

THE TWO COVENANTS

COMPLETE STUDY

PART 1



THE TWO COVENANTS

A close-up photograph of a thick, rolled-up scroll made of aged, yellowish-brown parchment or paper. The scroll is resting on a dark surface with a light-colored grid pattern. The lighting is warm, highlighting the texture of the material.

The Theology of Covenants.
The SINAI COVENANT and the ETERNAL COVENANT.

Part 1

WHY STUDY THIS TOPIC?

a. To interpret and understand the Bible better.

To know and explain difficult passages in the Bible (Ephesians 2:15; Hebrews 7:12).

b. To present the truth in a truthful manner.

God forbids the use of false arguments. (Testimonies 5, p. 708.1)

c. To love God more.

Love God with all your heart and with all your understanding. (Matthew 22:37)

WHY STUDY THIS SUBJECT?

God forbids the use of false arguments.

“It is important that in defending the doctrines which we consider fundamental articles of faith we should never allow ourselves to employ arguments that are not **wholly sound**. These may avail to silence an opposer, but they do not honor the truth. We should present sound arguments, that will not only silence our opponents, but will bear **the closest and most searching scrutiny**. With those who have educated themselves as debaters there is great danger that they will not handle the word of God with fairness. (...)

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, 708.1

EXAMPLES OF ILLEGITIMATE ARGUMENTS

- Inserting words into the text

Romans 6:14

“For ye are not under [*condemnation*] the law, but under grace.”

Galatians 4:4

“[Jesus was] made of a woman, made under [*condemnation*] the law.”

EXAMPLES OF ILLEGITIMATE ARGUMENTS

- Changing the words of the text (or their meaning) according to convenience

Genesis 2:2

"And on the seventh day God ended his work"

And on the sixth day God ended (...)

EXAMPLES OF ILLEGITIMATE ARGUMENTS

- Using double standards

Isaiah 28:10

“Line upon line, here a little, and there a little.”

Genesis 35:18

“As her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Ben-oni.”

EXAMPLES OF ILLEGITIMATE ARGUMENTS

- Not fitting certain texts into the system

Ephesians 2:15

“Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances.”

Hebrews 7:12

“For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.”

MOST WELL-KNOWN EXPLANATION

	MORAL LAW	CEREMONIAL LAW
1.	Law of the Lord (Ps. 19:7)	Law of Moses (Neh. 8:1)
2.	Written with the finger of God (Ex. 31:18)	Written by Moses (Deut. 31:9)
3.	Tables of stone (Deut. 4:13)	Written in a Book (Deut. 31:24)
4.	Placed inside the ark (Deut. 10:5)	Placed outside the ark (Deut. 31:26)
5.	Spiritual law (Rom. 7:14)	Carnal law (Heb. 9:10)

The ceremonial law is called the Law of the Lord.

(Luke 2:39; 2 Cor. 3:3,4)

The commandments were first written in the book and then on stone. (Ex. 24:3-12)

If only the ceremonial law was repealed, what about:

- THE LAW OF SLAVES (Ex. 21:1-11; Deut 15:12)
- LAW OF PRIMOGENITURE (Deut. 21:15-17)
- LEVIRATE LAW (Deut. 25:5-12)

WHY STUDY THIS SUBJECT?

Unanimity is not proof of truth

“The fact that there is no controversy or agitation among God’s people should not be regarded as conclusive evidence that they are holding fast to sound doctrine. There is reason to fear that they may not be clearly discriminating between truth and error. When no new questions are started by investigation of the Scriptures, when no difference of opinion arises which will set men to searching the Bible for themselves to make sure that they have the truth, there will be many now, as in ancient times, who will hold to tradition and worship they know not what.”

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, 707.1

STUDY METHOD

Comparing Text with Text – The Method of Christ

Luke 24:27, 44, and 45

“²⁷ And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”

“⁴⁴ And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the **law of Moses**, and *in* the **prophets**, and *in* the **psalms**, concerning me.

“⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.”

STUDY METHOD

The Golden Rule

The Great Controversy, p. 599

“The truths most plainly revealed in the Bible have been involved in doubt and darkness by learned men, who, with a pretense of great wisdom, teach that the Scriptures have a mystical, a secret, spiritual meaning not apparent in the language employed. These men are false teachers. It was to such a class that Jesus declared: “Ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God.” Mark 12:24. The language of the Bible should be explained according to its obvious meaning, unless a symbol or figure is employed.”

STUDY METHOD

The Golden Rule

Adventist Theology Treatise, p. 75

“The uniform example of the writers of the Bible shows that the Scriptures are to be taken in their **literal sense**, unless it is obvious and clear that they are speaking in a figurative sense [...]. It is not necessary to peel away the ‘shell’ to reach the ‘kernel’ of a mystical, secret, or allegorical meaning that only the initiated can discover.”

STUDY METHOD

Making the Bible Its Own Interpreter

Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 187

“The Bible is its own expositor. One passage will prove to be a **key** that will unlock other passages, and in this way light will be shed upon the hidden meaning of the word. **By comparing different texts** treating on the same subject, viewing their bearing on every side, **the true** meaning of the Scriptures will be made evident.”

1. DEFINITION OF COVENANT

Alliance, agreement, pact, contract—these are synonymous words.

Agreement is a relationship with commitment.

Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 1, p. 110.2

“A covenant is an agreement by which parties bind themselves and each other to the fulfillment of certain conditions. Thus the human agent enters into agreement with God to comply with the conditions specified in His Word. His conduct shows whether or not He respects these conditions.”

2. BASIC PRINCIPLES OF A COVENANT

1. Agreement between two or more parties.
2. Mutual obligations. Each party has rights and duties.
3. A contract is binding only on the parties.
4. There must be provision for a contractual penalty.

2. BASIC PRINCIPLES OF A COVENANT

MAN

➤ DUTIES: Worship God, be fruitful, multiply, subdue the animals, tend the garden, do not eat the fruit of the forbidden tree.

➤ RIGHTS: Enjoy peace, joy, and receive eternal life.

GOD

➤ DUTIES: To grant eternal life to Adam

➤ RIGHTS: To receive worship and obedience from Adam

CONTRACTUAL FINE

DEATH:

"for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."
(Genesis 2:17)

