

THE EVERLASTING COVENANT

Shadow & Substance

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FOREWORD

The Everlasting Covenant is God's unchangeable promise to humanity. It is a promise of a new heart and a new spirit given to the listening and obedient by circumcision of the truth. Gal 3: 14. *That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.* The covenant is revealed through the revelation of the three signs, a rainbow, circumcision and the 7th day of the week.

Hebrews 10:1. *For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things...* The Bible is the teaching of God given in riddles, parables and stories. Literal events, taken as allegories, teach spiritual lessons. Overall, the Bible is a revelation of God's dealings with and plans for mankind. It contains the revelation of his character of love. A love that is, has and will always be. *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God...* (1 John 3:1, ASV)

Romans 1: 20. *For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:* The law is a shadow that helps us discern our heavenly Father by the things we can see.

Another shadow is the creation of God - The heavens, the earth and the sea, and all that is in them are symbols of something spiritual, i.e. of the Spirit. Even the body parts of mankind represent something of the Spirit. All creation is used to teach us about God's eternal power and Godhead! Romans 1:20, alone, contradicts the multitudes that declare God is a mystery. In the final day of reckoning, not one person will have an excuse for rejecting salvation.

First the shadow, then the reality. The last words King David spoke about the ruler of Israel: 2 Samuel 23: 4. *And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.* Without clouds there will be no shadows. And without shadows we will see the Father face to face.

The following quote of a friend sums it all up very nicely:

The study of the Covenants lays a foundation that is much needed today. Present truth is ever progressive; and in order to keep up we must understand the meaning of the Everlasting Covenant. It is our prayer your heart be open to receive the deep things of God that you might know Him even as you are known. Scott Stanley

It is my hope that the things presented in this three part study will give every sincere heart a glimpse of eternal things and the magnitude of God's everlasting love for his creation. Woodrow Oliver

The Rainbow - Part I

NOTE: To obtain full benefit of this study the reader should have a good understanding of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Additionally, knowledge of symbols of the Bible will give you confidence in the way God teaches. (Studies are available). Solomon says it this way: Proverbs 1: 1. *THE PROVERBS of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel:* 2. *That men may know wisdom and instruction, understand words of insight,* 3. *receive instruction in wise dealing, righteousness, justice, and equity;* 4. *that prudence may be given to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth--* 5. *the wise man also may hear and increase in learning, and the man of understanding acquire skill,* 6. *to understand a proverb and a figure, the words of the wise and their riddles.* Revised Version (All scripture quoted from the King James Bible, unless noted otherwise).

Gen 7: 11. *In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.* The literal flood of Noah's day was a type of the spiritual corruption of mankind. Water is a symbol for words, and words emanate from thoughts. Waters from heaven mixed with waters out of the earth displays the same principle of the Garden of Eden where eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was forbidden. It is a type which reveals that when man's ways (water from the earth) are mixed with God's ways (water from the heavens), the result is evil. When allowed to go unchecked, a flood of evil engulfs the whole world. However, God promised to never again allow this type flood. Neither will there be a literal flood, as a reflection of an inward truth.

Gen 9:8-16: 9. *And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;* 10. *And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.* 11. *And I will establish my covenant with you, neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.* 12. *And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual ⁵⁷⁶⁹ generations:* 13. *I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token (sign) of a covenant between me and the earth.* 14. *And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:* 15. *And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.* 16. *And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting ⁵⁷⁶⁹ covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.* Note: The words perpetual & everlasting are translated from the same Hebrew word.

THE SIGN

The rainbow is the first of three signs of the promise of God, called the Everlasting Covenant. A rainbow has seven colors. In order for one to be present there must be sunlight and rain. The sun is a symbol of the Son of God (Mal 4:2); rain represents God's spoken word (Deut 32:1-2); color, generally is understanding (i.e. white = righteousness; black = spiritual darkness; green = righteousness; red = sin; blue = the law). A cloud is a person or people (Heb 12:1); earth is self (Mk 4:5, 16). Seven is God's number for enough, or completeness.

