

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
Third Quarter 2017: *The Gospel in Galatians*
Lesson 6 “The Priority of the Promise”

Read for this week’s study

Galatians 3:15–20; Genesis 9:11–17; Matthew 5:17–20; Exodus 16:22–26; Genesis 15:1–6.

Memory Text

“For if the inheritance comes by the law, it no longer comes by promise; but God gave it to Abraham by a promise” (Galatians 3:18, ESV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Law and Faith (*Galatians 3:15–18*)
- III. Faith and Law (*Romans 3:31*)
- IV. The Purpose of the Law
- V. The Duration of God’s Law
- VI. The Superiority of the Promise
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Read Galatians 3:15-20. At first glance, what does this passage tell you about God? (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Read Galatians 3:15-18. What is the point of Paul’s analogy between a person’s final will and testament and God’s covenant with Abraham? Does a one-sided covenant imply that God is somehow capricious or arbitrary? What do you think of Paul’s logic in verse 16? Replace the word “covenant” in the following passages with the word “promise” (Genesis 9:11-17, 15:18, 17:1-21). What is the nature of “covenant” in each passage? How does understanding God’s covenant as a promise make the meaning of each passage clearer? (Sunday’s lesson)
3. If salvation is by faith and not by works of law, does Paul mean to say that faith abolishes the law? How do the following texts help us answer that question (Romans 3:31; 7:7, 12; 8:3; Matthew 5:17-20)? In what way have you suffered as a result of disobedience to God’s law? What does that tell us about law? What does that tell us about God? (Monday’s lesson)

4. Read Galatians 3:19-29. Paul makes multiple references to “the law.” What law is Paul primarily referring to in this section of Galatians? Why does Paul say the Law was “added?” Compare Galatians 3:19 with Romans 5:13, 20. (Tuesday’s lesson)
5. Does Paul’s statement about the law being added at Mount Sinai (Galatians 3:19) mean that it did not exist previously? See the evidence cited in Genesis 9:5-6, 18:19; 26:5; 39:7-10, Exodus 16:22-26 and Mark 2:27-28. If the law existed before Mount Sinai, in what sense did it exist? What was “added” at Sinai? What does Paul mean when he says that the law was added “until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made?” (Wednesday’s lesson)
6. Consider the powerful expression of God the Israelites experienced at Mount Sinai. Then consider their behavior with the Golden Calf just a short while later. What does that tell us about the usefulness of drama, power and miracles as a revelation of God? What does it tell us about true faith and how we can get it and maintain it? (Wednesday’s lesson)
7. Read Galatians 3:19-20 along with Acts 7:38. What is the major point Paul is trying to make in Galatians 3:19-20? Who is the mediator of the law in verse 19? (Thursday’s lesson)
8. Read Genesis 15:1-6, 18:1-33 and 22:1-18. Describe Abraham’s encounters with God in your own words. What benefit came to him as a result of this immediacy with God? What are some barriers in our own lives to experiencing that kind of immediacy with God? (Thursday’s lesson)
9. How do you feel about people who have broken their promises to you? Does it make a difference to you if the person intended to keep the promise in the first place or if they said it with no intention of keeping it? Does it make a difference if they changed their mind or were prevented from fulfilling the promise? What happened to your level of trust after the promise was broken, regardless of the reason? How can we come to trust in God’s promises to us? (Friday’s lesson)

A Fresh Translation of Galatians 3:15-20, Jon Paulien

Key

Italics = Not in Greek text, but required by the context

Bold = Quotation from the Old Testament

[] = Explanatory note by translator

15 Brothers, let me speak from a human perspective:

As is the case with a man-made covenant,
no one can set it aside or add to it
once it has been ratified.

16 Now it was to Abraham and his seed

that the promises were spoken.
It does not say,
 “And to seeds,”
 as referring to many,
 but as referring to one,
 “And to your seed,”
 which is Christ.