3. HOW DID ADAM RESPOND TO THE WORKS COVENANT?

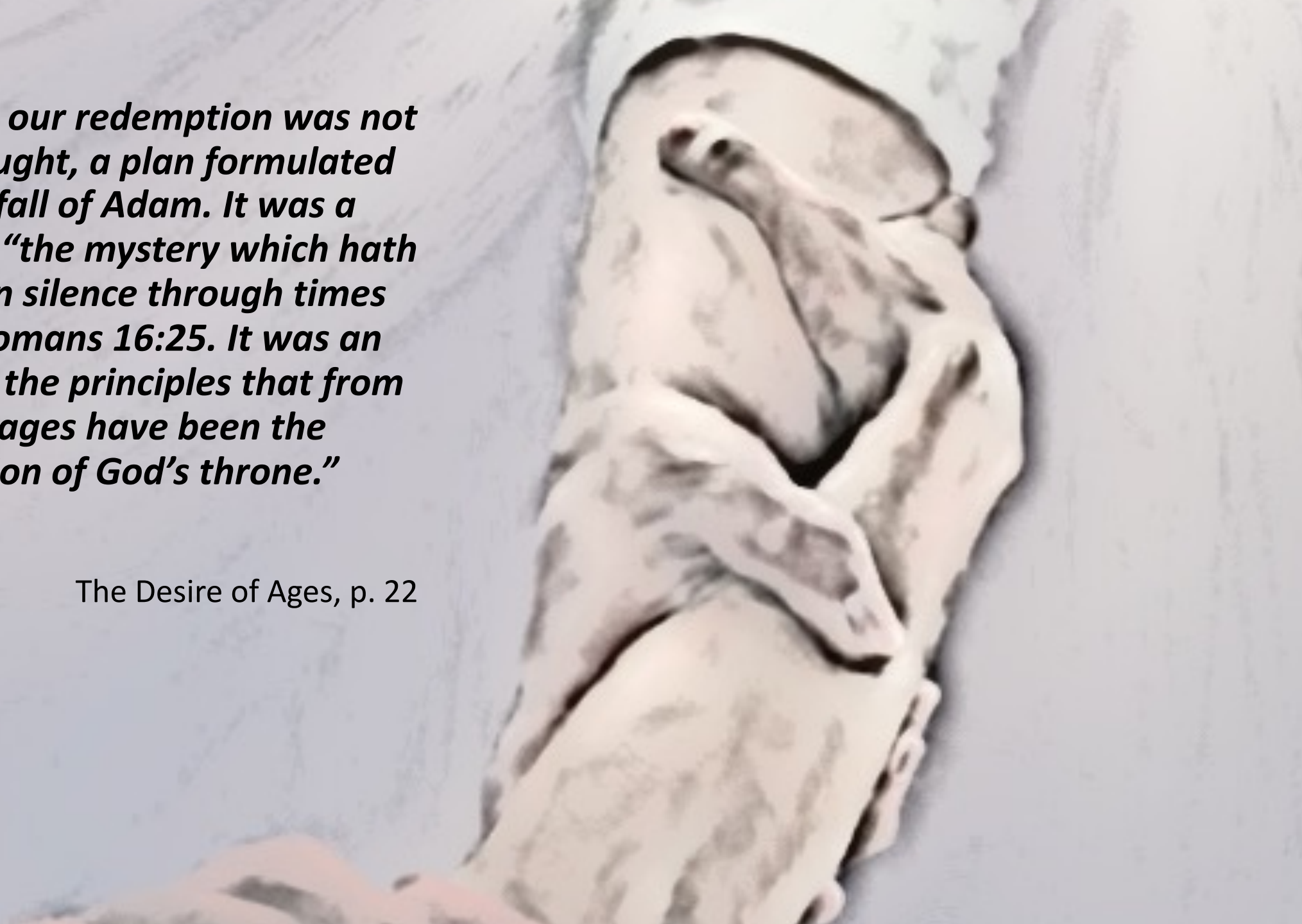
Hosea 6:7

“But they like Adam have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me.”

- If Adam and Eve had never sinned, could God have expelled them from the garden?
- Adam and Eve were condemned to death (Gen. 2:17). They could not demand forgiveness or mercy from God, for this was not provided for in the contract. The destruction of the couple would be just.
- Faced with this impasse, God proposed a new covenant to them. This new covenant is the eternal covenant of grace, which had been hidden from eternity.

“The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of “the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal.” Romans 16:25. It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God’s throne.”

The Desire of Ages, p. 22



“Before the foundations of the earth were laid, the Father and the Son had united in a covenant to redeem man if he should be overcome by Satan. They had clasped Their hands in a solemn pledge that Christ should become the surety for the human race. This pledge Christ has fulfilled. When upon the cross He cried out, “It is finished,” He addressed the Father. The compact had been fully carried out.”

The Desire of Ages, p. 834





4. MERCY BECOMES KNOWN

If Adam had obeyed, could God have destroyed him?

Rom. 4:4. “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.”

If God had destroyed the first couple, would He have been just?

Gen. 2:17. “but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

Rom. 6:23. “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life.”

4. MERCY BECOMES KNOWN

Why didn't God destroy Adam and Eve after they ate the fruit?

Lam. 3:22. “*It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed.*”

Titus 3:5. “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

4. MERCY BECOMES KNOWN

Is God obligated to show mercy? Can man demand mercy?

Rom. 9:14-16, 18. “¹⁴ What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid. ¹⁵ For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. ¹⁶ So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. ¹⁸ Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.”

Titus 2:11. “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.”

4. MERCY BECOMES KNOWN

Ellen G. White, *MM – Amazing Grace*, p. 10.

“By disobeying the commands of God, man fell under the condemnation of His law. This fall called for the grace of God to appear in behalf of sinners. We should **never** have learned the meaning of this word “**grace**” had we not **fallen**. God loves the sinless angels, who do His service, and are obedient to all His commands; but He does not give them grace. These heavenly beings know naught of grace; they have never needed it; for they have never sinned.”

4. MERCY BECOMES KNOWN

Ellen G. White, *MM – Amazing Grace*, p. 25 (continued).

“Grace is an attribute of God shown to undeserving human beings. We did not seek after it, but it was sent in search of us. God rejoices to bestow this grace upon every one who hungers for it. To every one He presents terms of mercy, not because we are worthy, but because we are so utterly unworthy. Our need is the qualification which gives us the assurance that we shall receive this gift.”

5. GOD PRESENTS THE EVERLASTING COVENANT TO MAN

How was the Everlasting Covenant presented to man?

Genesis 3:15, 21.

“¹⁵ And I will put enmity between thee [serpent] and the woman, and between thy seed [of the serpent] and her **seed** [of the woman]; it [the seed of the woman, Christ] **shall bruise thy head** [the serpent], and thou [the serpent] shalt bruise his heel [the offspring of the woman]. ²¹ Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.”

5. GOD PRESENTS THE EVERLASTING COVENANT TO MAN

As was the covenant of Eden, before sin:

MAN

- DUTIES: Worship God, be fruitful, multiply, subdue the animals, tend the garden, do not eat the fruit of the forbidden tree.
- RIGHTS: Enjoy peace, joy, and receive eternal life.

GOD

- DUTIES: Grant eternal life to Adam
- RIGHTS: To receive worship and obedience from Adam

CONTRACTUAL PENALTY

DEATH: "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2:17

5. GOD PRESENTS THE EVERLASTING COVENANT TO MAN

How was the covenant of Eden like after sin:

MAN

- DUTIES: Complete obedience.
- RIGHTS: Eternal life.

GOD

- DUTIES: To grant eternal life.
- RIGHTS: To receive worship and obedience.

