HOUSE OF WISDOM

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The Rest of God

Introduction: Why are there so many different religious organizations today? Because everyone desires to have the preeminence of their own interpretation of the Bible. It is the sin nature of man that leads him to desire to have recognition, to be first or the most honored. Instead of men uniting in the truth, they contend and debate to have their opinions accepted. Jesus said, *For many are called, but few are chosen* (Mt 22:14). Why are few chosen? Because, when called they will not hear (cf Mt 13:13-15). The consequence is that the multitudes follow those with whom they mostly agree. This principle was manifest at Mount Sinai by Israel when they told Moses *Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die* (Ex 20:19). God spoke the Ten Commandments directly to all the people, but they did not want to hear Him anymore. The Ten is the *measure of faith* given by God to every person on this planet (Rom 12:3), but the majority do not want to hear God's understanding of these ten principles.

Eph 3:8-11: *8. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; 9. And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: 10. To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, 11. According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord*: The "riches of Christ" is the "wisdom" of God, which is our heavenly Father's explanation of why He brought forth a Son, and the understanding of the Son's preexistence before creation of the Universe and the reason for him becoming a man and dying on the cross. The ultimate objective of God is for mankind to be created inwardly in His image (cf Eph 3:19). Paul stated the requirement to reach this point: **Eph 4:13:** *Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*: It requires *unity of the faith* and the Son's knowledge. Understanding how to love one another is a key part in this accomplishment, and only then will we have a single body of Christ, united in truth.

Figures, types, metaphors & allegories: Jesus is referred to several times as a "lamb," or the "lamb of God" (Isa 53:7; Jn 1:29, 36; Acts 8:32; 1 Pet 1:19; and 26 times in the book of Revelation). And yet, not one person believes that Jesus was literally a lamb, because they recognize that the lamb is a type, or figure. It is said that a lamb is one of the most helpless animals on the planet. If it loses its balance and rolls over on its back, it will lie there and die unless the shepherd helps it up. A lamb will not drink from running (living) water. It drinks from pools or potholes, even those polluted by urine of the sheep that went before it. A sheep is a perfect picture of a human being. Jesus came as a *lamb without blemish and without spot* (1 Pet 1:19); He was *brought as a lamb to the slaughter* (Isa 53:7) to fulfill the Passover, as a type. If all are come into *the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*, why can everyone not see self as a lamb, and as fulfilling the feast days spiritually?

The law: When we read about the law in the New Testament, the writer is referring to what is called today the Old Testament. In the disciples days it was called writings [(Gll24)] (KJ = scriptures) and broken down as the law of Moses, the prophets and the Psalms (Lk 24:44-45). Sometimes the reference was shortened to just Moses, or law and the prophets (Mt 5:17; Mt 7:12; Jn 1:45; Acts 13:15; 24:14); but most of the time it was

just called law (Mt 5:18, 40; Lk 2:22-24, 27, 29, many times in Romans & Galatians). The best definition for the word law is found in the Hebrew, which is the word *towrah* (H8451). The root of *towrah* is *yarah* (3384) and properly means to flow as water, to rain, when figuratively applied to the law is to teach, inform, instruct. So when the word "law" is encountered in the New or Old Testament, it would be better translated as teaching, instruction. This fits well with **Dt 32:1-2:** *1. Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. 2. My doctrine* (teaching) *shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass*: (cp Isa 55:7-11). When God speaks to the conscience about the law, He is teaching or informing. The heavens and earth are a metaphor of mind-sets of people that, when they listen will be watered with God's word, which will cause them to receive God's ideas (herbs & grass), and to grow in His understanding.

Man says that the Ten written in stone are commandments of a law. However, notice the original: **Ex 20:1:** *And God spoke all these words* (H1697)*, saying...* The Hebrew word, *dabar* (H1697), is similar in meaning to the New Testament Greek word *logos* (G3056), and both words can mean "an individual word, a group of words forming a statement, or a saying expressing a concept or idea." What God spoke and wrote in stone, were ten concepts or ideas, the depth of which need to be understood from God's perspective. (See also Ex 34:28; Dt 10:4). These ten concepts were a covenant God made with Israel: **Dt 4:13:** *And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments* (H1697)*; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone*. The Ten were spoken to all Israel, but the rest of the law was given at Mount Sinai through Moses. Is it part of the Covenant? This is explained in the book of Hebrews. The first covenant is defined in chapter 8 as *the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt* (Heb 8:9), also called old and first. The next verse connects the law given through Moses: **Heb 9:1:** *Then verily the first (covenant) had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary*. The word "covenant" is correctly supplied according to the context with chapter 8.

