

## **Covenants Presentation Part 1**

Covenants presentation Part 1 transcribed from video

### **Introduction, background & history during the 40 years in the desert**

#### **Transforming the Law to Love**

*For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Yahushua Messiah (Joh 1:17 KJV)*

What are these covenants? Are they applicable today? Are all of them applicable today? Which of these covenants forms the foundation for your faith? Is the covenant at Moab a surprise to you to see it in this list? It probably will be even more of a surprise to find out that the covenants at Sinai really had two versions. Was the law transformed to love? Or was love transformed into the law?

There are many questions that could be asked. Do you embrace the Law of Moses, or do you embrace grace and truth which came by Messiah, or perhaps both?

This project has been probably the largest writing project that I've undertaken. And it really started with a key word, and that keyword is called "unity" and as we have grown in our faith and knowledge, and as we have fellowshiped with others, unity has been and has become a subject that my wife and I have looked into and let's just start with a couple of those scriptures.

One of the key scriptures that have been on our mind for the last number of years is John 13:34, Yahushua told his disciples, and he's telling us,

*A new commandment I give unto you. That you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men know that you are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. (Joh 13:34-35 KJV)*

When I read this, I take it as it's our love for one another as a witness and a testimony to all men, to those that are not believers as well as those that are believers. So our love to one another is paramount in our relationship with the Father and with the Son. And as we've grown in our life, we see that the fellowship with others and with brothers and sisters is something that should be very important. Sadly to say, this "unity" seems to be lacking. If you're not exactly on the same page with somebody else in their understanding, then this love that we're supposed to have for one another seems like it drifts away or maybe it was never even there, or it's not shared.

Another scripture that is of interest in this subject of unity is found in Corinthians.

*Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Master Yahushua Messiah, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. (1Co 1:10 KJV)*

Paul is saying this to the Corinthians and it applies equally well, or even more so today. There are contentions within the churches and the assemblies of YHWH. There are contentions when one person does not want to fellowship with another because of certain doctrinal differences. And then another scripture:

*If there be therefore any consolation in Messiah, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil you my joy, that you be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. (Php 2:1 KJV)*

So being likeminded to these Philippians, as Paul is writing to them, is something he says is important, being likeminded. Unfortunately, there are not many that are really likeminded today. We are different minded. We have different ways of understanding the scriptures, different ways of applying the Old Testament, and the New Testament, and the Torah and whether we should have the Torah, or whether we shouldn't or how much of it should we keep and so forth.

*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists, and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Messiah; Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of YHWH, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Messiah. (Eph 4:11-13 KJV)*

So this seems to be the calling and the reason for the teachers, the elders, the priests, and the leaders in our groups and assemblies that they should be for the perfection, they should be for helping us become perfected and be edifying one another. Edifying the body and growing in faith and unity.

Now the subject of unity really came into my thinking over the last 5 or 6 years. Unity has become a topic that I've paid a lot of attention to. I've examined and tried to figure out why there isn't the unity that the scriptures say there should be. I think this all boils down to people that have a difference in understanding of the Old Covenant, and are those laws in effect?

The basis of this unity in almost all cases amongst the Believers in Yahushua Messiah today seems to be this discussion on what laws are in effect. Particularly the laws of the Old Covenant, are they all applicable, or just some of them? So what is the law, and what is not?

There are some 613 as they have been catalogued, and if you simply go online and Google, you'll find lists of all 613 laws that you can choose from. And I don't mean to say that it's a list that you can pick yourself and just select the ones that you like. But there are 613 of these laws in the Torah, in the five books of Moses, the five books written by Moses.

One interesting event that happened a year or so ago, my wife asked a friend that's in the faith, what do you think is applicable in the Old Covenant, the Old Contract, if you will. What laws are applicable and what aren't. This person said: "Well all the law is applicable except sacrifices and stoning." That really got our attention and the thought comes to mind: well how do you know? Where does it say that? Everything is in effect except the Levitical sacrificial laws and stoning. So we got to wondering where or how a person would prove that.

Others we've talked to seem to have a focus on fringes or tzitzies and circumcision. Now I know that tzitzies are talked about in Numbers and Deuteronomy in two places. Circumcision is certainly talked a lot about in the Old Contract as the sign of being a part of the community of Israel, but in the New Contract, it's crystal clear that circumcision is something that's not required. All you have to do is read Acts 15 and the Council of Jerusalem clearly concludes that circumcision is something that's not required. Why people say that it is today is hard for me to understand how they can make that determination.

Other areas of discussion and debate have to do with perhaps the calendar and tithing. There are a number of different calendar systems and the scriptures are really very limited on the instruction of the calendar. We certainly understand the new moon cycle, but these become the areas for disunity.

Tithing is a real interesting one. Even when you go into the Christian communities, they will preach that the law has been nailed to the cross, will in their second breath talk about the importance of tithing to the church. That's somewhat an enigma to understand why that paradox can be there. Tithing, even in some of the Messianic Assemblies think there are three tithes; they try to justify three tithes. There are no scriptures that talk about three tithes that I can find. There are certainly scriptures about tithing in the law, but not about three separate tithes. When you research that, you find that it comes right out of the Talmud. The Talmudic references show that the traditions of the elders, the traditions of the fathers in the Israelite community and the Levitical community talk about these three different tithes. The Talmud talks about three different tithes. These become areas of how do you prove it, and how do you not?

Another area that is interesting is righteous language, or phonetics, if you will. There are people that like to maximize the use of the Hebrew names and words. Jeremiah isn't good enough, it has to be Yeremiahoo, or Paul isn't good enough, it has to be the Hebrew version of

Saul, David is Dawveed, on and on the list goes. Then you start running into the calendar. The pagan months of the Roman calendar can't be pronounced so we have to use the number of the months. It's the same with the days of the week; we can't use Monday (Moonday) or Thursday (Thorsday) and so forth because those are pagan words that, according to some, the Torah condemns the use of that sort of language in our mouth.

People try to eliminate all the pagan names, but you don't have to look very far to find there are a lot of pagan names written into the scriptures. One example that I can think of is the example of Apollos coming to town in Acts. Apollos came to town and was preaching what he thought to be the gospel or the Good News of the Messiah. A couple named Priscilla and Aquila ran into him and found out that he wasn't preaching the fullness of the message and so they took him aside and showed him a more excellent way. Apollos and Aquila are both pagan names, yet those are the names of the people that were preaching the Good News, the righteous news of the return of the Messiah. The fact that the Messiah had come and had given his life for us, so there's hypocrisy in my way of thinking with this righteous language and it's carried to extreme by some. Is that part of the law? Is that part of the Torah or not?