17 This is what I am saying,
 law,
 which happened 430 years later,
 does not annul covenant,
 which had been ratified by God,
 in order to destroy the promise.

18 For if the inheritance arises out of law,
 it does not arise out of promise:
but God graced it [the inheritance] to Abraham
 through promise.

19 Why then the law?
 It was added because of transgressions,
 until the seed
 to whom the promise [referred, was made?] should come.
 It [the law] was put into effect
 through angels
 by the hand of a mediator.

20 Now a mediator is not *just* one, but **God is one**.

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Recommended Listening: The entire series by Graham Maxwell on the book of Galatians is available at <http://pkp.cc/MMGALATIANS66>

Does it help to know that faith is a substance? Or that faith is the evidence of things not seen? That would suggest that if you have faith in something, that's evidence that it really is so. So if you have faith that there's a man in the moon that proves there must be one? That doesn't make sense! But do we sometimes use faith this way? Does Hebrews 11 encourage us to do so? Look at those two words, translated "substance" and "evidence." Take evidence first: the Greek word is *elegchos*. It's a noun that comes from a verb that's used in the work of the Holy Spirit. That when the Spirit comes, he will convince you. He will convict you. He will settle you into the truth. A better translation would be "conviction." Faith is conviction.

Then the other word, “substance.” Well, this is a word we don’t often use in English. Hypostasis comes from the Greek *hupostasis*. That doesn’t help much to know that faith is a *hupostasis*, does it? But does it help to know that faith is a substance? The Greek word *hupostasis*, not to go into it too much, means “that which stands under,” and that’s where “sub” “stance” came from. Which is very good Latin but not very good English.

Not until the turn of the century did scholars really discover what this word means. As archeologists were digging in the sands of Egypt, looking for manuscripts primarily, they even found crocodiles sometimes, stuffed with manuscripts. Well, among these manuscripts they found some that were title deeds to property, business agreements made, covenants; and the title of these documents was this very word: *hupostasis*. And it dawned on some of them that what the apostle was saying here is that faith is, as it were, an agreement, a covenant. God has much to offer us. But first he presents himself. Do we find him worthy of our trust? Then he has many things he would like to do with us. And if we decide we can trust him, and that we would like to do business with him, (to speak of this in business terms) then that trusting relationship is *faith*. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #3, “All God Asks is Trust” recorded January, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/3MMCAG>*

If it is true that God values nothing higher than our freedom, why has he made so much use of law? If all he asks is trust and love, and these cannot be commanded or produced by force, then why did he give us the Decalogue, which seems to demand our love and obedience under threat of execution? If he doesn’t wish to be seen as arbitrary, exacting, and severe, why has he surrounded us with innumerable rules?

Paul understood all about trust and freedom. He emphasized it so much that he was accused of doing away with these rules, doing away with God’s law. “No,” he said, “I intend no such thing. Faith does not abolish law. Faith establishes the law, by putting it in its proper perspective.” But what is the right perspective from which to view God’s use of law? It is mentioned in Galatians 3, the first text on the Bible Reference Sheet. Paul raises the question his audience was asking: “Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions.” (RSV)

Then Paul goes on to explain why the law was added. Using the *King James* language, he said, “The law was our school master to bring us to Christ.” The Greek word behind it, and I’ve tried not to pronounce too many Greek words in our conversations, the Greek word is *paidagogos*. Can you hear pedagogue in that, the pedagogical method? But that word actually was the name given to a trusted slave whose duty it was to take the children to school, to make sure they got there, stayed there, and then it was his duty to bring them home. He was not the teacher. He was the guardian; he was the protector.

Now can you see the reason for the translation in the next passage? See Galatians 3:24, 25 on the sheet:

So the Law has been our attendant [some have translated “guardian,” “guide,” “governess,” even], our attendant on our way to Christ, so that we might be made upright through faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer in the charge of the attendant. (Goodspeed).