God said: *I do set my bow in the cloud...* The rainbow represents the perfect understanding that our heavenly Father would bring to the inhabitants of the earth through his only begotten Son. Through the Son of God, those listening to the Spirit of God could receive understanding that would restrain evil in their personal lives and the world. With it, there cannot be a destructive flood of false teachings to sweep away any who choose to listen to God. Man's true nakedness is inward. The first sign of a Savior, given to Adam and Eve, was clothing of the skin of a sacrificed animal. The righteousness with which we will be clothed is the perfected understanding of the Son of God (Cf Heb 5:8-9).

THE PROMISE

And I will establish my covenant with you, neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

The flood of Noah's day covered the entire earth and the highest mountains. It took 150 days for the water to recede enough so Noah and family could leave the ark. How did the water recede from the land? The process of evaporation would have taken many years. Scientists today know there are canyons in the ocean deep enough to submerge the highest mountain on earth. It seems reasonable that great chasms opened that literally drained the water to expose dry land again. This concept is shown in the book of The Revelation: Rev 12:15-16: *15. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. 16. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.* Outwardly, a woman is a figure of God's church in the last days. Inwardly, she is a mind-set. The opened earth is the understanding being given by God to prevent the church, or individuals from being swept away by the winds of false doctrine blowing in the religious organizations of today. Thus, God continues to protect his people, scattered in all denominations, by advancing their understanding. And in this manner, he is fulfilling to us the part of the promise represented by the rainbow.

TODAY'S RAINBOW

The purposes of God are discernable only as he reveals them; and he has chosen to reveal himself over several thousand years, as shown by the seven seals of Revelation. God has been revealing himself through prophets and teachers through out the centuries. While I believe that God set the rainbow in the cloud at the cross, the full realization of what the cross means to us in modern times did not begin to be finalized until the early 1800s.

This finalization, or end times, becomes apparent by comparing history with Bible prophecy. The first sign of the Everlasting Covenant is revealed in the continuing reformation of the early 1800s. Rev 10:1-2: *1. And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: 2. And he had in his hand a little book open...* The person with the rainbow upon his head is Christ (Rev 1:13-16; 2 Cor 4:65). He has in his hand a little book open. The fact that the *little book* is open, implies that it was once closed. There is mentioned only one book that was ever closed: Dan 12:8-9: *8. And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? 9. And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.* It is the understanding of the book of Daniel that has been sealed. In the early 1800s, the teachings on the return of Christ were primarily centered around the prophecies of the book of Daniel, though his actual return was misunderstood.

With the advent of the cross, The Christ, the Son of God through his human experience, completed (perfected) his understanding of his heavenly Father, the purposes of creation and how the Father is dealing with mankind. (Heb 5:8-9). A people (cloud) being moved by the Spirit of Christ (mighty Angel), pictured with perfect understanding (rainbow), moves on the heart of sincere believers to thunder a message to the world. But John was told not to write what the seven thunders uttered (Rev 10:4). Why? Because it is not the ultimate message to be given to the world. The perfect understanding has, and continues to come, not through denominational leaders, but through the poor in spirit. It will culminate in the 144,000 sounding the message of the three angels of Revelation 14.

One interesting aspect of a rainbow, is that when viewed from the heavens it appears as a perfect circle. Only God knows the whole picture. A circle has no beginning or ending. Jesus Christ is the beginning of the creation of God (Rev 3:14). That is, the Son's mind began to be created by the Father in eternity, and continued by becoming a man

in fallen flesh. (Note: He was birthed {not created} physically in eternity, and his human birth was miraculous in that He was birthed, or brought forth of the Father). There will be no end to the understanding the Saints will accumulate from the teachings of Christ throughout eternity.

Summary of The Rainbow

The rainbow in the cloud represents the perfect understanding of our heavenly Father which would come by his only begotten Son. The Son is the “word made flesh”. “Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (Jn 1:1, 17). The rainbow is a symbol of HOW God performs the everlasting covenant through the Son.