**Are there two covenants** in effect today? Some people want to try to convince you that there are two covenants. The Old Covenant hasn't been totally done away with, yes the Levitical system has, but the rest of it is still in place. That covenant's in place and we're in some sort of temporary grey zone where yes, there is a New Covenant, but really it's a renewed covenant. The fullness of the renewed covenant won't be a really New Covenant until the Messiah returns or until the New Heaven and New Earth comes down at the end of the age.

These are all questions my wife and I have been thinking about in terms of the background in the introduction of this topic. Another area that we see in dialogue with people and reading what others are writing are what I would call "work arounds" to scriptures. You can read the book of Galatians as an example, and you can come out of one of two, I'll say extreme understandings. In one scripture Paul talks about doing away totally of the law, and in another Paul is talking about embracing one hundred percent of the law. When people write the commentaries about Galatians, they have these work arounds that tell you what the scriptures are saying, and sometimes they are abstract patches.

My knowledge of work around's and patches from the computer business come from my professional career in computer science. Work around in the computer industry is something that you add on to an existing program to make it work as it was originally designed. Because it really didn't work as it was originally designed, you had to come up with a work around so that people could get the same function out of it. Or they patch it so it functionally looks like it was advertised to be, but it really isn't underneath the covers. So we see a lot of work arounds and patches today in the commentaries of what people think the scriptures are really saying.

The idea there is proof texting, this exegetical proof texting of what a particular scripture, verse or chapter means. People like to cherry pick the verses using one or two verses, sometimes out of context, and sometimes not in alignment with the culture and history of what the society was really thinking about in those days. We see these work arounds sometimes when we read about the understanding of some people. I question their explanations and don't understand why there aren't different work arounds and different patches that they are trying. There are different conclusions depending upon the foundation of the basic doctrine of a particular person.

The oral law is somewhat a complication also. The tradition on the elders and the Levitical priests were written in the Talmud. Some of these Talmudic practices have found their way into Believers and Christianity. To a Believers understanding the oral law is something we like to watch out for because it is not scripture, it is opinion and op-ed largely by the Rabbis dating back to the first century C.E. When we look at all of this and try to put it into context, what are the alternatives that we see? They really fall into three categories.

One category of understanding is mainstream Christianity. That's certainly the largest, but for the most part, mainstream Christianity would have us believe that the law has been nailed to the cross. They quote Colossians 2:16 and say, "There's our proof; the law has been nailed to the cross."

The other group that are known as the Torah Keepers or Messianic Judaism in contrast to Christianity, would say that the Torah is in full force, that fundamentally, it's all in force except for sacrificing and stoning, and maybe a few other things. A question I ask about that is what about cities of refuge? Our society doesn't allow that but there could be safety zones built in the believing community for the assemblies or there could be churches or assemblies of refuge.

Other areas of the law that could be questioned if all of the law is in effect are what happened to kinsmen redeemers, the avengers of blood, or the leverite marriages? What about the laws in the Torah that has to do with the passing along of property, and what about the forgiving of debts on the Sabbatical and the Jubilee? All these are part of the Torah. The entire chapter in Leviticus 25 is about the Sabbatical and the Jubilee, what about those practices, have they been done away with? Is that part of what we should be practicing today? Maybe we will be in the future.

The second area of Torah Keepers and Messianic Judaism thinking this is all in force and is a category all of itself.

The third category which is somewhat a mix of the first two, primarily comprised of what's known today are the Churches of God, the offshoots if you will. Some two or three hundred offshoots from what was originally called the World Wide Church of God. Some of the laws in

the Torah are in effect, particularly tithing, and there are three tithes. That's one of the things taught in the Churches of God.

**What is in effect and what is not?** In thinking and trying to get our arms around all of this, we asked ourselves is the Old Contract in effect, or isn't it? What parts of it are and what parts of it aren't? There doesn't happen to be a chapter in the scriptures that I have found that shows what is and what isn't. There are certainly guidelines, and Yahushua Messiah gave us some very clear guidelines in Matthew chapter 5 in the Sermon on the Mount.

One of the paradoxes that is apparent are in Paul's writings. We often time find people that are in that second category. Torah Keepers or Messianic Believers disregard Paul's writings. They selectively use Paul's writings. Paul wrote about head coverings so they keep that, but Paul writes about circumcision and how it's unnecessary, they reject that. I've been studying the text of the Bible for over fifty years and I've read these scriptures a number of times. Until recently, I haven't really understood Galatians chapter 4. The whole book of Galatians for that matter, and I would have to say until recently I haven't really understood Galatians chapter 4, particularly this section. Paul is talking to the Galatians, and when you read this you are biased by your filters and pre-conditioning of what Galatians is saying. That's the way we all read these things. But this is particularly a paradox.

*I desire to be present with you now and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you. Tell me, you that desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by the freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh, but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory; for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and answers to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written; Rejoice, thou barren that bears not; break forth and cry, thou that travail not; for the desolate has many more children than she which has a husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit even so it is now. Nevertheless what says the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son; for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free. (Gal 4:20-31 KJV)*

I don't know about you, but when I have read this in the past, I always wondered what Paul is getting at. I'll tell you one of the work arounds that you often see with these scriptures is 2 Peter 3:16, when Peter says Paul's a Believer with us but sometimes he's hard to understand. So, that's what the explanation of this is, that Paul is hard to understand. And then people will

go into whatever their pet conditioning is what this is really trying to say. Until the last year, I wasn't sure what this said; I didn't really know what this said. I had my own work around, or I had somebody else's work around that I thought was reasonable. Now when I read this I have a full understanding of it. The question I want to ask, who do you embrace, the bondwoman or the freewoman? Now we are getting to the heart of the matter about this presentation. When this scripture is read, you see that there is a conundrum. There's a paradox here. The one that you thought would be the good side is the bad side, and the one you thought to be the bad side is the good side so the things have flipped upside down. Paul calls this a paradox or an allegory so we have to examine what this allegory is all about. I don't think if you use just this one scripture the allegory won't make any sense. Hold this scripture in the back of your mind as we move through this presentation. It's an interesting starting spot.

