

## The Twelve Steps of Covenant Law II

Fred R. Coulter—August 15, 2009

We are right in the middle of the words of the covenant, commitment and belief, so let's continue on in the New Testament and let's see the beginning of the words of the New Covenant.

### 4. The Words of the Covenant, Commitment, and Belief

Let's come to Matthew 26:26. Now this was at Jesus' last Passover. Jesus had two things to accomplish with this Passover, which makes it a little different than the Passover we keep today. And the reason being is, that Jesus had to finish and complete the Passover for the covenant with Israel first, before instituting and completing the New Covenant.

Matthew 26:26: "And as they were eating, Jesus took the bread and blessed *it*, then *He* broke *it* and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, 'Take eat; this is My body.'.... [So as we will see, not only do you have the words of the covenant you also have the sacrifice of the covenant, and you also have witnesses of it. So we'll put all of these together and see how, through the Bible, that that is consistent with Abraham, and then Isaac, and then with Israel, and on into the New Covenant.] ...And He took the cup; and after giving thanks, He gave *it* to them, saying, 'All of you drink of it; for this is My blood, the *blood* of the New Covenant, which is poured out for many for *the* remission of sins'" (vs 27-28). We have another teaching concerning that—how vital it is.

Now as I mentioned last time, we won't get into John 14, 15, 16, and 17, which really are the words of the New Covenant, and that's what we use when we go through the Passover ceremony—because the Passover ceremony is the renewing of the New Covenant. So just like everything else:

1. the proposal
2. the agreement
3. the counting of the cost
4. the words, the commitment, the belief

This is what Jesus is also teaching here in John 6—to show the importance of His sacrifice. You could also consider these expanded words of what we just read back in Matt. 26.

John 6:35: "Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life... [Now here's a promise. There are always promises *in the words*.] ...the one who comes to Me shall never hunger; and the one who believes in Me shall never thirst at any time.... [In other words, once you really know and believe and are in covenant with God, have counted the cost and all of that, then you know that God's way is it.

You're not out looking for something else. You're not out looking for another way.] .....But *as* I said to you, you also have seen Me, yet you do not believe'" (vs 35-36).

Because if you don't believe Jesus Christ—Who He is and what He said and what He did—then there's no way you can enter into covenant with Him. Now for example, many of the (just about universally) Protestants, they say 'Jesus did away with the law. It was all abrogated.' What they don't realize in saying that, they're not believing Jesus, because Jesus said, 'Not one jot or tittle of the law shall pass away until all has been fulfilled.' First of all, God establishes everything that needs to be. We cannot add to it or take away from it, because in doing that we are trying to impose our will upon God. And no one can impose his will upon God, because those who try to are actually saying they know better than God what is right and what to do. They really don't think of it that way, because they think, 'Well, we're going to improve it, we're going to make it better.'

So Jesus said: "...you do not believe.... [Now v 37 shows again some more of the purpose of the New Covenant]: ...All whom the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will in no wise cast out'" (vs 36-37). Even though they may have times of trouble and difficulty, or even though they may be like the prodigal son of Luke 15, God will not cast them out. And always remember this: ***Where there's life, there's hope*** and where there is life, there is ***room for repentance***. And always remember, because a lot of people think, 'Oh, have I committed the unpardonable sin.' We have a whole sermon on that that you can get online, actually two of them in the series of Hebrews. But remember this: if God forgave Ahab, and Ahab repented; and if God forgave Manasseh and all that he did for fifty-five years, ***God can forgive you***, and ***God can bring you back*** just like the prodigal son.

Here's another thing that is part of the covenant and this is part of the covenant between God the Father and Jesus Christ. Since God is a covenant God, God the Father was also in covenant with Jesus Christ when He was on the earth. And here's part of the covenant that Jesus said: "For I did not come down from heaven to do My own will, but the will of Him Who sent Me.'.... [And if Jesus is going to do that, then what do we need to do in relationship to God the Father and Jesus Christ?] ...And this is the will of the Father, Who sent Me: that all *of* whom He has given Me, I should not lose

any, but should raise them up at the last day” (vs 38-39). Now there are a lot of people who think that this is the Last Great Day of the Feast. However, for those who understand that the resurrection is on Pentecost, what is the last day of the fifty-day count? *Pentecost!* So this would have to refer to that.