Heb 13:20-21: *20. Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21. Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* When Adam and Eve sinned, a symbolic sacrifice was given and they were clothed with the skin of the animals (Gen 3:21). This was a gesture of God that the spiritual (inward) nakedness of man was to be covered by the Savior to come. The offering of Isaac by Abraham prefigured the offer of the only Son of God. The promised birth of Isaac was also ratified by blood. Israel’s entire ceremonial system is a parable of the work of God in providing a means through His only begotten Son for the salvation of mankind. Heb 9: 22. *...without shedding of blood is no [deliverance].* The Father gave the Son, and the Son gave Himself - it was an immeasurable gift of love.

Circumcision - Part II

Circumcision was originally given Abraham, then carried forward in the writings of Moses. Every existing male of Israel and every man child born was to be circumcised. Any proselyte of the Jews or any stranger had to be circumcised to become a part of Israel and participate in the feasts. The rite became the heart of the dispute about the law in Paul’s day. Today, understanding this concept spiritually is of great significance.

THE SIGN

Gen 17:9-12: *9. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. 10. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. 11. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token [or sign ²²⁶] of the covenant betwixt me and you. 12. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations...* The sign of the everlasting covenant given Abram was literal circumcision. That the covenant was understood to be spiritual circumcision is clearly seen: Deut 10:15-16: *15. Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers (Abraham, Isaac & Jacob) to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day. 16. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked.*

Gen 17:13: *...and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.* Literal circumcision is a circle cut in the flesh. The shadow was given Abram when he was 99 years old. It is a figure of the spiritual circumcision of the heart (Deut 30:6) and spiritual birth. As Paul also said: *...circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit...* (Rom 2:29). Abram’s name also was changed to Abraham at that time. The name change is connected with the rite given. Name, in the Hebrew culture represents character. Abraham is the progenitor of Israel. The name came directly from Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel after wrestling all night with the angel of the Lord (Gen 32:28). It is circumcision of the heart by the truth of God that changes one’s character.

A rainbow and circumcision are connected because both are circles. Understanding begins and continues to be given to those who listen. The Bible describes a person's spiritual development as taking place over seven days. At the end of seven days God rests. On the eighth day one's faith meets its ultimate test. *What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? 17. Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.* (Jam 2:14, 17). A male baby is to be circumcised on the 8th day. Eight is the beginning of a new week, or new beginnings, as would be a person born from above of the Spirit. It represents infinity, over and above seven (enough). Ἰησους [²⁴²⁴ - Greek name for Jesus] adds up to 888, and after Jesus' resurrection, he was seen of 512 (1 Cor 15:5-6), which is 8x8x8. There is no end to eternal life for all who choose it. A rainbow viewed from above is a perfect circle; circumcision is a circle cut in the flesh. Infinity can be seen in the circle, as it has no end. It is acting on the perfect understanding given by Christ with which our hearts are circumcised for eternity. Isa 40:18, 21-22: *18. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?... 21. Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? 22. It is he that sits upon the circle of the earth...*

THE PROMISE

Gen 17:8: *8. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.* Do you think the promise to Abraham was for a piece of real estate? Heb 11:8-10: *8. By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 9. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10. For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.* The literal promised land is only a type. What about the city? Pr 25:28: *28. He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.* The spirit is the inner man. Proverbs likens it to a city. A city is a mind-set, a way of thinking. Abraham remained a stranger in the land of inheritance because the inheritance could not come until Christ made a way. The ultimate promise of God through the covenant made with Abraham is to give mankind back what was lost in Eden - control of the mind. This can only be done by supplanting our thoughts with God's (Isa 55:7-9). Then will we manifest the righteousness that comes through Christ.

SPIRITUALITY OF CIRCUMCISION

Probably circumcision, more than any other single symbol, reveals more fully the spiritual aspect of Israel. Abraham had two sons - one from his own works, the other a son of promise. These two sons represent the two covenants (Gal 4:22-24), one of bondage, the other of liberty in Christ Jesus. Jacob went down into Egypt. Many decades later a nation, called Israel and named after him, came out of Egypt. The night before departure they kept Passover. Anyone keeping Passover was required to be circumcised. During the 40 years in the wilderness none were circumcised. However, before entering Canaan, all the males of Israel had to be circumcised (Josh 5:2-8) again.