**Does this mean that the law is abandoned or abolished?** What does it mean? The other testimony that I've read many times and thought that I clearly understood was Yahushua's testimony. Most of you know this scripture well.

*Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. (Mat 5:17-18 KJV)*

If you are mainstream Christianity, you say well, that's easy, that means that Yahushua fulfilled all the law and we don't have to do any of it. If you are a believer in the Messiah, and a believer of the Way, you say well no, Yahushua didn't come to destroy the law he came to fulfil, which means to magnify or to amplify. He gave us a broader perspective of what we need to do and how to behave.

This one scripture in what I would call the New Contract, so this is a New Contract being tantamount to the Upper Room and I think you get the correlation of that. This scripture is the foundation for many different groups. But they don't agree the premise of the applicability in the Torah to this or we don't have to worry about that. So there is conflicting interpretations. As we go on with Matthew 5 the preceding verses give us a little more detail.

*Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. (Mat 5:18-20 KJV)*

Is this talking about the application of 613 commandments or statutes? What are the least of these, maybe it's the leverite marriage or kinsman redeemer, and maybe it's the city of refuge or the Sabbatical or the Jubilee laws. Are those the least? If someone is teaching those aren't

important that person in going to be the least in the kingdom? What it seems to indicate is that at least they'll be in the kingdom. It would seem to say, if that's what this means, that the least of the commandments are important, certainly, but at least you make it into the kingdom. The question I have is what is Yahushua talking about? What are the least commandments? Show me a list and we'll know what to avoid. This scripture is somewhat of a paradox all by itself.

We will dig into this scripture, and what is important about this scripture is that it's really the cherry picking idea. These few verses here have been cherry picked, or proof texted out of the context of a much greater dialogue that Yahushua was having at the Sermon on the Mount. This is in the middle of chapter 5 and he started with what we would call the Beatitudes in the beginning of chapter 5 and then went on for two more chapters. We have to look at the full context, and we will. These scriptures in Matthew 5:17 form the foundation for many groups and there is large disagreement on what these mean.

### **Introduction and Context**

The topic itself is somewhat a conundrum and is very complex. You might see that already in the few introductory comments that I've made. There are numerous conflicting opinions on this, and I would suggest this has salvational implications and relevance. Do Yahushua and YHWH want us to be focused on the Torah and the law? How important is that? Is it salvational that we honor Leviticus and Deuteronomy and the instructions in Exodus, or is it not? That's an open question at this point. The whole purpose of going into this study on the covenants is just that. Is this Old Covenant or this old contract that was referred to as Moses Law, is that in effect today, or is it partially in effect? How does that all come together? Another area that really is part of the conundrum is the impact influence that Paul had with his writings. I have a couple of examples that are potentially conflicts, and there are many of these but some people use these conflicts as arguments to say, See? It means this or it means that. The first one I want to look at is in Romans 7:4, because it potentially conflicts with verse 12, I'm not saying it does, I'm saying it potentially does.

*You also are become dead to the law by the body of Messiah (Rom 7:4) – verses the law is holy and just and good (Rom 7:12) It's in contrast. Which is it?*

*Whosoever of you are justified by the law, you are fallen from grace (Gal 5:4) Verses not the hearers of the law are just before YHWH, but the doers of the law shall be justified. (Rom 2:13) Which is it?*

Again, sometimes this is explained with 2 Peter 3:16 that says Paul's writings are hard to understand. I don't think Paul is hard to understand; for the most part they are straightforward if you remove the bias and conditioning that you've been taught. Give the scriptures a chance

to speak as the scriptures are. Let YHWH's spirit lead you and ask for help, you will get the answer to what all of this means. Certainly there is a lot of doctrinal corruption.

The significance of the Pharisaical system and the legalism that was rampant in the time Yahushua walked the earth, I would suggest today that the Pharisaical legalism is a part of what we would call that believing community of Believers today. There are false teachers that are teaching false doctrines and these are Pharisaical legalistic teachers. There has to be some balance to all of this, and I'm not judging anybody but stating what I see from interactions from many different people. There is a contrast to the legalistic practice and that is, you don't have to worry about any of that, once saved always saved. Some think all you have to do is say I believe in Messiah and then you're saved. Doesn't matter too much what you do after that.

**Which way is it?** When it comes to obedience to the Torah or to the law, does obedience lead to love? Or does love lead to obedience? Another question is, do we keep the law to be saved, or because we keep the law we are saved? Perhaps another alternative is, the law has been abolished, so we don't have to worry about that. I remember one person years back told me that you don't need to old contract; all you need is the new contract. The old has been abolished, done away with. This means I could tear my Bible in half because I don't need those 40 some books of the Old Testament; all I need is the new.

**What did Yahushua teach?** That's what we are going to examine in detail.

**Purpose and Scope** of this presentation and with that background, let's examine the covenants at Sinai, Moab and the Upper Room. It's probably surprising to you that Moab is in that list. The main covenant before the children went into the Promised Land of Israel as they got ready to cross the Jordan; the covenant at Moab was the one that formed the foundation for the rest of their tenure in the land of Israel. It's also probably going to be a surprise that Mt. Sinai didn't have just one covenant, but two separate versions of the covenant that was established at Mt Sinai. We are going to examine those covenants.

We are going to determine if Yahushua modified, magnified or abolished the law. It's talking about the scripture in Matthew 5:17 and many others. We will discover what laws Yahushua fulfilled, if any. We will explore the terms of the new contract established by Yahushua. This is what is known as the New Covenant. We will also look into the idea of the "Renewed Covenant" in the process. We're going to detail the characteristics and attributes of The Way.

We find the term "The Way" in a number of places, particularly in the New Contract in the New Testament in Acts and writings of Paul. The people that were following Yahushua were following "The Way". We will substantiate what law or laws that are applicable today.

## Agenda

Now with this Agenda, I'm going to go through the background and the summary of Israel's history, that's found interestingly enough in the book of Ezekiel, and other places. The book of Ezekiel in chapter 20 has a succinct outline of Israel's history. Before and during the time they were in Egypt, the time they were in the Promised Land, their captivity and exile, and then Ezekiel outlines the ultimate return of the Messiah. That's all in Ezekiel. We will look at the covenants, two covenants at Sinai and the one at Moab. We'll look at those and what laws went along with each.