“And this is the will of Him Who sent Me: that everyone who sees the Son, and believes in Him... [Notice, we have belief—*words, commitment, belief.*] ...believes in Him, may have eternal life... [Now there again you see how that agrees with John 3:16. *May have.* Now God’s covenant is irrevocable from His point of view. The covenant for us is conditional *if* we remain faithful unto the end. So we *may have eternal life*] ...and I will raise him up at the last day” (v 40). Then, of course, the Jews were complaining and saying, ‘How could He say He came down from heaven,’ and so forth. Always remember this: If there’s any doubt about where Jesus came from, study through the Gospel of John and count the number of times that He said, ‘I came from heaven. I came from above, you are from beneath,’ etc. and you will see that.

Let’s come to v 48: “I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate manna in the desert, but they died. This is the Bread which comes down from heaven so that anyone may eat of it and not die.... [There again notice *may*, because it is in the Greek subjunctive. Meaning that there is a qualifier to finish it.] ...I am the living bread, which came down from heaven... [Because He said, this is My body, take eat.] ...if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I give is even My flesh, which I give for the life of the world” (vs 48-51). Now, in that verse it tells us an awful lot—doesn’t it? *If you eat it, you shall live forever.* And it’s His flesh. Now that covers the New Covenant, ‘which I give for the life of the world,’ then which takes and brings it clear over to the second resurrection also; because they will have to come into the Kingdom of God through that process at the second resurrection.

Verse 52: “Because of this, the Jews were arguing with one another, saying, ‘How is He able to give us *His* flesh to eat?’.... [Now you think about problems of clean and unclean meat here. This presented a lot of problems to them.] ...Therefore, Jesus said to them... [And here’s Jesus emphasizing it even more.] ...‘Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you do not have life in yourselves.... [Showing *the only way to eternal life is through Jesus Christ.*

- not through any other religion
- not through any other means
- not by any teachings of men, etc.

...The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day; for My flesh is truly food, and My blood is truly drink. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in him” (vs 52-56).

Now when we get to the rest of the *words* of the New Covenant in John 15, we find this expanded even more. So hold your place here and come to John 15. Let’s see how that the covenant expands with greater understanding as the covenant goes along. And we’ll see this in a little bit with Abraham, when we go back there. Now let’s compare that with what we just read back here in v 56.

John 15:4: “Dwell in Me, and I in you.... [Then He also expands that more in John 17. So this is something! What we can see is that the covenants have great meaning and it can be layered with more description of what’s going on which this does here.] ...As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, but only if it remains in the vine, neither *can* you bear fruit unless you are dwelling in Me. I am the vine, and you are the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit... [Now this shows there are things we need to do.] ...because apart from Me you can do nothing. **If** anyone does not dwell in Me, he is cast out as a branch, and is dried up; and men gather them and cast *them* into a fire, and they are burned.... [v 6 begins *if*; v 7 begins *if*]. ...**If** you dwell in Me, and My words dwell in you... [So this also tells us how Christ is going to be in us, not only spiritually through the Spirit of God, but through the *words* of God.] ...you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you. In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples. As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love” (vs 4-9).

Again, expanding the words of the covenant—right? *Yes!* We’ll read just a couple more verses here. Verse 11: “These things I have spoken to you, in order that My joy may dwell in you, and *that* your joy may be full. This is My commandment: that you love one another, as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends. **You are my friends**, if you do whatever I command you” (vs 11-14). What was Abraham called? *The friend of God*, because he did the will of God from the heart; and also kept His laws, commandments, statutes, judgments, and His charge.

Now let’s finish up here back in John 6 where we see *the words* of the New Covenant and then we’ll also take another look at *belief*. Here is the whole sum of it. Here is what Jesus is telling us.

John 6:57 “As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me.” So He’s telling them, ‘I am not going to give you My literal flesh.’ He showed His disciples that it is His symbolic flesh represented by the broken bread. That shows that in the covenant of eating the bread and drinking the wine—His flesh and blood—that you’re going to live by Him. “As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me.”

Now let’s see what kind of faith that we are to have, what kind of belief that we are to have. Let’s come to the book of Hebrews, chapter 11 which is also called the *faith chapter*. In the Greek the word to *believe* is the verb, and the word for *faith* is the noun of the verb to *believe*. So let’s come to Hebrews 11:1: “Now faith... [or belief. Remember you can substitute *faith* or *belief*, either one. Because to *believe* in the Greek means to *faithize*.] ...Now **faith is the substance of things hoped for**... [Faith—from the Spirit of God—is the fruit of the Spirit of God. So it is in our minds a spiritual substance. And actually when our minds are working, our minds are being programmed by our thoughts, and also with the Spirit of God. So it becomes a substance within us, spiritually, of things hoped for.] ...and the conviction of things not seen.”