The types above speak of our spiritual journey out of the world (Egypt) in answer to the call of the Spirit. But as spiritual babies, we wandered in search of God (wilderness experience). During this time we were getting our righteousness out of the law. Most of us followed the denominational route, thinking the church we joined must know the way of life. The second experience of circumcision is when we learn to listen to God (enter the promised land). Another way to express listening is, 'abiding in Christ'. I am amazed at the number of people who say we cannot hear God - He does not speak directly to us. Others say that both the Devil and God can speak to the conscience. Therefore, a person must study the Bible in order to know which voice they are hearing. This is just not so. A person not listening to his conscience is making his own spiritual decisions. As long as they continue in that way of thinking, the heart cannot be circumcised.

Paul and the other disciples were continuously disputing with the Pharisees which believed, who taught that a man must be circumcised and keep the law (Acts 15:5). Today, some still teach that a man must be literally circumcised. But, ...*in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.. 15. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.* (Gal 5:6; 6:15). And it is by the faith of Christ (Gal 2:16) we are saved, that is, his understanding.

Summary of Circumcision

Again, how is spiritual Israel to receive the promise? Rom 4:11-13: *11. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: 12. And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised. 13. For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.* Do not miss the point! The world to which we are to be heir is, first, between your ears. And the promise of it is NOT through the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ! Spiritual circumcision of the heart/spirit is WHAT God does in the everlasting covenant. His righteousness is His thoughts. AMEN!

THE THIRD SIGN

So far we have considered two signs of the everlasting covenant. The rainbow in the cloud being a symbol of HOW God will perform the covenant through his only Son. Circumcision signifying WHAT God does in the performance of his promise by circumcision of the heart. And, the third and final sign of the everlasting covenant reveals the RESULT of the first two steps. Ex 31: 16. *Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual (everlasting) covenant.* The sabbath rest is the objective of the everlasting covenant. This part of the study is more involved, in that one must understand what are the old and new covenants, what the law of God entails and how we relate to it. These will not be discussed in detail as there are studies available that deal with the proofs more thoroughly.

Old and New Covenants

Jer 31: 31. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: 33. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*

Old Covenant: 1) Existed in time of Jeremiah. 2) Began at the time of Israel's deliverance out of Egypt. 3) Old, because the new one replaces it.

New Covenant: 1) New because it is future to Jeremiah's day. 2) God will write the law on the heart. 3) God and His people become one. 4) The people's relationship will be directly between themselves and God, and not through another. 5) God will forgive their distortions (iniquity) and misunderstandings (confusion about God), and no longer call to mind their sin.

The book of Hebrews, chapter 8, uses certain adjectives to describe each covenant: One covenant is old, ready to vanish, first & not without fault, (verses 7, 13); and, included the Levitical priesthood (Heb 9:1). The other is better, established on better promises, second, new and replaces the first (verses 6, 7, 13); and Christ permanently replaces the Levite system (Heb 7:11-19). First, what is the old covenant?

Deut 5: 1. *And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them.* 2. *The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.* 3. *The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day.*

Horeb is a mountain in the Sinai region on which Moses received the law of God, referred to in other scriptures as Mt Sinai. By reading verses 4 - 22 it is clear that the covenant of which Moses is speaking is what we call the ten commandments, which were written in stone tablets by the finger of God. Note particularly, *The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day.* ‘Fathers’ refer to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (cf Deut 9:5). The covenant in stone is the one made when God took Israel by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. It was not the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Deut 4: 13. *And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.*

In the ancient east when a covenant was made between two parties, two copies were written on clay tablets or some other substance used to record documents. Each party retained a copy. It makes sense that God used this custom by writing two copies of the commandments on stone tablets and had Moses put them in a box called the “ark of the covenant”. The tabernacle Moses built was a parable of the new covenant and how it would be implemented. It was considered that God dwelled in the tabernacle between the cherubim (Ex 25:22). And so, in it was God’s and man’s copy of the covenant.

In Solomon’s time: 1 Ki 8: 9. *There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.* 21. *And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.* Jeremiah, Solomon and all Israel understood this covenant given at Mt Sinai. The book of Hebrews indicates also that Israel understood the same thing. However, the writer of Hebrews indicates there was to be a change in the covenant which affected the law.