CONTRACTUAL PENALTY

DEATH: "For the wages of sin is death." Rom. 6:23

TERM OF MERCY

ETERNAL LIFE: "The gift of God" Rom. 6:23

5. GOD PRESENTS THE EVERLASTING COVENANT TO MAN

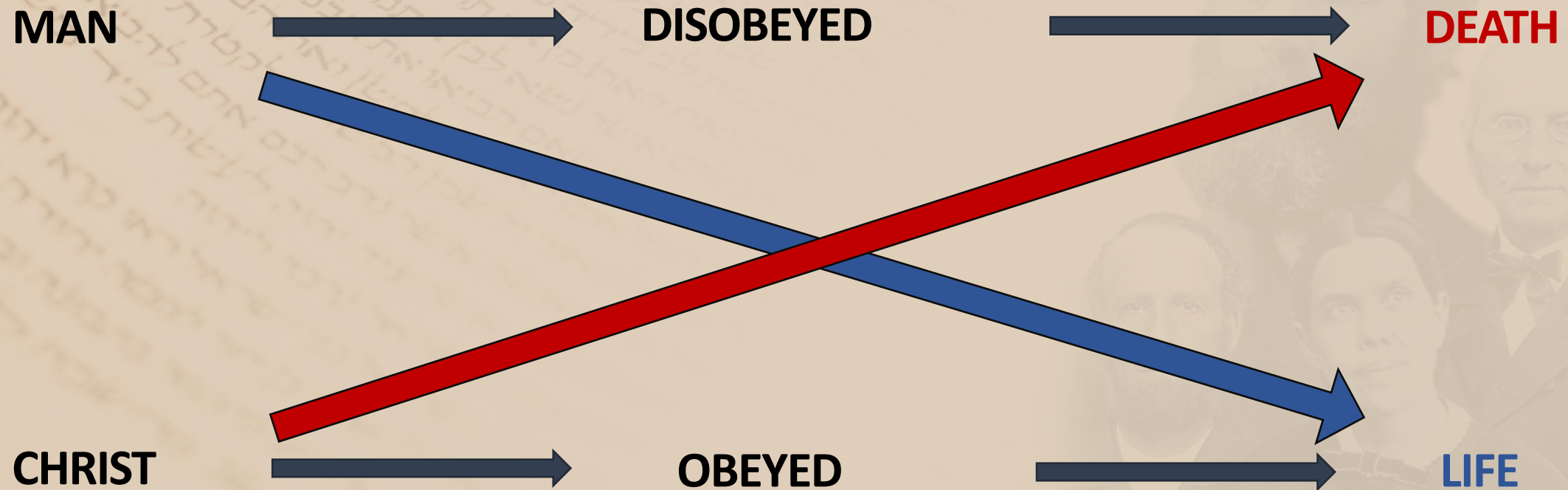
Besides crushing the serpent, what else was foretold in the Everlasting Covenant that Christ would fulfill?

Galatians 3:13,14

“¹³ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. (...) ¹⁴ that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles.”

5. GOD PRESENTS THE EVERLASTING COVENANT TO MAN

How does the exchange between blessing and curse work?



6. THE RENEWAL OF THE PROMISE THROUGHOUT HISTORY

With whom did God renew his covenant before and after the flood?

- **Gen. 6:18.** "But with thee will I establish [קִימָה – *kum*] my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee."
- **Gen. 9:8, 9, 12, 13.** "⁸ And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, ⁹ And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; 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 generations: ¹³ I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth."

6. THE RENEWAL OF THE PROMISE THROUGHOUT HISTORY

With which other patriarch did God renew his covenant?

- **Gen. 12:1-3.** “¹ Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: ² and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: ³ and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”
- **Gen. 15:17, 18.** “and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In the same day the Lord made [כָּרַת - *karath*] a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land.”
- **Gen. 17:1, 2, 7.** “¹ And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I *am* the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. ² And I will make [נָתַן - *nathan*] my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. ⁷ And I will establish [קִיּוּם - *kum*] my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.”

6. THE RENEWAL OF THE PROMISE THROUGHOUT HISTORY

With whom else did God renew his covenant?

- Ex. 6:3-6. “³ And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them. ⁴ And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers. ⁵ And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant. ⁶ Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, *I am* the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments.”

6. THE RENEWAL OF THE PROMISE THROUGHOUT HISTORY

With whom else did God renew his covenant?

- **Ex. 19:3-8.** “³ And Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, ‘Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: ⁴ ‘You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself. ⁵ Now therefore, **if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant**, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all **people**; for all the earth *is* Mine. ⁶ And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.’ ⁷ So Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before them all these words which the Lord commanded him. ⁸ Then all the people answered together and said, ‘**All that the LORD has spoken we will do.**’ So Moses brought back the words of the people to the Lord.”

6. THE RENEWAL OF THE PROMISE THROUGHOUT HISTORY

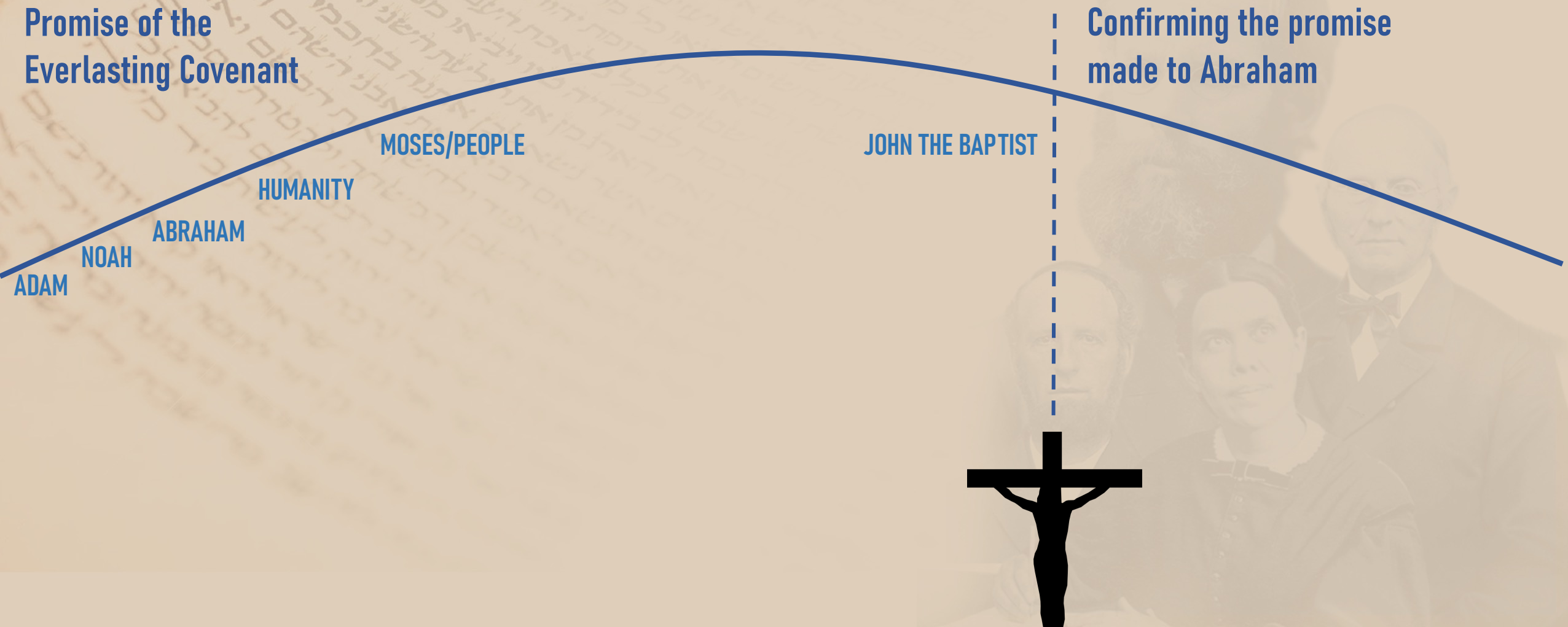
What commitment was John the Baptist called to?

