

The Everlasting Covenant

Most See the 'New Covenant' as being the Epitome of Development within the Overall Plan of God. Those not Destined to be Called in this Age, and Who Seem Excluded from it, will discover HOPE in a Most Ancient Ceremony.

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When considering the issue of God's Covenants with man, we are pre-disposed to think of only two. In fact, there are four! A most solemn evening, set some 430 years before the Exodus, and a highly extraordinary sacrifice and procession occurring on that evening, reveal aspects of the overall plan of God not conveyed to us by those in the religious main stream. We are drawn to this original event by the clear announcement by the Apostle Paul, made in Galatians 3. "*And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*" (v.29) This tells us that Abraham is a person of utmost relevance in our inclusion into the family of Faith. Not only that, but also that the Promise made to him structures the basis of our ultimate hope!

There are obvious questions evident from just this statement. But then, additional questions arise when we also realize that the **Ark** of the Covenant, thought to have become irrelevant by the time, is also an item of major notice when the Millennial Kingdom is first set-up! Revelation 11:19 "*And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.*" The Ark of which 'testament'? Of the NEW? Of the OLD?? If this item is to be seen, it must be by looking into the Holy of Holies in Heaven!

We should go back and consider again those words from Genesis 15 for their broad implications and specific relevance to the Plan God is implementing toward His elect of every age. One thing should be obvious, that the Covenant extends out to a very broad time-frame. **God's Covenant is not something that is discarded on expiration, to be replaced by a whole new idea. No, rather, it is progressive. There is in reality only one Covenant that is developed out over four distinct progressive phases,**

each built on the experiences of the former.

Most modern theologians, teachers and students focus on the New Covenant only, as though it's the **only** one that matters. With regard to our personal salvation, that focus may be appropriate. But to understand what God is doing, what He intends to do as it involves **the rest** of humanity, then we need to widen our field of vision a bit. The Covenant made with Abraham on that original '*night to be much observed*'¹ contains a unique glimpse into the overall intentions of God toward His Creation.

With the polarity that exists against what we know as the "Old Covenant", it is hard to present a new regard for God's Covenant without it evoking at least some degree of negative reaction. Being that the Law was such a strong component of the Old Covenant, and for that matter, of the Patriarchal era before it, which observed ceremonies and practices also rejected by this generation, that negativism is hard to factor out. The primitive Law, at least as it had been developed to that point in time,² was a major consideration in the Covenant made by God with Abraham as it was in those to follow.

But that original Covenant, which Paul in his letter to the Galatians indicated the necessity of our becoming Abraham's seed, through the calling and regeneration process, has everything to do with the New Covenant we read of in Hebrews 8. Do we understand how? In it, God swore an **oath** before Abram that provided assurance to him and his descendants (both physical and spiritual) of their 'inheritance' through him as a result of his faithfulness to his calling.

¹ Exodus 12:42 The Exodus began on this exact anniversary!

² Gen. 26:5, Gal. 3:6, **Gen. 26:5** "*Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.*"

From this event in Genesis 15, we can begin to see that ‘the Covenant’ is one single Covenant, being developed-out thru **four distinct phases**. That’s how we, under the New Covenant, come under the Covenant and promise made with Abraham. That Covenant endures, remaining valid in each of the phases including up until this present day!

The lead-in to the passage of specific reference is a conversation between Abram and the LORD God (Gen. 15:2) in which Abram brings up the matter of his heir. He wanted to know what assurance he had that the promises made to him by God would actually come to pass. *“And He said unto him, I am the LORD that brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give you this land to inherit it. And Abram asked, LORD God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? And He said unto him, take an 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 him all these and he divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against the other, but the birds he divided not.”* (Gen. 15:9-10)

Elements of Sacrifice

Though each of these were the primary types of animals used later under the Old Covenant Sacrificial System, the greater relevance is that here we see represented the **four distinct phases** that the Covenant would develop through. In other words, each, **in their particular order**, is indicative of each of the phases thru which God’s Covenant with man would develop. In this sense, this ceremony and its four featured animal kinds are prophetic in an additional way than Abraham in his day would have understood.

The **heifer**: A bovine type animal, generally complacent, represents the Patriarchal Era: that era from the time of the Flood thru to the Exodus.

The female **goat**: A more stubborn ‘sheep-like’ animal, but with a mind of its own when it comes to being worked with, not unlike the characteristic of God’s ‘wife’, the children of Israel under the ‘old Covenant’ administration. This animal represents the Old Covenant Era, from the Exodus to the time of Christ.

The **ram**: A male of the sheep, with a different

natural disposition from a goat, though visually similar. This animal represents the ‘Christ-like’ characteristic, inherent in those who become converted, and receive His Spirit. This animal represents the Christian Era, that time interval between the first and second comings.

