

Habakkuk's Two Tables #13

THE COVENANT

OUR ADMONITION

“The entire history of the children of Israel was ‘written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come.’ No Hebrews could so fully estimate the sacredness and exalted character of God’s law as those who accepted Christ as their Redeemer. **He was the foundation of the entire Jewish system.**” *Review and Herald*, April 29, 1875.

SINAI

A TARRYING TIME, TWO TABLES, FORTY-SIX DAYS AND THE SANCTUARY

Exodus 24:1, 6–8, 12–18

“**Upon the seventh day**, which was the Sabbath, Moses was called up into the cloud. The thick cloud opened in the sight of all Israel, and the glory of the Lord broke forth like devouring fire. ‘And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount; and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.’ **The forty days’ tarry in the mount** did not include the **six days of preparation**. During the six days Joshua was with Moses, and together they ate of the manna and drank of ‘the brook that descended out of the mount.’ But Joshua did not enter with Moses into the cloud. He remained without, and continued to eat and drink daily while awaiting the return of Moses, but Moses fasted during the entire forty days.

“During his stay in the mount, **Moses received directions for the building of a sanctuary** in which the divine presence would be specially manifested. ‘Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them’ (Exodus 25:8), was the command of God.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 313–314.

THE GLORY OF THE LORD, A COVENANT AND GOD’S HAND REMOVED

Exodus 33:21–34:10

A MANIFESTATION OF GOD’S POWER

“Never since man was created had there been witnessed such a manifestation of divine power as when the law was proclaimed from Sinai.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 340.

PENTECOST COMMEMORATED

A MEAT OFFERING

Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall **offer** a new meat offering unto the Lord. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; *they are* the firstfruits unto the Lord. Leviticus 23:16–17.

“The Jews had always prided themselves upon their divinely appointed services, and many of those who had been converted to the faith of Christ still felt that since God had once clearly outlined the Hebrew manner of worship, it was improbable that He would ever authorize a change in any of its specifications. They insisted that the Jewish laws and ceremonies should be incorporated into the rites of the Christian religion. They were slow to discern that **all the sacrificial offerings had but prefigured the death of the Son of God**, in which type met antitype, and after which the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic dispensation were no longer binding.” *Acts of the Apostles*, 190.

TWO WAVE LOAVES

Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord. Ye shall bring out of your habitations **two wave loaves** of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; *they are* the firstfruits unto the Lord. Leviticus 23:16–17.

BREAD

And Jesus said unto them, **I am the bread of life**: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. John 6:35.

LEAVEN

Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with **leaven**; *they are* the firstfruits unto the Lord. Leviticus 23:16–17.

SIN

1 Corinthians 5:6–8

HIS CHARACTER

“God’s law is the transcript of His character.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 305.

THE HUNDRED AND FORTY AND FOUR THOUSAND

And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred *and forty and four* thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were **redeemed from among men**, *being* the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. Revelation 14:3–4.

REDEEMED

“As the people of God afflict their souls before Him, pleading for purity of heart, the command is given, ‘Take away the filthy garments,’ and the encouraging words are spoken, ‘Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.’ Zechariah 3:4. The spotless robe of Christ’s righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, nevermore to be defiled by the corruptions of the world. Their names are retained in the Lamb’s book of life, enrolled among the faithful of all ages. They have resisted the wiles of the deceiver; they have not been turned from their loyalty by the dragon’s roar. Now they are eternally secure from the tempter’s devices. Their sins are transferred to the originator of sin. A ‘fair miter’ is set upon their heads.

“While Satan has been urging his accusations, holy angels, unseen, have been passing to and fro, placing upon the faithful ones the seal of the living God. These are they that stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having the Father’s name written in their foreheads. They sing the new song before the throne, that song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth. ‘These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.’ Revelation 14:4, 5.

“Now is reached the complete fulfillment of the words of the Angel: ‘Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth My Servant the Branch.’ Zechariah 3:8. Christ is revealed as the Redeemer and Deliverer of His people. Now indeed are the remnant ‘men wondered at,’ as the tears and humiliation of their pilgrimage give place to joy and honor in the presence of God and the Lamb. ‘In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even everyone that is written among the living in Jerusalem.’ Isaiah 4:2, 3.” *Prophets and Kings*, 581–592.

BAKED

Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be **baken** with leaven; *they are* the firstfruits unto the Lord. Leviticus 23:16–17.

