the blessed opportunities of the New Covenant will be opened to them, as God promised. (Jer. 31: 31; # Romans 11:27-31) Then their eyes will be opened and they will see out of their obscurity and gladly accept the Mediator of the New Covenant and begin at once to share that covenant's blessings. . ." R4505-1.

"And similarly on a spiritual plane there are antitypes, including better sacrifices, all of which are incidental to the putting of the New Covenant into operation for Israel and that all mankind may avail themselves of its privileges." R4511-8.

"Then the New Covenant, having been sealed, So far as divine justice is concerned, by the application of the precious blood, passed through the church and made effective 'for all the people,' the time will come for the application of the blood of sprinkling to all the people—during the Millennium. . . Finally, when the church shall have finished using the blood, and, by God's grace through it, shall have attained to divine nature in glory, that same merit (as the blood of the Lord's goat) will be applied 'for all the people' at the close of this age by sealing the New Covenant. This second application for the people, 'for the sins of the whole world,' will settle completely all the claims of divine justice against every member of Adam's race and put the future interests of all into the hands of the Mediator—Jesus and the church, his body. Forthwith the work of reconciliation man-ward will begin. This is represented as the sprinkling of the people with the blood of the New Covenant." R4513-9 and 10; R4514-1.

"And that as servants or able (qualified) ministers of the New Covenant we still realize that we are in the 'harvest' time; and that the present work of gathering the elect will soon be finished; and that then the selection of the sacrificing members of the Mediator being completed the New Covenant with Israel will go into effect for the blessing of every creature, with restitution privileges.' R4531-15.

"(5) There is a difference between a covenant and the law of a covenant." R4549-4. NOTE

"We reply: Your difficulty is that you think of the mediator as acting between God and the sinners as individuals. This is the wrong thought. Lay firm hold on the Scriptural proposition that a mediator has to do only with a covenant and that the covenant deals with a nation or people and not with its individuals. God will not make New Covenants with each member of Adam's race and have Messiah mediate thousands of millions of covenants. . . That New Covenant will not be made with rebellious sinners, however. God's covenant will be with the Mediator for Israel, guaranteeing forgiveness and reconciliation to all of Abraham's natural seed who will exercise the faith and the obedience of Abraham." R4555-1, 2.

"WHEN I SHALL TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS"—"Beyond all question the Apostle applies the above words (# Romans 11:27) to the Jewish people at the conclusion of this Gospel age." R4612-5.

"And he will become the Mediator of that covenant and put it into effect for the blessing of all through or by means of his 'better sacrifices.'" R4683-3.

"By that time, the Great Mediator complete, our Lord and his members, will be ready to inaugurate the New Covenant which God has promised, through the Prophet Jeremiah. (# Jeremiah 31:31) This New Covenant is intended to bless all the families of the earth, as God said to Abraham. . . As soon as the New Covenant shall have been sealed it will become operative." R4902-last par.

We understand that the New Covenant goes fully into operation at the beginning of the Millennium, and that it brings blessings all through the age." R4903-9.

"As soon as the people shall have been released from their death-condemnation they will be in a position to begin to receive blessings, but not before. As the great High Priest, our Lord undertakes, at the close of the Gospel age, to seal with the blood of atonement a New Covenant between God and the seed of Abraham, natural Israel; and he, together with the 'church, which is his body,' undertakes to stand as the Mediator of that Covenant. 'All who come into full accord with that law will have eternal life. Through all those years the Mediator will merely carry out the provisions of that covenant, which promises that they shall have the privileges of restitution.'" R4905-last par.

"During the entire thousand years of the reign of Christ upon his mediatorial throne the work of sprinkling the people—the work of justifying them, making them acceptable, cleansing them from sin, and bringing them into relationship with the covenant and its demands of perfect obedience—will be in process. . . Thenceforth the New Covenant between God and men will remain a perpetual covenant." R5000-4.

