

KINGDOM SPIRIT

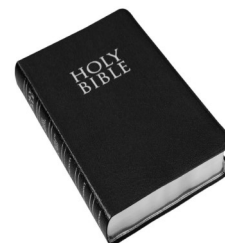
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"SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD"

Matthew 6:33



Issue 2206

IT'S THE LAW

ORDINANCES

Before we look at the category of law the Bible calls "Ordinances," we need to understand why we have this category. The majority of what we call ordinances is found in the book of Leviticus. They seem somewhat separated from the Commandments, Statutes and Judgments. There is a reason for this.

If we go to Ex. 19 where we find God actually organizing this people who have descended from Israel, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, we read in verses 5 and 6, **"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."** He puts forth the condition, **"if ye will obey my voice in deed, and keep my covenant,"** without expressing at this point what his voice or covenant was. Yet the people seemed to have an idea because they, in verse 8, all joined together and said **"All that the LORD hath spoken we will do."**

The apostle Paul makes the statement in Rom. 5:13, **"(For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.)"** I John 3:4 tells us, **"for sin is the transgression of the law."** Though this sounds somewhat contradictory I assure you it is not. For sin to have been in the world before "the law" there had to be law that was transgressed. I submit that at least the principle of the commandments, statutes and judgments have been in effect since creation. Cain was afraid of being killed because he had killed Abel, for example. God told Noah in Gen. 9:6, **"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."**

However, the law was basically unwritten and no people or nation had been required to stand responsible to this law. But this changed on this very event-

ful day at Mt. Sinai. Here God was making a nation. The new nation of Israel that He was forming was to be responsible to His law and they as a people agreed to it. Now they were accountable to the law. As Paul put it, from here on their sin (transgression of the law) would be imputed or reckoned to them. God then codified, or wrote, the law out for them. He wrote the Ten Commandments in stone, and then gave the balance of the commandments, statutes and judgments to Moses instructing him to write them down and teach them to the people.

The Judgments of the law are designed to right the wrongs of man to man. If the Judgments are carried out properly, with the exception of the non-restorable crimes like murder, anyone who has been damaged will have the damage restored, sometimes two to five times over. For the non-restorable crime, the criminal is executed.

However, now Israel is responsible to God when they sin. Not only do they damage each other when they sin, they damage God as well. As we said above, the judgments rectify the damage man does to man. At this point, however, there is no way to rectify the damage done to God. Thus God added a new set of laws to rectify this damage. In Gal. 3:17, Paul speaks of the **"the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after."** Then in verse 19 he tells us, **"It was added because of transgressions."** Understanding that the law Paul is referring to here is the body of law called Ordinances, that was added because of the fact that Israel now became accountable to God for their sins, will help greatly in understanding what Paul is discussing in his letter to the Galatians.

But a statement Paul then makes in verse 24 should help us to an even better understanding of this body of law. **"Wherefore the law (these ordinances) was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith."** In both Col. 2:17 and

Heb. 10:1, these ordinances are spoken of as a shadow of things to come. So, I think we can understand that the ordinances were to teach not only of the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ (through the doctrine of substitution—life for life), but also of the true Holy of Holies and being in the very presence of God in all His glory, the goal toward which we should all be striving. As we'll see, the ordinances not only teach us the principle of the blood sacrifice for sin, i.e. the sacrifice of life for sin, but also the order and holiness of the Tabernacle.

One other thing we need to remember as we begin our look at the Ordinances is a statement Jesus made as recorded in Matt. 5:17, **“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.”** Note He said **“fulfill”** instead of keep. While He certainly did the latter, more importantly He also **“fulfilled”** most of the laws we are about to discuss..

The first thing that God did here at Mt. Sinai in establishing a new nation was to establish an order of priesthood with Aaron, brother of Moses being the high priest. (Ex. 40:12-15) Ex. 28:1-43 tells us of this selection and gives us the **“law”** dealing with the garments that were to be made for the high priest and his sons to wear while performing their priestly functions. Verse 43 finishes by saying, **“it shall be a statute for ever unto him and his seed after him.”** As we discussed before in discussing statutes, this gives us a bit of a clue as to the difference between a Statute and an Ordinance. We could look at the type of clothing as described as part of the ordinances, but it was the responsibility of the people or nation to see that, 1) the priesthood remained in the house of Aaron from generation to generation; and 2) that the priests were provided and required to wear the type of clothing specified. Being the responsibility of the people then, it was called a statute.

