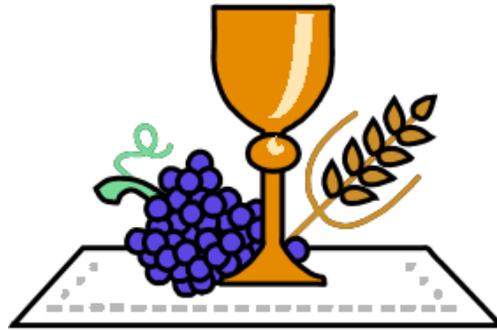


What It Means To Be Saved By Grace

*A Christian Appraisal
of Christ's New Covenant
Gift of Grace, in Relation
to the Mosaic Law*



By Helena Lehman
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E-mail: helena@pillar-of-enoch.com
Web site: <http://pillar-of-enoch.com>

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The Blood Covenant Foundation of Salvation

“He remembers His covenant forever, the word which He commanded, for a thousand generations, The covenant which He made with Abraham, and His oath to Isaac, And confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant...” - Psalm 105:8-10 (NKJ)

The Scripture opening this essay, taken from Psalm 105, speaks of Yahweh’s Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as an *everlasting* Covenant - one that Yahweh will remember *forever*. As an everlasting Covenant, it cannot be any of the conditional Covenants that Yahweh made with mankind. Therefore, this cannot be the Abrahamic Covenant that was dependent upon circumcision. Because it required mankind’s obedience in the act of circumcision, this Covenant was conditional. It also cannot be the Covenant cut with Israel through Moses, since this Covenant was also conditional, and required people to do good works in keeping with the Mosaic Law. Instead, this everlasting Covenant has to do with the New Covenant that Yahweh promised to make with mankind at another time:

“Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD (Yahweh), when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah -- not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers... to lead them out of... Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD (Yahweh). But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel **after those days**... 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.” - Jeremiah 31:31-33 (NKJ)

This Scripture alludes to the New Covenant of Grace that came “*after those days*,” referring to the days when the Mosaic Law held sway over the descendants of Jacob living in the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. This Scripture therefore was prophesying about the New Covenant that Yahshua cut with humanity on Calvary. It was also prophesying that the Covenant of circumcision, and the Mosaic Covenant were to be fulfilled and superseded, *but not replaced by* the New Covenant of Grace. Unlike these older, conditional Covenants, the New Covenant does not require any physical work, or ritual act to be honored. Rituals attached to the New Covenant like baptism and Communion are not essential for believers to participate in to be saved. Only belief in Christ (as He is defined in the Bible), and in the all-sufficiency of His work of salvation is required. This makes the New Covenant truly unconditional, and everlasting.

Psalm 105 indicates that an unconditional and everlasting Covenant was made with Abraham *before* the New Covenant. We will therefore examine the Covenants in the Books of Genesis and Exodus to determine why some Covenants with mankind were everlasting - while others were not, and how they were tied to the everlasting New Covenant of Grace. Let’s begin our exploration with the Covenants cut in the Garden of Eden, at the dawn of time.

Yah’s Covenants with Adam and Noah

Despite their great ability to teach us about Yah, the Old Testament Law, and the biblical feasts were not God’s original method of instructing us about sin, and the Gospel, or

Path to Salvation. For example, though considered righteous by their great faith in Yah, Enoch and Abraham did not know about, or keep the laws, or feast days that Yah instructed Moses to teach the Israelites. Though the first five books of the Bible are considered to be the Mosaic Law, the Law of Moses is not introduced until the second book of the Bible known as Exodus. Instead of Passover, the Mosaic Covenants, and the Mosaic Law, *the Book of Genesis introduces us to three separate sets of Covenants that came before Moses, and the Law*. These are as follows:

1. **The two Blood Covenants that Yahweh cut with Adam in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:16-18, 3:21).**
2. **The Blood Covenant cut with Noah and all humanity immediately after the Great Flood (Genesis 9:9-12).**
3. **The two Blood Covenants cut with Abraham while he was still an uncircumcised Semite called Abram (Gen. 15:4-18), and afterward.**

In the book from which this essay was derived, these three sets of Covenants are identified by the terms: Adamic Covenant, Noahide Covenant, and Abrahamic Covenant, and they define the relationship between God and mankind before the Mosaic Law came into being. Now, though we are not explicitly told about it, there was a *conditional* Covenant of trust between Yahweh and Adam before he sinned. Yah gave the terms of this Covenant to Adam before Eve was created:

"And the LORD God (Yahweh Elohim) commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." - Gen. 2:16-17 (NKJ)

Shortly after issuing the terms of this conditional Adamic Covenant, Yahweh cut Adam open while he was sleeping so he would not feel the pain. Since the Hebrew word for Covenant is "berith," which means, "to select, or choose, as by cutting," this is when Yahweh officially "cut" the Covenant with Adam. At that time, Yahweh took Adam's rib to create Eve. Then Yahweh gave Eve to Adam, performing the first marriage. Adam therefore appears to have served as a living sacrifice by shedding a part of his flesh to seal his agreement with God! Meanwhile, Eve offered herself as the proffered sacrifice in the first Marriage Covenant. At that time, Eve promised to love, honor, and obey Adam, and Adam promised to love and honor Eve, and to act as "one flesh" with her. Consequently, just as the cutting of Adam's flesh sealed the first Adamic Covenant, and made Adam subject to Yahweh, Eve was subject to Adam through the Marriage Covenant.

We can also see the results of breaking these conditional Covenants in the curses that Yah spoke against Adam, Eve, and the satanic serpent in Genesis 3:14-19. Like these first Covenants, each subsequent Covenant was formed between Yah, a righteous male leader that had found favor with Yah, and the people that leader governed, and held authority over. In addition, each Covenant had certain divine promises and curses associated with it, and each offered some form of divine protection to the people involved in them. All of these divinely initiated Covenants therefore established one clear message to mankind: that Yahweh loves mankind, and wants people to have (or be reconciled back into) a full, and loving relationship with Him.

After the conditional Covenant between Yah and mankind was broken, Yah made an *unconditional* promise to provide Adam and Eve's descendents with a Savior who would destroy Satan, sin, and death forever. To seal this unconditional Adamic Covenant promise, Yah covered Adam and Eve with the skins of animals that Yah Himself sacrificed as Adam and Eve likely watched in horror. These animal skins signified the sacrifice of the innocent flesh and blood of the Messiah that would one day be shed in death to atone for their sins.

Afterward, Yah solemnly warned Satan (and promised Adam and Eve) that the conflict between good and evil would be waged between the “seed,” or offspring, of Satan and Eve, and that the woman’s seed would be victorious:

“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” - Gen. 3:15 (NKJ)

This is the first and most important prophecy in the Bible, and it is nothing less than a divine promise that Yah would provide a Savior from “her seed,” which is the “seed of the woman,” but not of the man. This could only be true if the child was conceived in a virgin by miraculous means. As the New Testament clearly attests, this happened for the first, and only time when Yahshua was born humbly to the virgin Miriam (i.e. Mary) in Bethlehem. Yahshua, the divinely promised Seed of the Woman, would forever bruise the head of Satan, and all his followers - even while Satan wounded Yahshua’s heel on Calvary. But, though this evil heel wound was fatal like Achilles’, Yahshua rose from the dead, and delivered a blow to Satan’s “head” that would one day be forever fatal! Christ’s Resurrection is a Covenant promise indicating that Satan will one day be defeated forever - allowing all believers to enter into everlasting life without sin!

The next occurrence of a Covenant formed between Yah and man occurred when Noah offered sacrifices of clean animals and birds as burnt offerings. These were offered to thank Yahweh for delivering Noah and his family through the Great Flood (Gen. 8:20). At the time of this Noahide Covenant, Yah promised to bless Noah and his sons, and to ensure the fruitfulness of the Earth. In addition, Yah unconditionally promised that He would never destroy the whole Earth by flood again (Genesis 8:21-22, 9:1-12).

As a perpetual sign of this unconditional Covenant with Noah and his descendents, Yah formed a rainbow in the skies over Earth for the first time. The rainbow has deep spiritual significance, for it is allegorically meant to symbolize the giant bow of Yahweh that is always poised to shoot an imaginary arrow into heaven. Thus, it symbolized that Yah would pierce His own allegorical heart with an arrow before He would allow the Earth to suffer from a total worldwide flood again. Yahweh later did, in fact, pierce His own heart with a type of arrow. It happened when Yahshua, who was already dead on the Cross, was pierced through to the heart by the spear of a Roman soldier. Isn’t Yah an amazing God?

Yah’s Covenant with Abraham

Hundreds of years later, Yah cut two more Blood Covenants with another righteous man named Abram. Since he was descended from Shem and Eber, Abram was both a Semite, and a Hebrew. He was not, however, an Israelite, but an uncircumcised Gentile born before the Covenant that would ultimately lead to the formation of Israel as a nation, and as a multitude of people who would found many nations.

Yah made His first set of elaborate promises to Abram during a Blood Covenant ceremony. At that time, Yah *unconditionally* promised Abram that his descendents would be as innumerable as the stars (Genesis 15:5). In addition, Yah promised that Abram’s descendents would inherit all the lands between the Nile and the Euphrates Rivers, which included the Sinai, Canaan, and Phoenicia (Genesis 15:18). This first Abrahamic Covenant was *unconditional*, so Abram was not responsible to see to its fulfillment. Since Yah alone symbolically passed through the sacrificed animals arranged on the ground to seal this Covenant, Yah signified that He would honor it whether, or not Abram’s descendents loved Yah the way Abram did. In fact, ***Abram’s descendents did not even have to remember this Covenant for Yah to keep it!*** In addition, by passing through the sacrificed animals alone,

God indicated His willingness to die in Abram's stead if he, or his descendents broke the covenant. Amazingly, on Calvary, God fulfilled this part of His covenant with Abram by providing Yahshua as the perfect sacrifice - thereby blessing the whole world with Salvation and Grace through Christ.

Significantly, this Covenant promise was made to *all* of Abraham's Gentile descendents, not just to those who were born to Jacob/Israel! Remember that Abraham had Ishmael through Sarah's handmaiden Hagar, and he also had another wife named Keturah after Sarah died. In addition, Isaac had Esau as well as Jacob. ***The Land of Israel was therefore promised to Abraham's Gentile descendents, as well as to Judah and Israel.*** The first Abrahamic Covenant is further discussed in Chapter Nine of "The Language of God in Humanity." Also see Books Three and Four of the Language of God Book Series to find out how this unconditional Covenant has been partly fulfilled in modern times.