“The purification of God’s people cannot be accomplished without suffering. God permits **the fire of affliction to consume the dross, to separate the worthless from the valuable, in order that the pure metal may shine forth**. He passes us from one fire to another, testing our true worth. True grace is willing to be tried. If we are loath to be searched by the Lord, our condition is one of peril. God is the refiner and purifier of souls. He places us in **the heat of the furnace**, that the dross may be forever separated from the true gold of Christian character. Jesus watches the test. He knows just what fire

of temptation and trial is needed to purify the precious metal, in order that the radiance of divine love may be reflected.

“It is by close, testing trials that God brings his people near to himself; for in trial and temptation he discovers to them their weakness, and teaches them to lean upon him as their only help and safeguard. When this result is attained, his object is accomplished, and his tried servants are prepared to be used in every emergency, to fill important positions of trust, and to accomplish the grand purposes for which their powers were given them. God takes men upon trial, and he proves them upon the right hand and upon the left, until they are educated, trained, and disciplined for his use.” *Review and Herald*, April 10, 1894.

FIRST FRUITS

Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; *they are the first fruits* unto the Lord. Leviticus 23:16–17.

THEY ARE VIRGINS

And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are **virgins**. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, *being the first fruits* unto God and to the Lamb. Revelation 14:3–4.

“The parable of the ten virgins of Matthew 25 also **illustrates the experience of the Adventist people.**” *The Great Controversy*, 393.

WAVE OFFERING

Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two **wave loaves** of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; *they are the firstfruits* unto the Lord. Leviticus 23:16–17.

AN ENSIGN

Ensign: a *flag*; also a *sail*; by implication a *flagstaff*; generally a *signal*; figuratively a *token*: - banner, pole, sail, (en-) sign, standard.

THE ENSIGN IS LIFTED UP

And **he will lift up an ensign to the nations** from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth: and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly. Isaiah 5:26.

All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, **see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains**; and when **he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.** Isaiah 18:3.

THE FLOCK OF HIS PEOPLE

And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as **the flock of his people**: for they *shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign* upon his land. Zechariah 9:16.

YE WOULD NOT

For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In **returning and rest shall ye be saved**; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and **ye would not**.

But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift. One thousand *shall flee* at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: **till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill**. Isaiah 30:16–17.

THE FINAL GATHERING

Isaiah 11:10–16

“Trials are to come upon God’s people and **the tares are to be separated from the wheat**. But let not Ephraim envy Judah any more, and Judah will no more vex Ephraim. Kind, tender, compassionate words will flow out from sanctified hearts and lips. It is essential that we be united, and if we all seek the meekness and the lowliness of Christ, we shall have the mind of Christ, and there will be unity of spirit.” *Review and Herald*, March 19, 1895.

PENTECOST’S TWO LOAVES

And Jesus said unto them, **I am the bread of life**: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. John 6:35.

FORTY AND SIX YEARS TO BUILD THE TEMPLE

John 2:19–21

COVENANT CONFIRMED

Daniel 9:27

A MANIFESTATION OF GOD’S POWER

“Christ’s ascension to heaven was **the signal** that His followers were to receive the promised blessing. For this they were to wait before they entered upon their work. When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and Christ was indeed glorified, even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity. **The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven’s communication that the Redeemer’s inauguration was accomplished**. According to His promise He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers as a token that He had, as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was the Anointed One over His people.” *Acts of the Apostles*. 38.

A TARRYING TIME

Luke 24:44–52

“After his resurrection **he opened their minds that they might understand the Scriptures**, and told them the same things which before they could not comprehend, saying, ‘These are the things which I spake unto you while I was yet with you.’ We should pray that our understanding may be opened, that we may comprehend what Christ has said unto us; for we are to be sanctified through his word.” *Signs of the Times*, April 6, 1891.

THE FOUNDATION CONDEMNED

“Christ, **the foundation of the whole Jewish economy, stood before the Jewish rulers**, to be condemned by his own nation.” *Review and Herald*, June 12, 1900.

THE TABLES OF THE COVENANT

“Moses took **the tables of the covenant**, the law of Ten Commandments, and descended from the mount. . . . Confusion and shame on their account took possession of him, and he there threw down **the tables** and broke them. As they had broken their covenant with God, Moses, in breaking the tables, signified to them, so, also, God had broken his covenant with them. **The tables, whereupon was written the law of God**, were broken.” *Review and Herald*, July 29, 1873.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

“The law of Ten Commandments, which has been so lightly disregarded, is **the foundation of many generations**; and no man or body of men has been authorized to **set aside, or vary in the slightest particular**, one of the ten precepts of Jehovah. God spoke this law from Sinai in awful grandeur, in the hearing of all Israel, and **he wrote it with his own fingers upon tables of stone**, not for his chosen people only, but for all men, to the close of time. Christ himself declares that while the heavens and the earth remain, not one jot or tittle shall pass from this holy law.” *Signs of the Times*, February 28, 1884.