Ex. 29:9 and 29:29-30 reiterate what we are told in chapter 28. Ex. 30:1-10 describes the incense altar that Moses was to build. Ex. 36, 37, and 38 describe the instructions Moses received from God for the building of the tabernacle. Please read these chapters on your own as we won't go into the details of its construction. Keep in mind that it is basically a tent, but one that was to last for a long time. It had board sides that were covered with curtains of fine twined linen, then a covering of goat's hair curtains, then a covering of ram's skin died red, and a final covering of badger skins.

The measurements given are in cubits. However, if you look up a cubit in a Bible dictionary, you will find there is more than one cubit with varying lengths listed in the Bible. The shortest cubit is about 18 inches long, so I am using this length to translate the

measurements into feet and inches. I recently read an article by a gentleman who pretty much proved that the official cubit was a fraction over 25 inches based on the measurements of the Great Pyramid of Giza. Based on an 18 inch cubit, the tabernacle was roughly 30 ft. long and 12 ft. wide. It was divided into two rooms separated by a veil of fine twined linen. It opened on the east side. It then had a court around it approximately 150 ft. long and 75 ft. wide.

The east room was to be the sanctuary and it would look out on the altar of burnt offerings and the laver. The other room contained the altar of incense we mentioned above, the ark of the covenant, the mercy seat, a table and a candlestick. This room was called the holy of holies and only the high priest could enter it. The east room and the court could be entered by anyone who was not deemed unclean.

Ex. 30:22-33 gives instructions for making a holy anointing oil with which Moses was to anoint the tabernacle and its furniture, and Aaron and his sons as priests. It was to be made and used by the priests throughout their generations. Also a perfume was to be made and set before the ark continually. (Ex. 30:34-38).

Aaron and his sons were given the responsibility of the actual sanctuary and the holy of holies and the functions of sacrifices, etc. The Levites, in general, had charge over the whole tabernacle, including the court, but were not to approach the altar or attempt any of the functions of Aaron and his sons. (Num. 18:1-7) It was the job of Aaron and his sons to make atonement for the sins of the people. Atonement means **“covering”** or **“to cover”**, i.e. it was the high priest's responsibility to present the people before God without sin that they might fulfill the conditional **“if ye will obey my voice, and keep my covenant”** portion of the covenant God made with Israel at Mt. Sinai. They were to do this in several ways. They were to teach both in reading the law and by offering sacrifices. Of particular importance was the sacrifice for sin made once a year by the high priest on the Day of Atonement. This was done as a **“covering”** for the whole nation. They were to set themselves apart as an example of Israel setting herself apart from sin and the world, or being holy. They were to minister to the people in their needs such as in sickness and their spiritual needs.

Sacrifices were probably the primary emphasis of their work. They were required to offer a daily burnt offering of a lamb each morning and each evening. (Ex. 29:38-42; Num. 28:2-8) Also an additional two lambs and a meat offering (flour or cakes made with flour) were to be offered on the Sabbath. (Num. 28:9-10) On the first day of each month two young

bullocks, one ram and seven lambs with their meat offerings were to be offered as a burnt offering, in addition to the continual daily sacrifice. Also a goat kid was offered as a sin offering. (Num 28:11-15) But then the people made sacrifices themselves as well and it was the priest's job to take care of these. There were four basic sacrifices, the burnt offering, the sin offering, the trespass offering and the peace offering. Each was to be handled differently and different occasions and situations demanded one or more of these sacrifices. If you are reading through these books of the law, all of the sacrifices can get a little confusing, but if you remember that there are only four basic sacrifices, it should relieve the confusion. So that we know just what was to take place with each type of sacrifice, let's look at what was required for each type.