- **Luke 1:72, 73** “⁷² To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, ⁷³ he oath which He swore to our father Abraham.”

Why did Jesus come into the world?

- **Rom. 15:8.** “Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers.”

Renewal of the Everlasting Covenant throughout the centuries



7. "ANOTHER COVENANT" – THE SINAI COVENANT

After spending time on the mountain receiving instructions from God, Moses returned to the people. What did he present to them? How did the people respond?

- Ex. 24:3, 4, 7. “³ So Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, ‘All the words which the Lord has said we will do.’ ⁴ And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. (...) ⁷ Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, ‘All that the Lord has said we will do, and be obedient.’”

7. “ANOTHER COVENANT” – THE SINAI COVENANT

Did the people respond badly?

- Deut. 5:28. “Then the Lord heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me, and the Lord said to me: ‘I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken to you. They are right in all that they have spoken.’”

7. “ANOTHER COVENANT” – THE SINAI COVENANT

Did the people respond badly?

- “Here the people received the conditions of the covenant. They made a solemn covenant with God, typifying the covenant made between God and every believer in Jesus Christ. **The conditions were plainly laid before the people. They were not left to misunderstand them.** When they were requested to decide whether they would agree to all the conditions given, they unanimously consented to obey every obligation. They had already consented to obey God’s commandments. **The principles of the law were now particularized,** that they might **know how much was involved in covenanting to obey the law;** and they accepted the specifically defined particulars of the law.”

(Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 1, p. 114.2)

7. “ANOTHER COVENANT” – THE SINAI COVENANT

How was the Sinai Covenant ratified?

- Ex. 24:6, 8. “⁶ And Moses took half the blood and put *it* in basins; (...) ⁸ And Moses took the blood, sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, ‘This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you according to all these words.’”

7. “ANOTHER COVENANT” – THE SINAI COVENANT

How was the Sinai Covenant ratified?

- Heb. 9:18, 19. “Therefore not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people.”

7. "ANOTHER COVENANT" – THE SINAI COVENANT

How the Sinai Covenant generally worked

OBEDY - LIVE

- Lev. 18:5. "You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them."

DISOBEDY - DIE

- Deut. 27:26. "Cursed is the one who does not confirm all the words of this law by observing them."

COVENANT OF SINAI

MAN

- DUTIES: Complete obedience.
- RIGHTS: Eternal life.

GOD

- DUTIES: Grant eternal life.
- RIGHTS: To receive worship and obedience.

CONTRACTUAL PENALTY

DEATH: “The wages of sin is death.” Rom. 6:23

TERM OF MERCY

ETERNAL LIFE: “The gift of God” Rom. 6:23

EVERLASTING COVENANT

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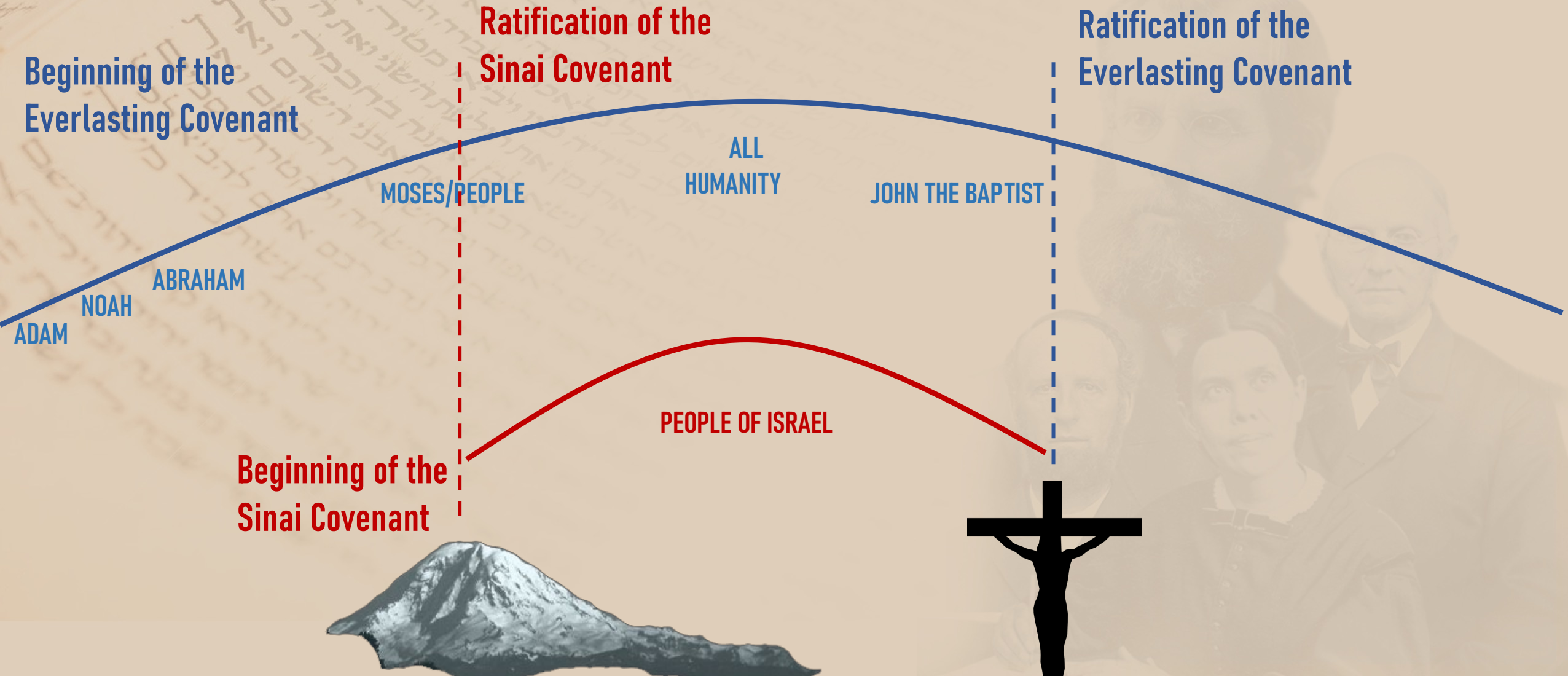
DEATH: "The wages of sin is death." Rom. 6:23

8. THE RATIFICATION OF THE EVERLASTING COVENANT

If the Sinai Covenant was ratified with the blood of animals in the middle of the desert, how and when did the ratification of the Everlasting Covenant take place?