Later, Yah entered a second, conditional Covenant with Abram that called for circumcision. At this time, Yahweh also gave Abram a new name: Abraham - a name that melded the "ha" sound in Yah, with "Abram" to form Abram's Covenant name. Interestingly, "ha" is a sound that almost everyone associates with laughter, and Abraham and Sarah named their son Isaac, which means "laughter" in Hebrew! This shows that the Abrahamic Covenant was always meant to be associated with joyful laughter. After all, under his new name, Abraham would become the forefather of both literal, and spiritual Israel, and open the way to the New Covenant.

Unlike the first Covenant that Yahweh made with Abram, the second Abrahamic Covenant was *conditional*. This is because it required circumcision, and also depended on people's ability to fulfill it by worshipping and loving Yahweh, and each other. At the time this Covenant was sealed, Yahweh promised to be Abraham's God, while Abraham, and his descendents promised to be Yah's special Covenant people. Yah cut this Covenant, and the previous one with Abraham because of his great faith in, and love for Yahweh.

Because of Abraham's great faith, Yah's second, conditional Covenant promise to Abraham was even grander. This time, instead of simply promising that Abraham's descendents would inherit the land of Canaan one day, Yah promised that Abraham's barren wife Sarah would bear him a son, and that - through this son - Abraham would be the father of many nations (Gen. 17:4-5, 15-16). Likewise, the New Blood Covenant that Yahshua cut with humanity is sealed by our faith - a faith in Yahshua that has given birth to a countless army of witnesses.

Long after Abram changed his name to Abraham, and received circumcision to seal his second Covenant with Yah, Yah renewed His original, *unconditional* Abrahamic Covenant by promising that Abraham's descendents would become great blessings to all the nations of the Earth:

"In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." - Gen 22:18 (NKJ)

This blessing was given to Abraham shortly after Yah had spared Isaac's life by providing Abraham with a ram to sacrifice. This spiritual blessing upon all nations was therefore to be literally realized through Isaac, and his Israelite descendents. Nonetheless, because Isaac wasn't sinless and perfect, Isaac and his ordinary descendents could never serve to fully eradicate sin. Only Yahshua the Messiah could do that.

Yah asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son Isaac to allegorically teach Abraham the Path to Salvation that would require the coming Messiah's future, perfect sacrifice for sin. Yah showed this by providing Abraham with a ram trapped by its horns to sacrifice instead of Isaac:

"Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son." - Gen 22:13 (NKJ)

This ram was a metaphorical symbol for the perfect sacrifice that God alone would provide, and that was later accomplished by Christ on the Cross. This was in fulfillment of the prophetic words spoken by Abraham to Isaac that: *"God will provide for Himself a lamb for the burnt offering"* (Genesis 22:8). When Abraham said this, could it have been an allusion to the fact that Abraham was able to foresee the coming of the Lamb of God through his knowledge of the Gospel in the Stars, and the meaning of the constellation of Aries? Based on my findings in Book One on the allegorical symbolism of the Star Gospel, it is possible that Abraham saw the analogy being drawn between the need for the prophesied Messiah's death, and the near-slaughter of his son Isaac.

Much later in history, John the Baptist also clearly foresaw Christ's role as a sacrificial atonement offering for sin:

"The next day John saw Jesus (Yahshua) coming toward him, and said, 'Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!' " - John 1:29 (NKJ)

When John the Baptist referred to Yahshua as the Lamb of God, he was inferring that Yahshua would serve as a type of Passover Lamb, and atonement sacrifice for anyone who believes in Him. Since Christ served as the only perfect sacrificial lamb, anyone who is covered by Yahshua's blood through faith is entitled to receive everlasting life. Like a lamb silently led to the slaughter, Yahshua offered Himself up, and willingly paid the death penalty for all sin.

Through Yahshua's sacrifice, we who believe in Him, and ask Him to cover our sins with His blood will find everlasting life. Our salvation from sin is therefore only possible through our faith that Yahshua, as the Son of God, was the only one who could pay the blood price for all sin. Since our salvation is dependent on our belief in Yahshua's death and resurrection, and in His role as an atonement sacrifice, the Book of Revelation refers to Yahshua as *"The Lamb"* twenty-three times! Here are two of those occurrences:

"Then... I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders... saying with a loud voice: 'Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and... honor and glory and blessing!' And every creature... I heard saying: 'Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!'" - Rev. 5:11-13 (NKJ)

Yahshua is *"the Lamb who was slain"* in the Book of Revelation. He was slain, and shed His own blood to atone for our sins, thereby paying the death penalty on our behalf. In exchange for Yahshua's righteousness - which only becomes available to us through His sacrifice - we must forsake our sinful selves, and symbolically nail them to the Cross. By doing so, we symbolically die on the Cross with Christ, so that we can one day be resurrected as new, and perfect spiritual beings through His Spirit. Baptism is a symbol that we are awaiting birth through the waters of the Holy Spirit's allegorical womb. We therefore symbolically die in baptism as we await everlasting life, when we will be made pure through the First Resurrection, and will literally be clothed with light. The deep allegorical significance found in baptism is explored in depth in *"The Language of God in Humanity,"* from which most of Chapter Two formed the body this essay.

A New Covenant to Fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant

The Covenants mentioned in the Pentateuch, or Torah were forerunners to a far more perfect Covenant that Yahweh would cut with mankind through His Son Yahshua. This New Covenant is an everlasting, unconditional Covenant. Furthermore, it was founded on superior promises to any previous Covenant. Though this New Covenant did not abolish the previous Covenants, all of them were, and will be, fulfilled through it. The writer of Hebrews quoted from the prophet Jeremiah regarding this superior Covenant:

“For if that first (covenant) had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with them, He says: ‘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 -- 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...” - Hebrews 8:7-9 (NKJ)

Note that, though the word “covenant” does not appear in verse 7 of the original Scripture as quoted above, verses 8 and 9 are a direct quote of Jeremiah 31:31-33, which tells us that a new Covenant is being pointed to as a replacement for the first, conditional Covenant made with Israel through Moses. This verse therefore does not refer merely to the old priesthood being replaced with a better one, as some Messianic Jews claim.

When we partake in the body and blood of Christ through Communion, we enter this unconditional New Blood Covenant agreement with our Heavenly Father, and His Son. Yahshua called the Covenant that He cut with all humanity the “New Covenant” because it was based on better promises than the conditional Adoption Covenant cut with the Israelites in the form of a betrothal. The conditional, inferior Covenant cut specifically with the offspring of Israel/Jacob was made in several stages, which began on the first Passover.

Passover symbolically served as the beginning of the official betrothal between Yahweh and Israel. After the subsequent Exodus, the first Pentecost (a.k.a. the Feast of Weeks, or Shavuot) marked the final sealing of the marriage contract cut with Israel on Passover.

Shavuot marked the day that Yahweh signed the marriage contract with Israel, and became Israel’s allegorical Husband, even while Israel became God’s symbolic Wife. Their Marriage Covenant, or Contract consisted of the Mosaic Law, which Yahweh began to give to Moses on Pentecost, though it took many days after that for Moses to receive, and write down all that Yahweh was going to show him. Incidentally, this written Law had to be given because the Israelites refused to ascend the mountain with Moses and receive God’s Law directly (Exodus 20:19). This refusal of the Israelites to meet face to face with Yahweh demanded that Moses serve as a mediator between them and God. Sadly, this set the precedent for Israel’s marriage relationship with Yahweh until the time of Christ. In fact, it was not until the Church was betrothed to Yahshua on Pentecost that ordinary people finally began to receive the gift of hearing directly from Yahweh through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and began to freely receive divine revelations through that same Spirit without the need of a prophet, or priest as an intermediary.

Unlike temporary betrothals between ordinary men and women, ***the New Covenant is an everlasting betrothal contract that will end in marriage.*** Like Passover, it promises redemption, and salvation from death, but in an everlasting rather than temporary way. Also, since Passover was instituted before the Law was given to Israel, the New Covenant is a continuation of the Abrahamic Covenant that offered Salvation by Faith, and blood atonement. The salvation given to us when we have a firm belief in, trust in, and love for the one true God Yahweh, and His Son Yahshua is better than the kind offered to Abraham,

however. Because of the New Covenant that Yahshua cut with mankind, there is no need for us to offer countless animal sacrifices to obtain atonement. Therefore, Yahshua's death and resurrection fulfilled the older, unconditional Adoption Covenant promises that Yah made to Adam, and Abraham. Yahshua serves as the Passover Lamb for all believers, and forever came to fulfill the promise of escape from death that the Passover lamb, and other atonement sacrifices offered temporarily.

The sacrifice that sealed this New Covenant of Faith was Christ's own perfect body and blood, rather than the tainted flesh and blood of a ram, lamb, or bull. Yahshua pledged His desire to marry His Church on Calvary, signing the betrothal contract with His own precious blood. Consequently, Yahshua intends to marry His Bride, the glorified Church, in Heaven. After this, Yahshua will return to Earth again with His Bride to rule as King of kings and Great High Priest. It that time, Yahshua will also allow His Bride, the True Church, to rule with Him as Queen, and fellow priest! This is fully explained in Chapter Six of "The Language of God in Humanity," which explores the deep spiritual ramifications of the Marriage Covenant.

The Passover and Mosaic Covenants made with Israel through Moses on Mount Sinai could never offer everlasting life because they convicted mankind of their sin. The Mosaic Law offered conditional salvation, temporary atonement, and - ultimately - condemnation through failure to keep the Law perfectly. The Passover and Mosaic Covenants were conditional, and judgmental - offering rewards and punishments based on one's moral performance. This is why Yahweh's unconditional Covenants made with Adam, Abraham, and their offspring are far more pivotal Covenants, and formed the basis for the Judeo-Christian concept of salvation. This is why the God of the Bible is not called the God of Moses, but "*Yahweh Elohim, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob*" (Exodus 3:16, NKJ). This is also why salvation through Christ is open to everyone, not just Israelites or Jews. Remember that Adam, Noah, and Abraham were not Israelites!