BURNT OFFERING:

This could be a bullock without blemish, a ram or a he goat without blemish, or it could be an offering of turtle doves or young pigeons. If it came from an individual, it had to be offered of one's own voluntary will. If it is a bullock, ram or goat, the owner is to kill it and the priests are to take the blood and sprinkle it round about the altar. The owner is then to skin it and cut it in pieces. The priests were to lay the pieces in order on the altar. The legs and the inward parts were to be washed with water and then laid on the altar and all of it is to be burnt with fire unto the LORD. The birds were to have their head wrung off and the blood wrung out at the side of the altar, their feathers plucked off and then split, but not cut completely in two and then laid on the altar and burned. The priests were to keep a fire on the altar continually. They had to remove the ashes from the altar and then move them to a clean place outside the camp. (Lev. 1:2-17; and Lev. 6:8-13)

SIN OFFERING:

This offering depends on who is offering it. If a high priest sins through ignorance, his offering is to be a young bullock without blemish. He is to lay his hand on the bullock's head and then kill the bullock before the LORD. The priest is to take the blood into the tabernacle, dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle it seven times before the Lord before the veil and then he is to put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD. He is then to pour the rest of the blood out at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering. Next he is to take all the fat that covers the inwards, the two kidneys and the fat on them, and the caul over the liver and burn all this on the altar. All of the rest of the bullock is then to be taken outside the camp, to where the ashes are taken, and it is to be burnt on wood there. (Lev4:3-12)

If it is the whole congregation that has sinned

through ignorance, the elders of the people are to bring a young bullock before the LORD and lay their hands on it. The procedure is the same as with the high priest. (Lev. 4:13-21; Num. 15:22-26)

If it is a ruler who has sinned through ignorance, the sacrifice is to be a male kid of the goats. He is to put his hand upon its head and it is to be killed before the LORD. Instead of putting the blood on the horns of the altar of incense, the priest is to put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering and the rest of the blood is to be poured out at the foot of the altar. Again the fat, kidneys and the caul is to be burned on the altar and the priest is to keep the rest of the goat. (Lev. 4:22-26)

If it is a common person who has sinned through ignorance, he is to bring a female kid of the goats that is without blemish or a female lamb without blemish. The procedure is the same as with the ruler and the male kid. (Lev. 4:27-35; Num. 15:27-29)

Any sin offering in which the blood is put on the altar of incense is not to be eaten, but if it is put on the altar of burnt offering, it is to be eaten by all the males among the priests. (Lev. 6:24-30)

TRESPASS OFFERING: This offering can be a female lamb or kid or two turtle doves or two pigeons or it could be 1/10 ephah of fine flour. If it is a lamb or kid, it is to be killed where the burnt offering is killed and the blood sprinkled round about the altar. The fat of the rump, the inward parts, the kidneys and the caul are all to be removed and burnt on the altar. The males among the priests shall eat the rest. The sin offering and the trespass offering are to be handled the same.

If it is the turtle dove or the pigeons, then the priest shall offer one for a sin offering, but shall not divide it and the other for a burnt offering as described in the burnt offering.

If it is the fine flour, nothing is to be put with it. The priest will burn a memorial from it and the rest will be his.

With each of these, the person making the offering shall be forgiven. (Lev. 5:5-13)

Peace offering: This offering can be cattle, male or female, or sheep or goats, male or female. The one making the offering shall lay his hand upon its head and kill it before the tabernacle. The priest shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar. The fat on the rump, the fat on the inward parts, the kidneys and the fat on them and the caul above the liver are all to be removed and burned on the altar. (Lev. 3:1-5; 6:11; 12-16)

The peace offering has to be offered of one's own will and it must be eaten the same day or the next.

Anything left the third day is to be burned. (Lev. 19:5-8) The same applied to offering a vow. (Lev. 7:16-18)

If it is offered for a thanksgiving, then an offering of unleavened cakes mingled with oil, unleavened wafers mingled with oil, or cakes mingled with oil made with fine flour and fried, plus an offering of leavened bread is to be offered with the sacrifice. One is to be offered as a heave offering and the balance shall go to the priest making the offering. (Lev. 7:11-15)

The person making the peace offering keeps the sacrifice except for the breast which is to be waved before the LORD and the right shoulder which goes to the priest making the offering. The breast goes to the high priest. (Ex. 29:27-28; Lev. 7:28-34)

There is also a law concerning the meat offering which is usually offered in conjunction with another offering. Meat here is a reference to a grain or flour offering rather than a flesh offering.

