God’s Covenant

By Berenice Myers Shotwell

The word covenant has a rich Scriptural significance, as it is through the covenant idea that God is made known His relation to men.

“The covenant of God with His people is an expression of His love for them. It may be called the divine constitution or ordinance, which is designed to govern human relations with Himself.” This divine promise is everlasting and inviolate. The essential requirement on the part of men is that of obedience; Israel was blessed in proportion to its obedience.

In the **Abrahamic Covenant**, the greatest in historical importance, the sacred covenant became definitive. In it God promised Abraham a land and a seed, that seed to be a blessing to all nations: “Get thee out of thy country . . . unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation . . .and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:1–3). It was renewed with Abraham after he came up from Egypt to Canaan (Gen. 13:14–17) and

later confirmed by the solemn ceremony of the blood covenant (Gen. 15:2–21). At a still later ratification the promise was amplified: “I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee . . . for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.” At this time circumcision was instituted as a sign of the covenant (Gen. 17:2–14). This promise was renewed to Abraham’s son Isaac and to Isaac’s son Jacob (Gen.

26:2–5; 28:13–15).

There are several other biblical covenants (Adamic, Noahic, Sinaitic or Mosaic, Davidic, etc.).