There is a section that's called the first born and first fruits. That design actually preceded the Levitical System. We think of the Levites as the first priests but that is incorrect. The first priests were the first born. We'll take a look at where that is, and when it was talked about.

We'll take a look at the old contract disposition the Levitical law was added on to. That's provable by several scriptures. Also, that old contract was broken by Israel. We'll then look at the New Contract. A more perfect way was prophesied, and of course that more perfect way is through the Messiah, and a better hope is declared through the Messiah. We'll look at the higher benchmarks and the revolutionary attributes that Yahushua brought and outlined and actually detailed in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, 6 and 7. We'll see what is perfected and fulfilled by Yahushua.

Now this first grouping of the agenda probably comprises about 40% of the overall project that I'm going to present. The last 60 percent will be comprised of what's called "A More Excellent Way" and there are nine points in the more excellent way. The first point is:

1. The first contract is abolished.
2. The Torah is transformed and center calibrated to love. We will be focusing on that topic in each of these sections.
3. The New Contract internalizes YHWH's laws into a Believers heart and mind. I'll show you where all those scriptures are so that you will see that that's a part of the Way or the New Contract.
4. The New Contract in Part 4 is comprised of two great commandments, now that doesn't mean there aren't others; it just says they're comprised of two main points.
5. On these two Commandments hang all the law and prophets. If you can have a mental image of a hangar with two items hanging on it, and many others hang underneath the two items, that's what this section is talking about.
6. The obedience to the Torah is fulfilled and satisfied through love.
7. How love leads to obedience.
8. Yahushua fulfilled every Old Testament scripture
9. The law and the prophets point to Yahushua

I some ways going though these nine points, show a little bit of the direction this presentation is heading. What I would say, is the conclusions that are written underneath these points are different than most of you have probably heard. I had no idea what the conclusions would be when I started writing on this project about a year ago. I thought I would go one way or the other and it turns out that there was a third way that I had no idea existed until I started studying and researching. I think you'll find it exciting to see that there's an alternative to probably what most of you have thought and it certainly was an alternative to what I had thought to be my previous conditioning.

Stay tuned, get your Bible out, have your mind open and pray and study. Look to YHWH for the answers.

### **Background terminology**

The word Covenant according to Merriam Webster dictionary means a written agreement or a promise, a contract, and is usually under the seal between two or more parties especially for the performance of some action. So we commonly use the word contract in our society today. Contract law applies when we buy a car or house, or any large ticket item. We have a contract for who performs what, when, and what the terms will be and what the warranty will be and what the buyers' responsibility is, and what the sellers' responsibility is. That is a common term today and so when we see the word covenant it really means, fundamentally, a contract.

The Hebrew word in Strong's Concordance is H1285=ber-eeth is in the sense of cutting, a compact it's made by passing between pieces of flesh, confederacy, covenant, league. The confederacy covenant or league, are all words that are used to translate this word ber-eeth into the English translation of the Bible that we see. One of the scriptures that comes to mind when we look at ber-eeth or covenant is the covenant with Abraham that was made in Genesis.

*And he <sup>(Abraham)</sup> said, YHWH Eloah, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? (The Promised Land) And He said unto him, Take me 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 unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, (he cut them in two) and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not....in the same day YHWH made a covenant <sup>H1285 the word ber-eeth, or contract</sup> with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river Euphrates. (Gen 15:8-18 KJV)*

This is one of the early contracts that we find in the scriptures and this contract, if you read the context of the rest of this verse, YHWH put Abram to sleep so Abram didn't get a vote in it. YHWH completed the contract. This was a one sided of an unconditional contract. It was made by dividing the parts of these animals.

In the Greek, Strong's G1242 = diatheke= a disposition, a contract, covenant, testament. So Greek and Hebrew have a similar word.

It appears 272 times in the Old contract (Tanakh) – ber-eeth and it appears 34 times in the New Contract – diatheke.

I didn't list all of the places these words are found, but any place that has greater than or equal to 10 occurrences, as an example in Genesis, the word covenant or ber-eeth is used 26 times. Now sometimes particularly in the old covenant or the old contract, the Tanakh, the word covenant means league, it's an agreement between two parties.

There are 306 matches in the Covenant or Testament. First and second Chronicles show there are 30 occurrences of this word Covenant or ber-eeth in the text. Probably a dozen of those 30 occurrences are the Ark of the Covenant. Sometimes the context is actually the Ark of the Covenant, (the box with the lid on it) that was where the 10 Commandments were kept. Keep all of that in mind. Deuteronomy has the second most occurrences of the word covenant. It's one of the places that you find the word a lot.

By Contrast, the New Covenant Books of the Bible, the New Covenant books, Hebrews by far has the most occurrences. It's probably not surprising if you have studied the book of Hebrews it's a masterpiece that I would say (it's anonymous) but probably written by Paul. I know there are differences of opinion about that, but the style and the way the method of writing seems to follow a lot of Paul's characteristics. That's not the point, the point is, that there's a lot of explanation in the book of Hebrews, particularly chapter 7 through 10 about the covenant, the New Covenant in contrast to the Old. I think you'll find that section of particular interest.

### **Unconditional covenants**

There are at least 3 unconditional covenants that I can find, there are probably some others, but the first one is the **Noahic**. Genesis 9:1-13 shows it was given to Noah by YHWH. He was told to populate the earth, rule over animals, there would be no more worldwide floods and the rainbow would be the sign of the promise.

The second unconditional covenant was to **Abraham**. We find this in Genesis 12-15 is an interesting one because he was promised a land or territory (space). He was told he would be the father of a great nation (race). YHWH said he would bless all the families of the earth (grace).

This foundation and this promise is the promise of the Messiah. You can relate this down to space, race and grace. Abraham didn't get a vote in this by the way. Remember Abraham was made to go to sleep while YHWH was making or ratifying the covenant. This is an important

one that you'll find in Paul's writings. It's an important one in contrast to the law because people get the law ahead of this Abrahamic unconditional covenant.

