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I. LITERARY.

MAJOR JAMES MORTON*

Was a native of Prince Edward County, Virginia, where he spent the greater part of his very long life. He died at the age of ninety-two, at High Hill in Cumberland County, the family seat of his son, Dr. William S. Morton. He was one of a family of eighteen children—twelve sons and six daughters.

*The following sketch of Major James Morton, of Willington, was written by my Father during his later years, while he lived with me in Jonesborough, N. C. (I being at that time pastor of Buffalo and Ephronia churches in Moore county, N. C.), about 1880, and published in the *Central Presbyterian* in two or three numbers. I had so often when a student in the Seminary heard "Aunt Rice" (Mrs. Anne S. Rice, widow of Rev. Dr. John Holt Rice) and Mrs. Wharey with whom I boarded (a lady of singular simplicity and sincerity of character and of pure and lovely piety) speak of their Father, Major Morton. And when during those last sweet and precious years of my Father's life, he spoke of the old hero, of Dr. Rice, of John Randolph of Roanoke, of William B. Giles, of Dr. Alexander, and his Father Rev. Drury Lacy (him of the "silver fist and silver voice"), of Dr. Moses Hoge, of Benjamin F. Stanton, and the evangelist Rev. Asabel Nettleton, and others, I begged him that he would commit some of these reminiscences to paper. This is the only one that he prepared, and I have copied it carefully from his manuscript, spelling and all. So many who read it in the *Central* more than ten years ago have asked me to furnish it again to the press, where it might appear in some form more likely to be preserved, that I send it to the UNION SEMINARY MAGAZINE. Major Morton's connection with the Hill, and with Rev. Dr. Rice, the founder of the Seminary, and his deep personal interest in the Seminary and daily prayer for it, make it eminently appropriate.

W. S. L.

THE COVENANTS OF GENESIS XV. AND XVII.

BY REV. H. H. HAWES, D. D.

In Gen. xv. is the Covenant for the land of Canaan,—or *Carnal* Covenant. In Gen. xvii. is the Covenant for the Church,—or *Spiritual* Covenant. The germs, or promises, for these two covenants, are in Gen. xii:1-3. *The development, or fulfillment of each is as distinct as is the difference between black and white.* The object of this article is to prove that proposition. Observation has brought conviction that this difference is not appreciated. Often these two covenants are spoken of as one,—and not a few connect circumcision (the token of the covenant of Gen. xvii.) with the Canaan covenant, of Gen. xv. Doubtless this results from the fact that both covenants are mentioned in the historic account of the making of the second covenant, Gen. xvii. A critical study of the passages will establish the proposition herein advanced.

1. In Gen. xv. Abram (not Abraham) asks for a sign of God's faithfulness. For he could not see how he,—a childless man,—could enjoy the fulfillment of the Canaan promise made for his "seed." vv. 1-3.

God assured him that the "seed" should descend from his own lawful heir, v. 4. Steps were then taken to make and seal the covenant for that promise. Sacrifices were ordered,—which, except "the birds," were cut in pieces and arranged decently. vv. 5-10.

Then, under the experiences which followed, God gave prophecies for the future, concerning the "seed", and solemnly sealed them in the mystery of the "smoking furnace" and "burning lamp." vv. 11-17.

Thus was the Canaan Covenant made and sealed. For we read, v. 18, "In the same day, the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land", etc. Now let it be noticed: There was no mention of, nor hint at circumcision, in making this covenant, nor any mark to be borne by the heirs to it. *It had no token.* It was simply made, after the regular business-manner of those days,—by the *cutting of sacrifices.* Literally, we would read:—"In the same day, the Lord *cut* a covenant", etc. The word translated

“made”, is כרת “to cut”, etc. The transaction was absolutely completed,—“sealed, signed, and delivered.” Nothing was wanting, nothing more was to be done.

2. In Gen. xvii. three differences are to be noted in the covenant-making :—

(1). In Abram’s ninety-ninth year, God made the first *recorded demand for personal, spiritual service.* v. 1. There was not one reference to any such thing in making the covenant of Gen. xv.

(2). In v. 2. the word translated “make,” in the sentence, “I will make my covenant,” is not כרת but נתתי—literally, “to make, constitute,” etc. *It belongs to the original making of a covenant.*

(3). A token (circumcision) was attached to this covenant, to be borne upon the persons of its heirs, binding those bearing it to “keep” this covenant.

Nothing of the kind occurred in the covenant-making of Gen. xv. There, *God, alone,* could keep the covenant made, as all depended upon His faithfulness to His promises, and the efficient working of His power, bringing to pass what all of Abram’s power could not compass. Therefore, neither Abram nor his “seed” could be,—as they were not,—required to “keep” that covenant. But, in Gen. xvii. duties were enjoined within the power of man ; viz., spiritual service, and the application of the covenant-token, engaging the heirs to observe the obligations of this covenant. But :—

3. In vv. 7-8,—is (as some have claimed) a vital connection of the two covenants, making them so one, that circumcision is for both.

This is an error, leading to confusion. It is said :—“The words, ‘And I will establish my covenant’ etc.—and which refer to the land of Canaan,—show that circumcision belongs to that covenant.” The idea is only on the face of things, in the translation. For the word translated “establish”, is קים which, in its meaning, *reaches back* to some former transaction, in the sense of *confirming* what was *previously* done. This is what we see :—God made and sealed (Gen. xv.) the Canaan covenant, with Abram, when he was about eighty-five years old. Now, (Gen. xvii.) once more, God appears,—about fourteen years later,—to make a covenant. Naturally, Abram would wish to know whether *this* covenant-making is akin to, or is to interfere with the *former* ? The question is settled :

(1). By יָתַתּ—to make, “constitute,” etc.

(2). By the use of קָיָם “to confirm.”

Thus:—“I make *this* covenant as a *new transaction*. (כִּרְתִּיכָה was the old.) But, I will also *cause to stand*, or *confirm the former covenant*. It shall not interfere with this, nor this with that. Therefore, “this is my covenant, which ye shall (now) keep; every man-child among you shall be circumcised, * * * and it shall be a token of this new covenant betwixt me and you.” See vv. 7-14.

Again:—This covenant was made under a new name,—two names indeed, both changed: (a) *Abraham*, v. 5; (b) Sarah’s name, not mentioned in the Canaan covenant, was changed to *Sarai*, for her part in this covenant.

This interpretation separates the *Carnal* covenant of Gen. xv. from the *Spiritual*, or church-covenant of Gen. xvii. No one should say, as has often been said, that the covenant of Gen. xvii. is both civil and religious. The interpretation here given, is correct, if the asserted use of קָיָם is correct. Its correctness appears in xvii.19, where it is used in connection with Isaac, to whom this covenant was to be *confirmed*,—not newly made.

It is believed that all the passages, in which it occurs, have been examined by the writer, and the asserted use found correct.

Gen. vi. 18, ix.9-17 seem the only doubtful passages; but the doubt disappears when what is there said is regarded as resulting from the promises or covenants already made, which (1). *Caused Noah to build the Ark*, vi.7-14; (2). *Caused him to come out of it, confidently, after the flood*, ch. viii.15-22.

So too, the writer has examined every passage, in the Bible, referring to circumcision, and not once does it appear otherwise than as spiritual in its significance. It belonged, not to Jews, as such; but to God’s spiritual, separated people.