Heb 9: 1. *Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.* Connected with the first covenant were the ceremonial services and the Levitical priesthood. This is verified by the fact that what Moses wrote (first 5 books of the Bible) was called the “book of the covenant”. Ex 24: 7. *And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people...* It was still referred to this way during the time of Josiah, king of Judah: 2 Ki 23: 2. *And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the Lord.* By this time there had been a substantial amount added to the writings of Moses by Joshua, the prophets and other scribes. This book of the covenant was also called the book of the law (Deut 29:21; 31:26).

The new covenant is said to be the writing of the law in the inward parts, in the heart (Jer 31:33). Here is the literal Greek from Hebrews 8:10: *Because this (is) the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith (the) Lord; giving my laws into their understanding {present tense}, indeed, I will write them on their hearts {future tense}: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:* (supplied by translators). The letter

of the law is the book of the law. However, it is the spirit of the law that will be written on the heart, or into the understanding of the mind. Only the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus can cleanse us from the sin nature. And the Spirit of the law is God's understanding of the law - not man's. This is the mechanics of the everlasting covenant.

But God gave Abraham the everlasting covenant long before the law came into existence. So why is it called the second, or new covenant? Israel is a spiritual type of the church. They left Egypt, wandered in the wilderness, then entered Canaan and slew the nations. The Father calls us out of the world (Egypt) to listen to His Son. We wander in a land of darkness perpetrated on us by the denominational way of thinking (wilderness) which causes us to stop listening to God in the conscience. Therefore, we came to depend on our reading of the Bible. Jer 2: 31. *O generation, [consider] ye the word of the Lord. Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness?* We (and hopefully many more) left that state by learning we are to daily abide in Christ (enter the promised land). Now, by listening to Christ, we enter the Everlasting Covenant and the Son shows us the Father and slays the 'old man' of confusion (Babylon). The sin nature is based on a lie that we are unacceptable to the Father, and that He had to sacrifice his only begotten Son to pay the penalty for a broken law. As an individual and a spiritual Jew, we come under the law in the religious organizations first. To be 'under the law' is to be governed by man's interpretation of it. But God gave the law to be our school master, our teacher, our instructor (Gal 3:24) to bring us to Christ, or into the new covenant. This only happens as we listen to the Spirit tell us what the law (Bible) means. First comes the experience of being under the letter of the law, then comes the experience of being under the law of the faith of Christ. Rom 3: 21. *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets* (Old Testament); 22. *Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:* 23. *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;* 24. *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:*

The Law

Deut 1: 5. *On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this law, saying...* From this verse up through chapter three Moses is recounting the movements and experiences of Israel in the wilderness. In 4:1 Moses tells Israel to hearken to the 'statutes and judgments' which he will teach them. The point here is that the law consists of statutes and judgments, covenants AND historical accounts. While in the New Testament a specific statute may be mentioned, the word law should be understood as making reference to the whole Old Testament. It was one law commonly called writings of Moses, prophets and Psalms (cf Lk 24:44-45).

We have established above that the law is the whole book (in modern times called old testament), and the whole book is the old covenant. The Christian Bible today is derived from ancient manuscripts of the law and the writings of the apostles and prophets. What is called new testament serves to help us understand a great deal of the old testament and the Jewish religious system of types and shadows. To me, the whole Bible is still the letter of the law, or the old covenant. This will become more clear as we progress.

The Hebrew word torah (Strong's 8451) is translated all 219 times as 'law'. The root of 'torah' is ayah³³⁸⁴, which means 'to teach'. It is used to indicate this concept literally and figuratively (as sprinkle water, shoot an arrow). Therefore the word torah would better be translated as 'instruction', or 'teaching'. So the book of the covenant would be an instruction book coded in symbols, types (literal stories), parables and allegories, and to be understood only as the Spirit of God reveals the meaning. So, inspired men wrote the letter of the law, and the spiritual understanding of the letter is what God reveals through what is written. Paul said it this way: Col 1: 9. *For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the*

knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding... It is God's knowledge, wisdom and spiritual understanding needed - not man's. Religious entities today are divided according to the way man has divided the law. This is a serious problem which causes endless arguments regarding Bible doctrines. The only hope I see of resolving this conflict is for individuals to seek their understanding directly from God. God has his own pastors and teachers who will aid the body of Christ, which is scattered world wide.