You might compare with that, the *New International Version* translation right underneath: “So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.” (NIV)

Now which law in your judgment is he talking about? Which law was added because of transgression to lead us to Christ? Was it the ceremonial law? Was it the moral law? *Was it all law?* Would you dare include the Ten Commandments? Well, consider how God gave the Ten Commandments. One day, you recall, he gathered his misbehaving children together at the foot of Sinai. He announced, “I want all the murdering to stop, and all the hating to stop. I want all the stealing, cheating, the lying, and the immorality to stop. I want you to stop going after other gods.” What an emergency in his family, when he had to ask his children to stop doing all those things! You recognize, of course, the Decalogue. It was added because of transgression.

Have you ever had to do this in your home? Some of you fathers might say in the morning at worship, say, next Monday morning before the children leave for school, “Now Billy, let us see if we all can make this a very good day in our family. Billy, when you are at school today, do you promise not to murder any of your friends?”

“Yes, Daddy, if you insist.”

“And Mary, do you promise not to steal any more while you are in school?”

“Well yes, Daddy, if you insist.”

Then you turn to your wife and say, “And when I am at work, please do not commit adultery again. Do you promise, wife?”

“Well yes, if you insist.”

If you do this in the morning, be sure not to leave your window open, or the neighbors will assume that terrible things are happening in your home. And you don’t think the devil mocked God for having to say to his children, “Please, I want all this to stop”?

The law was added because of sin. There was no need before sin entered the universe to say to the loyal angels, I want all this misbehavior to stop. They didn’t need a law to do what was right. They did what was right—because it *was* right. But here on this earth, the law was added because of sin. Of course when sin entered the universe, there came the first day when God

had to speak of law. Then the first awesome day when God had to say that sin, rebelliousness, disorderliness, and lawlessness result in death.

But there are many dangers inherent in the use of law. One danger is that now that the law has been expressed, one will assume that doing right means merely obeying the rules, that sin is merely disobeying the rules. And that the penalty for breaking the rules is that the Rule-giver will execute you:

But God does offer forgiveness and then he won't have to execute you?

How has he made this possible?

Someone else paid the legal penalty, so it's all right for God to forgive you.

What if you turn down the offer?

Then you will be painfully destroyed, perhaps more painfully because of your ingratitude.

You know how that understanding can lead to the *obedience that springs from fear*.

But if one takes the larger view of all sixty-six books, you see that what God really wants is not mere obedience to the rules: he wants us to *do what is right because it is right*. He wants the obedience that springs from love and trust and that is offered in the highest sense of freedom.

{Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #11, "God's Emergency Measures" recorded April, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/11MMCAG>*

If the school building is on fire, would you teachers raise your voice, or would you stand upon your dignity, your reputation of many years, and refuse to raise your voice? So the children can't hear, and they'll all die in the fire, but your reputation is much more important than that! You would at least, after being told by the Principal at the door that the building is on fire, you would at least give the children a chance! You would stand in before the class and say, "Boys and girls, the building is on fire; remember how we've drilled. Line up quietly and go out that door." But they're so noisy they don't even hear; they don't even know you are there. Well, you've given them a chance; they haven't listened; they've rejected the truth. And so you leave, your reputation intact, but thirty children suffering and dead. Would you do that? Would you be willing to raise your voice, something you don't normally do? And they still can't hear? What a dilemma! Would you be willing to climb on the desk? Throw an eraser or two? Finally get their attention? In terror, they slip into their seats; they've never seen Miss Jones like that before. And you slip into your seat, worried about the consequences. And you say, "Boys and girls, please don't go home and tell your mothers I was angry with you; it's that the building is on fire, and I love every one of you, and I want you to line up quickly and get out that door."