The third unconditional covenant is the **Davidic Covenant** found in 2 Samuel 7:13-16. It says that Solomon will build the temple and David's kingdom would be established forever. David is where the seed of the Messiah came from of course. The genealogy points clearly back through Solomon and David. This promise of grace, we will say in terms of comparing it to the Abrahamic covenant. Those are three of what is commonly known as the unconditional covenants.

### **Israel's History**

As our starting spot, I wanted to get a historical perspective and it turns out, in the Book of Ezekiel chapter 20; we get a look at Israel's history. In almost the whole chapter of Ezekiel 20, we get a nice concise historical view that YHWH is providing through Ezekiel being written in these scriptures. We also get a sense that there is more than one Old Testament Covenant as YHWH is describing this history.

*And it came to pass in the seventh year in the fifth month, the tenth day of the month, that certain of the elders of Israel came to enquire <sup>H1875 question</sup> of YHWH, and sat before me. (Eze 20:1-10)*

A little context, I could spend a full length presentation on this particular topic, but I'll give you a couple of highlights. Ezekiel is writing in the seventh year in the fifth month on the tenth day. When you read through the book of Ezekiel, you'll find that Ezekiel chapter one starts out in the fifth year. Actually Ezekiel says it's the thirtieth year, but it's the fifth year of their captivity and I would just mention that it is my belief that the thirtieth year is the thirtieth year of the Jubilee cycle. That's a whole discussion on its own that we won't get into here. It's the fifth year in Ezekiel 1 of their captivity, so the 7<sup>th</sup> year is a couple of years after their captivity. I want to show you a couple of things here. First of all, you have to understand that this captivity was the result of Nebuchadnezzar's siege and deportation of the people of the Southern tribes. Not the Northern, the northern tribes have long since been taken into captivity, a hundred years or so previous. This is about the Southern tribes.

A little bit of historical background is that there were actually three sieges of Jerusalem in this time period. The first siege happened in 605 BCE as referenced in 2 Kings 24:1 and Daniel 1:3-4. This was before Nebuchadnezzar was actually king. His father was king at this point in time. Nebuchadnezzar in 605 BCE had this first siege and deportation of Jerusalem.

That's when Daniel was taken. Nebuchadnezzar took the young princes, the nobility. It was a small number of people that were taken. He took them to Babylon and the result is the book of Daniel was written. You will put these pieces together in your own mind if you study the book

of Daniel. Then in 597 a second siege occurred. After the first siege, Jehoikim was put in charge. Jehoikim was actually the second son of Josiah. Josiah was a reformer about 30 to 40 years previous. After that, Josiah was the last good king in the Southern Kingdom. Jehoikim was put in charge and in 597, during the siege, Jehoiakim died and Jehoiachin was put in charge. Jehoiachin also was known as Coniah or Jechoniah.

The second siege accounts in 597 are found in 2 Kings 23:24, 24:17, 25:27-30. It's also found in 2 Chronicles 36:5-10, and again in Jeremiah 52:28. That's when Ezekiel and Jehoiachin are taken. The reason I'm going through this is, when you read through Ezekiel, he references the year that he was taken and Jehoiachin, whom he viewed as the proper king was also taken into captivity. Ezekiel's benchmark and perspective is 597. In 597 BCE when he it's the 5<sup>th</sup> year in the case of Ezekiel chapter 1 it was 592.

In the case of Ezekiel 20, he says it's the 7<sup>th</sup> year, that's 590 BCE. This particular siege was the one that the most people were taken. There were over ten thousand people taken captive in this siege and Jerusalem was still standing. When Jehoiachin was taken, Zedekiah was put into control as a vassal king. Jerusalem continued on for 10 more years until the 3<sup>rd</sup> siege.

The third siege in 587 BCE is found in 2 Kings 24:17 and 25:23. Finally Nebuchadnezzar took the whole city. He besieged it and took it to the ground. In the third siege, there were additional people taken. Zedekiah said he wasn't going to see Babylon. He was taken to Babylon and in the process of being taken; he was blinded by Nebuzaradan the guard or general for Nebuchadnezzar. His eyes were put out, that's why he wouldn't see that he would be in Babylon, but he actually did go to Babylon. It's an interesting story on its own.

A few years later, even though Jerusalem had been completely razed there was another deportation because of an assassination that went along with Gadaliah. With all of that in mind, we are at 590 BCE and a little bit of background to get you to what Ezekiel is talking about here. And another thing I will mention before I continue is that Jehoiachin's captivity started in 597 BCE also.

The Northern Kingdom went into exile some 100 years prior to the Southern Kingdom. The Northern Kingdom went into exile in 722 BCE. The Southern Kingdom didn't go into exile until 587 BCE and the last king listed is Zedekiah. Jehoiachin, the guy we're talking about was in the time when Ezekiel was writing about Jehoiachin and Jehoiakim his father. Ezekiel is contemporary with Jeremiah and Daniel. Of course, at the same time Nebuchadnezzar was the gentile general and king that made this all happen. After that, there was Cyrus the Mede, the Persians, and of course Greece and Romans after that. This information should give us a reasonably good foundation of what this is talking about in the 7<sup>th</sup> year.

*Certain of the elders of Israel came to enquire* <sup>H1875 question</sup> (This is an interesting word because they are going to question YHWH. YHWH perceives these aren't going to be innocent questions of a humble mind and attitude. These elders are coming to find out why they are in captivity.) *of YHWH, and sat before me. Then came the word of YHWH unto me saying, Son of man, speak unto the elders of Israel and say unto them. Thus saith YHWH Eloah. Are ye come to enquire of me? As I live, saith YHWH Eloah. I will not be enquired of by you. Wilt thou judge them, son of man wilt you judge them?* (Son of man is Ezekiel. It's a reference that YHWH makes of Ezekiel in a number of places.) *Cause them to know the abomination of their fathers:* (That's why YHWH's telling Ezekiel, you can judge them because of the abominations of their fathers.) *And say unto them, thus saith YHWH Eloah; In the day when I chose Israel, and lifted up mine hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and made myself known unto them in the land of Egypt, when I lifted up mine hand unto them saying, I am YHWH Eloah... To bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands.* (This is the beginning of this historical context that Ezekiel chapter 20 and is talking about when they were in the land of Egypt) *to bring them into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey which is the glory of all the lands. Then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abomination of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt: I am YHWH your Eloah. But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abomination of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst* (which means the center) *of the land of Egypt.* (So the Israelites were rebellious even in the land of Egypt is what this is telling us. YHWH wanted to bring them out) *But I wrought* <sup>H6213=do, make, acted</sup> *for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen among whom they were in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness. (Eze 20:1-10)*

YHWH's saying I don't want to disgrace my name because they are so rebellious even in the land of Egypt I didn't want to punish them right then and there. Wherefore I caused them to go forth, so he brought them out. And I brought them into the wilderness. This is talking about the time under Moses leadership. They left the land of Egypt and went into the wilderness. They were in the wilderness for some 40 years. That's the verses 5 through 10.