The meat offering is to be of fine flour (usually barley or wheat) and oil (olive) is to be poured on it and frankincense is to be put on it. The priest is to take a handful of the flour and oil and all of the frankincense and burn it. The remnant goes to Aaron and his sons. (Lev. 2:1-3)

The meat offering can be baked in an oven, however. If so it shall be unleavened cake of fine flour mingled with oil or unleavened wafers anointed with oil or it can be an offering baked in a pan or fried in a frying pan, but again of fine flour with oil poured on it or fried in oil. Again, a memorial of it is to be burned on the altar and the rest goes to Aaron and his sons. No leaven or honey is to be used in any offering of the LORD made by fire. (Lev. 2:4-11; Lev. 6:14-18). Numbers 15:1-16 details the meat offering that is to be offered with each sacrifice.

Every oblation of meat offering shall be seasoned with salt. (Lev. 2:13) No animal that was sacrificed was to be blemished or to be evil favored in any way. (Deut. 17:1)

These are the basic sacrifices. There is occasionally a variation but the basic rules apply always. Lev. 2:12 says that any oblation of firstfruits is not to be burnt. Lev. 2:14-16 says that if a meat offering is made of the firstfruits, it is to be green ears of corn (grain) dried by fire, grain beaten out of full ears or heads. Oil and frankincense are to be put on it and the priest is to burn a memorial of it like a regular meat offering.

All meat offerings were to be divided up among the high priest and his sons. (Lev. 7:10) The priest offering the burnt offering was to get the skin and the priest offering a meat offering baked in a pan was to receive it. (Lev. 7:8-9)

Once a year, the high priest was to take a young bullock for himself, and a ram for a burnt offering and two kids of the goats for the congregation and a ram for a burnt offering. He was to put on proper clothing and offer the bullock for a sin offering for himself. Then he was to cast lots on the goats and offer the one chosen for a sin offering for the congregation. He then is to take the live goat and lay both hands on it and confess all the iniquities of the children of Israel over it thus putting them on the head of the goat. Then he is to send the scapegoat away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness. (Lev. 16:1-28) We'll see a little later that this came to be done on the Day of Atonement.

If someone sinned, through ignorance, in the holy things of the LORD, he was to bring a ram for a trespass offering, plus pay a fine determined by the priest, plus make amends for the damage done and add 20% of the cost and give it to the priest. (Lev. 5:15-19)

If someone lied about property left in his care, or found something lost and lied about it, or swore falsely, or deceived his neighbor, he was to first restore the property in question and then add 20% to it and give it to the one damaged. Then he was to bring a ram for a trespass offering plus a fine to be determined by the priest and offer it as a trespass offering before God. (Lev. 6:2-7)

Num. 5:6-10 tells us that if there is no one to recompense for the loss, the recompense and the offering are to both go to the priest making the offering.

There are at least a couple of rules concerning the animals used for sacrifices. First, it was to be perfect with no blemishes. It could not be an animal from the stranger's land. It had to be your own from birth. (Lev. 22:18-20; Lev. 22:21-25) It had to be at least 8 days old. You could not kill a mother and her young on the same day. (Lev. 22:27-30)

Num. 19:2-10 tells us of another ritual, that had to do with cleansing that we need to discuss before going further. The people were to bring to Moses and Aaron a red heifer without spot and in which there were no blemish. They were to give it to Eleazar, Aaron's son, who was to take it outside the camp and have her slain in his presence. He was to take of her blood on his finger and sprinkle it directly before the tabernacle seven times. Then he was to have her burned totally along with cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet. He and the man burning her were to wash their clothes and bathe their flesh and return to the camp. One who is clean is then to gather up the ashes and lay them up in a clean place outside the camp where it is to be kept for the congregation for a "water of separation." We're told it is a purification their for sin. We'll discuss further how it is to be used shortly.