- **Matt. 26:27, 28.** “²⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. ²⁸ For **this is my blood of the new covenant**, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.’”
- **Dan. 9:27.** “Then **he shall confirm a covenant** with many for one week; but **in the middle of the week** he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.”

Order of Ratification of the Covenants



9. DOES ELLEN WHITE CONFIRM THIS EXPOSITION?

The theology of Patriarchs and Prophets (Chapter 32 – The Law and the Covenants, p. 370)

“As the Bible presents two laws, one changeless and eternal, the other provisional and temporary, so there are two covenants. The covenant of grace was first made with man in Eden, when after the Fall there was given a divine promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head. To all men this covenant offered pardon and the assisting grace of God for future obedience through faith in Christ. It also promised them eternal life on condition of fidelity to God’s law. Thus the patriarchs received the hope of salvation.

"This same covenant was renewed to Abraham in the promise, (...)

"Though this covenant was made with Adam and renewed to Abraham, it could not be ratified until the death of Christ. It had existed by the promise of God (...)."

9. DOES ELLEN WHITE CONFIRM THIS EXPOSITION?

The theology of Patriarchs and Prophets (Chapter 32 – The Law and the Covenants, p. 370)

Another compact—called in Scripture the “old” covenant—was formed between God and Israel at Sinai, and was then ratified by the blood of a sacrifice. The Abrahamic covenant was ratified by the blood of Christ, and it is called the “second,” or “new,” covenant, because the blood by which it was sealed was shed after the blood of the first covenant. (....)

The terms of the “old covenant” were, Obey and live: “If a man do, he shall even live in them” (Ezekiel 20:11; Leviticus 18:5); but “cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them.” Deuteronomy 27:26. The “new covenant” was established upon “better promises”—the promise of forgiveness of sins and of the grace of God to renew the heart and bring it into harmony with the principles of God’s law.

Bible Readings

FOR THE

Home Circle

*A Topical Study of the Bible, Systematically
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ABRAHAM SENDING AWAY HAGAR

"Cast out the bondwoman and her son." Gal. 4:30.

THE TWO COVENANTS

1. WHAT two covenants are contrasted in the Bible?

"In that He saith, A *new* covenant, He hath made the first *old*. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." Heb. 8:13.

2. By what other terms are these covenants designated?

"For if that *first* covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the *second*." Verse 7.

3. In connection with what historical event was the old covenant made?

"Not according to 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*; because they continued not in My covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord." Verse 9. See Ex. 19:3-8.

4. When God was about to proclaim His law to Israel, of what did He tell Moses to remind them?

"Tell the children of Israel; Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself." Ex. 19:3, 4.

5. What proposition did He submit to them?

"Now therefore, *if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people*: for all the earth is Mine: and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." Verses 5, 6.

6. What response did the people make to this proposition?

"And all the people answered together, and said, *All that the Lord hath spoken we will do*. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord." Verse 8.

7. In this covenant with Israel, what obligation was imposed upon the people?

"Now therefore, *if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant*." Verse 5, first part.

8. What was the Lord's covenant which they were to keep as their part of this covenant?

"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." Deut. 4:13.

NOTE.—The ten commandments were the "covenant" to which the Lord referred, when, in proposing to make a covenant with Israel, He said, "If ye will obey *My voice* indeed, and keep *My covenant*," etc. Ex. 19:5. The ten commandments were termed God's covenant before the covenant was made with Israel: hence they cannot be the old covenant itself. They were not an agreement made, but something which God commanded them to perform, and promised blessings upon condition they were kept. Thus the ten commandments — God's covenant — became the *basis* of the covenant here made with Israel. The old covenant was made *concerning* the ten commandments; or, as stated in Ex. 24:8, "concerning all these words." A covenant means a solemn pledge or promise based on conditions.

9. After the law had been proclaimed from Sinai, what did the people again say?

"And all the people answered with one voice, and said, *All the words which the Lord hath said will we do*." Ex. 24:3.

10. That there might be no misunderstanding, what did Moses do?

"And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, . . . and he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people." Verses 4-7.

11. What did the people once again promise to do?

"And they said, *All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient*." Verse 7.

12. How was this covenant then confirmed and dedicated?

"And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And *Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.*" Verses 5-8.

13. How does Paul describe this dedication of the covenant?

"For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and *sprinkled both the book, and all the people*, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you." Heb. 9: 19, 20.

NOTE.— We here have the complete account of the making of the first or old covenant. God promised to make them His peculiar people on condition that they would keep His commandments: Three times they promised to obey. The agreement was then ratified, or sealed, with blood.

14. Within less than forty days after the making of this covenant, while Moses tarried in the mount, what did the people say to Aaron?

"*Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.*" Ex. 32: 1.

15. When Moses came down from Sinai, what did he see?

"And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw *the calf, and the dancing*: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount." Verse 19.

NOTE.— The great object and secret of the old covenant is revealed here. The people did not realize the weakness and sinfulness of their own hearts, or their need of divine grace and help to keep the law; and so, in their ignorance, they readily pledged obedience to it. But almost immediately they began to commit idolatry, and thus to break the law of God, or the very conditions laid down as their part of the covenant. In themselves the conditions were good; but in their own strength the people were unable to fulfil them. The great object of the old covenant therefore was to teach the people their weakness, and their inability to keep the law without the help of God. Like the law itself, over which the old covenant was made, this covenant was designed to shut them up to the provisions of the new or everlasting covenant, and lead them to Christ. Gal. 3:

23, 24. And the lesson which Israel as a nation had to learn in this, each individual now must learn before he can be saved. There is no salvation for any one while trusting in self. Unaided, no one can keep the law. Only in Christ is there either remission of sins or power to keep from sinning. The breaking of the tables of the law signified that the terms of the covenant had been broken; the renewing of the tables (Ex. 34: 1, 28), God's patience and long-suffering with His people.

16. Wherein does the new covenant differ from and excel the old?

"But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of a *better covenant*, which was established upon *better promises.*" Heb. 8: 6.

17. What are the "better promises" upon which the new covenant was established?

"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; . . . I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*" Jer. 31: 33, 34. See Heb. 8: 8-12.

NOTE.— These are simply the blessings of the gospel through Christ. They are promised upon condition of repentance, confession, faith, and acceptance of Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant, which means salvation and obedience. In the old covenant there was no provision for pardon and power to obey. It is true there was pardon *during the time of the old covenant*, but not by *virtue* of it. Pardon then, as now, was through the provisions of the new covenant, the terms of which are older than the old covenant.

18. In what statement was Christ promised as a Saviour and Deliverer of the race as soon as sin entered?

"And the Lord God said unto the serpent, . . . I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and *her seed*; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel." Gen. 3: 14, 15.

NOTE.— The covenant of grace, with its provisions of pardon and peace, dates from the foundation of the world.

19. To whom was this covenant-promise later renewed?

"And God said unto *Abraham*, . . . Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with *his seed* after him." "I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, . . . and in *thy seed* shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Gen. 17: 15-19; 26: 4.