"Our Lord will redeem the whole nation from their failure to keep the law, from the condemnation of that law, by instituting the New Covenant, by taking over into the New Covenant all those who were under the old Law Covenant. . . At the end of this age he will apply the price for Israel and the world; and then the New Covenant arrangements will go into effect for the blessing of all who come under its regulations." R5047-13, 14

The New Covenant is the Scriptural name for the new arrangement between God and man, by which God purposes to receive mankind

into harmony again with himself. . . But the work of taking away the stony heart will be gradual. The disciplinary processes of the kingdom will gradually relieve mankind of hard heartedness, and make them tender-hearted and affectionate. All who enter that new condition of things will no longer be held accountable for Adam's sin. . . No divine condemnation will hold over against them from the past. . . The first work of the new dispensation will be the antitypical application of the blood in the antitypical Most Holy, upon the Mercy Seat, to make a reconciliation for the sins of all the people. Until that shall have been done, the New Covenant cannot be inaugurated. . . Our High Priest has been commissioned to inaugurate the New Covenant. The application of the blood will be the sealing—the making valid. . . As soon as this blood of Atonement shall have been applied for the sins of all the people, the New Covenant will be inaugurated." R5292-5, 9, 12, 15, 16.

"At the beginning of the new dispensation the world begins life anew, So to speak—not individually, nor personally, but collectively, through the Mediator. . . All the accounts against humanity having been cancelled by justice, mankind will be turned over to the Mediator. . . Just as our sins are now cancelled, So likewise will the whole world go free from the condemnation of sin absolutely, when the world shall have accepted Christ, the great Mediator. . . When God recognizes the satisfaction of divine justice and cleans the slate So far as sinners are concerned, this does not mean that he has merely transferred the account to Jesus, who will hold it against them. Our Lord Jesus will not hold against mankind the things which the Father has forgotten." R5293-1, 4, 8, 11.

"Immediately after satisfaction is made to justice for the sins of the world, all mankind will be turned over to the one who bought them. With the world it is different. Theirs will be a work of gradually coming to a condition of justification, of perfection of mind and body, under the cover of the New Covenant, sealed with the blood of Christ." R5776-6, 8.

"This change of heart is entirely aside from the making of the New Covenant." OUR MOST HOLY FAITH—535-2.

"We now see that the Law Covenant was a foreshadowing of the New (Law) Covenant, which is about to be established at the Second Coming of Jesus the great Mediator of the New Covenant will be enthroned in Divine power. Then the New Covenant will go into operation, as God said to Israel: '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.' The antitypical Mediator, after paying over to Divine Justice fully and forever the ransom-price for Adam and his race, will assume full control, and under that New Covenant, thus sealed, will begin the work of blessing and restoring all the willing and obedient of Adam's race." Volume 6, Author's Foreword, page i, par. 3 and 4.

"We answer that the New Covenant has not gone into effect, So far as the world is concerned: that it will not go into effect fully and completely until the second advent of Christ: and that, as we have just seen, Israel after the flesh will be amongst the first of mankind to profit by the New Covenant." Volume 6, page 358-1.

"There will be a Law conjoined to that New Covenant. It will be the same Law of God which changes not." Volume 6, page 359-1.

The New Covenant Everlasting. "It is evident that the world does not enter into New Covenant relationship with God individually at the beginning of the millennial age, and will do So only at the end of that age. So then, we see clearly that the end of the millennial age will be the end of the mediatorship of Christ, and will mean the personal and individual New Covenant relationship of each one of the world. There is another view, however, which should have our consideration, and that is this: This same New Covenant that starts with the beginning of the millennial age will continue through all eternity. There is no additional New Covenant at the end of the thousand years of Christ's reign. This New Covenant will be operated, not directly between God and man, but through the Mediator. In this covenant, God agrees that he will remember the sins and iniquities of the world no more, that he will have nothing against them, and that they may have his blessings the same as though they were personally received of himself. They will be received through their representative, the Mediator, The Christ.

"The whole world during the millennial reign will be in covenant relationship with God in exactly the same way that Israel was in covenant relationship with God—through the Mediator. The Law Covenant persisted after Moses died. So this New Covenant will continue after Christ shall have finished his work. The whole world will be under that covenant arrangement. But before God finally accepts them he will give them a test to see how many of them will be found worthy of everlasting life. Hence the test at the close of the thousand years is a test of Jehovah, a test to prove the worthiness of each to enter into everlasting covenant relationship with him. They will not be tested as a nation or as a race, but each individual must establish his own right to this covenant

relationship—a new covenant relationship in that the original, similar relationship was vitiated by father Adam's disobedience." OUR MOST HOLY FAITH—page 168 and 169, par. 4, 1 and 2. (Re. end of Millennium)