Add the idea of teaching and we have ten concepts and *ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary* that teach us to love God with all our hearts, minds and souls, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. *On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets* (Mt 22:40). On these two commandments hang ALL the Old Testament. Jesus taught that Moral, Civil, Ceremonial and Dietary laws are all to teach two concepts - love God and love your neighbor. Paul wrote: **Gal 5:14:** *For all the law is fulfilled in one word* (G3056)*, even in this; Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself*. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 for the definition of love and you will find 16 things that have to do with our thinking and attitude. God is love (1 Jn 4:8) and these attributes describe His character that we are to obtain, and which we see manifested in Jesus Christ at the cross.

Jesus said of the law: **Mt 5:17-18:** *Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled*. The Greek word for "destroy" is kataluo (2647), derived from 2596 and 3089, is properly to loosen down (disintegrate), i.e. (by implication) to demolish (literally or figuratively): & can be translated as destroy, dissolve, be guest, lodge, come to nought, overthrow, throw down. Jesus did not come to destroy, dissolve, overthrow or throw down even the smallest part of any of the law, but to fulfill it. In Matthew 5, Jesus gave several examples as He made all the law spiritual - i.e. as the Spirit applies the law (Bible) to the heart.

Paul understood and taught that the law was spiritual (Rom 7:14): **2 Cor 3:4-9:** *And we have such trust through Christ toward God. 5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, 6 who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant,*

not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. 7 But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away, 8 how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? 9 For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory. (NKJV)

Notice that the "new covenant" is not of the letter of the law. The letter of the law mentioned here are the Ten engraved in stone at Mt. Sinai, the Old Covenant (Heb 8:8-9), also called the "ministry of death." The New Covenant is of the Spirit. Connect this with **John 6:63:** *The spirit it is that is giving life; the flesh doth not profit anything; the sayings that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life*. (Young) Life is in keeping Christ's understanding of the law, but death is in keeping of the letter of the law – i.e. your own works of keeping the letter according to a man's understanding. **Gal 2:16:** *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law* (keeping the letter), *but by the faith of Jesus Christ* (spirit of the law), *even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified*. No one is rendered righteous by his own understanding, but by the understanding (faith) of Jesus Christ – not your faith, but Christ's faith, and the law is not of faith (Gal 3:12), nor can the law give life or righteousness (Gal 3:21).

Peter said of Paul's teaching: **2 Pet 3:15-16:** *15 And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction*. This is still true today. Below are some key scriptures with comments to add clarity:

Rom 7:5-11: *7:5 For when we were in the* (understanding of the) *flesh, the motions of sins* (influence of our sin natures), *which were by the* (letter of the) *law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. 6 But now we are delivered from* (being governed by) *the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit* (governed by Christ), *and not in the oldness of the letter* (of the law). *7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known* (G1097) (by experience) *sin, but by the* (letter of the) *law: for I had not known* (G1492) *lust* (perceived outwardly with the eyes) , *except the* (letter of the) *law had said, Thou shall not covet. 8 But sin* (the sin nature), *taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence* (evil desire). *For without* (understanding) *the* (spiritual) *law sin was dead. 9 For I was alive without the* (understanding the) *law once: but when* (the spiritual understanding of) *the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. 10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. 11 For sin* (the sin nature), *taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me*. Paul, by his outward acts considered himself blameless (Phil 3:4-7). But, when the Lord taught him to apply the law inwardly, he realized that he was still dead to God because his heart was not pure. He realized that *if righteousness is by* (my understanding of) *the law, then Christ is dead in vain*. (Gal 2:21)

The rest (or Sabbath): The New Covenant is the explanation of the Old Covenant (Ten in stone - Dt 4:13), which Jesus came to give to the Jews, but they rejected his teachings and killed him instead. The Jews never entered the spiritual rest (Heb 3:12-19; 4:1-11), even though they were diligent to keep all the letter of the law, including the seventh day, which is a symbol of the ultimate rest not yet obtained in this world. While Genesis One is about the literal creation, it is a prophecy of the spiritual creation of mankind. The seventh day is a figure of the conclusion of creation week and being made in the image of God. If you keep the first three commandments and rest by ceasing from your own works, as God did from His, then and only then can you do to last six.