Now why? Just like it was with Abraham—and we’ll go back and look at that again here in just a minute—when God took him outside and told him, ‘Now look at the heavens, and if you can number the stars, that’s how your seed is going to be.’ And **he believed!** So when there is nothing for us to do—because it’s impossible for us to do, such as counting the stars—we’re to believe God that it will be so. Why?

- Because we proved that God exists
- God does not lie
- God has a plan
- God has a purpose
- God has called us

—and we add all these things up together. So:

- we have the words
- we have commitment
- we have belief
- belief then results in faith

Let’s come down here to v 6: “Now without faith *it is impossible to please God*. For it is mandatory for the one who comes to God to believe that He exists... [That He is] ...and *that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him*.” So there’s the whole basis and foundation for it. We are to *believe God, believe His Words*, we are to have

*commitment* to it, and we are to have the kind of faith that produces action. Now you read all of these things here:

- by faith Noah
- by faith Abraham
- by faith Abel
- by faith Enoch

—and so forth. What happened with their faith? *By faith they did the things that God said*.

So this is to lead to action. Now let’s look at the difference of this in James 2:14 and see how he defines it: “My brethren, what good *does* it do, if anyone says *that he* has faith, and does not have works? Is faith able to save him? Now then, if there be a brother or sister who is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; be warmed and filled,’ and does not give to them the things necessary for the body, what good is it?... [But someone is going to say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.... [Now here is the true translation of it.] ...*My answer is*: You prove your faith to me through your works, and I will prove my faith to you through my works” (vs 14-16, 18). Everyone has faith, whether a negative faith to not obey or a positive faith to obey, and that faith produces works. Not giving someone what they need is a work and choice— isn’t it? *You decide not to do it*. So this is showing what kind of faith that we need to have.

Then he continues, very important, v 19: “Do you believe that God is one? You do well to *believe this*. Even the demons believe—and tremble *in fear*. But are you willing to understand, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?... [This is where we’re going to then finish up and go back to Abraham and see how things were carried out in that particular case.] ...Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac, his own son, upon the altar.... [We’ll examine that in detail (in just a little bit) and see that that was part of the covenant that demonstrated to God that Abraham would always obey Him.] ...Do you not see that faith was working together with his works, and by works *his* faith was perfected? And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘Now Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness’; and he was called a friend of God. You see, then, that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only” (vs 19-24). ***Faith is to believe, and to believe brings action.***

Let’s go back and see this account in Genesis 22. Some of these categories will overlap in what we’re going to cover, but we will see all the elements in the covenant. They all come together. Now here was the test of Abraham. ***We’re all going to have a test like this.*** Do we really believe? And

are we going to act upon that belief and faith by doing what God says, even though we may not understand at the time we are asked to do it?

Let's think about everything here in Genesis 22:1: "And it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am'.... [here's a real test] ...And He said, 'Take now your son, your only *son* Isaac... [Did he not have another son called Ishmael? *Yes, but Ishmael was not the son of promise.* Here's the son of promise that God said, 'Through your seed.' Here he is. We've estimated many times back and forth about how old he was, but I think we can pretty well reckon it at about fifteen.] ...'Take now your son, your only *son* Isaac, whom you love, and go into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell you'" (vs 1-2).

Now notice, just like when Abraham was told to leave his country, leave his father, leave his house, and go into the country that God said Abraham obeyed and went. So here he obeyed. "And Abraham rose up early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two *of* his young men with him, and Isaac his son. And he split the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up and went to the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said to his young men, 'You stay here with the donkey, and I and the boy will go yonder and worship, and come again to you'" (vs 3-5).

Now here's another type. In this case Abraham is representing a *type of God the Father*, and Isaac is representing a *type of Christ*, Who was the only begotten of the Father, Whom the Father loved. So what did he do? "And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it upon Isaac his son... [Which was a type of what? *Jesus carrying His cross.*] ...And he took the fire *pot* in his hand... [Obviously he couldn't take fire in his hand, it would burn.] ...and a knife. And they both went together.... [Now notice, Isaac had a question, but he was not rebellious either.] ...And Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, 'My father.' And he said, 'Here I *am*, my son.' And he said, 'Behold the fire and the wood.... [Now I see that.] ...But where is the lamb for a burnt offering?' And Abraham said, 'My son, God will provide a lamb for a burnt offering.' So they both went on together. And they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. And he bound his son Isaac and laid him on the wood, upon the altar" (vs 6-9).