We will continue our study of ordinances in our next issue. JRL

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

(Read Heb. 1:1-4) Verse one in the King James is a little bit misleading. The NASB renders it more correctly. **"God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways..."** I have heard people criticize the Bible saying that it was just a compilation of stories by a lot of different men. What many people fail to realize is that the author of the scriptures is the Holy Spirit, God as this verse tells us. He used different men under different scenarios in different ways as his recording instruments, each with a different portion, to bring us the whole Bible. Especially is this true with the Old Testament. But the story is complete. However, admittedly, it has not always been fully understood. Each age seems to be given a little clearer vision of the whole story. In verse 2, we were told that Christ made the world, or more properly, the ages. The fact that He created "time", as we know it is a little hard for us to comprehend, but I believe we can consider this as an extension of a statement made by Jesus in Matthew 12:8, **"For the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath day."** The Sabbaths and the attending feast days reveal "time" as we know it, thus are prophetic of future events through the coming ages. The ages, or the time periods that especially affect us are the ages that begin with Moses beginning with the passing over of the death Angel. In the beginning of this Passover age we had the giving of the law at Mount Sinai. We need to go back to Exodus 19:5-6 to understand that this law was part of the First, or Old Covenant that we discussed in our last lesson. Verse five begins, **"Now therefore if you will obey my voice indeed and keep my covenant..."**, His voice that was heard by this newly formed nation, or kingdom, was the Ten Commandments in chapter 20. The covenant that they were to keep included the Ten Commandments and all the supporting laws that followed. They were an integral part of this First Covenant. They are a part of the New Covenant as well as God says in Hebrews 8:10, **"I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts."** but we are getting ahead of ourselves. This law gave the Israelites a better vision of God and his purpose, however, it still was not plain enough to most of them for them to fully understand that the purpose of the sacrifices was to prepare them for the ulti-

mate Passover, the crucifixion of Christ at the end of that age. Paul tells us in verse two that while God had spoken through the prophets in many portions in many ways, He, in these last days spoke to us through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Following a 7-week transition between Christ's resurrection and the day of Pentecost, we had the beginning of the Pentecostal age with the giving of the Earnest of the Spirit to the disciples in the upper room. This Earnest of the Spirit then, through the apostles and disciples and their later counterparts gave us the New Testament, or Covenant, which included these words spoken by Jesus Christ, and made that vision brighter so that we might see more clearly God and his plan and purpose.

If, as I believe we will, we follow the feast day pattern, we have yet another age, the tabernacles age, which should then give us yet a still clearer vision of God and his purpose. How this will be done we will have to wait and see.

The word "brightness" in verse 3 comes from a word defined as "reflection" by Dr. Young the words "express image" come from the Greek *charakter*. The word means the exact impression as when a metal is pressed into a dye, or a seal upon wax, the seal is like the signing of the document with the fingerprint, or insignia that represents the one issuing the document. The word "person" is from the Greek *hupostasis* meaning "substratum, what lies under". It is used of title deeds, legal documents proving ownership. The title needed then would be the support of proof of ownership. Christ is the imprinted seal of heaven that certifies the validity of God's title deed to the kingdom.

If we consider what the Jews were expecting their Messiah to be, I think we can see that they were really narrow in their view. It seems all that they were expecting was a military genius that would defeat the Romans, the feet and legs of the Babylonian succession of empires that we saw in Daniel 2. If we consider that the stone, that was to destroy this succession of empires, was to grow to fill the whole earth, i.e. God's Kingdom that was to grow to fill the whole earth, being a genius military king of a relatively small nation with a great military ambitions is quite different from being king of the whole earth. Ruling, to the Jews, met oppressing as they had been oppressed. Christ's revealing, or reflecting the Father, revealed deliverance, not oppression. Not only was Christ heir by right of creation but when He had finished His ministry on the earth and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high he had earned the right to be heir of all the world by expressing his love to all men through his crucifixion and redemption of all men. Paul says that he obtained a much better name than the angels.

The object of most religions is to teach their people to be better servants of their god. Christianity, when taught as it should be taught, is unique in that it puts forth the idea Fatherhood of God. If we create a business, it is to serve us. It has an impersonal relationship to us. A created being, though a very marvelous thing, actually has an impersonal relationship to the creator, because the relationship that is established is basically a master/servant relationship. With the new covenant, we have the idea of sonship instead of servanthood. Paul tells us in Galatians 4:1-7 that a son in training was treated as a servant only until he comes into full spiritual maturity. (Read) The idea of sonship is found in the Old Testament but it is not portrayed nearly as clear as it is in the New Testament, or Covenant.