20. Who was the seed here referred to?

"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause He is the mediator of a *new covenant*, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." Heb. 9: 14, 15, R. V.

NOTE.—The fact that Christ, as mediator of the second covenant, died for the remission of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, shows that there was no forgiveness *by virtue* of the first covenant.

26. Under the old covenant, what did the people promise?

To keep the law of God in their own strength.

NOTE.—Under this covenant the people promised to keep all the commandments of God in order to be His peculiar people, and this without help from any one. This was virtually a promise to make themselves righteous. But Christ says, "Without Me ye can do nothing." John 15: 5. And the prophet Isaiah says, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Isa. 64: 6. The only perfect righteousness is God's righteousness, and this can be obtained only through faith in Christ. Rom. 3: 20-26. The only righteousness that will insure an entrance into the kingdom of God is "the righteousness which is of God by faith." Phil. 3: 9. Of those who inherit the kingdom of God, the Lord says, "Their righteousness is of Me" (Isa. 54: 17); and the prophet Jeremiah says of Christ, "This is His name whereby He shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness." Jer. 23: 6.

27. Under the new covenant, what does God promise to do?

"I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." Jer. 31: 33.

NOTE.—The new covenant is an arrangement for bringing man again into harmony with the divine will, and placing him where he can keep God's law. Its "better promises" bring forgiveness of sins, grace to renew the heart, and power to obey the law of God. The dissolution of the old covenant and the making of the new in no wise abrogated the law of God.

28. Where was the law of God written under the old covenant?

"And I made an ark of shittim-wood, and hewed *two tables of stone*. . . . *And He wrote on the tables . . . the ten commandments*, which the Lord spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the Lord gave them unto me." Deut. 10: 3, 4.

29. Where is the law of God written under the new covenant?

"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*." Jer. 31: 33.

30. What reason is given for making the new covenant?

"For if that first covenant had been *faultless*, then should no place have been sought for the second. For *finding fault with them*, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant." Heb. 8: 7, 8.

NOTE.—The chief fault in connection with the old covenant lay with the *people*. They were not able, in themselves, to fulfil their part of it, and it provided them no help for so doing. There was no Christ in it. It was of *works* and not of *grace*. It was valuable only as a means of impressing upon them their sinfulness and their need of divine aid.

31. What unites all believers under the new covenant?

"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: *but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ*." Eph. 2: 11-13.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE TWO COVENANTS

1. Both are called covenants.
2. Both were ratified with blood.
3. Both were made concerning the law of God.
4. Both were made with the people of God.
5. Both were established upon promises.

DISSIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE TWO COVENANTS

OLD COVENANT	NEW COVENANT
Called the old covenant.	Called the new covenant.
Called the first covenant.	Called the second covenant.
A temporary compact.	An everlasting covenant.
Dedicated with the blood of animals.	Ratified with the blood of Christ.
Was faulty.	Is a better covenant.
Was established upon the promises of the people.	Is established upon the promises of God.
Had no mediator.	Has a mediator.
Had no provision for the forgiveness of sins.	Provides for the forgiveness of sins.
Under this, the law was written on tables of stone.	Under this, the law is written in the heart.
Was of works.	Is of grace.
Conditions: Obey and live; disobey and die.	Conditions: Repent and be forgiven; believe and be saved.

THE OLD	THE NEW
If. If ye. If ye will. If ye will do. If ye will do all.	I. I will. I will do.
If ye will do all, then—ye shall be My people, and I will be your God.	I will do all. I will do all, and—will be your God, and ye shall be My people.

PRINCIPLES OF LIFE FROM THE WORD OF GOD

A Systematic Study of the Major Doctrines
of the Bible

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THE TWO COVENANTS

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2:8.

Another compact—called in Scripture the “old covenant”—was formed between God and Israel at Sinai, and was then ratified by the blood of a sacrifice. The Abrahamic covenant was ratified by the blood of Christ, and it is called the “second,” or “new” covenant, because the blood by which it was sealed was shed after the blood of the first covenant. That the new covenant was valid in the days of Abraham, is evident from the fact that it was then confirmed both by the promise and by the oath of God,—the “two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie.” Hebrews 6:18.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 371:1.

The Old Covenant

1. Define the term “covenant.”

To agree with, to enter into a formal agreement; to bind oneself by contract. An agreement between two or more persons or parties, or one of the stipulations in such an agreement.—Webster.

2. Where and with whom did God make the “old” covenant? Exodus 19:1-8.

3. What proposition did God sub-

mit to them? Exodus 19:5, 6.

4. After Moses had explained the terms of the covenant to the people, what was the unanimous response? Exodus 19:8; 24:3.

5. Tell how this covenant was ratified. Exodus 24:3-8; Hebrews 9:18-21.

6. Before Moses had finished his audience with God and come down from the mountaintop, what had Israel done? Exodus 32:7, 8.

What was wrong? Just this: The people could not fulfill their part of the agreement. The fault was with them. They were carnally minded and could not be subject to a spiritual and holy law. They were seeking to establish their own righteousness by their own efforts, not realizing that without divine help they could do nothing. When they had tried to clothe themselves with rightdoing, they found themselves covered only with the filthy rags of sin.—William H. Branson, *Drama of the Ages*, 359:2.

7. What, then, was wrong with the old covenant? Hebrews 8:7, 8.

The old covenant . . . was a system of reform without Christ. It was a covenant of works from which Christ, the only Mediator of righteousness and peace, was entirely excluded.—William H. Branson, *Drama of the Ages*, 359:3.

The terms of the “old covenant” were, Obey and live: “If a man do, he shall even live in them” (Ezekiel 20:11; Leviticus 18:5); but “cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them” (Deuteronomy 27:26). The “new covenant” was established upon “better promises” [Hebrews 8:8, 6]—the promise of forgiveness of sins, and of the grace of God to renew the heart, and bring it into harmony with the principles of God’s law.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 372:1.

8. Was the old covenant the Ten Commandments, the moral law?

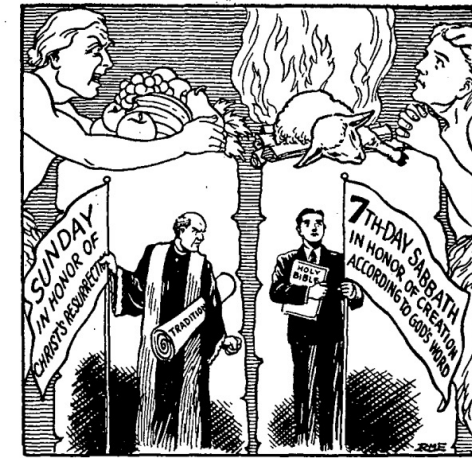
Many have erroneously supposed that the old covenant was the moral law, the Ten Commandments, and that when the New Covenant was ratified, the law was annulled and set aside. The old covenant was not the Ten Commandment law, but was instead an agreement made between God and the people regarding the keeping of His commandments. “If ye will obey, ye shall live,” was God’s promise. To this the people replied: “All that Jehovah hath said will we do, and be obedient.” Exodus 24:7. This was the covenant agreement. It was *about* the keeping of the Ten Commandment law, but it was not the law itself. The law was only the subject.—William H. Branson, *Drama of the Ages*, 359:5.