There is only one law - Jesus did not divide it. Matt 5: 17. *Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.* 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 'jot' and 'tittle' are the smallest part of a letter. In modern language we would say the 'dot' of an 'i' or the 'cross' of a 't'. Read the rest of chapter 5. You will notice Jesus quotes from the Ten Commandments and other statutes, showing He did not divide the law. But, if the smallest part of the law has not perished, and it is all still in effect, then how are we to relate to it?

Heb 7: 12. *For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.* This passage has been understood to mean only that the Levitical priesthood and the ceremonial services ceased at the cross. It is true that the Levite system was replaced by the priesthood of Jesus Christ. Remember however, there is only one law, which includes the whole book. It should be understood that a change in the law does not do away with any of the law. But since the cross, we are to look at all the law spiritually. The sanctuary and its services are spiritual types of the Priesthood of Christ and how He goes about the cleansing of the true tabernacle between our ears. While the letter of that written in stone has some validity, there is a deeper meaning that serves to soften the heart and reveal the love of God. Each commandment is telling us to listen to and worship God. It is a spiritual law that governs the inward man, which in turn governs the outward actions. (Detailed studies are available upon request)

Now, with this understanding look at some of the law passages:

2 Cor 3: 5. *...our sufficiency is of God;* 6. *Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament (or covenant); not of the letter (of the law), but of the (law of the) spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.* In verse 7, the stone tables are called the ministration of death. When man tries to apply the letter, and live by his own understanding, the result is spiritual death, and eventually everlasting destruction of soul and body. But the spiritual understanding gives life. Jn 6: 63. *It is the spirit that [gives life]; the flesh profiteth nothing: **the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.***

Gal 5: 18. *But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.* To be led of the Spirit means to be governed by the understanding of the Spirit; To be under the law means to be governed by your own understanding of the law. Most professed Christians today are under the law, but say they are under grace. If these believers are led by the Spirit of Christ, why do we have all the divisions of, and in the churches, plus contentions among the professed body of Christ? Why is the world getting worse, instead of better? The problem is not the pagans and unbelievers. It is professed Christians who are living according to the flesh and not according to the Spirit. They are serving self instead of serving God. True, we are saved by grace through faith (Eph 2:8). However, grace is God's divine power given through the faith (understanding of spiritual things) of Christ. 2 Pet 1: 2. *Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,* 3. *According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:* 4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature...* It is not the knowledge about the Father and Son that saves us. It is THEIR knowledge whereby we are saved. Grace (divine power) and peace (rest in Christ) are multiplied to us through the FATHER's AND SON's knowledge! God's divine influence (grace) in the word we receive of him. It becomes our faith.

Gal 3: 11. *But that no man is justified by the (letter of the) law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall*

live [out of] (the) faith (of Christ). 12. And the law is not of faith... (Comments added for clarity) [Greek]. The faith by which we are justified (made righteous) is that of Christ's (Gal 2:16). Some of the newer versions of the Bible destroy this concept and make it sound like our faith. And then people interpret faith as only their believing IN Jesus. The inference is that to increase faith one must somehow believe harder. Bear in mind, Christ's faith is his understanding perfected at the cross. (Studies available for grace, faith, salvation). God's righteousness is his thoughts. So ultimately, it is God's understanding that makes us righteous when we walk according to his teaching (called law). When God's spirit dwells in us, it is his understanding given through Christ in us, and it becomes OUR faith, our understanding, which is God's character in us.

By now I hope you are grasping an understanding of the human problem. Mankind today is still mixing man's ways with God's ways. However, in the last generation, God will have a people who will listen to him, and do his will. And they will keep the commandments of God (spoken to the conscience) and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (his experience - Rev 12:17), which is the spirit of prophecy (Rev 19:10). And by God's grace (His divine influence) they will give the last message to a dying world.