Heb 4:10-11: *9 There remains therefore a rest to the people of God. 10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. 11 Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.* The Greek word for rest comes from the Hebrew word for Sabbath (H7676), which in English means "rest." As a Sabbatarian I was taught to focus on the King James marginal reference - "a keeping of a Sabbath." However, verse nine is correctly translated with the focus of these verses being on ceasing from our works as did God, and laboring to enter God's rest. In other words, the rest had not been entered, yet the indication in the New Testament is that the Jews, disciples, Paul and others were attending worship on the seventh day. The seventh day, therefore, is a figure of the end of a process whereby believers eventually cease from law keeping according to a man's understanding, and rest in God's way of understanding seven days a week, forever. The law was given to teach love and not to put people in bondage under the regulations of man.

Acts 15:1-2: *1. And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. 2. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.* Leaders in Jerusalem were teaching that the letter of the law had to be kept in order to be saved, which was in opposition to what Paul and others were teaching. In the meeting at Jerusalem, the agreement to which they arrived was that the Gentiles did not have to keep the law, but only abstain from fornication and from eating things offered to idols (Acts 15:19-20). Why do men, 2000 years later, try to put the Gentiles (not literal Jews) back under the letter of the law?

Conclusions: After Paul came to Christ, he learned and taught the spirituality of the law and that the letter of the law was a Tutor to bring one to Christ. **Gal 3:22-25:** *22 But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. 23 But before faith* (Christ's way of understanding) *came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster* (tutor) *to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith* (of Christ). *25 But after the faith* (of Christ) *is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.* To be "under sin" is to be governed by sin. To be under the law is to be governed by the law in an attempt to make self righteous by your works. The promise to be given is the Holy Spirit of the Father (Gal 3:14; Rom 8:9-11), and Christ teaches us about the Father through the written word. When Christ is truly your head you will be governed by his interpretation of the law - i.e. you will be resting in his understanding. Keeping the Spirit of the law is what Jesus meant when he said: *If you love me, keep my commandments* (Jn 14:15).

Paul came to understand that LOVE was the most important thing (1 Cor 13:1, 13). However, there are two things to know in order to understand love - know the Father and Son and know the human nature. The purpose of the cross was to reveal both. Paul said in **Rom 13:8-10:** *8. Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loves another hath fulfilled the law. 9. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. 10. Love works no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law***.** The phrase "for this" is two Greek words - *gar* (1063) and *to* (3588), the definite article. The Greek word *gar* is a primary particle, properly assigning a reason. For the reason that you love others you will keep the law - the Spirit of it. Remember, Jesus quoted, "thou shalt not kill," and explained that if you are angry with a brother without cause, you are in danger of judgment (Mt 5:21-22). Going to church on the seventh day will not change a

person's heart. Entering the rest of God will change the heart, even if you attend worship on Monday, or any other day of the week.

When asked, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus gave a parable using a Samaritan injured by robbers (Lk 10:29-37). Jews had nothing to do with Samaritans (Jn 4:9), so this parable had special significance when given to a Jew. Jesus also said, *Love your enemies; bless those cursing you, do well to those hating you; and pray for those abusing and persecuting you, so that you may become sons of your Father in Heaven* (Mt 5:44-45 Literal translation - LITV). When a person reaches a point of consistently loving others, they have entered the Sabbath rest, no matter the day.

The Jews were to keep letter, and very rigidly kept the seventh day, but they never entered the rest of God – i.e. they refused the spiritual explanations of the law. They did not enter the rest because of unbelief (Heb 3:19) - The very same problem that exists today. *For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith* (Christ's understanding) *in those who heard it. For we who have believed do enter that rest* (Gal 4:2-3). The word "Sabbath" means rest in Hebrew and Greek. However, it is not one literal day, but a spiritual rest we are to observe everyday of the week, of which the seventh day is a figure.

Peter, who was in the meeting at Jerusalem, referred to the law as a yoke (Acts 15:10), which none of them were able to bear, past or present. However, the Pharisees which believed continued to teach that the law was to be kept (Acts 15:5; 21:17-26). Old Jerusalem (old way of thinking) had to be destroyed and the Jews scattered to end adherence to the letter of the law. Today, God will establish the New Jerusalem (new mind-set) wherein the people will keep the spiritual law and worship the one true God and His only Son. *Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free*. (Cf Gal 4:21-31)

In which city will you dwell? The choice is yours – be yoked to men's understanding of the law which is death, or be yoked to Christ's and his understanding, which is life. *Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loves another hath fulfilled the law*. (Rom 13:8) When one reaches the point that he truly loves all others, he has entered God's rest, he is keeping the Sabbath according to God's ways. Amen.