Now, which shows greater love: to refuse to scare the children by raising your voice, or to love them enough to be willing to risk your reputation for a moment or two by terrifying them if need be; running the risk of being obeyed out of fear. They might even hate you for a minute, but you saved them all. It seems to me we owe God a lot of apologies for misunderstanding Sinai and many other places. It's for our sakes that he has raised his voice, and don't we love him the more for it? He's willing to meet us where we are, and speak a language we can understand. Of course, all that demonstration of majesty and power does, is get attention, isn't it, and inspire a little reverence for a moment or two. It doesn't seem to last, though, does it? What were they doing forty days later? He hadn't overdone it. He hadn't terrified them too much. Had he deprived them of the image of God within them, the power to think and to do? Why, no, a few days later they still had that ability to say to Aaron, "We don't know about this God, or this Moses. Give us an idol." They still were free, It's just they were so hard of hearing God had to raise his voice that loudly to be heard. But it does raise a significant question about the use of force all through the Bible, from beginning to end, right up to the third angel's message, which is a fearsome message of torment in sulfurous flames and never-ending smoke. Remember? In the third angel's message. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Exodus, recorded October, 1981, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1983:

<http://pkp.cc/3MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/4MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

And he was chided—even by some Christians who hadn't worked it out too well yet, and they would say to Paul, "Aren't you doing away with the law by your emphasis on trust?"

"No," he said, Romans 3:31. "Faith does not abolish law. Faith establishes law, by putting it in its proper perspective."

Next question: "What is the proper perspective? What is the over-all view, the larger view of all this?"

The answer is in Galatians 3, the text that was the basis of the Minneapolis General Conference discussion. Look at that, Galatians 3:19.

"Why then the law?" he was asked.

"It was added." What law was added? Remember the debate at Minneapolis? Was it the Ten Commandments? Was it the ceremonial law? They had quite a disagreement. Did you know that the President of the General Conference and a young physician—they wrote two books holding two opposite views on this matter? Elder Butler and Dr. Waggoner. I mean, how could a young physician talk to the General Conference President like that? It was very respectful! The

introductions are very polite. But then they mince no words about their disagreement. So they went to Ellen White and said, “What law was added to be our guardian to bring us to Christ?” “Why,” she says, “it was the Ten Commandments and the ceremonial law; all of it.” All law was added because of the emergency of sin.

But what is sin? Romans 14, “Sin is a lack of trust. A breach of trust.”

What is sin? 1 John 3:4, “Sin is rebelliousness.” Sin is a stubborn unwillingness to listen. Or in the book of James, sin is knowing to do what is right and not doing it. Doesn’t that perfectly describe the children of Israel when God brought them out of the land of Egypt? Was there trust?

Now, he gave them a chance, first. He said, “Let me be your God, and you be my people. Let’s trust each other. I can get you into Canaan. You won’t even have to fight.” And Ellen White observes it was never God’s design that they fight their way into Canaan, any more than they fought their way out of Egypt. He would have fed them and clothed them. Did they get ill in the wilderness? Did they lack anything? Nothing. He said, “I’ll take you there, and the angel will clear the way before you. Yes, I’ll have to lay many of my sinful children to sleep until the resurrection, but let me put the Canaanites to sleep and all those other people. Let me do it. They are my children.” It’s hard for us to kill each other without getting angry while we do it. Let the Eternal God put his own children to sleep. It would be much better, wouldn’t it?

But they didn’t trust him—didn’t trust him on anything. And when they got to the river Jordan, they begged Moses to take them back to Egypt. What do you do with people who aren’t willing to listen and don’t trust you? Rebellious people (1 John 3:4). Untrusting people (Romans 14). Don’t you have to do everything that is described in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy?

Well, there was one other thing God could have done. He could have said, “I think that surely none of my loyal angels would misunderstand me if I let those noisy, troublesome, ungrateful, untrustworthy people go.” But instead of doing that, he went to work. All through these books; first he raised his voice. Then he even had to tell them how to be modest in worship, how to be reverent, how to do this, that and the other, in great detail. How he could be misunderstood as a fussy, arbitrary, even fuddy-duddy God, hardly one to be revered and respected, surely not one to be loved; but a God who desires the service of fear.