Now this is getting right down to the last minute, and many times that's how God deals with us. He'll rescue us at the last minute, and we really

don't know it until that time comes. "And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son" (v 10). Now why would he do that? Well, we're told in Heb. 11, he did it because he knew that God could raise him from the dead, because he, in a fact, came from his own dead body through Sarah's dead womb *by promise*. A hundred-year-old man, a ninety-year-old woman, very hard to do, but God did it. So he knew if God could do that, He would raise him back to life.

So notice God intervened right at the last minute. "And the angel of the LORD called to him from the heavens and said, 'Abraham! Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.... [And I bet it was, 'HERE I AM!'] ...And He said, 'Do not lay your hand upon the lad, nor do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me'" (vs 11-12). Now that goes also back to *counting the cost*—right? Because we have

- proposal
- agreement
- counting the cost
- words, commitment, belief

—so you see how all of that goes in. ***He counted the cost!***

God performed a miracle: "And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked. And, behold, behind him a ram was entangled in a thicket by its horns.... [Again, another type of Christ in the ram. The ram became what? *The substitutionary sacrifice for Isaac.*] ...And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide... [***that's the result of faith and belief***] ...so that it is said *until* this day, 'In the mount of the LORD it will be provided'" (vs 13-14).

Now look what happened here because of this. This now becomes a reaffirmation of the covenant, which also then includes Isaac—and let's see what God did, because there has to be (as we'll see a little later the next one) *witnesses*, so we'll just leave it here with this. "And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, 'By Myself have I sworn,' says the LORD... [Now God does not need to swear. ***His word is true***, but this is an extra confirmation that God is giving to Abraham for his work of faith.] ...because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son; that in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply your seed like the stars of heavens, and as the sand which is upon the seashore. And your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in your seed... [Which Paul wrote of in Gal. 3, referring to Christ.] ...shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice'" (vs 15-18).

So there are many, many elements all in here, but this is really something.

### 5. Witnesses

Now let's come and see the covenant with Israel—Exodus 24. Let's see how we have all the elements here again. We had the Ten Commandments given: we had the *agreement*, then God *spoke* the Ten Commandments. We had the extra laws given, Exodus 21, 22, and 23. We covered some of those last time. Then we have something different here. Now we have a *confirmation with the witnesses of the agreement*.

### 6. Sacrifice and Shed Blood

So let's see those all wrapped up here in the confirmation of the covenant with Israel. God wanted to have *witnesses*, so here's what He did. Exodus 24:1: "And He said to Moses, 'come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu... [So what do we have? *Three witnesses*. 'In the mouth of two or three witnesses'—what? *Every word shall be established*.] ...and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship afar off.'" So He had another seventy, which were *secondary witnesses*, but they did not go up as far as Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu. So they saw all of this.

"And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments.... [Now here again we have *agreement*.] ...And all the people answered with one voice and said, 'All the words which the LORD has said, **we will do**'" (v 3). Just like in a marriage covenant and this was a marriage covenant right here. Which then God says, 'I will provide for you, I will give for you, if you will submit to Me.' Just like the wife, she will submit to the husband, the husband will provide, etc. You have the same basis here. 'All the words which the LORD has said, we will do.'

"And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. and rose up early in the morning, and built an altar at the base of the mountain and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel who offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of bullocks to the LORD, And Moses took half of the blood..." (vs 4-6). [So there has to be the *shedding of blood*. There has to be the **blood of the covenant**, which then is number seven—sealed with the blood. So we have:

5. witnesses
6. sacrifice
7. blood of the covenant

### 7. The Blood of the Covenant

So that's what we have here all wrapped up in these verses. Very similar to what we had in Genesis 22. We had a sacrifice, then we had the

shedding of the blood, and the burning of the burnt offering of the substitute sacrifice, and so forth.

"And Moses took half of the blood, and put it *in* basins, and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the ears of the people.... [So they heard every word. Remember what the people said to Moses. 'Moses, you go speak to God, and you come and tell us His words, and we'll obey.' So that's exactly what he did.] ...And they said [after hearing it], '**All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient**'" (vs 6-7). Just like the husband saying, 'I will provide,' and the wife saying, 'I will submit and I will do.'