9. What became of the old covenant? Hebrews 8:13.

The New Covenant

10. With whom did God make the new covenant? Hebrews 8:8, 9.

11. How did the new covenant



Which shall we honor—the Sabbath of the Creator, or Sunday, the tradition of men?

differ from the old one? Jeremiah 31:33; Romans 8:3, 4; Hebrews 8:9, 10.

The new covenant is “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Colossians 1:27. (See also Ephesians 3:16-20; Philippians 4:13.)

12. Who is the Mediator of this covenant? Hebrews 8:1, 6; 12:24.

13. Where there is a covenant, what is necessary? Hebrews 9:16, 17.

14. Where and how was this new covenant ratified? John 19:30; 20:17.

Jesus refused to receive the homage of His people until He had the assurance that His sacrifice was accepted by the Father. He ascended to the heavenly courts, and from God Himself heard the assurance that His atonement for the sins of men had been ample, and through His blood all might gain eternal life. The Father ratified the covenant made with Christ, that He would receive repentant and obe-

PRINCIPLES OF LIFE

dient men, and would love them even as He loves His Son.—*The Desire of Ages*, 790:3.

15. With what allegory did Paul make evident the difference between the two covenants? Galatians 4:21-31.

16. In the study of this lesson what conclusion do we reach regarding salvation? Ephesians 2:8-10.

It [the old covenant] was not an instrument of salvation. Those who have been saved, on either side of the cross, have been saved by faith in Jesus

Christ and by His power dwelling in the heart.—William H. Branson, *Drama of the Ages*, 367:2.

The Two Covenants Were Alike in That

- a. Both are called covenants.
- b. Both were ratified with blood.
- c. Both were made with the law of God as a basis.
- d. Both were made between God and the people.
- e. Both were established upon promises.

The Two Covenants Were Different in That

- | | |
|--|---|
| a. One was called the old covenant. | a. The other was called the new covenant. |
| b. One was called the first covenant. | b. The other was called the second covenant. |
| c. One was a temporary compact. | c. The other was an everlasting covenant. |
| d. One was ratified with the blood of animals. | d. The other was ratified with the blood of Christ. |
| e. One was faulty. | e. The other is a better covenant. |
| f. One was established upon the promise of the people. | f. The other is established upon the promises of God. |
| g. One had no mediator. | g. The other has a Mediator. |
| h. The old covenant had no provision for the forgiveness of sin. | h. The new covenant has provision for the forgiveness of sin. |

Think:

1. In the councils of peace that were held between the Father and the Son, a complete plan was devised by which, if man sinned, he could be redeemed (see Zechariah 6:12, 13). It was impossible that the plan should be based upon the idea of setting aside the death penalty, and there must be provided a substitutionary death

THE TWO COVENANTS

that would meet all the demands of a broken law. In order to save man, God would have to pay the penalty of man's sins.

2. It is with awe and reverence that we see Christ present Himself before the Father and willingly offer to act this part in human redemption. . . . He offers to go to the cross.

3. This was to be Christ's part in saving man. It was thus that He became the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." [Revelation 13:8] . . .

4. The Father's part in the everlasting covenant was equally important. . . . He accepted the offer so freely made by Christ. . . . There was no alternative.

5. The Father also agreed that those who should accept the provisions made through the sacrifice of Christ should be given power to become the sons of God.

6. He would forgive their sins.

7. He would hear their prayers.

8. He would impute and impart to them Christ's righteousness.

9. He would raise Christ's children from the grave.

10. He would grant to them the priceless gift of eternal life.

11. He would restore them to their long-lost home in Paradise by renewing the earth and placing the redeemed in it.

12. He would dwell with them forever.—William H. Branson, *Drama of the Ages*, 365:1 to 366:5.

Texts to Remember:

Jeremiah 31:33 Ephesians 2:8-10 Hebrews 8:8-10

Define or Identify:

"better promises"	ratify
covenant	righteousness by works

AN
OLD TESTAMENT
THEOLOGY

WALTKE



an exegetical, canonical, and thematic approach

AN OLD TESTAMENT
THEOLOGY



BRUCE K. WALTKE
with Christopher L. Wright



10. AND WHAT DO THEOLOGIAN SAY?

A little bit of Bruce K. Waltke's theology

"The marked superiority of the new covenant administration inaugurated by Christ is so much greater than the administration of the old covenant inaugurated for Israel by Moses that it is better to speak with Jeremiah and the writer of Hebrews of the former administration as the old covenant and of the new administration as the new covenant. (p. 512)

"But the Sinai covenant has a glaring weakness: Israel attempted to keep it by their own resolve. Many Jews regard it as a covenant of works. But if the covenant of works failed in the Garden of Eden before the Fall, how much more will the Sinai covenant fail by human resolve in defiled Canaan." (p. 511).

(Bruce K. Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology*, Zondervan Publishing Company, 2011)

10. AND WHAT DO THEOLOGIAN SAY?

A little bit of Bruce K. Waltke's theology

“The new covenant is superior to the old in its effects on sinners. The old covenant condemned sinners and sanctified saints: (...) (Rom. 7:7-8). The new covenant stands in contrast with its gracious offer that God **forgives** sin on the basis of the perfect sacrifice of Christ and **enables** the faithful to know God and enter the sacred realm of life: the new covenant opposes this (...) (2 Cor. 3:9-11). This new experience of forgiveness in connection with a new obedience to the law entails a new relationship with God." (p. 514)

(Bruce K. Waltke, An Old Testament Theology, Zondervan Publishing Company, 2011)

10. AND WHAT DO THEOLOGIAN SAY?

A little bit of Bruce K. Waltke's theology

“The old covenant was put into effect by sprinkling the blood of bulls on the altar and on the people, but the blood of bulls **could never take away sin** (Heb. 10:11). Their blood only foreshadowed the blood of Christ that effects the new covenant. Jesus proclaimed the fulfillment of this symbolism when he offered the cup at the supper, saying, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Matt. 26:28). Christ’s vicarious death and cleansing blood satisfied God, enabling him to uphold his justice while **extending mercy and forgiveness to Israel** for breaking the old covenant. This is the reason he is the mediator of the new covenant. (...) The blessings of the new covenant arrangement — that unlike the old, the new cannot fail — can be traced to the grace mediated by the righteous Servant (...).” (p. 514)

(Bruce K. Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology*, Zondervan Publishing Company, 2011)

11. REASONING OF THE BIBLICAL AUTHORS

JEREMIAH 31:31-34

³¹ “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when 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 lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord.

³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

³⁴ No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

11. REASONING OF THE BIBLICAL AUTHORS

EXODUS 23:20-21

²⁰ “Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. ²¹ Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name *is* in Him.”