The New Testament is filled with allusions to Abraham as a great man of faith. Since Abraham was technically an uncircumcised Gentile when Yah honored his faith with Covenant promises, the salvation based on the faith of Abraham was always open to both Jews and Gentiles. The Apostle Paul understood this well. That is why Paul's first recorded sermon at Antioch opens with the statement: "*Men and brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God...*" (Acts 13:26, NKJ). Paul's understanding of the Abrahamic Covenant is that it gave Gentiles the hope of inclusion in the promises made to Abraham and the Israelites because of their faith in God alone. This is also why Abraham did not have to keep the Law of Moses. Abraham was counted as righteous because of his faith, not his works! Despite this fact, no Jew believes that Abraham will not be among the righteous in Paradise. This is why Paul made the following statement:

*"What then shall we say that Abraham... discovered in this matter? If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about -- but not before God. What does the Scripture say? **Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.**" - Rom. 4:1-3 (NIV)*

When the Apostle Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans, it was directed to the Jews in Rome. That is why most of it is directed toward teaching these Jews that their loyalty to the Law of Moses was never the basis for their hope in everlasting life. Instead, Paul makes it clear that the Mosaic Law was instated to expose the innate sinfulness of all people, regardless of sex, race, class, or fortune. This is why Paul called the Mosaic Law a curse! It was not meant to save anyone from sin, but to convict them of their sinfulness, and need for atonement:

“For if those who live by law are heirs, faith has no value and the promise is worthless, because law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression.” - Rom. 4:14-15 (NIV)

“All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: ‘Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.’ Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, ‘The righteous will live by faith.’” - Gal. 3:10-11 (NIV)

“But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ... I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ -- the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection...” - Philippians 3:7-12 (NIV)

Through these statements, and others like them found scattered throughout his epistles, Paul makes it clear that true righteousness is found in having an intimate relationship with Yahshua and His Father. Through a desire to love and emulate Yah's Son, people develop an active faith, sharing their love for God the Father and His Son with all whom they come in contact with. Salvation through Christ is therefore not earned through self-directed works, or by doggedly following a prescribed set of rules like the Law of Moses. Instead, it is open to both circumcised Jews, and uncircumcised Gentiles by their loving faith in Yahshua, and their desire to be like Him:

“Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness. Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised...? It was not after, but before! And he received... circumcision, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them.” - Rom. 4:9-11 (NIV)

Here, Paul is saying that **Abraham received “a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith” before he was circumcised**, or before he entered into his conditional Covenant with Yahweh that was marked with circumcision. Therefore, this conditional Abrahamic Covenant was preceded by an unconditional one based on Abraham's faith, as was shown earlier.

This conditional Covenant marked by circumcision was renewed on the first Passover. When Yah ordered the ritual slaughter of a lamb on the first Passover, it led to the Exodus - when the Israelites were freed from slavery. At that time, Yah cut a conditional Marriage Covenant with Israel that culminated with new promises, blessings, curses, and the giving of the Law to Moses. Nonetheless, the Mosaic Law was given to people who were still under the original unconditional Abrahamic Covenant based on faith. This is because both the Passover, and the Law of Moses, were not meant to replace the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant. Rather, they were an amendment to it - just as they were amended to the conditional Covenant made with Abraham that is marked by circumcision. The Covenant cut at the first Passover was never meant to save the Israelites, or anyone else, from sin. It was instead a promise that, just as the Israelites were spared from the death angel in Egypt, they would one day receive everlasting life through the fulfillment of the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant based on faith.

It was God's unconditional Covenant with Abraham that first promised salvation from sin through the production of a multitude of righteous people with the same saving faith in Yah that Abraham had. In addition, the unconditional Covenants with Adam and Abraham

promised a Savior who could eradicate mankind's utter sinfulness. Through that Savior, our sinfulness is replaced with a pure righteousness that comes only through a true and abiding faith in Yahweh and His Son. Therefore, the Passover and Mosaic Covenants were conditional, temporary extensions to the two unconditional Covenants with Adam and Abraham. Nonetheless, all of the Covenants that Yahweh cut with mankind showed the necessity of a future Bridegroom and Redeemer who was without sin. This is because only this Redeemer could fulfill both the conditional, and unconditional Marriage and Adoption Covenant promises made to Abraham and his descendents. Paul clarified this truth in his Epistle to the Galatians:

"Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law. You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus (The Anointed One Yahshua), for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek... for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs..." - Gal. 3:23-29 (NIV)

There is no mention here in Paul's teaching of needing to follow the Law. Rather, Paul is beseeching his Jewish audience to understand that the Mosaic Law was a taskmaster that is not needed by people who believe in Christ, and share Abraham's faith in, and love for, Yah. Instead, the Law was put in place to instruct people in the ways of righteousness. It was also geared to show seekers of righteousness their total inability to keep the entire Law. Once people realized the Law was a curse, Paul hoped they would accept the free gift of salvation found by taking on the righteousness of Christ. Through the New Covenant, believers are allegorically clothed in Christ. They are therefore no longer seen as sinners, but as perfect like their Savior.

Christ's Solution to the Condemnation of the Law

In contrast to the transforming power of the Holy Spirit given under the New Covenant, the Mosaic Law is powerless to transform our hearts. Instead of saving us from sin, the Mosaic Law serves to convict us of the reality of sin. The Law was meant to instruct men on how the nature of their holy and perfect God differs markedly from fallen mankind. The Law was also created to convict us of the insidiousness of sin, and of our complete inability to become sinless without a total inner change of spirit and character. This complete change of character is only possible through a saving belief in Christ, whose Spirit transforms us after our *spiritual* baptism - that glorious moment when we die to the fleshly desires of the world, and do our best to live only for Christ. Abraham knew of this coming Savior of the world, but he did not learn of Him through the Old Testament Law and Prophets since they were not yet composed. Instead, Abraham learned of the coming Messiah just as Enoch and Noah did. This was through their understanding of the Blood Covenant ceremony, as well as the Gospel message written into the Mazzaroth, or Zodiac by the finger of Yah Himself.

Before Moses, the truly righteous people among the ancients based all their laws of justice and moral conduct on the principles taught through the ritual of the Blood Covenant. They also knew of, and reverently studied, the spiritual meanings in the Mazzaroth locked into the forty-eight original constellations. As revealed in Book One of my Language of God Book Series, they followed the progression of the constellations, and the movements of the planets through them, as part of their devotion to the true God. This is because they believed that Yah wrote messages into the stars and planets at the moment of their Creation. The pictorial signs of the ancient Zodiac, and the planets themselves, therefore preserve a memory

of that first true Gospel that told mankind about the one true God Yahweh, His wonderful Son Yahshua, and of mankind's place in Yahweh's plans. The Star Gospel also taught mankind of their lost perfection, sinfulness, need for a Redeemer, and their future restoration to perfection through the transforming power of the Messiah's own Spirit.

Sadly, the deep spiritual truths known to the righteous antediluvian ancestors of Seth, Enoch, and Noah were eventually lost. This is because the knowledge of Sacred Astronomy was badly perverted by Nimrod and the later Babylonians, who turned to Black Magic, Astrology, and Star Worship. They also forgot, or perverted their Blood Covenants with Yahweh with human sacrifice, and created evil myths that polluted the truths once locked into the Star Gospel. Like the fall into apostasy that occurred before the Great Flood, this fall into apostasy after the Flood was worldwide. This created the necessity for Yahweh to rise up prophets for Himself - prophets that could teach others about biblical truths that had been forgotten, and - when re-discovered - would forever set them free from sin and death.

Inevitably, this plan to raise up righteous prophets to shepherd God's people led to the writing of the Bible, which is a divinely inspired collection of the writings of Yah's most powerful prophets. Added to for hundreds of years, the Bible is the best record about God, and His continuing mission and purpose, that humanity currently possesses. It teaches us about the existence of Heaven and Hell, the purpose of life and death, the nature of sin and salvation, and the only path to everlasting life through Christ. Ultimately, the Bible teaches us all how we can get to Heaven, and avoid Hell, through Christ. But what is this place called Heaven, and how does it figure in our salvation?

In biblical times, the Israelites, and later the Jews, believed that they went to a place called "Abraham's Bosom" when they died. In fact, the word "heaven" was inspired by the place in Canaan called Hebron, where Abraham purchased a field called Machpelah. A cave in this field became the burial place for Abraham, his wife, and many of their descendents. Hebron means, "seat of association" in Hebrew, implying that - by the association of Abraham's bones being buried in Canaan - this place would one day become Abraham's everlasting habitation. Hebron was therefore the figurative location of Abraham's Bosom. This temporary dwelling place for the dead is not on, or inside, the Earth at all, however, but in a different dimension - in the heavenly realms beyond the Universe - where God and His angels reside.

As the Jewish version of "heaven," Hebron was likely combined with the Jerusalem of history to become associated with the heavenly New Jerusalem spoken of in Revelation. In the Book of Hebrews, Paul commented that Abraham foresaw, and longed to inhabit, that future holy city:

"By faith Abraham obeyed when... called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance... not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God." - Heb. 11:8-10 (NKJ)

Abraham's foresight into the coming existence of the New Jerusalem was not just a lucky hunch on his part. It was a divinely given insight inspired by the Holy Spirit, which showed Abraham the future. Therefore, the same Holy Spirit, and divine knowledge that Yah gave to all of His prophets was also given to Abraham. This covering by the Spirit of God gave all those who possessed it the promise of everlasting life, and preserved their spirits in a state of bliss after physical death.

As we shall see in the next section, Yahshua Himself claimed that Abraham was not dead and awaiting spiritual life, but only the eternal physical life in a new body that would be

given to all believers after Yahshua rose from the dead. Yahshua indicated that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were alive spiritually when He said that Yah *"is not the God of the dead, but of the living."* Therefore, long before Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, ***Abraham was the father of salvation by faith in Yah - and he believed in the hope of eternal physical and spiritual life based solely on that faith.***

Like Abraham, Christians are justified by their faith in their Heavenly Father, and His Son, who is our Messiah. Scriptural references to Abraham, such as *"My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering"* (Gen. 22:8), suggest that he believed God would send a Messiah with a divine nature that would not only teach people to be loving, merciful, and just with others, but who would die in their place so that they could receive everlasting life. Abraham also likely knew that they needed the same Holy Spirit that filled him in order to become a perfect reflection of the loving God who created them. ***Indeed, it is the baptism of the Holy Spirit that allows believers to fulfill the Spirit of the Law, rather than the Letter of the Law, which was fulfilled once, and for all time by Christ.*** Like Abraham, Christians are guaranteed their salvation through *the indwelling presence* of the Holy Spirit. This is a gift that no one can receive until they accept Yahshua as their Savior, as Abraham surely did through His knowledge of the Star Gospel, and through understanding the hidden meaning behind Blood Covenanting.