The Jews were basically looking for the equivalent of an Angel that could oppress their oppressor enough that they could in turn become the oppressor. The concept of Sonship was beyond their thinking, something that had to be corrected. Paul uses a number of Old Testament scriptures to show that Christ did not come as an Angel. Angels had their place and responsibility, but Jesus Christ came as the Son of God, a far superior position than that of an Angel. The angels were created—Christ was begotten of God. Therefore, God would be a father to Christ and Christ a son to the father. Angels would worship the Son. Angels were whatever God made them, a spirit or possibly a flame of fire.

(Read Heb. 1:8-9) God makes it clear through Paul that Christ is to rule to the age of the ages, this is not said of an Angel. Because he hated iniquity, or lawlessness, Jesus had received a greater anointing, the greater rulership. Paul is quoting scripture primarily from the Psalms and the prophet Isaiah, scriptures that the Jews of that day would have been familiar with, comparing them to what they knew of the character and history of Christ to prove that He truly was the Messiah. He is showing that the prophets who have been given the prophecies concerning the Messiah did not picture him as a military genius that they were expecting at that time.

(Read Heb. 1:10-12) Just as there is a change from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant, or Pass-over age to Pentecost age, there will be another change in the earth as we go from the Pentecost age to the Tabernacles age. God doesn't change, but we will see him more clearly. The change is similar to us changing garments, the earth will change garments, so to speak. Paul continues to use Old Testament scriptures to point these things out to the Hebrews.

(Read Heb. 1:13-14) Paul makes one more contrast between angels and Jesus Christ. Christ is at the right hand of the Father. Angels are sent to minis-

ter for the sake of those who will inherit salvation.

So we have seen in times past, i.e. in Old Testament time, God spoke through prophets and angels, but now he has spoken through the Son, whom he appointed heir of all things. The prophets and angels were all inferior to the Son, So what the Son has said is a greater revelation than what we heard from the prophets and angels.

(Read Heb. 2:1-4) Because the words spoken by the Son is a greater revelation, Paul says we need to give it the more earnest heed for fear that we let it drift away from us. If the words spoken by angels proves steadfast, or unchangeable, and every sin received just come recompense, Paul asks how we can escape if we neglect the words spoken by the Son, i.e. this greater, or more revealing word. Paul is using what the Jews of his day had accepted as truth and unchangeable, then pointing out that if Jesus was the Messiah, his word should be more accepted and believed. This word was first spoken by the Son, then confirmed to Paul, and those to whom he was writing, by those that heard the word directly from the Son, i.e. the apostles and disciples that were with Christ, with God also witnessing with signs and wonders and gifts of the Holy Spirit according to God's own will. The book of Acts gives us many examples of this.

(Read Heb. 2:5) The angels are not the inheritors, thus they will not be the rulers. The word "world" here is from the Greek, *oikoumene*. It is a compound word and as I understand it, means "abide" and "dwelling place" with reference both to the land and to the people. So God has not put the "abiding place" that is yet to come under the subjection of angels. We saw in the first chapter that Christ was established as the Heir (Keep in mind that Christians, as the body of Christ, then are co-heirs with Him.)

Now we begin to look at the inheritance. Romans 4:13 tells us that the promise to Abraham was that he would be heir of the world, or cosmos. Psalms 2:8, a prophetic instruction to Christ, says, ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen nations for thy inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Several other references confirm that the inheritance is the nations, the people as well as the land, the world as a whole. Compare this to the rewards that God promised in the Old Testament: **"then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye are to be a be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."** Peculiar treasure refers to ownership, the kingdom would belong to God, no one else. Priests means rulers in the sense of the Levites being both civil and religious rulers, the bureaucrats as we would refer to them in our day. They had the responsibility and authority to make government work. Holy nation means to be a nation set apart from the other nations. I think we can see when we understand rulership under God's way that the rewards promised under the Old Covenant are basically the same as those promised under the New Covenant. So the difference in the covenants really has to do with the law. We will discuss this more a little later.