Now notice how it's sealed with the blood. Just like Jesus said that the wine was symbolic of His blood in the New Covenant and that He became the literal sacrifice. Verse 8: "And Moses took the blood and sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, 'Behold the **blood of the covenant**, which the LORD has made with you concerning all these words.'" Boy, there you go: sprinkled on the altar to verify the words of God along with the burnt offerings and then the blood sprinkled upon the people to show that they had made a blood covenant with God.

Now notice what else happened, so here's a continuation of the *witnesses* now. You have the witnesses of Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, the seventy elders. You have the witnesses of the people and their agreement all together. "And Moses went up, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. And **they saw the God of Israel**.... [So they would be witnesses to the fact that it was really God that did this.] ...And *there* was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the heavens in clearness" (vs 9-10). So here is a *sea of glass* right there, if you would. So we have:

5. witnesses
6. the walk of death
7. sealed with the blood

### 8. The Covenant Meal

"And the nobles of the children of Israel He did not lay his hands. Also they saw God, and **ate and drank**" (v 11). Now we project this forward to the ultimate in the New Covenant, we'll see a little later, there is what? *The marriage supper of the Lamb*—correct? *Yes!* We'll get to that a little later. But I just want you to see the consistency in every one of these covenants that God has made.

"And the LORD said to Moses, 'Come up to Me in the mountain, and be there. And I will give you tablets of stone, and the law, and commandments which I have written, so that you

may teach them.’ And Moses rose up, and his attendant Joshua. And Moses went up into the mountain of God. And he said to the elders, ‘You wait here for us until we come again to you. And behold, Aaron and Hur are with you. If any man has a cause, let him come to them.’ And Moses went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain. And the glory of the LORD abode upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days....” (vs 12-16).

Now remember how this was with Noah—right? He went into the ark and then it started raining on the seventh day. So here he goes up to God and then: “...And the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. And the sight of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain to the eyes of the children of Israel.... [Well, that’s where they went wrong, because they got afraid and said, ‘Wonder if he’s still alive?’ Remember, what did they do when he was up there forty days and forty nights? *They said, ‘We don’t know what happened to this guy. Aaron, make us golden calves.’*] ...And Moses went up into the midst of the cloud, and went up into the mountain. And Moses was in the mountain forty days and forty nights” (vs 16-18).

Now we’ll just summarize this right here: What is the purpose of every covenant of God? Exodus 25:8: **“And let them make Me a sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them.”** *God wants to dwell with His people.*

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Let’s emphasize point #6 a little bit more: *the sacrifice and death walk*. We will see how that applied. Let’s go back to Genesis 15, let’s see this, and then we will see how it applied to Christ and how it applies to us.

Now in the Passover book and *The Day That Jesus the Christ Died* I showed how that here in Genesis 15 this is really the beginning of the Passover, you might say the proto-Passover. And that makes sense because Abraham is what? *He’s the father of the faithful*. And we are the children of Abraham, if we are Christ’s. Let’s see what happened when he offered the sacrifice. God told Abraham to offer.

Genesis 15:5 and we’ll review just a little bit here. “And He brought him outside and said, ‘Look now toward the heavens and number the stars—if you are able to count them.’ And He said to him, ‘So shall your seed be.’” Now we can look and see the evidence of that physically, because we’re living at the end of the age. He didn’t even have an inkling that he would have a son, except God told him that he would.

“And he believed in the LORD. And He accounted it to him for righteousness. And He said to him, ‘I *am* the LORD that brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give you this land to inherit it.’ And he said, ‘Lord GOD, by what shall I know that I shall inherit it?’.... [Because he knew that in a covenant there had to be a guarantee. So here’s the guarantee, which also then is the *sacrifice* and then *the death walk*. Very important.] ...And He said to him, ‘Take Me a heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.’ And he took all these to himself, and divided them in the middle, and laid each piece opposite the other...” (vs 6-10).

So this was not a sacrifice on an altar. This was a sacrifice on the bare ground. It was an unusual sacrifice, which then is the covenant sacrifice to make the sacrifice irrevocable at this point. In other words, once this was completed and done, that was an absolute guarantee by God Himself that He would perform it. So here they are, half on one side, half on the other side with the three animals, and then the young pigeon and turtledove, he didn’t divide those, with all the guts laying out there, the blood, guts, and gore with it.