Though Christians should be respectful of, and fully knowledgeable about, the Judaic and Abrahamic roots of their faith, they are considered righteous Children of God adopted into the family of Abraham, not Moses. This is accomplished through the New Covenant of faith that they are under in Christ. Their Covenant of faith with Yahshua is therefore not based on the Law, but in truly loving Yah, and serving Him in Spirit, and in truth - as Abraham did. The circumcision was a sign of Abraham's belief in, and desire for the promises that Yah made with him to be fulfilled. When these Covenant promises to Abraham were fulfilled in Christ, there was no longer any *spiritual* need for believing Gentiles to circumcise their children. This is because salvation is based on faith, and Spirit-directed works of faith that define *the Spirit* of the Law, not on the Written Law:

"If those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker." - Rom. 2:26-27 (NIV)

The "written code" Paul spoke of in the preceding Scripture is the Mosaic Law. Moses wrote this Law down, but the preincarnate Yahshua (as the Word of God) dictated it to him. Exodus through Deuteronomy therefore formed the God-breathed code of legal and moral conduct for the people of Israel. But what caused Gentiles, who were largely unfamiliar with the Law of Moses, to follow the Law better than the Jews, who were all taught the Law as children? The answer is simple, yet complex. It is simple because it does not rely on complex rituals and memorized utterances for its effectiveness. Nonetheless, it is complex because it is manifested invisibly through the Holy Spirit, and many people do not know how to have a personal relationship with Christ through that Spirit.

The Holy Spirit works behind the scenes in those who are saved by their simple, yet sincere belief in Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of the world. The Spirit of God gives believers wisdom, and many other fruits of the Spirit, such as kindness, gentleness, and self-control. The Spirit also helps them to worship Yah fully - with love and honesty. The Spirit of the Law is therefore none other than the Spirit of Christ, or the Holy Spirit, which indwells all true believers.

The Old Law Transformed in the New Covenant of Grace

Our Savior Yahshua was a good, righteous Jew who not only kept the Mosaic Law, but also fulfilled it. He did so by keeping the Law perfectly throughout His life, and calling all people to live by His righteous example. In the Gospel of Matthew, Chapters 5, 6, and 7, Yahshua commented on various aspects of the Mosaic Law. But before He did so, Yahshua made this pointed declaration:

*“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter... will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. **Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.**” - Matthew 5:17-19 (NIV)*

Here, Yahshua tells us that we are all required to teach the commandments regarding morality that lead to righteousness. This does not mean we have to follow the sacrificial and dietary portions of the Mosaic Law, but that ***we must meet, and teach the moral requirements of the Law if we are to be considered righteous and upright when we stand before God’s Throne!*** Yahshua then proceeded to discuss the Ten Commandments, and other aspects of the Law dealing with morality. As He did, ***Yahshua continually called His audience to exceed the expectations of the Law***, while adding a new dimension to it. He did so by emphasizing the mercy and forgiveness of Grace, rather than the judgment and punishment of the Law:

“You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment. But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment.’” - Matt. 5:21-22 (NIV)

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” - Matt. 5:27-28 (NIV)

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you: ‘Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you’...” - Matt. 5:43-44 (NIV)

From Yahshua’s continual references to the moral requirements of the Law during His Sermon on the Mount, and throughout the Gospels, it is clear that Yahshua did not come to abolish the Law of Moses. Instead, He came to call all people to live morally, peacefully, and decently just like He did, and to do their best to fulfill the Mosaic Law like He did. Nonetheless, ***Yahshua satisfied the righteous requirements of the Law for us because He knew we could never do so on our own.*** No one else but Yahshua, who was sinless, could perfectly keep the Law!

This concept is the basis for Grace, where God the Father graciously and compassionately forgives us when we believe in Yahshua, and His precious Name, or divine character. When we are living under Grace, we are necessarily filled with gratitude, and are being led by Yahshua’s own Spirit to keep the moral requirements of the Law. In fact, when people are born again by Yahshua’s Spirit, they are freed from the condemnation of the Law, and should be filled with joy, want to live morally, and wish to develop a deep and intimate relationship with God.

If people who profess to be believers are continually depressed, never seek God’s presence in prayer, Bible study, or fellowship with other believers, or live a hedonistic, selfish

lifestyle, then their claim to be Christians cannot be genuine! They are like many professing Christians who are asleep, and need to wake up with a life-saving dose of the Holy Spirit. This is because we can only fulfill the righteous requirements of the Law with the Spirit of Christ dwelling inside us. Christ's Spirit leads us to be morally upright. But when we fail, that same Spirit ensures that our sins are covered over with Christ's righteousness, and continually forgives us with God's unconditional Grace, or graciousness when we repent, and ask for forgiveness:

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." - Ephesians 2:7-9 (NKJ)

Grace is a free gift from God to mankind, but it will only be given to those who believe that Yahshua is the Son of God, who died and rose again, and thereby become the Savior of the world from sin and death. The concept of Grace can best be defined as the outpouring of Yah's love and forgiveness upon us when we repent of our sins, and accept Yahshua as our personal Savior:

"For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (Yahshua the Anointed One)." - John 1:17 (NKJ)

We receive Grace when we believe that Yahshua is God made man, and that He came to save us from sin by shedding His body and blood on the Cross:

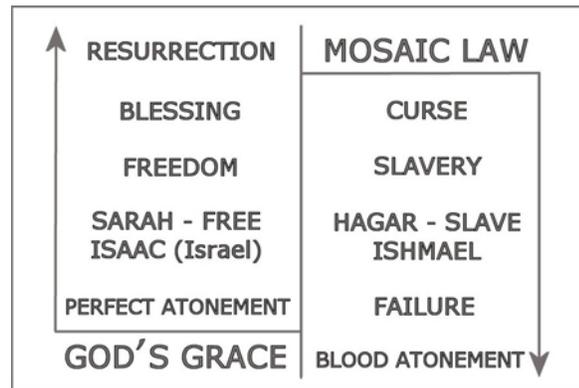
"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son... to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already..." - John 3:16-18 (NKJ)

"If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus (Adonai Yahshua) and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." - Rom. 10:9 (NKJ)

When we believe in Yahshua by accepting His atoning death, and His resurrection into everlasting life, Yah sets us free from the penalty of sin by covering us with His Son's righteousness, and filling us with His Spirit. ***When we receive the gift of God's Spirit and righteousness through Christ, we receive Grace - and are thereby set free from the penalty of sin.***

Therefore, those who are under Grace are no longer bound by the enslavement of religious systems based on blood sacrifices, salvation by works, and mediation with God through the services of priests and prophets - which is what the Mosaic Law demanded. Instead, believers are personally led by Yahshua's Spirit, and given Yahshua's all-encompassing forgiveness and guidance *directly*. They no longer have to go through a priest or prophet to find fellowship with God, or answers to prayers. They are instead called to be their own priests and prophets, seeking God's Will while they share His love, and instruct, care for, nurture, and forgive others just as Christ does! These are the beautiful gifts of Grace, and the only good works God requires of us.

Those who accept God's Grace are no longer required to perform ritual self-denial, or asceticism, nor are they obligated to follow any religious observances, or customs:



*“But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. **This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ (Yahshua the Anointed One) to all who believe.** There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus (Messiah Yahshua).” - Romans 3:21-24 (NIV)*

Grace then, is the righteousness of God attributed to us through our faith in Yahshua. We need to be covered by the unconditional forgiveness of God’s Grace because, even with the Spirit of Christ dwelling inside us, we will be incapable of keeping God’s moral requirements until we are fully born again - which happens when we are resurrected into everlasting life. The Apostle Paul complained of this very malady, saying that his body, which was dying in its sins, was at war with his spirit, which was in Christ’s control:

*So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For... I delight in God's law; **but I see another law at work in... my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within... What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God -- through Jesus Christ our Lord (Yahshua the Anointed One, our Adonai)! So I... in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.**” - Rom. 7:21-25 (NIV)*

Here, Paul is telling us that, though his mind and spirit delighted in the moral rightness of God’s Law, his physical body and its desires continually caused him to fail to keep the Law. Paul saw this conflict of sin at war with Yahshua’s call to righteousness within our fleshly bodies as an inescapable fact of life that has only one cure: the saving Spirit of Yahshua inside us, and the promise of our future Resurrection from the dead into everlasting life. This is why Paul spoke longingly of the corruption-free spiritual bodies we will have in the First Resurrection:

*“So also is the resurrection of the dead. **The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.** It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. **It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body....**” - 1 Corinth. 15:42-44 (NKJ)*

Even as a devout Jew like Paul could not completely fulfill the Mosaic Law, born again believers also cannot. This is because, ***as long as we are trapped in these bodies of sin, we are incapable of following the Law’s every requirement. This is why Christ had to fulfill the Law for us,*** and gave us His forgiveness and Grace to cover our sins in the New Covenant, which is unconditional. Nevertheless, as Christians we are still called to strive to live morally and righteously, as Christ’s Law requires. This means we need to make every effort to keep the Ten Commandments, as well as the moral rules for living that Yahshua gave to us that were summed up in his Two Commandments to love God, and love our neighbors as we love ourselves. This is because, even if the eternal price for all our sins was unconditionally paid through Yahshua, believers still suffer consequences on this Earth for moral rebellion - just as non-believers do.

The Moral Law of the New Covenant

Though believers enter this unconditional New Covenant agreement with Christ through baptism and Communion, they are still obligated to keep the moral requirements of the Covenant, which are to forsake their sins and lusts, and to take on the righteous attributes of Christ. To understand Christ’s moral requirements, we therefore need to memorize the Ten

Commandments, and internalize all the moral concepts covered in Yahshua's Sermon on the Mount found in the Gospel of Matthew, Chapters 5, 6, and 7. These serve as the foundation of New Covenant Law. However, believers are *not* called to fulfill the requirements of Yahshua's Moral Law on their own merits, but through the guidance of the Holy Spirit:

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." - John 14:26(NKJ)

Once we are baptized with His Holy Spirit, Yahshua leads us to develop what the Law was powerless to give: the inner righteousness that comes apart from the Law. Through the Spirit of God, we are called to remember and follow Christ's Moral Law, which is greater than the Mosaic Law because ***Yahshua is the Word of God made flesh*** (Romans 8:7-9; John 1:1,14, 8:53,58). This is why Yahshua could deliver a simplified version of the Law that was meant for Christians and Messianic Jews under the guidance of the Holy Spirit alone. Though the moral requirements of the entire Mosaic Law is still required of every Jew or Gentile, Yahshua taught that the whole Law of Moses could be summed up in Two Commandments. These two Laws embody the original Ten Commandments, the Mosaic Law, all the moral teachings in the prophetic books of the Bible, and the Sermon on the Mount:

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus (Yahshua) replied: 'Love the Lord your God (Yahweh Elohim) with all your heart... soul and... mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." - Matt. 22:36-40 (NIV)

"And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, 'Teacher, what shall I do to inherit everlasting life?' He (Yahshua) said to him, 'What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?' So he answered... 'You shall love the Lord your God (Yahweh Elohim) with all your heart... soul... strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.' And He (Yahshua) said to him, 'You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.'" - Luke 10:25-28 (NKJ)

The Two Commandments that Yahshua gave above were taken from the Mosaic Law, and summarized the moral spirit of the Mosaic Law, and the Sermon on the Mount. The first one that admonishes us to love Yahweh our Elohim fully is found in Deuteronomy 6:5. The commandment to *"love your neighbor as yourself"* is found in Leviticus 19:18. However, though these are part of the Law of Moses, they together serve as a simplified version of the Ten Commandments - the Moral Law written by the finger of God on two stone tablets (Exodus 31:18), which represent God's righteousness. The first four of the Ten Commandments specify how we should love God. The fifth commandment applies to both God and man, since we have heavenly and earthly parents we need to love and honor. Finally, the last five of the Ten Commandments tell us how to love our neighbor as ourselves.