The Love of God Versus the Sin Nature

Remember, the letter of the law is considered the old covenant. The effect of the letter (salvation by works) stops, and the affect of the spirit (salvation by abiding in Christ) began at the cross. While the literal cross happened 2000 years ago, it is a type which must be realized in our personal experience. The Spirit of it has to happen right now in one's personal relationship with God. Rom 3: 21. *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22. Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 27. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. 31. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.* The law of works ceases and the law of faith begins when we accept the true understanding of why the sacrifice of the Son of God. Heb 9: 14. *How much more shall the blood of Christ,... purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?* I accept and believe Jesus Christ died to save me. But how does the blood of Christ, shed on the cross, cleanse my conscience?

The serpent is a symbol for the sin nature - the old man. It represents man's crooked and perverse thinking. Ps 140: 1. *Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil... 3. They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders' poison is under their lips. Lk 3: 7. Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers... From the time of Moses to John the Baptist, the teacher and prophets of Israel understood that a serpent was a type for wicked man. Just as a snake crawls on its belly on the earth, so man in his thinking is earthly, sensual, devilish (Jam 3:15).*

Job 26: 13. *...his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.* How did God's hand form the serpent? He forms it by exposing it with His works, His judgments (decisions). It was already there, but we did not know it. Mankind's crooked perverse way began with a bad choice. God did not make Adam and Eve eat from the wrong tree. However, what they choose to do perverted their way of thinking, which has been handed down through the generations. Eccl 7: 13. *Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?* Isa 42: 16. *And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.*

God used the symbol of a brass serpent in the wilderness (Num 21:5-9). Because Israel was complaining against

Moses and the Lord, the Lord sent fiery serpents among them, an appropriate symbol for their inward crooked and perverse attitude. When the people finally realized their sin, they repented. The Lord had Moses make a brass serpent and put it on a pole. All they had to do was look and live. That brass serpent represents the sin nature that the Son of God took on this earth and killed it at the cross. (See studies on the Godhead). To 'look' is to understand. Salvation (mind reformation) is in full swing when we understand that God did not sacrifice his only Son because we broke the law, or because he is angry with us. We have always been accepted and loved by the Father. The Son did not die to pay the penalty of the law. (Don't you see that this would put the law above God?) God sent his only Son as an act of mercy (not a propitiation) because it is the only way he could bring mankind back from the depth and bondage of sin. THIS is how the righteousness of God is manifested without the law (Rom 3:21-22). The spiritual understanding of the law becomes the witness, which is the testimony of Jesus Christ from the Father to us.

The Final Sign

The foregoing discussion on the covenants, the law, the sin nature and the love of God were necessary in order to understand the third sign. Ex 31: 12. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 13. Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. 14. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. 15. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. 16. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. 17. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed. 18. And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.*

Sabbath in the Hebrew and Greek is a transliteration of the language. Translation of the Hebrew word, means 'rest'. *Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the rest of rest, holy to the Lord: whoever does any work in the day of rest, he shall surely be put to death.* There are two points to make here. 1) Israel and all its economy represent the gospel in figures (Cf Rom 2:28-29). Literal Israel was to keep the law by listening to the voice of God (Deut 30:10). In doing so, they were acting out a parable of the plan of salvation. 2) The seven days of creation, in Genesis 1 & 2, are to be understood as symbols of a spiritual creation (Genesis study of the spiritual re-creation of man in the image of God). Day six complete's man's creation in God's image. On day seven man enters a permanent rest in Christ. Being perfected, he has become one with the Father and Son. He has become third ruler in the kingdom of God - not a literal kingdom, but a spiritual kingdom of the mind. It is a restoration of self dominion.

Verse 16 above states that Israel is to ... *observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.* The word 'perpetual' ⁵⁷⁶⁹ is the same Hebrew word used in Genesis 9:16 but translated 'everlasting'. It is also translated 'perpetual' in Gen 9:12. In Ex 31:17 it is translated 'for ever'. The point is that the seventh day of the week is the third sign of the everlasting covenant. It is also part of the letter of the law. Therefore it is part of the shadow. The day is a symbol of resting in Christ by his faith. In other words, abide in him by listening to and seeking him for daily guidance. True sabbath keeping is seven days a week, of which the seventh day is a symbol. It is a day when all the darkness of our understanding will be removed and we see God as he really is. (Study available on Col 2:14).