Paul then details who the world to come will be put in subjection to. (Read Heb. 2:6-8) As I read this, it is man, but more especially the Son of man, Jesus Christ. In verse 8 he says, **"Thou hast put all things in subjection under his**

feet.” He then defines “all” by telling us that he has left nothing that is not put under Him. It is important that we understand that this means ALL, EVERYTHING, NOTHING LESS.

But, in Paul’s day, this had not yet happened. The process had begun, people were being converted to Christ, but it had not become a complete reality. It has not become a complete reality yet in our day. But we do see how God is going about bringing this to pass. (Read Heb. 2:9-11) Jesus had to become lower than the angels because it was necessary that he participate in death, the penalty for sin. (**“For the wages of in is death.”** Romans 6:23) Though he was crowned with glory and honor, it was necessary for God’s plan that **“he by the grace (gift) of God should taste death for every man.”** Even though all things were made by him and for him, according to the law that he had given, it was fitting for him, in order to lead many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation complete through suffering. To be the great intercessor for man, Jesus had to identify with man by being born as a man and to suffer and die as a man.

As proof that Jesus is not ashamed to call those that are sanctified his brethren, Paul quotes from the Old Testament. (Read Heb. 2:12, 13) It is important that we note that it is those who are sanctified that he’s calling brethren. Keep in mind that “sanctified” means “set apart” and indicates a degree of spiritual maturity. Because of a lot of mis-teaching in our churches today, spiritual maturity is not something that is considered necessary. Justification, sanctification, and glorification are the three steps to age lasting life, or eternal life as the King James puts it. Justification is free, requires nothing on our part other than to accept it as a free gift. This was done for us on the cross by Jesus Christ. This puts one’s name in the book of life. Sanctification is basically learning to live a righteous life, to perfect or to complete ones spiritual maturity. This qualifies one for the first resurrection. Glorification is a result of the first two steps when one receives the resurrection body and becomes in reality a Son of God.

So it is those qualified for the first resurrection that Jesus says he is not ashamed to call them brethren. The rest of the chapter deals with Christ as the great intercessor. (Read Heb. 2:14-18) Being an intercessor involves redemption. When Christ came as a man, there are two associations that he made to qualify him as a Redeemer. Verse 14 tells us, **“For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part in the same.”** This takes us back to Adam. Christ came as the last Adam. Adam and all mankind were made of flesh and blood, so Christ also had to come made of flesh and blood, in order to be kindred to mankind. In that sense, his brethren then include all mankind.

The second association is in verse 16, **“For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.”** He was descended from the family of Abraham, specifically from King David of the tribe of Judah of the children of Jacob-Israel.

Now, why were these two associations important? (Read Lev. 25:47-49) For him to have the right to redeem, he had to be a kinsman. If he had come in the form of an

angel, which is the way that he appeared to all those he appeared to in the Old Testament such as Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David and others, he would not have been a kinsman, thus would not be qualified by law to redeem. By this law of redemption, presumably anyone could redeem a friend if the owner of the bond slave was willing to let the slave go. But if the kinsmen came to redeem a person, the owner had no choice but to let the redemption take place because the kinsman had the lawful right of redemption. You see here first that Christ was a partaker of flesh and blood that through death, the price of redemption in this case, **“He might destroy him that had the power of death, that he is, the devil, what should be.”** In this case the word “devil” is from the Greek diabolos which means accuser. What is it that accuses one and has the power of death? Is it not sin itself? The strongest accuser we have is the very deeds we do in violation of God’s law, is it not? And what has the power of death? **“The wages of sin is death.”** (Romans 6:23) only our risen Christ destroyed sin and will take it out of the world. John the Baptist, upon seeing Jesus coming to him said and, **“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”** We haven’t seen the full reality of this, but we know that ultimately all sins will be removed from the earth. So in this case, men have sold themselves into the slavery of sin, but Christ the Redeemer has paid the price of redemption that all men will be redeemed from sin.