The polished Stone Tablets containing the Ten Commandments were stored inside the Ark of the Covenant (Deut. 10:3-5). The Ark of the Covenant is a symbol of the righteousness of Christ, and His place of leadership on the allegorical throne in our hearts. Just as the Stone Tablets were placed inside the Ark, the moral code immortalized in the Ten Commandments needs to be internalized in the heart of every believer - where it can serve as a guide for making good moral decisions. The word translated as "Commandments" for the ten moral laws Yah gave to Moses literally translates as "words." This means that the Ten Commandments are the literal Word of God, and they therefore represent the moral perfection of Yahshua, who is the Word of God made flesh (John 1:1,14). Only the Ten Commandments, as the divine moral centerpiece of the Law, were stored inside the Ark, which is a symbol for Christ's body, and the body of every born again believer. This means

that, just as the Ten Commandments were literally engraved inside Yahshua's heart, they also need to be engraved upon our hearts.

After being given the Stone Tablets, Moses was given several other sets of laws that he delivered orally to the Israelites before writing them down. ***The first set of laws was given right after the Ten Commandments, and on the same day, which was the first Pentecost, or Shavuot.*** It was called the Book of the Covenant (Exodus 24:7). This relatively short book of moral codes is recorded in Exodus 20:22 through 23:33, and it is basically an enlargement upon the moral code set forth in the Ten Commandments. However, ***it also includes the instatement of three major festivals to Yahweh: the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Harvest, or Firstfruits (a.k.a. Pentecost, Shavuot, or the Feast of Weeks), and the Feast of Ingathering, (a.k.a. Sukkot, or Tabernacles) :***

"You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread (you shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt; none shall appear before Me empty); and the Feast of Harvest, the firstfruits of your labors which you have sown in the field; and the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you have gathered in the fruit of your labors from the field. Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord GOD." - Exodus 23:15-17 (NKJ)

Here, the Book of the Covenant required that the men of Israel gather together for these three feasts every year. The Israelites were faithful in keeping Passover with the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the spring, and the Feast of Harvest, or Firstfruits at the beginning of the summer. But, for some biblically unexplained reason, the Israelites forgot to keep the Feast of Tabernacles in the autumn! In fact, the Bible records that they did not keep this important feast from the time they first celebrated it in the era of Joshua, son of Nun, until the end of the Babylonian Captivity (Nehemiah 8:13-18)!

Though few scholars have ever addressed the possible reasons for this long Israelite disregard for the Feast of Tabernacles, it may have been because this Feast celebrates the ingathering of all people into Israel, and marks a time when God will be King over Israel instead of the descendants of David. As such, it was an uncomfortable reminder to the natural descendants of Jacob that they were meant to serve the Gentiles, and lead them to a saving knowledge of God. But the Israelites were too weak-willed, and skeptical of the reality of God to remember their divine mandate. As a result, instead of leading their neighbors to worship Yahweh, they repeatedly whored after foreign gods.

After the delivery of this Book of the Covenant - with Aaron (the future High Priest), and his sons in attendance - a Covenant sacrifice was made, and a Covenant meal was eaten:

"So Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD (Yahweh)... And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD (Yahweh). And he... built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he sent... the children of Israel, who offered burnt offerings... to the LORD (Yahweh). And Moses... took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, 'All that the LORD (Yahweh) has said we will do, and be obedient.' And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, 'This is the blood of the covenant which the LORD (Yahweh) has made with you according to all these words.' Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the God of Israel... So they saw God, and they ate and drank (the covenant meal)." - Exodus 24:3-11 (NKJ)

In the lengthy, abridged Scripture above, note that the Book of the Covenant was delivered to Israel *immediately after* they were given the Ten Commandments, and the

Covenant meal was eaten *immediately after* the Book of the Covenant was read to the Israelites, and they agreed to follow the terms of the Covenant. Therefore, this Covenant Book, with its call to ritual observance of three biblical feasts, and the Ten Commandments were the actual laws of this Covenant. Note also that *the Covenant meal was eaten in God's very presence after the Book of the Covenant was read to the people* (Exodus 24:11). Furthermore, *this Covenant Book did not include the rest of the Law of Moses* as found in the remaining portions of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

This is no accident, but was Yahweh's way of showing all believers that the Ten Commandments, the Book of the Covenant, and its call to keep three major biblical feast days are important tools for instructing people in the ways of righteousness. Though they are often unaware of it, Christians agree to honor this same Book of the Covenant whenever they take Communion, because the Last Supper was a Passover Meal. Unlike the Ancient Israelites, however, believers today are blessed by having the Holy Spirit to guide them - a gift given on the Pentecost immediately following Yahshua's ascension into Heaven.

The pouring out of the Holy Spirit allows God's just laws to be truly written on people's hearts after they repent, and are saved. However, this is not done to nullify the Book of the Covenant, or the Ten Commandments, but to truly fulfill them in Christ! This means that the first moral laws given as part of the old Covenant should be written on every believer's heart, and kept by all - whether Jew or Gentile. We will further discuss the reason why keeping the Ten Commandments, and the three feasts mentioned in the Book of the Covenant are vitally important a bit later.

After giving the Ten Commandments, and the Book of the Covenant to the Israelites on Pentecost, Moses was given another extensive set of ceremonial laws that were meant to guide the Aaronic priests in their behavior before Yahweh inside His Tabernacle. Moses wrote this Ceremonial Law (in Exodus and Leviticus) and the rest of the Civil Law (in Numbers and Deuteronomy) down onto scrolls. These scrolls defined the culture and religion of the nation of Israel. Yet, they also defined the burden of sin that the nation of Israel carried when it repeatedly failed to keep the Law. After Moses wrote these laws down, he gave them to Israel's Aaronic priests (Deut. 31:9). This portion of the Written Law was kept in the Most Holy Place beside the Ark of the Covenant as a witness against the Israelites when they sinned (Deut. 31:26).

The composition and placement of both portions of the Written Law shows their importance in God's Plan of Salvation. The Ten Commandments were written by God onto relatively imperishable stone to show that they are eternally true and binding. They teach both Gentiles and Israelites that a true love for God and one's neighbor is the basis for all moral righteousness. On the other hand, the Civil and Ceremonial Laws were written by Moses onto perishable scrolls to show that they applied specifically to the Israelites, were temporary and impermanent, and would no longer be needed or remembered someday. This portion of the Law includes the rules regarding blood sacrifices, the plans for the Tabernacle and priestly garments, the dietary laws, civil laws pertaining to all sorts of human interaction and relationships, and the calendar dates and other rituals attached to the Sabbath and the biblically ordained Holy Days.

Since the Ten Commandments were placed inside the Ark that signifies Christ, they represent the literal Word of God - while the Law written on scrolls was His inspired Word through Moses. When Paul said that Yahshua nailed the "*handwriting of requirements*," or "*written code*" that was against us to the Cross, he was speaking of the Written Law that Moses wrote on the scrolls (Col. 2:14). These served as a moral guide for the Israelites alone, but the Ten Commandments, or Moral Law inside the Ark applied to everyone - whether Israelite, or Gentile - because it was written by God, and is eternally binding. Furthermore, the Stone Tablets contained that part of the Law that was *imperishable*. In other words,

because the Ten Commandments reveal the pure righteousness of God, they are everlastingly required of all believers who become the Body of Christ. Much more about the meaning of the Ark of the Covenant is revealed in "The Language of God in Humanity."

Since Yahshua is far greater than Moses in importance, and in relation to our salvation, Christ's Moral Law, or Ten Commandments is greater than the Ceremonial and Dietary Laws that He commissioned Moses to record in writing. Furthermore, our New Covenant with Yahshua is based on superior promises: namely, that **believers are absolved of all sin, and given everlasting life for their real faith in, and full desire to be like Yahshua and His Father** - just as Abraham was. Though believers still must do good works to show the reality of their faith in, and love for Yahshua, works are not the basis for their salvation. As Yahshua Himself said:

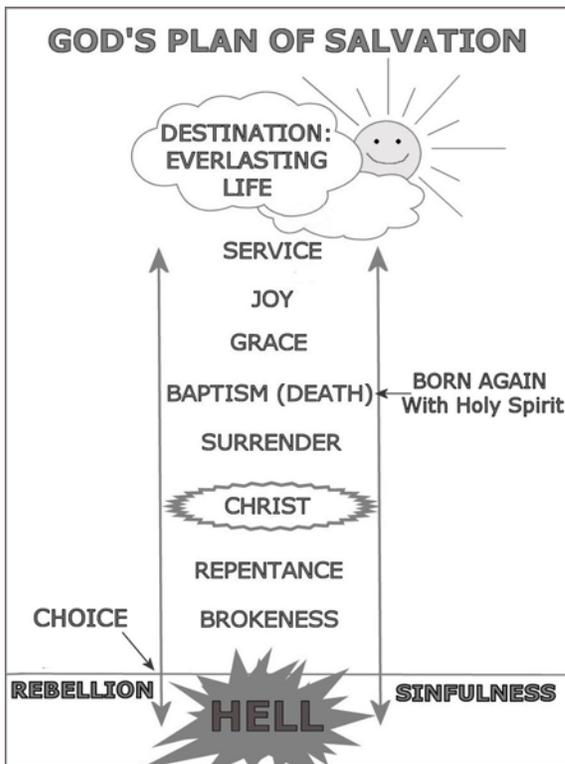
*"But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, 'I am the God (He Yah Elohim) of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?' **God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.**" - Matt. 22:31-32 (NKJ)*

This means that Abraham foresaw the need, and longed for the coming, of the Messiah. He knew about the Messiah from the Gospel in the Stars taught to him by Noah and Shem. He also knew that this coming Messiah was alluded to in every Blood Covenant ceremony, which was the divine vehicle used for teaching God's Moral Law to humanity before Moses. Without this knowledge, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob could not have already received the promise of everlasting life. The righteous forefathers of the Israelites therefore foresaw the coming of the Messiah, and longed for Him - thereby finding salvation through their great faith in Yah's promises.