But the prophets came along and they didn’t misunderstand it that way, did they? How could Hosea, and Amos, and Micah, and David even, and Isaiah and Jeremiah understand as clearly as they did? Apparently, though, it takes a little time. It took Saul (later Paul), quite some time to put it all together. And when he put it all together, he wrote in Galatians 3, “Let me tell you why God gave us all these things in Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. It was all added because we were such sinners, and so stubborn, and so noisy, and so ungrateful.”

The amazing thing is that instead of giving us up, God stooped to meet us where we are. He spoke a language we could understand. He led us no faster than we were able to follow. And he ran a grave risk of being misunderstood, in using such methods to get our attention and hold it long enough to tell us more of the truth about himself. In that light, all of this material in the Old Testament is magnificent evidence of the truth about God. What a condescending, skillful, versatile teacher he is! If that's where the people were, that's where he met them. That's why he didn't give the Sermon on the Mount on Sinai. They wouldn't have respected it. They wouldn't even have heard it. It took thunder and lightning. What a terrible thing though, that he had to say "stop the killing, and the stealing, and the lying, and the cheating." But then in the tenth Commandment, he indicated how lofty his ideals were. He said, "When I've really fulfilled my purposes for you, my children, you not only won't do any of those things prohibited here; you won't even want to. You'll love and trust in the highest sense of freedom. That's what I want." But only occasionally did he have a friend who really saw the truth. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Leviticus, recorded October, 1981, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

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Further Study with Ellen White

The Bible is written by inspired men, but it is not God's mode of thought and expression. It is that of humanity. God, as a writer, is not represented. Men will often say such an expression is not like God. But God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. The writers of the Bible were God's penmen, not His pen. Look at the different writers. {1SM 21.1}

It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts. But the words receive the impress of the individual mind. The divine mind is diffused. The divine mind and will is combined with the human mind and will; thus the utterances of the man are the word of God.—Manuscript 24, 1886 (written in Europe in 1886). {1SM 21.2}

The Lord speaks to human beings in imperfect speech, in order that the degenerate senses, the dull, earthly perception, of earthly beings may comprehend His words. Thus is shown God's condescension. He meets fallen human beings where they are. The Bible, perfect as it is in its simplicity, does not answer to the great ideas of God; for infinite ideas cannot be perfectly embodied in finite vehicles of thought. {1SM 22.3}

I am asked concerning the law in Galatians. What law is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? I answer: Both the ceremonial and the moral code of ten commandments. {1SM 233.1}

“The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (Gal. 3:24). In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. {1SM 234.5}

The law of ten commandments is not to be looked upon as much from the prohibitory side, as from the mercy side. Its prohibitions are the sure guarantee of happiness in obedience. As received in Christ, it works in us the purity of character that will bring joy to us through eternal ages. To the obedient it is a wall of protection. We behold in it the goodness of God, who by revealing to men the immutable principles of righteousness, seeks to shield them from the evils that result from transgression. {1SM 235.1}

But if the Abrahamic covenant contained the promise of redemption, why was another covenant formed at Sinai? In their bondage the people had to a great extent lost the knowledge of God and of the principles of the Abrahamic covenant. In delivering them from Egypt, God sought to reveal to them His power and His mercy, that they might be led to love and trust Him. He brought them down to the Red Sea—where, pursued by the Egyptians, escape seemed impossible—that they might realize their utter helplessness, their need of divine aid; and then He wrought deliverance for them. Thus they were filled with love and gratitude to God and with confidence in His power to help them. He had bound them to Himself as their deliverer from temporal bondage. {PP 371.2}