Verse 11 says, and this becomes the interesting part from the purpose of starting to talk about the two different times that he gave them statutes and judgements. There were two different period of times in the wilderness. The first time he talks about the ordinances that he gave at Sinai. See if you see how this matches up.

*And then after I brought them out, I gave them my statutes and shewed them my judgment, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. <sup>1</sup> Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths to be a sign between me and them that they might know that I am YHWH that sanctify them. <sup>2</sup> But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness; they walked not in my statutes and they despised my judgments. Which if a man do, he shall even live in them. <sup>1</sup> And my Sabbaths they greatly polluted then I said I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness to consume them. <sup>3</sup> But I wrought <sup>H6213=do, make, acted</sup> for my names sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen. (He didn't want to defile his name with the people that were hypocrites. He'll punish the hypocrites but it makes it look pretty bad that the hypocrites that are supposed to be His people aren't acting according to what they should be.) In whose sight I brought them out. Yet also I lifted up my hand unto them...that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey....because they despised my judgments, and walked not in my statutes but polluted my Sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols. Nevertheless mine eye spared them from destroying them....But I said unto their children...Walk ye not in the statutes of you fathers....nor defile yourselves with their idols; I am YHWH your Eloah. Walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments and do them, and hallow My Sabbaths, and they shall be a sign between me and you that you may know that I am YHWH your Eloah. <sup>2</sup> (Eze 20:11-20)*

Keep in mind this is in Ezekiel 20 so this is in 590 BCE when this is being spoken to Ezekiel. Yet the events that are being referenced here are back in 1450 BCE, 900 years earlier. We can see the reference that YHWH is making to these events in Ezekiel in some of Moses earlier writings in the Torah.

The first item says <sup>1</sup> *I gave them my statutes and shewed them my judgment, which if a man do, he shall even live in them.* This statement is found in Leviticus 18:5. Leviticus was written at Mt Sinai. *You shall therefore keep my statutes which if a man do he shall even live in them. I am YHWH.* This is like going to court and the prosecution saying you did these things, "I'm making the accusation that you did these things 900 years ago." And you say, "Well how do you prove that?" And the prosecution says, "Well here it is written in your law, the law you said you would be a part of, and that this is what you said you would do, and you didn't." This is a reference back to Sinai that he's making.

The second item, <sup>2</sup> *Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths to be a sign between me and them that they might know that I am YHWH.* 900 years earlier he told the Israelites to keep the Sabbaths and now 900 years later, He is saying you didn't do that. Here are the contract clauses that I'm bringing up here that you aren't doing.

*Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep, for it is a sign between me and you throughout....that ye may know that I am YHWH that doth sanctify you. (Exo 31:13 KJV)*

The third item <sup>3</sup> He said he would pour out His fury in the wilderness.

*They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made them a molten calf (That's the heart of the beginning of the big problem) YHWH said unto Moses. It is a stiff necked people....let me alone that my wrath may wax hot against and that I may consume them. (Exo 32:8-10 KJV)*

They had fair warning. They had agreed to these contract terms earlier. YHWH is pointing out that He doesn't want to be talked to and questioned. He doesn't want to be enquired by these priests and elders that were in captivity in Babylon. That's where they were, they were in Babylon in captivity and they probably wanted to know how long they were going to have to be there. Can we get back and re-build the temple? That became the theme a little later on.

The next section in this historical summary that's found in Exodus starts to highlight the second period in the wilderness. It's when they were given the ordinances at Moab. It was made into an additional covenant.

*Notwithstanding the children rebelled against me. (So they continued on rebelling.) They walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments....which if a man do, he shall even live in them; they polluted my Sabbaths; then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness. <sup>1</sup> Nevertheless I withdrew mine hand and wrought <sup>(acted)</sup> for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted in the sight of the heathen, in whose sight I brought them forth. (All the way there were heathen around them) I lifted up mine hand unto them also in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them throughout the countries. Because they had not executed my judgments, <sup>2</sup> but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my Sabbaths, <sup>3</sup> (It's an ongoing problem) and their eyes were after their fathers idols. Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good <sup>H2896=good thing, joyful, cheerful</sup> (Not a good thing, not cheerful this is key here, He gave them statues that were not good) and judgments whereby they should not <sup>(could not)</sup> live. <sup>4</sup> And I polluted them in their own gifts in they caused to pass through the fire all that opened the womb <sup>5</sup> that I might make them desolate...that they might know that I might make them desolate...that they might know that I am YHWH. (Eze 20:21-26)*

Number 4 is a key area because He gave them statutes that were not good. We will get to the statutes and the Commandments that were at Mt Sinai. If you've read any of that account, were any of those not good? He's talking about something else here, and a different period of

time. *I gave them also statutes that were not good and judgments whereby they could not live.* What's happening here is because of their disobedience law is getting stacked on law.

It's like it is today, the government will make a law against some transgression in society and people will figure out a way around that so the community or the place where the law was made, the congress has to make a new law to plug the hole and then they have to make a third law to plug the hole of the hole. This goes on and on. It's something like what's going on here. The people originally said we will be obedient, they were not. Okay then, if you're not going to be obedient, then I'll add more laws to what you're not obedient to so that you'll see that you have to be. That's what YHWH is getting at. *I gave them also statutes that were not good* so he was stacking additional requirements on them.