"The very moment when the merit of Christ is applied for the world is the same moment when they will be turned over to the Mediator. Then they will be in covenant relationship with God, but only through the Mediator, until they shall have reached human perfection and shall enter into this relationship directly with the Father. The New Covenant will continue everlastingly; and as it is proper to say that Moses mediated the Law Covenant, So we may say that Christ will mediate the New Covenant. . . At the end of the thousand years, when Messiah will have accomplished his work of restitution, he will cease to act as Mediator. But the Covenant will continue to stand; for if that relationship with God were to be removed from the people, they would have no blessing of everlasting life. That blessing depends upon covenant relationship with God." OUR MOST HOLY FAITH—pages 535 & 536, par. 3, 4 and 1. (Re. end of Millennium)

"At the conclusion of the one thousand years he will present them perfect, blameless, irrefragable to the Father. Having then accomplished the purposes of his Mediatorial kingdom he will resign his dominion to God the Father, and Israel will thenceforth be in actual Covenant relationship with God. R4612-11. (Revelation end of Millennium)

"Eventually, by the close of the Millennial age, those who prove faithful will be turned over to God, even the Father. Such will then be fully in accord with Jehovah and fully in Covenant relationship with Him." R4624-10. (Revelation the end of the Millennium)

"At the close of the Mediatorial reign all mankind will be ready to profit by the experiences of the Millennium and will be turned over to God, to divine justice. Then they will be actually on the same plane that Adam was before his fall; and it will be for them to maintain this covenant relationship with God.....; we understand that the New Covenant goes fully into operation at the beginning of the Millennium, and that it brings blessings all through that age. Under this New Covenant the Lord will take away the sins and stony hearts of mankind. (# Ezekiel 36:26, 27) But the New Covenant does not become personal between God and mankind until the Mediator steps out of the way. (I Cor. 15:24) After he steps out of the way, Covenant relationship with God will be established just as with Adam, and God will guarantee eternal life

to all who continue obedient to the divine law.' R4903-2, 9 (Re. the end of the Millennium)

"At the close of that time they will be privileged to enter into this covenant relationship with Jehovah. Then they must stand or fall individually. As we read, at the end of the thousand years Satan shall be loosed for a little season; and all that love unrighteousness will be deceived by him. The remainder of mankind, having passed their test successfully, will be received into everlasting life. Then they will be in covenant relationship with God—without a mediator—just as Adam was in covenant relationship with the Creator before sin entered into the world." R5293, last par. (Revelation the end of the Millennium)

Meaning of words used by Bro. Russell in connection with the New Covenant.

CONFIRM: to make firm; establish; to render valid by formal consent; ratify; verify. Webster.

CONFIRMED: established; settled. Webster.

EFFECTIVE: being in effect; operative, as a law. Webster.

ESTABLISH: (# Ezekiel 16:60) Strong's number #6965—accomplish, confirm, continue, decree, make good, lift up again, make, ordain, set up, make to stand, make sure, uphold.

INAUGURATE: to begin or initiate; to commence or enter upon; to set in motion. Webster.

INSTITUTE: to set up, originate and establish; organize; initiate. Webster.

MAKE OR MADE: Strong's #3772 (# Jeremiah 31:31, 32) to covenant—make an alliance or bargain; make a league (covenant).

MAKE: to enter into; to compose; to frame or formulate in the mind; to regard or consider as being; to cause to exist. Webster.

OPERATION: the act, process or effect of operating. Webster.

RATIFY: firm, valid, to make. Webster.

SEAL: that which seals or secures; a guaranty; an assurance; a pledge; to set or affix a seal to; hence, to authenticate; ratify; as, to

seal a deed; to determine irrevocably or indisputably; to solemnize for eternity. Webster.

VALID: founded on truth or fact; effective; having legal strength or force. Webster.

*COVENANT: Strong's number 1285—a compact, confederacy, covenant, league. Compact: to make an agreement with, an agreement between parties. Webster.

confederacy: a league or compact for mutual support or common action.

Webster.

covenant: an agreement between persons or parties, the promises God as revealed in Scripture; to enter into a formal agreement, promise, pledge. To promise by covenant. Webster.

league: an agreement or covenant between two or more parties, or persons, for the accomplishment of some purpose by their co-operation. Webster.

(The New Covenant-7)