“And when the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.... [Because the buzzards and eagles could look down there and see all of that and they know when there is a carcass on the ground. Now here it is open, ready to go. He had to chase them off. Notice the sequence of events here because this leads up to the *death walk* after the sacrifice.] ...And it came to pass, as the sun was going down, that a deep sleep fell upon Abram. And behold, a horror of great darkness fell upon him!.... [This is a type of death. How can you come to a point of experiencing death yet not die? This is about the closest you can come to.] ...And He said to Abram, ‘You must surely know that your seed shall be sojourners in a land *that* is not theirs... [Now notice how this continues here. There is a parenthetical statement.] ...*(and shall serve them and afflict them)*... [But that doesn’t mean they shall serve them and afflict them for 400 years, because the parenthetical statement, if you read past it, it is:] ...your seed shall be sojourners in a land *that* is not theirs four-hundred years.... [That’s what happened to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to Joseph, and so forth. And they were actually afflicted a little over one-hundred-and-some years in Egypt.] (Now then here’s another promise): ...And also I will judge that nation whom they shall serve. And afterward they shall come out with great substance” (vs 11-14). Just like the children of Israel did when they left Egypt.

““And you shall go to your fathers in peace. You shall be buried in a good old age. But in the

fourth generation they shall come here again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full” (v 16). Now notice this is an important part of the sacrifice, because this is the *death walk*. Let’s understand something concerning this also: Abraham *did not walk down between those pieces* of the covenant sacrifice. This special sacrifice was a *death walk*, because it is a maledictory oath. And with a maledictory oath and this kind of sacrifice, what you are saying and confirming is this: That if I do not fulfill the promises that I gave to you in this covenant, *I shall likewise die*. Now with God doing this, not only was it applicable in that particular point to fulfill it, but also a prophecy of His coming death and crucifixion.

“And it came to pass—when the sun went down... [so that ends the day] ...and it was dark— behold, a smoking furnace and a burning lamp passed between those pieces” (v 17). Because Abraham was in this horrible dark deep sleep akin to death, and in vision he saw God, pictured by the burning lamp, walk between those parts. And the burning furnace consumed them, completely consumed. Apparently there’s no account of the sacrifice still being there after this event took place; completely consumed those sacrificial animals. And God took the death walk down between them. That sealed the promise and guarantee that He would give this land as He said.

Now also remember, there were two promises of seed:

1. The *physical* who would receive the land.
2. The *spiritual* who would be as the stars of heaven.

So we have within this the *promise of the covenant* to Israel to give them the land, and the *promise to the spiritual seed through Christ through His death*. Both of those are there.

Let’s come to Hebrews 9, because here is how Paul talks about the covenant sacrifice. Unfortunately this is very mistranslated and misunderstood in the *King James Version*, because they translate the word ‘testament’ from the Greek word ‘diatheke’—which should read *covenant*. And almost every other place it is covenant, except here it talks about the *death and covenant law*.

Let’s come to Hebrews 9:15 and here it will show you the problem with the translation. Before we get into it, let me ask you a question. Do you have a last will and testament? What is the difference between a testament and a covenant? If you have a testament, you can change it at any time before you die, and it’s still binding. A covenant is not that way. You have to guarantee the covenant *first* with a covenant sacrifice before it becomes binding, because it cannot become binding until there is the

sacrifice. That sacrifice is the evidence of your death, maledictory death. That’s what we just read in Genesis 15.

Here is the fulfillment of it. Hebrews 9:15 (KJV): “For this cause He is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by the means of death for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they who are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator” (vs 15-16). That’s the difference. A testament/will does not come into effect until the testator dies and this is what the translators were reading into this, because they didn’t understand the Greek. I’ll explain it to you here in just a minute.

Verse 17 (KJV): “For a testament *is* of force after men are dead... [Now that’s the *wrong translation*, because this is talking about covenant, not testament. And this is where the confusion comes. I’ll explain it to you here in just a minute.] ...otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator lives.” Then he talks about dedicated with blood, and so forth.

Now let’s read it in the *Faithful Version*. And this one here was a difficult one to translate it, because v 17—I’ll explain it to you when we get there. Let’s read it beginning in Hebrews 9:15: “And for this reason He is *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant... [because God deals in covenant law] ...in order that through *His* death, *which* took place for the release of the transgressions *that were committed* under the first covenant...”