Then as we mentioned, in vs.16 we’re told that Jesus took on himself the seed of Abraham. Isaiah 50:1, speaking of the kingdom of Israel, says, **“Thus sayeth the Lord, where is the bill of your mother’s divorce, whom I have put away? Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold for your inequities have you sold yourselves and for your transgressions is your mother put away.”** God then mocks Israel for their lack of faith in the next verse, **“Is my hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem?”** In Paul’s letter to the Galatians whom he considers part of these Israelites that sold themselves he says in chapter 3:13, **“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us; for it is written, cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree:”** To be able to redeem something, it has to be something that was owned by the redeemer before. In both cases here, Christ owns all mankind by right of creation. He owned Israel by a covenant agreement between him and Israel. (Ex. 19:5-6)

It is interesting that God used the fall and redemption of Israel as a lawful means to redeem all men. Back to Gal.3, vs. 14 continues, saying, **“That the blessing of Abraham might come on the gentiles (nations) through Jesus Christ; That we might**

receive the promise of the spirit through faith.” Romans 11:11 tells us, speaking of Israel, “**I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the gentiles (nations) to provoke them to jealousy.**”

By the law of redemption, sin does not have the authority or power to refuse the redemption in the first case. In the second case, the Assyrian empire gave way to the Babylonian succession of empires which would be the slave owner from Christ day until now and we know it doesn't have the authority or power to refuse the redemption of Israel. This has been proven over and over again through the centuries of persecution in which Christianity has continued to grow.

Paul tells us in vs. 17–18 that Christ had to be made like his brethren in, i.e. as a man, that he might know the suffering through temptation that man is subjected to, so that as a merciful and faithful high priest he could be an intercessor of man toward God knowing first hand the suffering of man. As the old saying goes, you can't know what someone else is going through until you have walked in their shoes. Christ knows first hand the very worst suffering man faces, therefore can empathize with man and intercede for him before God and make propitiation, or what appeases, for man sins

So far then, we have established three things.

1. Jesus Christ is greater than an angel, whether the angel be a prophet or an angelic being;
2. that Christ is our kinsman Redeemer;
3. the concept of Sonship being greater than servanthood. As we proceed, we will see that the author of Hebrews advances further into this this concept of Sonship and servanthood.

Paul assumes that his readers accept and understand these three things, thus he says, “wherefore” (Read Hebrews 3:1–2) “**Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly,**” identifies those to whom Paul is addressing, whether we consider them to be the Jews of Paul's day, or us today.

Let me digress for a moment. The word holy means set apart. How many of us would be offended if we were addressed as set apart brethren, set apart meaning set apart from the world. Most people be-

come uncomfortable if they are considered different from those around them. Especially is this true if what sets them apart is that they are partakers of the heavenly calling, i.e. being Christian in the real sense. So long as they can identify with a group, such as their fellow church members, they can hide behind their particular denominational dogma. But again how many of us would be offended if we were considered different because our faith showed in our everyday actions and words. I would dare say that most of us have experienced that feeling that we needed to be like the rest of the people around us so that we did not stand out by saying no to the world. Back to verses 1–2, the focus here is not on our calling, but rather on Jesus Christ, whom Paul identifies as the apostle and high priest of our profession, or confession. In verse 2, he compares the faithfulness of Christ to He that appointed him as the Apostle and High Priest of our profession to the faithfulness of Moses in all his house (or the House of Israel).

(Read Heb. 3:3–4) While Moses was faithful in all his house, Christ is worthy of more glory inasmuch as Christ is the actual builder of Moses' house.

(Read Heb. 3:5–6) Moses represents the faithful servant in contrast to Christ, the faithful son. This servant and son relationship extends to us today. Moses, representing the Old Covenant, is a faithful servant. Though Moses had a great calling, the calling of Jesus Christ, representing the New Covenant is a greater calling. Moses's faithfulness as a servant was for a testimony of those things that were about to happen, i.e. the coming of Christ, his death, burial, and resurrection. Note in verse six that we are Christ's house, “**if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope to the end.**” This is not talking about personal salvation as we will see as we continue reading. Paul is using the Exodus as an allegory of one's Christian experience. “**Unto the end**” is referring to enduring to the end of the journey, the entering into the promised land. Again, if we can use the feast days as an example, the people had the faith to put the blood of the lamb on the doorposts and to get out and leave Egypt. This was their Passover experience comparable to justification. (continued next issue) JRL

**But, Seek ye first the kingdom of God,
And His Righteousness
And all these things shall be
Added unto you. Matt. 6:33**