The **turtledove** and **pigeon**: Under this phase of Abraham’s ‘sacrifice’, we’re introduced to a different consideration. First, these two aren’t ‘blood sacrifices’ as the others. The method used to kill them was to break their necks, not cut them in two as the others all were. We have two different types of bird that otherwise seem very similar. But there are distinctions. First, the pigeon is to be a young pigeon. All the others were to be three years old. (In their reproductive prime.) The dove’s age is kept unspecified. (Ageless) In order to see what they represent, we need to consider where we are in the sacrificial progression. With the male sheep, we are conveyed through to the Second Coming, at which time all who are ‘in Christ’ will be made Spirit Beings.³ Now the Spirit of God was represented as a dove in John 1:32. It is posed here that the dove represents those who are Christ’s at His coming, who reign over the nations with Him in His Kingdom.⁴ This represents the Millennial Age and the Post-Millennial Age,⁵ from the second coming of Christ to the advent of the Father!⁶

Two Concurrent Kinds

But what about the immature pigeon? Who does it represent? In the present world, we have different peoples’ living together. In the spiritual sense, we have two kinds primarily: those being converted and those not! In the age beyond the Second Coming, there will also be a distinction, but since that is the era of opportunity for all who live during that age, the distinction follows Spiritual lines. Those who are converted and who have been made Spirit, are represented by the dove of unspecified age, and the ‘young’ pigeon, represents those still in process of becoming converted, still physical, not

³ 1st Corinthians 15:49-54

⁴ Revelation 5:8-10 Request the three article series on “**The Millennial Worship System**”.

⁵ My article “**The HOPE of the Last Great Day**” discusses this extended era.

⁶ My articles “**The Elements Shall Melt...**” & “**The HOPE of Glory**” discusses this little known event in greater detail.

yet made Spirit. Rather than being divided in two, as are all the other animals, these are set one on one side of the path and the other on the other. There is an inter-positional gulf ⁷ applied wholly to each distinct example. These two kinds represent the two distinct kinds of beings living side by side within the Millennial Age. So this representation covers the Covenant Era extending from the Second Coming out through the end of the Millennial Age and Great White Throne.

In this we can see a prophetic component conveyed in the symbolism. The Covenant is to develop out through these four distinct phases of application with each phase presenting a quantum leap in spiritual opportunity and maturation.

Dirty Birds

Not only are we introduced to sacrifice-worthy birds, but also while in waiting for the 'Confirmation Procession', a more sinister representation: "*And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.* We see those who oppose the Covenant and the Truth that it conveys being cast as flesh-devouring raptors! There will always be an element-in-waiting to take away from this sacred institution, which requires our constant vigilance! "*And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and, lo, a horror of great darkness ⁸ fell upon him.*" (Gen. 15:12) (This event has a correlation to another event centuries later.) "*And it came to pass that when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace and a burning lamp passed between those pieces. In the same day **the LORD** ⁹ **made a covenant** with Abram saying, Unto your seed have I given this land from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates." (Gen. 15:17-18) Notice here, we have a description of a 'promised land' much greater than was achieved at any time in history. With the current political climate in this region of the world, it is not to happen any time before*

⁷ Luke 16:26 The **gulf** existing between those in Abraham and those not is illustrated with one entirely on one side of the pathway, and the other on the other!

⁸ The article "**The Abrahamic Covenant**" expands upon the significance of this '*horror of great darkness*' and on the exquisite timing as it relates to a significant future event.

⁹ Note that these TWO distinct and separate Divine Representations are presented here as a 'unity' under the single name: YHWH! This was the original 'selfsame day'!

Christ's return, indicating that its fulfillment lies beyond the era of man's 6000 year self-governing experience.

So, in our regard for the Old Covenant, we should remain aware that it is not '*done away*' in the sense of having no value. We learn from the examples and experiences our predecessors illustrated. ¹⁰ Those who regard the Old Covenant as having been all done away risk losing the spiritual lessons of that age which are intended to enhance the understanding of our age. Of course, those lessons are for the most part illustrations of the consequences of breaking God's Law! If we disregard that Law, (and that seems to be the major objective of those who regard the New Testament as being divorced from that Law), then we lose the value of those illustrations.

Ever Mindful

God says He is ever mindful of His Covenant. It is the central theme and underlying preoccupation in His dealings with His Creation. Though He relates to mankind in graduated steps, there is no phase of that Covenant that is informationally dispensable or worthy of the raw contempt certain 'new testament' persuasions are so quick to inject into their theological stance. The tragedy of our age is the willful disregard for the Covenant in its full manifestation, largely being a casualty to a mis-conceived and mis-defined "new covenant", one which sets aside the New Covenant's functional base: the implantation of God's Moral Law in the core of our beings: putting the Law in our inward parts, writing it in our hearts! This is the True Covenant applicable to the present age, represented by the male sheep. "***And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.***" (Gal. 3:29)

What will be especially fascinating will be to see the implementation of that **final** phase of the Covenant, which will involve the best of both the New and Old phases: the new applying to the **dove** contingent and a restored version of the old applying to those **pigeons** then 'under the schoolmaster system' and by that being brought to Christ as it says in Galatians 3:24, a mere five verses before the one featured in the opening paragraph! **Ω**

¹⁰ 1st Corinthians 10:11