Heb 3: 7. *Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, 8. Harden not your hearts, as in*

the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9. When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. 10. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. 11. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) The people of Israel were rigorous keepers of the seventh day. But they were not sabbath keepers. They constantly chided Jesus for his alleged sabbath breaking. But it was THEIR interpretation of the law Christ was breaking. Heb 3: 17. *But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? 18. And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? 19. So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.* Sabbath keeping is a spiritual experience based on the previous six days, each day having darkness associated with it. These are six spiritual days of gathering knowledge and experience and coming out of the darkness of that particular day. Just like Israel of old, modern day religions are based on man's understanding. Most enter not into God's rest because of unbelief. And unbelief is there because they refuse to listen to God's way of understanding (cf Isa 55:7-9).

Heb 4: 1. *Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. 2. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word [of hearing] did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it [Greek].* Whether a person reads the Bible, enjoys nature or listens to another saint, God can speak to the heart by these experiences. The point is to seek to know God, and listen. Isa 55: 3. *Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.* It is by hearing and doing we enter into the everlasting covenant. Jesus said in Matt 7: 24. *Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon [the] rock:* The sure mercies of David are described in Acts 13:33-34 as the resurrection of Christ. First will come the spiritual, then the literal resurrection.

Summary of the Third Sign

Heb 4: 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 labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.*

The seventh day, which is the third sign of the everlasting covenant is the symbol for resting in Christ. However, it is God who will rest from all His works to create mankind in His image. Sabbath keeping is that daily experience of letting God direct our lives. Under the new covenant, the seventh day is only a symbol of the rest. The rest is a result of allowing Jesus Christ to circumcise the heart with his understanding perfected at the cross. Heb 5: 8. *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9. And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him...* It is his knowledge that will open the earth to swallow the flood of false doctrines. It is the revelation of God's love through his only son, begotten in eternity (not created), and begotten in Bethlehem and given as a gift to the world that will dry up the sea, the waters of the great abyss (human nature). Jn 3: 16. *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

Conclusion

Abraham was given the everlasting covenant. He obeyed the voice of God to keep his commandments, statutes and laws (Gen 26:5). Did he do it perfectly? No, he had problems along the way. But he remained faithful to the end. Rom 4: 13. *For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through*

the law, but through the righteousness of faith (of Christ). So, the first sign, the rainbow, reveals HOW God perfects mankind through Jesus Christ; the second sign, circumcision, tells WHAT God is doing in the covenant to cleanse the heart; the third sign is the RESULT, being complete in Christ and resting in the peace that passes all understanding. In Exodus, the Sabbath points us to the Creator, emphasizing the God of the covenant and the seven days of mankind's inward spiritual creation. In Deuteronomy, the focus is on the people of the covenant, and God tells us to REMEMBER our deliverance out of Egypt, a type of our worldly way of thinking. (See also Eze 20:9-20). And in the New Testament, the people are brought into the rest by the Deliverer. The only begotten of the Father was brought forth specifically for each of us, because God so loved YOU, He gave His only Son (Jn 3:16-17). He gave His son out of love - not because He was angry because we broke the law.

In the fulfillment of the spiritual Sabbath, God rests, and the righteous never cease praising the Father, saying holy, holy, holy. Rev 4: 8. *And the four [living creatures] had each of them six wings (man's cleansed heart) about him; and they were full of eyes (understanding) within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.* The everlasting covenant is God's promise to restore the dominion lost in the Garden of Eden. And that dominion, my friends, is self dominion that brings life. Once again, mankind can and will be in control of his own thoughts. But this time we will eat from the tree of life.

Mic 7: 15. *According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvelous things.*
16. *The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might: they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf.* 17. *They shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and shall fear because of thee.* 18. *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardons iniquity, and passes by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retains not his anger for ever, because he delights in mercy.* 19. *He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.* 20. *Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.* AMEN!!