The first area, <sup>1</sup> *I would pour out my fury on them, to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness.* We find a couple references to this, but the one that I think a match up to this is at Baalpeor. The people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab, so this is some 39 years after they left Egypt and they bowed down to their gods. Israel joined their selves to Baalpeor. The anger of YHWH was kindled against Israel and all of the people. Baalpeor was just before they crossed the Jordan. *The people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab...And bowed down to their gods, Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor... the anger of YHWH was kindled against Israel (Num 25:1-3 KJV)*

Item number <sup>2</sup> that they would be scattered among the heathen and dispersed. We find reference to that in Deuteronomy 28:64 *And YHWH shall scatter thee among all people* (He's not making this up in Ezekiel to say that I'm going to do this because you've been disobedient. He's saying I'm going to do this because I said I was going to do it 900 years ago if you weren't obedient.) *YHWH shall scatter you among all the people from one end of the earth even to the other and there thou shalt serve other gods,* Of course this is in Deuteronomy 28, this is the blessings and cursings chapter just before they went in. They were at Moab, just before they went in to the Promised Land. If you read the blessings and cursings, it's interesting because the chapter is 60 some verses long. The first one quarter, or 15 verses is about the blessings, and the last three quarters, or 45 plus verses are about the cursings. This rings to me when he says *I'm going to give them statutes that were not good.* The cursings were the result of their disobedience. I think that's exactly what is being talked about.

The third item <sup>3</sup> is found that relates *But they had despised my statutes and polluted my Sabbaths.* We find that reference in Deuteronomy 30:9-11 *And YHWH thy Eloah will make you plenteous in every work of thine hand...if you harken...to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law.* Keep His statutes that are written, but instead they despised them. They did just the opposite. Again, Deuteronomy 30 is at Moab just before they went into the land.

The fourth item, *I gave them statutes that were not good* Deuteronomy 28:15 says *I gave them statutes that were not good* in Deuteronomy 28:15 it says *But it shall come to pass if you will not hearken unto my voice of YHWH your Eloah, to do all his commandments...that all of these curses shall come upon you and overtake you.* What I read in Ezekiel that *I gave them statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live.* What's he talking about? It's talking about Deuteronomy 28 in the blessings and the cursings that he previously said he would perform for their lack of obedience.

The fifth item talks about how they polluted their own gifts and burned their own children. That is talked about in Deuteronomy 18. Deuteronomy 18 is at Moab; fundamentally the whole book of Deuteronomy takes place at Moab. It doesn't take place at Mt. Sinai, takes place at Moab. The fifth point says *There shall not be found among you any one that makes his son or daughter to pass through the fire, or that uses divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch.* These priests that came to enquire of YHWH through Ezekiel in 590 BCE had no leg to enquire upon. That's why YHWH is answering as he is answering.

### **The Settlement in the Promised Land**

After this they go into the Promised Land and we see that continuing on in this historical account.

*Therefore son of man, speak unto the house of Israel and say unto them, thus says YHWH Eloah, Yet in this year our fathers have blasphemed me, in that they have committed a trespass against me. For when I had brought them into the land, for the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to them, then they saw every high hill and all the thick trees, and they offered there their sacrifices, and there they presented the provocation of their offering, there also they made their sweet savor and poured out there their drink offerings. Then I said unto them, what is the high place whereunto ye go? And the name thereof is called Bamah unto this day. (Eze 20:27-29 KJV)*

When you read the history of the Israelites and their early time in the Promised Land, these groves are mentioned numerous times. The groves and the ashera poles and phallic symbols that the Israelites gravitated to because of their interaction and marriage to the gentile community that lived around them that they were supposed to take out but they really didn't. That's what this is talking about. We see the problem unto this day. We also see how Deuteronomy chapter 12 going back 900 years to this time in Ezekiel, how this relates.

*These are the statutes and the judgments which you shall observe to do in the land which YHWH Eloah of thy fathers gives you to possess it all the days that you live upon the earth. You shall utterly destroy all the places wherein the nations which you shall possess served their gods upon the high mountains and upon the hills and under every*

*green tree. And you shall overthrow their alters and break their pillars and burn their groves with fire, and you shall hew down the graven images of their gods and destroy the names of them out of that place. (Deu 12:1-3 KJV)*

Here we find the admonition and instruction not to do this and 900 years later has resulted in the captivity of the Southern Kingdom, and 100 years previous to that, the captivity of the Northern Kingdom. It's all because of these pagan practices that they originally covenanted with and contracted with YHWH and said, "Yes we will do what you ask us to do". The evidence is amazing when you see all of this. They weren't at Mt. Sinai three or four days, maybe a week and they built a golden calf because Moses was gone. It is really mind boggling to see the pagan nature that these Israelites participated in while in Egypt, in the wilderness wanderings, when they got into the Promised Land and now they're in captivity. They were told all along how to do, how to behave and they agreed. They signed on the dotted line, if you will. We agree to this contract. But they didn't do it.

We see another reference to the pagan practices in 1 Kings.

*And Judah did evil in the sight of YHWH and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed above all that their fathers had done. For they also built them high places, and images, and groves on every high hill and under every green tree. (1Kings 14:22-23 KJV)*

### **Scattering among the Gentiles**

The next section talks about the scattering of the Israelites among the Gentiles. Keep in mind this is just sequential, this reading through chapter 20 of Ezekiel.

*Wherefore say unto the house of Israel. (Not just to the house of Judah, but to the house of Israel, that means all of them, all twelve tribes.) Thus saith YHWH Eloah; Are you polluted after the manner of your fathers? And commit your whoredom after their abominations? (Keep in mind this is YHWH still talking to Ezekiel and giving him instructions on what to tell them.) For when you offer your gifts, when you make your sons to pass through the fire, you pollute yourselves with all your idols, even unto this day; and shall I be enquired of by you O house of Israel? As I live, saith YHWH Eloah, I will not be enquired of by you. And that which comes into your mind shall not be at all that you say, we will be as the heathen, (So these people want to be like the heathen around them.) as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone. As I live, saith YHWH Eloah, surely with a mighty hand and with a stretched out arm and with fury poured out, will I rule over you.*

YHWH is saying, even though you want to be pagan, I'm not going to let you. That's kind of the bottom line of what is being said. Also of note, and I see this as I read it, O house of Israel, who

he's talking about, keep in mind that primarily Ezekiel was of the house of Israel, and the exile that Ezekiel was a part of was the house of Judah, the Southern Kingdom. The Northern Kingdom had already been in captivity. It would appear that some of those in the Northern Kingdom are here because he says "O house of Israel", that's inclusive of all the tribes. It could well be that the people that are coming before Ezekiel not only are the priests, but some of the Northern tribes that have been in captivity in this same area. It could be that they are together in captivity.

