

If Faith Was Wanting

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But God is not a respecter of persons; and merciful and gracious as He is, yet He will by no means clear the guilty. Known to the Israelites as the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob,—as the Almighty, and as Jehovah; He made himself known to them also as the Holy One of Israel; and He chose them unto himself for a peculiar and a holy people. He entered into a covenant with *them*, when *He brought them out of the land of Egypt*. The law was then given them; and life and death were set before them. *The words of the covenant*—the ten commandments—were written on tables of stone by the finger of the Lord; *and after the tenor of these words He made a covenant with Israel*.

Sin can have no fellowship with God; He is angry with the wicked every day: and sinners, as such, cannot enter into covenant or communion with him. A sinner, how ever, like all other men, Abraham was; and even when the Lord had made and confirmed his covenant with him, he confessed that he was but *dust and ashes* in his sight. But *he believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness*. His faith was shown by his obedience to the voice of the Lord, even till his hand was lifted up to sacrifice his beloved son, the very heir of promise.

The covenant concerning the land was made with believing men. They believed in a righteousness not their own; they saw the day of Christ afar off and were glad; and the covenant between God and them was gracious and everlasting, and bears its *token* in all generations of their race. But even under the Old Testament dispensation, circumcision became as uncircumcision and availed nothing, if, with *uncircumcised hearts*, they were not the children of *faithful* Abraham. An Israelite according to the flesh alone, had no right to the inheritance of the land, if faith was wanting.

(The Land of Israel, According to the Covenant... by Alexander Keith, Edinburgh: William Whyte and Co., 1843, e-book, 15-16, Text and Paragraph Structure Modified)