

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

AN UNBREAKABLE COVENANT

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. Jeremiah 31:31

The LORD called Abram (later to be Abraham) out of the heathen land of Ur of the Chaldees (probably what is now known as Iraq). He did leave this region but went only so far as Haran according to the LORD's purpose. For it was in Haran that the LORD had appointed the death of Terah (Abram's father) to occur. We believe in like fashion as Moses died without entering the land of Canaan, due to his disobedience and representation of the condemning power of the Law, given on Mt. Sinai. Terah's past was rife with idolatry, from which the LORD called Abram. (see Josh.24:22) No doubt Abram was involved in the same. Yet the LORD would not leave Abram in that darkness and appeared to him and called him to go out of Haran, leaving behind his father's family and that land which he had long dwelt in.

The first time that the word "covenant" is mentioned in the scriptures is when the LORD spoke to Noah (who had found grace in the eyes of the LORD). "*But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.*" (Gen 6:18) When men in their natural thinking seek to define a "covenant" they usually view it as "an agreement" between two parties, involving a "quid pro quo". Yet this "covenant" is a statement of what the LORD would do and what HE would direct Noah to do. Noah did not have any say at all in this matter, rather the LORD declared what would happen and that is exactly what did happen. Noah "*moved with fear*" (Heb.11:7) and prepared an ark according to the LORD's purpose. Since he was an object of the LORD's grace, the LORD worked in HIM both to will and to do of HIS good pleasure. (see Phil.2:13; Ps. 110:3) This covenant did not fail.

Then the LORD expanded upon this "covenant" (which HE had unilaterally made) to include a token of HIS promise as HE set HIS "bow in the clouds". This "covenant" which had no conditions was that HE would never again destroy all flesh with water. This covenant has not failed.

Then we see HIM make a "covenant" with Abram, who like Noah was an object of the LORD's grace. Again, this is a "unilateral" covenant and has no conditions but is a declaration of the LORD's purpose to bless Abram and his SEED. We see this covenant being declared right after Abram was blessed by MELCHIZEDEK, KING OF SALEM, bringing forth bread and wine. (see Gen.14:18) "*In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land.*"(Gen 15:18) "*And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.*"(Gen 17:7-8) This is a declaration of the LORD's purpose, which we see gloriously fulfilled in HIM to whom this promise is made. "*Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.*" (Gal 3:16) "*Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break*

them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.” (Psa 2:6-9) This is a covenant that cannot fail.

The LORD JESUS CHRIST is the sole INHERITOR of all of these covenant promises, HE has taken captivity captive and given gifts unto men, triumphing over all of HIS enemies and therefore the enemies of all those whom the FATHER has given HIM from before the foundation of the world. HE is the FULFILLER of the Law, which no man could keep, and HE has established that covenant which was prophesied in the book of Jeremiah.

The only conditional covenant (with a quid pro quo) “do this and live”, which the LORD has set forth, was that which was given to Moses. Many assume this covenant is still in effect today, and go about to establish their own righteousness by a supposed adherence to its demands. Yet this covenant was never given to produce righteousness. *“if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.” (Gal 3:21) “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” (Rom 3:20) This mountain (Sinai) is no hiding place.*

The Law was given to teach men that they cannot keep the law nor come unto GOD by any works of their flesh. The man who thinks that he does keep the law is deluded and those who would seek to earn blessings by a supposed obedience to it deny both the holiness of the law and their own innate wickedness. Such was the plight of the Pharisee who went to the temple to pray *“thus with himself”*. The Jews perish because they go about to establish their own righteousness, even as many who profess to follow CHRIST do the same when they think that they can gain the favor of GOD by their actions. All of our *“righteousnesses”* are as filthy rags before HIM. *“So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.” (Luke 17:10)*

The glorious New Covenant which the LORD has established is in reality older than the Mosaic covenant which failed due to the weakness of the flesh and not the failure of the Law. The Law does indeed accomplish exactly what it was intended to do. *“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.” (Gal 3:24-25) Any other use of the law, than to bring men to the feet of CHRIST, in repentance, is a misuse of it, and any who lay it upon the backs of those who are set free in CHRIST fight against the LIBERTY of the sons of GOD. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” (Rom 8:1-4)*

The Covenant of promise which was first demonstrated to Abraham was in reality hinted at in the LORD’s declaration to Satan of that ONE who was to come. *“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” (Gen 3:15) The LORD set forth HIS promise directly to the SEED of Abraham which is the same ONE who is called the SEED of the woman. “For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” (2Cor 1:20)*

Then the LORD showed to Jeremiah how that HE would bring this covenant to fruition in calling out a people which HE has loved from the beginning. This covenant of promise is set forth in contrast to that covenant of law, which demonstrated the weakness of sinful flesh. *“And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.” (Gal 3:17-19) This is a covenant which shall stand forever for it is built upon a PROMISE which shall never fail and does not depend in any wise on the ability or supposed faith of sinful flesh to bring it to pass or cause it to endure. *“Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.” (Heb 6:19) Is CHRIST your HOPE?**