JEREMIAH 31:31-34

³¹ “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel (...) ³² NOT ACCORDING to the covenant that I made with their fathers (...) ³⁴ For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

11. REASONING OF THE BIBLICAL AUTHORS

ROMANS 9:4

“The covenants.”

2 CORINTHIANS 3:6-14

“New covenant” (v. 6) and “old covenant” (v. 14).

GALATIANS 4:24

“Two covenants...” (v. 24). “Sinai” and “Jerusalem above” (v. 24 and 26).

HEBREWS 8:7

“First covenant” and “second covenant.”

12. THE COVENANTS CONTENT. THE SUBDIVISIONS OF THE LAW

Subdivision of the Everlasting Covenant

- **Gen. 26:5.** “Because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.”

Subdivision of the Sinai Covenant

- **Deut. 4:45.** “These *are* the testimonies, the statutes, and the judgments which Moses spoke to the children of Israel after they came out of Egypt.”

12. THE COVENANTS CONTENT. THE SUBDIVISIONS OF THE LAW

Subdivision of the Sinai Covenant

- **Deut. 4:13, 14.** “¹³ So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone. ¹⁴ And the Lord commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that you might observe them in the land which you cross over to possess.”
- **Neh. 9:13.** “You came down also on Mount Sinai, and spoke with them from heaven, and gave them just ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments.”

12. THE COVENANTS CONTENT. THE SUBDIVISIONS OF THE LAW

Subdivision of the Sinai Covenant

- Neh 10:29. “(...) to walk in God’s Law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our Lord, and His ordinances and His statutes.”
- Deut. 7:11. “Therefore you shall keep the commandment, the statutes, and the judgments which I command you today.”

12. THE COVENANTS CONTENT. THE SUBDIVISIONS OF THE LAW

Conclusions

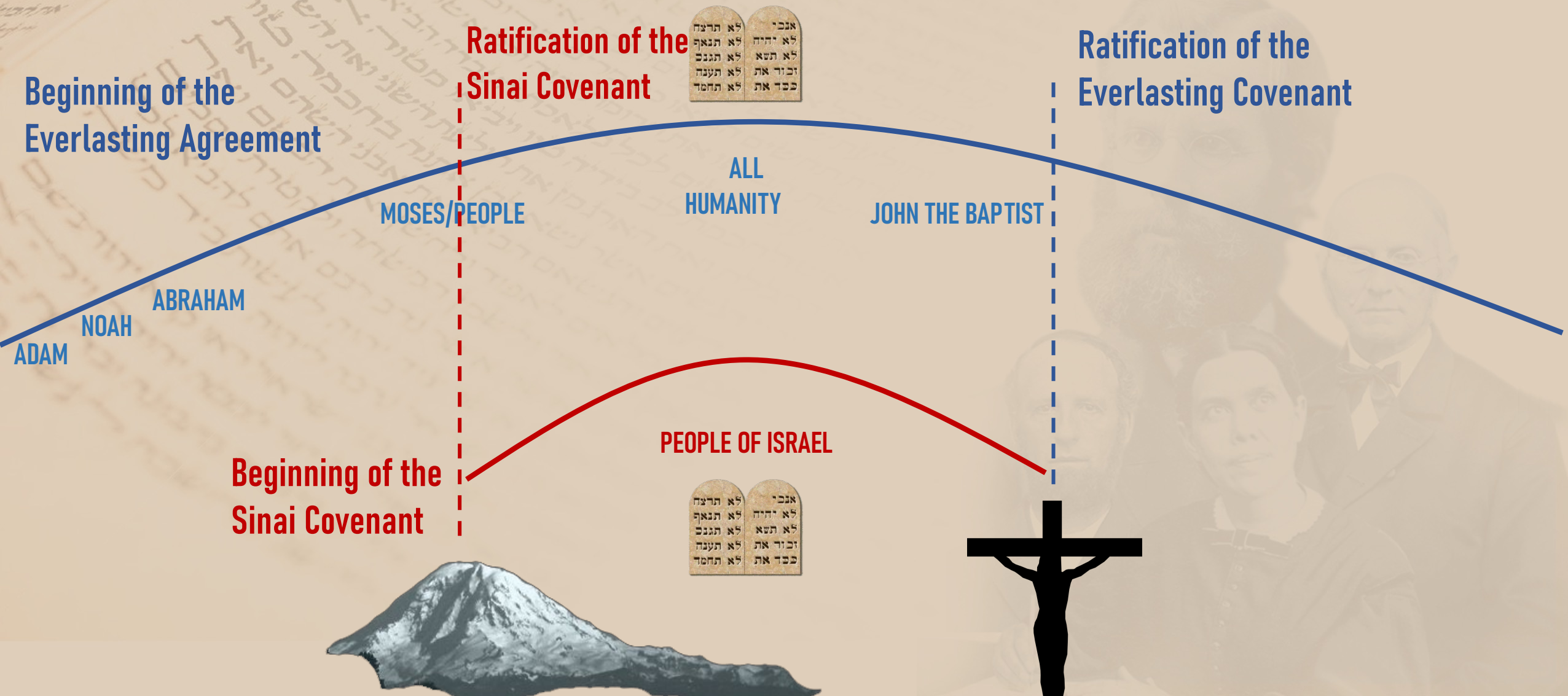
1. The Bible groups God's rules into Commandments, statutes, and judgments, rather than morals and ceremonies.
2. In each covenant there is a list of the Ten Commandments.
3. In both covenants there are ceremonial rules. Circumcision and sacrifice were common to both covenants. Currently, ceremonial law is limited to baptism, foot washing, Holy Communion, ordination of elders and deacons, and anointing of the sick.

12. THE COVENANTS CONTENT. THE SUBDIVISIONS OF THE LAW

Conclusions

4. This grouping of moral and ceremonial laws that we make is only didactic, not juridical. In fact, although there were groups of commandments, statutes, and judgments, the covenant was a single document. These groups were all united in the same package.
5. There was much more to the covenants than moral and ceremonial laws. We have civil laws, criminal laws, health laws, etc. They are included under the nomenclature of statutes and judgments.

Order of Ratification of the Covenants



13. WHY WAS THE SINAI COVENANT MADE?

If the Eternal Covenant was sufficient to save humanity, why did God establish a new covenant only with the Israelites?

Galatians 3:19

“What purpose then *does* the **law** *serve*? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the **promise** was made.”

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 371

“But if the **Abrahamic covenant** contained the promise of redemption, why was **another covenant formed at Sinai**?—In their bondage the people had to a great extent lost the knowledge of God and of the principles of the Abrahamic covenant. (...)”

13. WHY WAS THE SINAI COVENANT FORMED?

During their prolonged captivity, the Israelites lost sight of four things:

1. The notion of God's holiness.
2. The reality of man's depravity, and they became used to evil.
3. Their inability to obey God's law.
4. The realization that they needed a savior.

13. WHY WAS THE SINAI COVENANT FORMED?

The Sinai Covenant had an educational function to protect and teach.

Galatians 3:23,24

“²³ But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”

Galatians 4:1-3

“¹ Now I say *that* the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, ² but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. ³ Even so we, when we were children (...).”





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