If this is not enough to convince skeptics that Christians are to be viewed as adopted children of God through Yah's Covenant with Abraham, there is the testimony of Paul, as already mentioned. Paul was a proud Jew who nonetheless counted his Israelite heritage, and

the righteousness he acquired through following the Mosaic Law, as rubbish in the face of Yahshua's gift of Salvation by Grace, in the Kingdom of God (Phillip. 3:4-9). Paul understood that saved Gentiles did not have to become perfect Jews to remain saved. He knew that the Law was given to convict mankind of sin, and their need for Yahshua (Romans 3:20-22, 7:7-10). He also knew that we are incapable of keeping the Law - even after we are born again through belief in Christ.

Once they are born again, believers are under Grace, and can joyfully serve others, and work miracles in Christ's Name. This is because, **even though they have not yet been made perfect through the Resurrection, believers are seen as overcomers like Christ** (John 3:3-7, 16-18). This was all part of God's original Plan of Salvation, as shown in the illustration on this page. Once people realize that they are broken, and lost due to sin, they are ready to repent, and accept Christ's salvation. At



the moment of their humble surrender to Christ, and wish to be like Him, they are baptized, or die to the world's desires, and are covered by the mantle of Christ's perfection, which is the symbol of God's Grace. This is also when they receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which seals their salvation. These born-again believers can then experience the joy and peace that result from being saved, and can successfully minister to others as Christ's anointed servants.

In the meantime, while they await the Resurrection, true Christians do not have to follow old ritual methods to find salvation because they are already saved, and have the promise of everlasting life under Christ's Law of Grace. In addition, if they are faithful to draw near to God in prayer and Bible study, and make every effort to live morally, they no longer need the Mosaic Law. Instead, their spirits will slowly be transformed by Yahshua's own Spirit to become more righteous, and closer to the image of Christ. This is why they can do God's Will, and live morally - even without knowing the Mosaic Law. As Paul said:

"...When Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts..." - Rom. 2:14-15 (NIV)

In this Scripture, Paul is talking about believers in the Gentile communities where the Gospel was preached. By abiding in love, forgiving one another, calling one another to live morally, and worshipping Yahweh and Yahshua with loving devotion, these Gentiles were fulfilling the Spirit behind the Mosaic Law - even though they did not know the Law of Moses! This Scripture therefore proves that ***consciously making an effort to keep all of the Law in the Torah is only for those who have not been born again.***

Since they are not being fully guided by the Spirit of Christ, unsaved people do not have God's Moral Law *"written on their hearts."* They therefore need to know, and follow the entire Mosaic Law to learn what good and evil are, and to realize their need for a Savior. But those who are born again do not need to learn all of the Mosaic Law, for they will intuitively know how to keep all its moral requirements over time! In addition, as we will explore further a bit later, all believers are encouraged to keep biblically ordained Holy Days because they can teach neophytes in the faith about Christ's role in their salvation, and about coming End Time events that all believers can look forward to with joy.

Through their genuine love for, and faith in Christ, both Jewish and Gentile believers are freed from the curse of the Law, and its inescapable conviction of their sinfulness. In addition, they are being led by the Spirit to fulfill every part of the Moral Law that Yahshua requires from them. For this reason, the Jerusalem branch of the Church finally conceded that Gentile believers were not under the Law, but should make a godly effort to *"abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality"* (Acts 15:29).

Another oft-quoted passage in the Bible clearly teaches about this freedom that believers have in Christ. Unfortunately, it is also the Scripture most often attacked, or overlooked by those who uphold a legalistic view of salvation by works. It is found in the Apostle Paul's Epistle to the Colossians. To make sure we don't miss any of its importance, let's analyze Colossians 2:10-17 in sections:

"...And you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead." - Col. 2:10-12 (NIV)

In this portion of Scripture, Paul says that believers are full, or complete, in Christ. That is, we are viewed as buried with Christ in baptism, and then reborn in His image. Therefore, we should lack nothing spiritually. Those who are full of Christ's Spirit are blessed - receiving many gifts that can be utilized in their everyday lives. With the Spirit guiding us to live above the dictates of our fleshly bodies, we can rise above its sinful nature, and act according to the Spirit of Christ in us. Paul then goes on to say:

"And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ." - Col. 2:13-17 (NKJ)

In the preceding passages, Paul made it abundantly clear that the reality of our salvation is not dependent upon any ritual act, or religious tradition. The "*handwriting of requirements*" Paul referred to is the Mosaic portion of the Written Law, which is recorded in the Pentateuch, or Torah. The Written Law contains the God-breathed record of the Covenant promises Yah made with mankind, and the rules governing these Covenants. However, it also records mankind's repeated inability to behave as the Written Law of the Covenant required. This is why Christ had to nail the Mosaic portion of the Written Law to the Cross when He died for our sins. That is, ***Yahshua negated the Mosaic Law's ability to convict us of our sinfulness by giving us His righteousness as a cloak.*** This is why Paul said the following to his fellow Jews:

*"We who are Jews by nature... knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law... But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. **I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.**" - Galatians 2:15-21 (NKJ)*

In the Book of Galatians, Paul repeatedly expressed his consternation, and disappointment in his fellow Jews who were attempting to force Gentile converts to Christianity to be circumcised, and follow the dietary, and other outward requirements of the Mosaic Law. In addition, he constantly emphasized the importance of living our lives for Christ, through Christ, and in Christ, for as Paul so powerfully said: "*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God.*" And, "*If righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.*"

Indeed, the whole concept of Grace is negated if we seek to follow every requirement of the Mosaic Law in order to justify our salvation. The righteousness we receive from Christ, however, is only extended to us when we make the decision to love, and live for Christ like Paul did. We cannot just believe Christ existed, and rest our salvation upon that conviction. If we do, we are only seeking to justify our right to sin, and therefore are condemning ourselves to live, and to die outside of God's Grace.

Since Yahshua alone can fulfill the entire Law, He symbolically wears an everlasting garment, or cloak, of righteousness. When we accept Christ as our Savior, His cloak covers believers, making them appear as pure white sheep even though they are still black sheep until their spiritual transformation at death. This allegorical cloak not only hides their sins, but also completely obliterates them. Believers therefore cannot be judged as sinful if they choose not to keep dietary laws, biblical feasts, and Sabbaths. Christian men also do not need to be circumcised, since ***all believers, whether male or female, are allegorically circumcised when they die to their bodies, and become alive in the Spirit*** - which is the essence of the meaning of baptism (Romans 6:11; Galatians 2:12-14; Colossians 2:10-11; Ephesians 2:1-5; 1 Peter 3:18).

In Colossians 2:17, we are told that all the Holy Days, and the works that the Mosaic Law required, were only *"a shadow of things to come."* That is, they were a spiritual revelation that was far less substantial and powerful than Yahshua, and His revealed teachings on the Moral Law, or Ten Commandments. Nevertheless, Yahshua and His Spirit were brought into the world to fulfill both the Moral and Mosaic Law. This is why Paul says that the Law's *"substance is of Christ."* Faith in Christ, and Christ Himself, are the substance of the things that the Israelites hoped for, and the Old Testament pointed toward (See: Hebrews 11:1; Col. 2:17). Therefore, since Spirit-filled believers are hidden in Christ (Col. 3:3), they are viewed by God as having fulfilled the entire Law, just as Christ did. But, as we touched upon just now, and will learn in the next section, they are not justified to go on sinning! They are, rather, seeking to be radically transformed into a new creation in Christ:

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." - 2 Corinth. 5:17 (NKJ)

The New Law: Mercy, Forgiveness, and Love

In the least section, it was emphasized that people who are truly born again do not hang their faith on the promise of everlasting life, and then go blithely on their way to live life as they choose. If they do so, they cannot be born again! Instead, despite their covering of righteousness in Christ, true believers will express their saving faith in Yahshua through Spirit-directed actions, and deeds of charity and kindness motivated by love. This is in keeping with Yahshua's Two Commandments, and His wonderful Sermon on the Mount, which is found in the Gospel of Matthew, Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

Similar to the way the Mosaic Law was first delivered to mankind from a mountain, the New Covenant Law was given to mankind from a high hill near Capernaum in Galilee. But ***unlike the Mosaic Law, Yahshua's Law emphasized mercy, forgiveness, and love.*** Whereas the Old Testament Law demanded judgment, condemnation, and punishment for sin, the New Testament Law of Grace calls all people to be full of generosity, kindness, forgiveness, and mercy. This was not only true of the Sermon on the Mount, but in every instance where Yahshua contrasted the Mosaic Law with the New Covenant Law of the Kingdom of God:

"Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD (Yahweh). Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death." - Exodus 35:2 (NKJ)

"Then Jesus (Yahshua) said to them, 'I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy?' And when He had looked around at them all, He said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' And he did so, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.

But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus (Yahshua).” - Luke 6:9-11 (NKJ)

The extreme contrast between these two Scriptures is obvious to anyone. Whereas the first could be interpreted to mean that breaking the Sabbath by doing work *of any kind* was punishable by death, the second shows what Yahshua really meant. He wanted people to refrain from doing the work they did as a livelihood, or to pamper themselves, so that they could concentrate on doing truly good, selfless works of love, kindness, and generosity as a service to their community! This is why Yashua healed people on the Sabbath, and also why the Jewish religious leaders wanted to put Him to death (Mat. 12:11-14; Mark 3:2-6; John 5:6-16). ***Yahshua revealed that doing acts of mercy and kindness to benefit one's neighbors without seeking a profit are a requirement of keeping the Sabbath, not just refraining from work!*** In essence, Yahshua was showing that greed and selfishness are totally unlawful no matter what day it is.

Likewise, Yahshua's Two Commandments, and the Sermon on the Mount show that the moral requirements of the Mosaic Law can be improved upon, and thereby can cease to be needed - but only when everything is done in a spirit of love, mercy, and devotion - to both God and man. This type of love is only possible, however, when we are baptized with the Spirit of God, and motivated to do good works of charity that are truly pleasing to Yahshua.