And that took care of them—why? *Because all of the sins of the Israelites were forgiven to the temple*. Now the slate is completely wiped clean with His death. But His death also gave us something else. Remember He had the death walk. When He was being led to be crucified, He had a second death walk—didn’t He? And what was He doing? He was carrying the cross bar of the cross that they were going to make on the stake that was in the ground. Because the Romans were very efficient in what they did. Rather than have a new cross for every one, they crucified so many, that they left the stake in the ground. And then they had the one to be crucified carry the cross beam on which then they would nail his hands, and then lift him up and hook him to the stake. So that’s why in the New Testament you have tree, you have stake, you have cross, and that’s the difference in it there. So He had His *second death walk* when He what? *He walked to the place where He was to be crucified*.

“...those who have been called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance....

[Here's the correct translation for vs 16 & 17, and I've got a footnote there on page 1,211, which explains it]: ...Now where *there is* a covenant, *it is* obligatory to bring forth *a symbolic sacrifice to represent* the death of the one who personally ratifies the covenant... [Well, you don't die on the spot. It is a *symbolic death through sacrifice*, so that's why I translated it:] ...to bring forth *a symbolic sacrifice to represent* the death of the one who personally ratifies the covenant... [we'll see this take place in just a bit back in Jer. 34. (Here's the key): ...because a covenant *is* ratified *only* over *the dead sacrificial* animals..."] Now this verse is unusual because the *dead animals* is plural in the Greek. So what this is referring to goes clear back to Gen. 15, and also the practice of the covenant sacrifice: splitting them down the middle, walking between the parts. The *dead sacrificial animals* represent or symbolize your debt if you don't fulfill it. ] ...since there is no way that it is legally in force until the living ratifier *has symbolically represented his death.*"

Jesus did it as the Lord God of the Old Testament in Gen. 15. Then when it came time for Him to be crucified He became the sacrifice Himself, but was resurrected from the dead. So we have the 'symbology' in Gen. 15. We have the actual crucifixion and death at the time of the Passover.

Now notice what he refers to, v 18: "For this very reason, neither was the first *covenant* inaugurated without blood because after Moses had spoken every commandment of *the* law to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and he sprinkled both the book of *the covenant* itself and all the people, saying, 'This *is* the blood of the covenant that God has ordained for you'" (vs 18-20).

So Christ said concerning the wine, 'Take drink, this is My blood of the New Covenant which is shed for the remission of the sins of many.' Now let's see another instance of this back in Jeremiah 34. Let's where it refers to it, and let's see what God said to those Jews, who when they had given this covenant sacrifice, taking a calf, splitting it down the middle right at the temple, and all of them walking through it to guarantee the covenant. That if they did not do what they said, they would likewise die.

Jeremiah 34:8: "The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty to them... [Let's see what they did; here was the liberty.] ...that each man should let his male slave, and each man his female slave—if a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman—go free, that none should enslave a Jew, his brother among them.

And all the rulers obeyed, and all the people who had entered into the covenant allowed them to go free, each man his male slave, and each man his female slave, so that not any should be enslaved among them any more; and they obeyed and let *them* go" (vs 8-10). Now when you make a covenant, you cannot break it. If you break it, you will die as those sacrificial animals, because those sacrificial animals represented your death in case you did not do according to your word.

Verse 11: "But afterward... [After they made the covenant.] ...they turned and took back the male slaves and the female slaves whom they had set free and enslaved them *again* as male slaves and female slaves." Remember, because they made this covenant, what God did was this, because there were three invasions of Nebuchadnezzar. This was the second invasion because they made this promise to God to let them go, He caused Nebuchadnezzar to withdraw his forces and retreat from Judah and Jerusalem.

Verse 12: "So the Word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, "I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, saying... [And it was confirmed with blood. And they said, 'Yes, all that God has spoken, we will do.'] ...'At the end of seven years each man should let go *free* his brother, a Hebrew, who has been sold to him. And when he has served you six years, you shall let him go free from you.' But your fathers did not hearken to me, nor incline their ears. And you had turned today, and had done right in My sight to call for liberty, each man to his neighbor. And you had made a covenant before Me in the house which is called by My name"' (vs 12-15). Now remember: We can apply that spiritually to us today, because when we pray—what? *We go directly to God the Father in heaven above*—right? *Yes!* Here they came to the temple.

“...made a covenant before Me in the house which is called by My name. But you turned *back* and defiled My name... [Because when you promise God something, you defile His name.] ...and each of you has taken back his male slave and his female slave whom you had set free to do as they pleased. But you forced them *again* to become you male and your female slaves." Thus says the LORD, "You have not hearkened to Me to proclaim liberty each man to his brother, and each man to his neighbor! Behold, I proclaim freedom for you," says the LORD, "to the sword, to the plague, and to the famine. And I will cause you to be a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. And I will give the men who have sinned against My covenant, who have not done the words of the covenant which they made



before Me *when they divided the calf in two and passed between its parts*” (vs 15-18). There you go.