God’s work is the same in all time, although there are different degrees of development and different manifestations of His power, to meet the wants of men in the different ages. Beginning with the first gospel promise, and coming down through the patriarchal and Jewish ages, and even to the present time, there has been a gradual unfolding of the purposes of God in the plan of redemption. The Saviour typified in the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law is the very same that is revealed in the gospel. The clouds that enveloped His divine form have rolled back; the mists and shades have disappeared; and Jesus, the world’s Redeemer, stands revealed. He who proclaimed the law from Sinai, and delivered to Moses the precepts of the ritual law, is the same that spoke the Sermon on the Mount. The great principles of love to God, which He set forth as the foundation of the law and the prophets, are only a reiteration of what He had spoken through Moses to the Hebrew people: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.” Deuteronomy 6:4, 5. “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Leviticus 19:18. The teacher is the same in both dispensations. God’s claims are the same. The principles of His

government are the same. For all proceed from Him “with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” James 1:17. {PP 373.2}

But in heaven, service is not rendered in the spirit of legality. When Satan rebelled against the law of Jehovah, the thought that there was a law came to the angels almost as an awakening to something unthought of. In their ministry the angels are not as servants, but as sons. There is perfect unity between them and their Creator. Obedience is to them no drudgery. Love for God makes their service a joy. So in every soul wherein Christ, the hope of glory, dwells, His words are re-echoed, “I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart.” Psalm 40:8. {MB 109.2}

If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign, they would never have been seduced into idolatry, nor would it have been necessary for them to suffer a life of bondage in Egypt; they would have kept God’s law in mind, and there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai or engraved upon the tables of stone. And had the people practiced the principles of the Ten Commandments, there would have been no need of the additional directions given to Moses. {PP 364.2}

We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death. {1SM 235.2}

Before the entrance of evil there was peace and joy throughout the universe. All was in perfect harmony with the Creator’s will. Love for God was supreme, love for one another impartial. Christ the Word, the Only Begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father,—one in nature, in character, and in purpose,—the only being in all the universe that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God. By Christ the Father wrought in the creation of all heavenly beings. “By Him were all things created, that are in heaven, . . . whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers” (Colossians 1:16); and to Christ, equally with the Father, all heaven gave allegiance. {GC 493.1}

The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all created beings depended upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. God desires from all His creatures the service of love—homage that springs from an intelligent appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced allegiance, and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service. {GC 493.2}

Our will is not to be forced into co-operation with divine agencies, but it must be voluntarily submitted. Were it possible to force upon you with a hundredfold greater intensity the influence of the Spirit of God, it would not make you a Christian, a fit subject for heaven. {MB 142.1}

It is the Creator of men, the Giver of the law, who declares that it is not His purpose to set aside its precepts. Everything in nature, from the mote in the sunbeam to the worlds on high, is under law. And upon obedience to these laws the order and harmony of the natural world depend. So there are great principles of righteousness to control the life of all intelligent beings, and upon conformity to these principles the well-being of the universe depends. Before this earth was called into being, God's law existed. Angels are governed by its principles, and in order for earth to be in harmony with heaven, man also must obey the divine statutes. To man in Eden Christ made known the precepts of the law "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Job 38:7. The mission of Christ on earth was not to destroy the law, but by His grace to bring man back to obedience to its precepts. {MB 48.1}

To His children today the Lord declares, "Be strong, . . . and work: for I am with you." The Christian always has a strong helper in the Lord. The way of the Lord's helping we may not know; but this we do know: He will never fail those who put their trust in Him. Could Christians realize how many times the Lord has ordered their way, that the purposes of the enemy concerning them might not be accomplished, they would not stumble along complainingly. Their faith would be stayed on God, and no trial would have power to move them. They would acknowledge Him as their wisdom and efficiency, and He would bring to pass that which He desires to work out through them. {PK 576.1}

The rainbow spanning the heavens with its arch of light is a token of "the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature." Genesis 9:16. And the rainbow encircling the throne on high is also a token to God's children of His covenant of peace. {Ed 115.1}

We are not to think of God only as a judge and to forget Him as our loving Father. Nothing can do our souls greater harm than this, for our whole spiritual life will be molded by our conceptions of God's character. . . . {TMK 262.2}