The motivation behind every act of the Spirit of God is governed by love, and when the Spirit lives inside a believer, they will always be called to act in love - whether or not they choose to follow the Spirit's guidance. If a believer's actions are not governed by love, then they are not living in obedience to the Spirit of Christ, for *“love is the fulfillment of the law.”* As Paul said:

“...he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ...and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’... Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.” - Romans 13:8-10 (NIV)

Truly born again believers necessarily will show their love for their neighbor, and their love and faith in God, through their “works,” or actions. These include being charitable and kind to everyone, showing mercy and forgiveness to sinners, striving not to sin, being frugal and modest, fellowshiping with other believers, studying the Bible, and drawing near to Yahweh God in worship. Those who are born again will also seek quiet time to pray to, and fellowship with, Yah, and to seek His guidance before they make important decisions. In all these things, they strive to be more like Christ by sharing their love and faith in God. In this way, ***believers keep the Law that Yahshua gave to them during His ministry. These supersede any that Yahshua, as the Word of God, gave through Moses:***

“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments... For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world -- our faith.” - I John 5:2-4 (NKJ)

The commandments being spoken of in the preceding Scripture are those that Christ gave us, which are detailed in the Sermon on the Mount, and summarized in the Two Commandments to love God with our whole being, and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Citizens in God's Kingdom Satisfy the Mosaic Law

Yahshua made it clear that the Law and "the Prophets" (i.e. the prophetic books of the Old Testament) were preached until John the Baptist came. By preaching a baptism of repentance, John prepared people's hearts to receive an entirely new and better spiritual gift than the Law. Yahshua, the Son of God came to proclaim a new Gospel - one that proclaimed the coming of the Kingdom of God:

"The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail."
- Luke 16:16-17 (NKJ)

After stating that the Kingdom of God supersedes the Mosaic Law and the Prophets, Yahshua also declared that not even one "tittle," or special alphanumeric character in the Written Law would fail. By saying this, Yahshua was declaring that the righteous requirements of the Mosaic Law, and the teachings of the Messiah from the Prophets had to be fulfilled before a better Gospel could replace it! By saying this, our Savior was implying that the Law and the Prophets were being fulfilled through Him, *and* through His Spirit dwelling inside all born again believers! Salvation by Grace is the blessing given to Spirit-filled citizens in the Kingdom of God - those who have Christ ruling on the throne in their hearts. Therefore, they temper all that they do with love and morality.

With Yahshua's First Advent, the curse of the Law of Moses was negated. Since Yahshua fulfilled (and will fulfill) every requirement of, and every prophecy within that Law, Yahshua provides a way for every saved person to fulfill the moral requirements of the Law by symbolically being clothed in His righteousness through the New Covenant. This Covenant allows born again believers to be adopted into God's royal Family! This is why ***Yahshua, and His disciples preached the Gospel of the Kingdom of God instead of the Law.***

"Now after John was put in prison, Jesus (Yahshua) came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.'"
- Mark 1:14-15 (NKJ)

"Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him."
- Luke 8:1 (NKJ)

Besides these, there are numerous other biblical examples of Yahshua and His apostles teaching others the Glad Tidings, or Good News, of the Kingdom of God (See Matthew 6:23, 12:28, 19:24, 21:31, 21:43; Luke 4:43, 6:20, 7:28, 8:1,10, 9:2,11,27,60,62, 10:9,11, 11:20, 12:31, 13:18,20,28-29, 14:15, 16:16, 17:20-21, 18:16-17,24-25,29, 19:11, 21:31, 22:16-18, 23:51; John 3:3-5, Acts 1:3, 8:12, 14:22, 19:8, 20:25, 28:23, 28:31; 1 Cor. 6:9-10). All these Scriptures teach that Yahshua came to provide His followers with freedom from sin through the Kingdom of God, which believers enter when they believe in Yahshua, ask Him to forgive their sins, and ask Him to change them from the inside out through the power of the Holy Spirit. Yahshua therefore did not come to proclaim, or enforce the Law, but to fulfill the Law through the Kingdom of God - a moral, righteous kingdom that Yahshua established in people's hearts after Pentecost.

Unlike the Mosaic Law, which is an outwardly imposed, and often forced, expression of righteousness, ***the Moral Law of the Kingdom of God is fulfilled through voluntary acts of love and repentance, and by submission to Christ.*** We *must* believe in Christ's mission to save us, repent of our sins, nurture love, and ask Christ to help us change. True repentance leads to full forgiveness, and opens a way for us to love and fellowship with other believers. When

we do this, we obtain the Holy Spirit, which is the seal promising everlasting life. *Through our belief in the Gospel concerning Yahshua, we can receive spiritual rebirth through His own Spirit, and the promise of taking part in the future Resurrection into everlasting life.*

When Paul was defending himself before the Sanhedrin for being a follower of the Way, he preached this Gospel: that Yahshua, as the promised Messiah, is the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets, and that He came to give us everlasting life in the Resurrection:

“But... according to the Way... I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets. I have hope in God... that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust...” “...Therefore... I stand, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come -- that the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead, and would proclaim light to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.”
- Acts 24:14-15, 26:22-23 (NKJ)

In the preceding Scripture, Paul said he only preached about the things that the Old Testament proclaimed, such as the suffering of the Messiah, His resurrection from the dead, and the spiritual light He proclaimed to all people. When Yahshua miraculously rose from the dead, many saints that had been buried around Jerusalem were raised to life *at the same time* (Mat. 27:51-53). Their resurrection clearly showed that Christ had mastery over sin and death, and that we can be freed from sin, and given everlasting life through belief in Christ. This is what gave Paul this blessed hope in a physical resurrection into everlasting life! Paul's faith in, and love for God - and the Spirit of Christ dwelling inside Paul, also gave him this hope:

“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs -- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.” - Romans 8:16-17 (NKJ)

Until we truly believe in Christ's reality, mission, and purpose, we will not receive The Spirit of Christ that tells us we are children of God. Saying we believe in Christ - without being convinced that He is the Son of God and worthy of our worship - is meaningless. To truly *believe* in Yahshua, we must have a saving belief in the Gospel surrounding Christ, which proclaims that Yahshua was God made man (John 1:1-5, 10:30, 20:28; Rom. 9:5; Phil. 2:6; 1 Tim. 3:16; Col. 1:13-17), never sinned (1 Peter 2:21-24; 1 John 3:5), came in the flesh to redeem mankind from sin (Gal. 4:4-5; Titus 2:13-14; 1 John 4:2), and offers everlasting life through the physical Resurrection from the dead:

“Jesus (Yahshua) said to her, I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.” - John 11:25-26 (NKJ)

Christ sealed this promise to give us everlasting life through the Resurrection by establishing a New, eternal Covenant between men and God by shedding His own blood (Matthew 26:27-28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25-26). To enter into this New Covenant, people have to *repent*, and accept Yahshua's atonement sacrifice (*i.e.* admit to their sin guilt, and need for a Savior - see Mark 1:14-15; Acts 2:38; 3:18-20), and ask Yahshua to transform them into righteous people - from the inside, out (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 3:17-18). In fact, this is what believers are asking for whenever they partake in Communion (See 1 Cor. 11:26-32), though so few seem to understand it! Through our belief in, and desire to be like Christ, we obtain the gift of the Holy Spirit, which allows us to attain the Resurrection into everlasting life:

“But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus (Yahshua) from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ (the Anointed One) from the dead will

also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.” - Romans 8:11 (NKJ)

Asking Yahshua to change us from the sinners we are, into righteous saints, shows our genuine desire to be like Christ, and our understanding of the Gospel message. ***We can only receive the Holy Spirit and be saved when we truly know the Gospel, and then want to be like Christ. This is what it means to “believe” in Christ!*** The receipt of the Holy Spirit is an irrevocable spiritual gift, and marks a person’s entrance into the Kingdom of God, which is manifested spiritually. Only the results of being inside God’s spiritual Kingdom can be seen physically - through the loving actions, and other good works that true believers are motivated to do by the Spirit of God within them:

“Now when He (Yahshua) was asked... when the kingdom of God would come, He... said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.” - Luke 17:20-21 (NKJ)

Though Yahshua said the Kingdom of God was within the Jews and Gentiles who were listening to Him, and believed in Him, He did not mean that His Spirit had already become a part of them spiritually, since He had not yet been glorified (John 7:39). Instead, Yahshua meant that the Kingdom of God is an internal one that cannot be seen with one’s physical eyes. Therefore, it can only be found inside believer’s hearts, just as the Moral Law, or Ten Commandments were found inside the Ark - which represents Christ, as well as *Christ in us*.

The Kingdom of God is the Kingdom of Grace

Those who truly listened to Yahshua during His earthly ministry were offered a place in the Kingdom of God within them. But they wouldn’t become citizens of that Kingdom until they became born again, Spirit-filled believers. Only then would they be able to manifest the power of the Kingdom of God, and the Grace that governs it, in the world around them. That is why even the least among those who are born again are greater than John the Baptist, and any prophet that came before him. This is because the prophets who came before Christ were still liable to keep the entire Law. They had not received the promise of Grace that is given by the regenerating baptism of the Holy Spirit within them. Therefore, ***the Kingdom of God is the Kingdom of Grace***, and it was, and still is, only open to people whose spirits have been made alive through Christ’s own Spirit:

“For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” - Luke 7:28 (NKJ)

Today’s born again believers are greater than John the Baptist because they are saved by Grace, and are thereby instantly guaranteed a place in the Kingdom of God. In contrast, though all the great biblical prophets and patriarchs were overshadowed by, and filled with the Holy Spirit, and had gained the benefit of Her spiritual wisdom, they were judged for their worthiness to enter the Kingdom of God based on their works, not just by their faith - as Christians are today.

Outside of a chosen few, the majority of Israelites hoped for a physical resurrection from the dead, but had not yet been re-born, or baptized by the Spirit, which is the seal guaranteeing our right to everlasting life in the First Resurrection (2 Cor. 1:22-23; Ephes. 1:13-14). They did not have the gift of Grace, and spiritual regeneration from within before death. Instead, they did good works to please God, and earn everlasting life at the Last Judgment.

They were therefore not given the opportunity to be citizens in the Kingdom of God - where God's Grace saves us instead of doing good works.

In Old Testament times, people earned their salvation through doing *mandatory good works*. In addition, Blood Covenants, and blood atonement sacrifices were required for them to find temporary forgiveness, and the promise of salvation. Abraham's offspring, for example, practiced salvation by works in the rite of circumcision. Then, in addition to loving God, and offering propitiatory blood sacrifices to show repentance, the ancient Israelites were required to keep many laws that governed every aspect of their culture, religion, and behavior.