“His **law**, written with His own finger upon **tables** of stone, is **the foundation** of all truth.” *Manuscript Releases*, volume 18, 174.

“God’s **law** is the transcript of His character.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 305.

“Christ himself, the **foundation** and the crowning glory of God’s temple, became ‘a **rock of offense to them that stumble at the word**.’ Yet that chief **foundation stone**, ‘disallowed indeed of men,’ was ‘chosen of God and precious.’ **Though rejected by the Jewish builders**, it became the head of the corner. Christ was put to death; but the work of building did not cease. He was honored in Heaven and by the faithful on earth as the true **foundation**.” *Sketches from the Life of Paul*, 158.

“‘Hear another parable,’ Christ said: ‘There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: and when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?’

“Jesus addressed all the people present; but the priests and rulers answered. ‘He will miserably destroy those wicked men,’ they said, ‘and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.’ The speakers had not at first perceived the application of the parable, but they now saw that they had pronounced their own condemnation. In the parable the householder represented God, the vineyard the Jewish nation, and the hedge the divine law which was their protection. The tower was a symbol of the temple. The lord of the vineyard had done everything needful for its prosperity. ‘What could have been done more to my vineyard,’ he says, ‘that I have not done in it.’ Isaiah 5:4. Thus was represented God’s unwearied care for Israel. And as the husbandmen were to return to the lord a due proportion of the fruits of the vineyard, so God’s people were to honor Him by a life corresponding to their sacred privileges. But as the husbandmen had killed the servants whom the master sent to them for fruit, so the Jews had put to death the prophets whom God sent to call them to repentance. Messenger after messenger had been slain. Thus far the application of the parable could not be questioned, and in what followed it was not less evident. In the beloved son whom the lord of the vineyard finally sent to his disobedient servants, and whom they seized and slew, the priests and rulers saw a distinct picture of Jesus and His impending fate. Already they were planning to slay Him whom the Father had sent to them as a last appeal. In the retribution inflicted upon the ungrateful husbandmen was portrayed the doom of those who should put Christ to death.

“Looking with pity upon them, the Saviour continued, ‘Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.’

“This prophecy the Jews had often repeated in the synagogues, applying it to the coming Messiah. **Christ was the cornerstone of the Jewish economy**, and of the whole plan of salvation. This foundation stone the Jewish builders, the priests and rulers of Israel, were now rejecting. The Saviour called their attention to the prophecies that would show them their danger. By every means in His power He sought to make plain to them the nature of the deed they were about to do.

“And His words had another purpose. In asking the question, ‘When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?’ Christ designed that the Pharisees should answer as they did. He designed that they should condemn themselves. His warnings, failing to arouse them to repentance, would seal their doom, and He wished them to see that they had brought ruin on themselves. He designed to show them the justice of God in the **withdrawal of their national privileges**, which had already begun, and which would end, not only in the destruction of their temple and their city, but in the dispersion of the nation.

“The hearers recognized the warning. But notwithstanding the sentence they themselves had pronounced, the priests and rulers were ready to fill out the picture by saying, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him.’ ‘But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitude,’ for the public sentiment was in Christ’s favor.

“In quoting the prophecy of the rejected stone, Christ referred to an actual occurrence in the history of Israel. The incident was connected with the building of the first temple. While it had a special application at the time of Christ’s first advent, and should have appealed with special force to the Jews, it has also a lesson for us. When the temple of Solomon was erected, the immense stones for the walls and the foundation were entirely prepared at the quarry; after they were brought to the place of building, not an instrument was to be used upon them; the workmen had only to place them in position. For use in the foundation, one stone of unusual size and peculiar shape had been brought; but the workmen could find no place for it, and would not accept it. It was an annoyance to them as it lay unused in their way. Long it remained a rejected stone. But when the builders came to the laying of the corner, they searched for a long time to find a stone of sufficient size and strength, and of the proper shape, to take that particular place, and bear the great weight which would rest upon it. Should they make an unwise choice for this important place, the safety of the entire building would be endangered. They must find a stone capable of resisting the influence of the sun, of frost, and of tempest. Several stones had at different times been chosen, but under the pressure of immense weights they had crumbled to pieces. Others could not bear the test of the sudden atmospheric changes. But at last attention was called to the stone so long rejected. It had been exposed to the air, to sun and storm, without revealing the slightest crack. The builders examined this stone. It had borne every test but one. If it could bear the test of severe pressure, they decided to accept it for the cornerstone. The trial was made. The stone was accepted, brought to its assigned position, and found to be an exact fit. In prophetic vision, Isaiah was shown that this stone was a symbol of Christ. He says:

“‘Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He shall be for a sanctuary; but for **a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense** to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall **stumble**, and **fall**, and be **broken**, and be **snared**, and be **taken**.’ Carried down in prophetic vision to the first advent, the prophet is shown that Christ is to bear trials and tests of which the treatment of **the chief cornerstone** in the temple of Solomon was symbolic. ‘Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.’ Isaiah 8:13–15; 28:16.