We find an interesting correlation in 2 Kings to this history during a time of King Hoshea.

*And they rejected his statutes and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them, and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom YHWH had charged them, that they should not do like them. And they left all the commandments of YHWH their Eloah and made them molten images, even two calves <sup>Dan and Bethel 1 Kings 1:28</sup>, and made a grove and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.*

These two calves we find, is not a reference to Exodus; there is only one calf in Exodus. We find that two calves in Dan and Bethel are listed in 1 Kings 12. Let me explain where Hoshea fits. Hoshea is of the Northern Kingdom, and was the last king in the Northern Kingdom. There were some good kings in the Southern Kingdom but when you look in Kings and Chronicles, all of these kings did evil in the sight of YHWH. Starting with Jeroboam, some pretty wicked practices came out of these guys, and ended in their captivity in 722. What we are reading is taking place in the 700 to 750 BCE time frame, because it's referencing King Hoshea, who was the last king of the Southern Kingdom. It's these calves that are being talked about.

*And made a grove and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of YHWH to provoke him to anger. Therefore YHWH was very angry with Israel and removed them out of his sight there was none left but the tribe of Judah only. Also Judah kept not the commandments of YHWH their Eloah but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. And YHWH rejected all the seed of Israel and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers until he had cast them out of his sight. For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did, they departed not from them. Until YHWH removed Israel out of his sight as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day. (2 Ki 17:15-23 KJV)*

This event takes place about here in 2 Kings, is 130 years prior to the event that Ezekiel is talking to them about. Again, the testimony and the record of their actions support what Yahushua is telling Ezekiel.

### **Delivered from Exile**

The final section is when they were delivered from exile Ezekiel 20:34-44. This section, in my understanding is both when they were delivered back after their physical exile, but more importantly I think it points more to the future delivery from exile that has yet to come when Yahushua Messiah returns.

*And I will bring you out from the people and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people and there will I plead with you face to face.*

Has this happened? I don't think that he pleaded face to face when they were released by Cyrus. In 520 BCE they went back to rebuild the temple and Nehemiah and Ezra and that group wrote in those times. I don't see any reference to them being pleaded with at that time. They went back voluntarily and mostly it was the tribe of Judah and the Levites that went back. Probably some others but most of the Northern Kingdom was dispersed.

*Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt so will I plead with you, saith YHWH Eloah. And I will cause you to pass under the rod and I will bring you into the bond <sup>(obligation=CJB)</sup> of the covenant.*

Passing under the rod is a term used in sheep farming. Sheep ranchers have this rod and you pass under and count the sheep. When you pass under the rod the Torah said that every tenth one belongs to YHWH. This obligation is what this word "bond" is translated in the Complete Jewish Bible. The obligation of the covenant, what covenant is it talking about? I think it's talking about the New Covenant.

*And I will purge out from among you the rebels,*

It's like it's every tenth one that gets purged out and becomes YHWH's, I'm not sure that it's every tenth one, but this is the idea, you're passing under the rod and some are purged one way and some are purged the other.

*And them that transgress against me...As for you, O house of Israel saith YHWH Eloah; Go ye, serve ye everyone his idols and hereafter also, if you will not hearken unto me but pollute ye my holy name no more with you gifts and with your idols. For in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith YHWH Eloah, there shall all the*

*house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me; there will I accept them....I will accept you with your sweet savor, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein you have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen. And you shall know that I am YHWH when I shall bring you into the land of Israel....and there shall you remember your ways and all your doings, wherein you have been defiled; and you shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that you have committed. (Has this happened? I don't think it has.) And you shall know that I am YHWH when I have wrought <sup>(worked)</sup> with you for my name's sake, not according to your wicked way, nor according to your corrupt doings. O you house of Israel saith YHWH Eloah. (Eze 20:34-44)*

Keep in mind the captivity of the Southern tribes and the elders came, remember how this started. The elders came to Ezekiel and say they want to enquire of YHWH so this has been YHWH's response back to them through Ezekiel. I think it's fascinating to see what this is saying, particularly the earlier parts that he talked about stacking a more difficult set of laws onto them.

What we find in Jeremiah 31 is the prophecy of this Covenant. It says:

*Behold the days come saith YHWH that 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 that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt which my covenant they brake although I was a husband unto them saith YHWH. (Jer 31:31)*

Jeremiah's prophesying a New Covenant, Ezekiel in this section of chapter 20 is also talking about a bond of the covenant, and he's talking about yet a future time. I think this is talking about a New Covenant, I would suggest that it's talking about the Covenant in the Upper Room. We will get into that later, several sessions from now.

#### **40 Years in the Wilderness – Three Covenants**

This brings us to a preliminary discussion of three covenants, two covenants at Mt Sinai and one at Moab. There is a fourth one that's talked about, perhaps it's a new covenant yet in the future.

These first covenants at Sinai and Moab are seemed to be all lumped together as the Old Covenant. Some people would call it the Old Testament. Sometimes the Old Testament is referred to as all the books of the Tanakh. In the Old Covenant are the books of Moses, the first five books, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. This preliminary start shows us the history.

Do your own homework. I don't want you to listen to what's being said here and say it sounds good or it looks good, or its slick, and so you think it's right. You need to do your own homework. The scriptures are clear and there are many of them by the way. To prove all things and hold fast that which is good. Don't believe me. Maybe use this as an encouragement or the beginning of a study on this subject yourself. See whether those things said are true. Search the scriptures as it says in the following verses. Be like the Bereans and study, study these scriptures out. Study and prayer are paramount and you can study and you can pray, but doing them together will move you ahead in your understanding. It will allow YHWH's Spirit to work in you. I will become a pest about doing your own homework.

*These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched <sup>G350=scrutinize; examine</sup> the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. (Acts 17:11 KJV)*

*Prove <sup>G1381=test, discern, examine</sup> all things; hold fast that which is good. (1Th 5:21 KJV)*

*For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Master: walk as children of light: for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth; proving <sup>G2101=fully agreeable, well pleasing</sup> unto the Master (Eph 5:8-10 KJV)*

*Study to shew thyself approved unto YHWH, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing <sup>G3718=make a straight cut</sup> the word of truth. (2Ti 2:15 KJV)*