So what did they do? *They made this covenant with God*: They pledged their own death by walking between the parts of the covenant sacrifice of the calf; they turned and went back on it. So what did God say? ‘You’re going to have the sword, you’re going to have the plague, you’re going to have famine, and *I will cause you to be a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth.*’

Verse 20: ““I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those who seek their life. And their dead bodies shall be for food to the birds of heaven and to the beasts of the earth.... [Remember what happened with the maledictory sacrifice of those three animals that Abraham did? What happened? *The birds of prey came*—right? *Yes!*] ...And I will give Zedekiah king of Judah, and his rulers, into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those who seek their lives, and into the hand of the king of Babylon’s army, who has withdrawn from you. Behold, I will command,” says the LORD, “and cause them to return to this city. And they shall fight against it and capture it, and burn it with fire. And I will make the cities of Judah a desert without a soul to live in it”” (vs 20-22). So when a covenant is made, it is irrevocable.

Let’s look at *baptism, because baptism is a covenant death*. So let’s come back here to Romans 6 and see that. When we go get baptized, that’s our *death walk*. And here is the covenant; here’s what it symbolizes. That’s why all baptisms have to be by full immersion in water. If I sprinkled water on you, would you be subject to death or drowning? *No*, not unless I had a fire hose at full blast on you. When you bury a corpse, do you lay it on the ground and sprinkle a little dirt on it and say, ‘Oh, I buried it.’ *No!* So here Paul draws *the symbolism of our covenant death*. Christ gave His covenant death—right? *Yes*. Now here’s our covenant death. This is why the book of Hebrews talks about the unpardonable sin. Let’s read it here.

Romans 6:1: “What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound?... [Most of the Protestants agree yes, but Paul wrote:] ...MAY IT NEVER BE!... [and the Greek here means, ‘Do not even let this thought come into being.’ *May it never be!* King James says, ‘God forbid.’] ...We who died to sin... [Now how did you die to sin? *Through baptism*. You’re still alive.] ...how shall we live any longer therein? Or are you ignorant that we, as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death?” (vs 1-3). His was a *covenant death*, now yours is a

*covenant death*, and we always bring you up out of the water. But if you were held down under the water, you would die, no question about it.

“Therefore, we were buried with Him through **the** baptism... [Very interesting, that’s what it is in the Greek. Through **the** baptism which then makes it the covenant baptism.] ...into **the** death... [That is the death of Christ.] ...so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life.... [Because here’s what happens with baptism]: ...For if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death... [This is our covenant death with Christ’s covenant death, together.] ...so also shall we be *in the likeness* of His resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with *Him* in order that the body of sin might be destroyed.... [Showing that it is a process.] ...so that we might no longer be enslaved to sin; because the one who has died to *sin*... [How? *Through the operation of baptism*.] ...has been justified from sin.... [Having your sins forgiven and removed.] ...Now if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from *the* dead, dies no more; death no longer has any dominion over Him. For when He died, He died unto sin once for all... [because He’s Creator of all human beings] ...but in that He lives, He lives unto God” (vs 4-10).

Here’s what the lesson is we are to learn from it in this covenant law for our lives. “In the same way also, you should indeed reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof. Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from *the* dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God” (11-13). There’s the whole operation of it.

Now we’ll go ahead and finish here, and we’ll pick up the consequences of not carrying out the covenant pledge of your baptism-death is of the same force that God brought against the Jews who went back on the covenant in Jeremiah 34.

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 26:26-28
- 2) John 6: 35-40, 48-56
- 3) John 15:4-9, 11-14
- 4) John 6:57
- 5) Hebrews 11: 1, 6
- 6) James 2:14-16, 18-24
- 7) Genesis 22:1-18
- 8) Exodus 24:1, 3-18
- 9) Exodus 25:8

- 10) Genesis 15:5-17
- 11) Hebrews 9:15-20
- 12) Jeremiah 34:8-22
- 13) Romans 6:1-13

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Luke 15
- John 3:16; 17
- Galatians 3
- Exodus 21, 22, 23

Also referenced:

Sermon Series: *Hebrews*

Books:

- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- *The Day That Jesus the Christ Died* by Fred R. Coulter

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