“In infinite wisdom, God chose **the foundation stone**, and laid it Himself. He called it ‘**a sure foundation**.’ The entire world may lay upon it their burdens and griefs; it can endure them all. With perfect safety they may build upon it. Christ is a **tried stone**.’ Those who trust in Him, He never disappoints. He has borne every test. He has endured the pressure of Adam’s guilt, and the guilt of his posterity, and has come off more than conqueror of the powers of evil. He has borne the burdens cast upon Him by every repenting sinner. In Christ the guilty heart has found relief. He is the sure foundation. All who make Him their dependence rest in perfect security.

“In Isaiah’s prophecy, Christ is declared to be both **a sure foundation and a stone of stumbling**. The apostle Peter, writing by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, clearly shows to whom Christ is a foundation stone, and to whom a rock of offense:

“‘If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe He is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient.’ 1 Peter 2:3–8.

“To those who believe, **Christ is the sure foundation**. These are they who fall upon the Rock and are broken. Submission to Christ and faith in Him are here represented. To fall upon the Rock and be broken is to give up our self-righteousness and to go to Christ with the humility of a child, repenting of our transgressions, and believing in His forgiving love. And so also it is by faith and obedience that we build on Christ as our foundation.

“Upon this living stone, Jews and Gentiles alike may build. This is **the only foundation** upon which we may securely build. It is broad enough for all, and strong enough to sustain the weight and burden of the whole world. And by connection with Christ, the living stone, all who build upon this **foundation** become living stones. Many persons are by their own endeavors hewn, polished, and beautified; but they cannot become ‘living stones,’ because they are not connected with Christ. Without this connection, no man can be saved. Without the life of Christ in us, we cannot withstand the storms of temptation. Our eternal safety depends upon our building upon the sure foundation. Multitudes are today building upon foundations that have not been tested. When the rain falls, and the tempest rages, and the floods come, their house will fall, because it is not founded upon the eternal Rock, the chief cornerstone Christ Jesus.

“To them which **stumble at the word**, being disobedient,’ Christ is **a rock of offense**. But ‘**the stone** which the builders disallowed, the same is made **the head of the corner**.’ Like **the rejected stone**, Christ in His earthly mission had borne neglect and abuse. He was ‘despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: . . . He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.’ Isaiah 53:3. But the time was near when He would be glorified. By the resurrection from the dead He would be declared ‘the Son of God with power.’ Romans 1:4. At His second coming He would be revealed as Lord of heaven and earth. Those who were now about to crucify Him would recognize His greatness. Before the universe **the rejected stone** would become **the head of the corner**.

“And on ‘whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.’ The people who rejected Christ were soon to see their city and their nation destroyed. Their glory would be broken, and scattered as the dust before the wind. And what was it that destroyed the Jews? It was the rock which, had they built upon it, would have been their security. It was the goodness of God despised, the righteousness spurned, the mercy slighted. Men set themselves in opposition to God, and all that would have been their salvation was turned to their destruction. All that God ordained unto life they found to be unto death. In the Jews' crucifixion of Christ was involved the destruction of Jerusalem. The blood shed upon Calvary was the weight that sank them to ruin for this world and for the world to come. So it will be in the great final day, when judgment shall fall upon the rejecters of God's grace. Christ, their rock of offense, will then appear to them as an avenging mountain. The glory of His countenance, which to the righteous is life, will be to the wicked a consuming fire. Because of love rejected, grace despised, the sinner will be destroyed.

“By many illustrations and repeated warnings, Jesus showed what would be the result to the Jews of rejecting the Son of God. In these words He was addressing all in every age who refuse to receive Him as their Redeemer. Every warning is for them. The desecrated temple, the disobedient son, the false husbandmen, the contemptuous builders, have their counterpart in the experience of every sinner. Unless he repent, the doom which they foreshadowed will be his.” *The Desire of Ages*, 596–600.

“**The parable of the vineyard applies not alone to the Jewish nation. It has a lesson for us.** The church in this generation has been endowed by God with great privileges and blessings, and He expects corresponding returns.” *Christ's Object Lessons*, 296.