Before Christ came, only Abraham was judged as righteous by faith in God alone. Isaac, and Isaac's son Jacob had to earn their salvation through good works. In fact, God chose both Isaac and Jacob for special service partly because they proved worthier than their older, firstborn siblings. Jacob was not ordinarily a deceitful man, and only deceived his father to obtain the blessing of the firstborn over Esau because it was what God desired, not Isaac! Likewise, when Moses received the Torah, the Israelites still had to earn their salvation. But instead of choosing how they would earn it, they were told how to earn it with divine laws that left nothing to chance. Thus, Salvation by Grace alone was not available to all people until the Pentecost that occurred fifty days after Christ rose from the dead, and ten days after He ascended to Heaven in Glory - on the fortieth day after His Resurrection (Acts 1:3,9). This is what the writer of the Fourth Gospel meant when he wrote:

"For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (Yahshua the Messiah)" - John 1:17 (NKJ)

In the past, few people outside of the leaders and prophets of Israel were filled with God's Spirit, or manifested the gifts of the Spirit. This is because, prior to Yahshua's First Advent, only devout people who worked hard to live righteously were divinely chosen for special service - at which time they were filled with, or covered by the Holy Spirit. These people also had to have true faith in God, and His promises before the Spirit was given, just as is required in the New Covenant of Grace. However, When Christ sent the Holy Spirit out in power after His Ascension, all people were given the opportunity to be indwelt by God's Spirit, and born again by a simple declaration of sincere faith in Yahshua. No external works like baptism or blood sacrifice are required for salvation, but only our belief in Christ. When we are born again, we undergo a gradual change in character: from being unrighteous and sinful, to being righteous and sinless like Christ. However, the final transformation into spiritual perfection, and entrance into everlasting life occurs at the moment of physical death. This is why the writer of the Fourth Gospel recorded Yahshua's words as follows:

"If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever-- the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you." - John 14:15-18 (NKJ)

In these Scriptures, Yahshua was saying that the Spirit of God would soon do more than dwell visibly among people who wanted to live righteously, and to love God. Instead, Yahshua promised that the Holy Spirit was going to dwell within their hearts, not just inside the Tabernacle, or Temple, or in God's chosen prophets and leaders - as in the past. This means that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is open to all believers by Grace and faith, not by works! As such, the Holy Spirit literally fills, and enlivens the dead spiritual part of believers, and acts as their personal guide and counselor. Yahshua Himself called this phenomenon the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Just before His ascension into heaven, Yahshua promised to send the Spirit to His apostles:

"He (Yahshua) said, 'you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'" - Acts 1:5 (NKJ)

Just ten days after Yahshua was lifted up to Heaven, the apostles received the baptism of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. At that time, the Spirit filled the apostles with divine wisdom and knowledge, as well as a fearless love for, and belief in the supernatural power of Yahweh God and His Son. From that point onward, as evidenced from their bold behavior throughout the Book of Acts, all the apostles of Yahshua were indwelt and re-born by the Spirit. This baptism promised them everlasting life. Furthermore, it helped them to love themselves and others more fully, and to perform many miracles in Yahshua's Name. In this way, they entered the invisible, but ever-present Kingdom of God on Earth, where freedom and Grace governed them instead of slavery to the Law.

This is as true today as it was then, though few believers actually know how to act as powerfully on Yahshua's behalf as the apostles did. Sadly, this is because none of us have had the benefit of being Yahshua's disciples while He walked the Earth, when we would have been able to see all the miracles Yahshua performed in His Father's Name, and therefore believed in our own power to heal, and cast out demons *in Yahshua's Name*.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is what we need to love Yah and others fully, and to thereby fulfill all of the Law. After all, *"God is love,"* and *"love is the fulfillment of the law"* (John 4:8,16; Romans 13:10). Therefore, our love of Christ - and being baptized with Christ's Spirit through the New Covenant - is the fulfillment of the Law:

"As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love... This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." - John 15:9-12 (NKJ)

This Scripture plainly tells us that Yahshua loves us, and asks us to abide in His love by keeping his *one* commandment: *"that you love one another as I have loved you."* This single commandment combines the previous two that Yahshua gave in Matthew 22:36-40. Since we learn how to love others by loving Christ, it follows, then, that the Kingdom of God is a kingdom of love! It is governed by love, and filled with the love of every believer. Like the Kingdom of God, love is not a material thing with a physical presence. It is invisible like the Spirit of God, and can only be understood by the actions it produces in others. The Kingdom of God, and the love and Grace it bestows, are therefore being manifested in the world today through the loving actions of all true believers in Yahshua. Nonetheless, it will not be fully evident in the world until Yahshua's Second Coming. This is why, at the "Last Supper" or final Passover that Yahshua participated in, Yahshua said that He would not eat the Passover again until the Kingdom of God was firmly established:

"Then He said to them, 'With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.'" - Luke 22:15-16 (NKJ)

Did you catch that? Yahshua said He would not eat the Passover with His disciples again *until* the true purpose of the Passover is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God. The Passover was a commemoration of Israelite deliverance, not only from the death angel, but also from oppression and slavery. Therefore, the betrothal, or New Covenant that Yahshua instituted with His Church at Passover can only truly be "fulfilled" when all who are Israelites through the Spirit can live in absolute peace, joy, and freedom. This will be during the Millennial Kingdom of Christ - when the unseen spiritual Kingdom of God will have a literal homeland on Earth. Since Christ will keep the Passover during His Millennial Rule, all the nations of the

Earth that are loyal to Christ will also keep the Passover, as well as the Feast of Tabernacles or Sukkot:

“And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts (Melek Yahweh Tsavout), and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.” - Zechariah 14:16 (NKJ)

The preceding Scripture clearly indicates that the nations under Christ’s Millennial Rule will be celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles to show the solidarity of their faith. A tabernacle is a sacred tent, box, room, or place where people go to commune with God. In a tabernacle, God’s presence is considered to be dwelling there, and is strongly felt there. As willing citizens in the Kingdom of God on Earth, the mortal believers among the nations shall enter into the Tabernacle of God’s unconditional love and Grace by receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit - through which they obtain Grace, and the promise of everlasting life at the Last Judgment. Rather than an ark or temple building, the spiritual hearts of Yahshua’s true disciples now serve as His Temple on Earth:

“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.” - 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 (NKJ)

If Yahshua’s disciples are God’s Temple, and Yahshua served as the one and only perfect blood sacrifice for sin, then it follows that the only sacrifices God now requires are those we make on the altar of our hearts! It therefore also follows that the Old Testament system of propitiatory sacrifice, and the Aaronic priesthood *is no longer needed*. In fact, Scripture certainly proclaims it isn’t by calling all believers royal priests:

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” - 1 Peter 2:9 (NKJ)

As the fulfillment of God’s desire that Ancient Israel would one day be filled with people who served as a royal priesthood, the Kingdom of God serves as the fallen Kingdom of Israel’s literal fulfillment. All of God’s chosen servants will therefore serve as royal heirs, priests, and citizens in this spiritual Kingdom. The royal and priestly citizens in the literal Kingdom of God on Earth will be the heirs of the promises that Yahweh made to Israel. As such, they will be the recipients of all the blessings that God could never fully bestow on the ancient Kingdom of Israel.

As quoted previously in Luke 22:16, Christ said that He would not keep the Passover again until He did so with His disciples in the fulfilled Kingdom of God, during His Millennial Rule. Therefore, Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread will be kept during the Millennial Rule of Christ. Since these Holy Days are at the head of the yearly cycle of Old Testament religious observances, they suggest that *all* the Old Testament Holy Days will have some sort of future fulfillment in the Kingdom of God. Furthermore, though Christ said He would not keep the Passover until He comes again to rule on Earth, He still asked His followers to perform the Communion/New Covenant ceremony until He returned - and ***Communion is irrevocably attached to a specific ritual part of the Passover celebration.*** Therefore, those willingly under Christ’s authority should follow His example by keeping the Passover, and the Communion ritual connected to it, as well as the Feast of Tabernacles, also known as the Feast of Ingathering, or Sukkot.

This means that all believers, whether Gentile or Jew, are called to keep two of the three great feasts that were outlined as perpetual observances in the Book of the Covenant that was given to Israel right after they received the Ten Commandments. Shavuot is the other

holy feast day mentioned in the Book of the Covenant, and since Pentecost, or Shavuot is the real birthday of the Kingdom of God and Grace, it is a high holy day in many Christian communities around the world. This is as it should be, and the way Yahweh intended it to be. Sadly, however, the real meaning of Shavuot, or Pentecost is often lost on Messianic Jews because they do not see that the giving of the Holy Spirit into all believers hearts on Pentecost is a greater act of love than merely filling their ears with God's Word, which is what happened on the first Pentecost at the foot of Mount Sinai. This is discussed more in a future chapter of "The Language of God in Humanity."

It should now be clear that the preceding Scriptures in Luke and Zechariah, though used to defend the Gospel of the Kingdom of God under Grace, also uphold the teaching and keeping of the biblical feast days that were given under the Law of Moses. This is because, to truly live righteously, believers have to understand the basic reason for the Moral and Mosaic Laws in the first place. This was to convict mankind of their sin and transgression against God. Therefore, though Christians do not have to keep every statute in the Mosaic Law to be considered worthy of everlasting life, they need to live righteously by faith in Christ, and by upholding Christ's Moral Law - which should be engraved on their hearts if they are truly saved.

To avoid sin, it is nice to have a working definition of what constitutes sin. Because love is the fulfillment of the Law, any action that is not done to give love, or its companion trust, is a breach of the Law, and therefore a sin. In other words, we sin whenever we don't love God, others, or ourselves. For example, when someone gets drunk at a party and then attempts to drive home, they are sinning in three ways. First, by violating Yahshua's Commandments to love God and each other fully, they are not acting lovingly toward God, who is in Christ. Secondly, they are disobeying Yahshua's Commandment that tells us to love others as we love ourselves. They do so by putting too much alcohol in their blood, which can potentially injure their liver and other organs. This is not an act of love, but of hate and contempt for one's own life! Thirdly, they sin by driving a car while drunk, and they risk hurting themselves and others through their foolhardy actions. Therefore, they are acting in an unloving manner toward their neighbors.

To live righteously, then, is not about keeping external ordinances. Instead, it is about weighing every action and deed on the scale of God's perfect love. If we think or do anything unloving, it is an unrighteous breach of the Law. In fact, all external civil ordinances and laws are usually in place to make sure we act lovingly toward our neighbors, whether we feel like it, or not! Unfortunately, however, sometimes civil laws go against God's laws, and in these cases, believers are called to follow God's law over any man-made law, even on pain of death. Indeed, though we are not required to keep every civil ordinance, moral laws like loving God, others, and ourselves are essential to follow, and remember.

Note from author Helena Lehman:

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