

THE



"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2)

July 1986

No. 007

THE OLD TESTAMENT COVENANT -- SINAI

History:

The story of God's covenant with Israel is recorded in Exodus 19 and 20, and Deuteronomy 5. Having been freed from bondage in Egypt, Moses led the children of Israel across the Red Sea and to the foot of Mt. Sinai. God then came down upon the mountain and through Moses as mediator, he gave the terms of the covenant to Israel. In addition to the Ten Commandments it included rules and regulations recorded in Leviticus, plus a blueprint of the tabernacle. This was God's will for Israel until Christ should come.

The HARVESTER
Sun Hill Rd. Church of Christ
1120 Sun Hill Road
Birmingham, AL 35215

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Purpose:

The design or purpose of the Law was summarized by Paul when he said in Gal. 3:19, *"What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made."* More specially, God's purpose in giving the Law seems to be fourfold.

1. The Law was given to Israel for the purpose of a civil government. They were a nation and needed a code of civil and political laws by which to govern themselves. This purpose is clearly seen when one studies the various regulations found in the Law. Read Exo. 22:1-8 and Lev. 25:23-38.

2. The Law was given to teach and convict men of sin by giving them a perfect standard of morality. Paul states in Rom. 7:7, *"Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through the law: For I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."* The Law taught what sin was and what righteousness was.

3. The Law was also given to prevent the universal spread of idolatry by preserving among men the knowledge of the One True God. When Israel departed from the worship of Jehovah, a prophet would call them back to the law of Moses. Every reformation or revival was accomplished through a return to God's law.

Through the synagogue the Jews spread the knowledge of the One True God as they taught the Law to the Gentiles. This knowledge of Jehovah was a great help in spreading the Gospel after Pentecost.

4. A fourth purpose was that the Law was designed to lead men to Christ. Paul writes in Gal. 3:24, *"So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be*

justified by faith." The various rites and ceremonies, types and symbols in the Law of Moses were designed to teach and prepare men for Christ. For example, the sacrifice of a lamb to atone for sin was an illustration of this. John the Baptist understood this when he said of Jesus in Jno. 1:29, *"Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world."*

Duration:

The Old Testament clearly teaches that the Law of Moses was a temporary covenant. Moses predicted that he would be superceded as God's lawgiver and prophet when he said in Deut. 18:15, *"Jehovah thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken."* In Jer. 31:31 Jeremiah confirmed the temporary nature of the Law when he wrote *"Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah."*

Jesus said in Matt. 5:17, *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill."* Jesus fulfilled the Law of Moses when He lived up to it and fulfilled the types concerning Himself, which it contained. At His death, Paul says that Jesus took the Law of Moses *"out of the way, nailing it to the cross"* (Col. 2:14; II Cor. 3:12-14). When Jesus on the cross cried, *"It is finished"* (Jno. 19:30), He obviously had in mind a number of things, one being the Law of Moses. At that time the Old Covenant had been fulfilled and was now finished (Col. 2:14).

The writer of Hebrews is very specific when he writes Heb. 8:7-8, *"For if that first covenant had been faultless, then would no place have been sought for a second. For finding fault*

with them, he saith, 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." And to settle the matter once and for all, he adds: Heb. 10:9, "He (Christ) taketh away the first (Old) that he may establish the second (New)."

Joe Young
142 Cleveland Road
Valley, AL 36854

[illegible]

Broad is the road that leads to death,
And thousands walk together there;
But wisdom shows a narrow path,
With here and there a traveler.

Deny thyself, and take thy cross
Is thy Redeemer's great command;
Nature must count her gold but dross,
If she would gain that heavenly land.

The fearful soul that tires and faints,
And walks the ways of God no more,
Is but esteemed almost a saint,
And makes his own destruction sure.

Isaac Watts

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

ABOUT SLOTHFULNESS

Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man. (Prov. 6:6-11)

He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich. He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame. (Prov. 10:4,5)

The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat. (Prov. 13:4)

The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain. (Prov. 15:19)

He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster. (Prov. 18:9)

Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger. (Prov. 19:15)

The sluggard will not plough by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing. (Prov. 20:4)

Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; (Rom. 12:11)

For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. (2 Thess. 3:10,11)

That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. (Heb. 6:12)

AS THE MANNER OF SOME IS

(A Series to Promote Church Attendance)

Usually those who are guilty of "*forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is*" (Heb. 10:25) are the first ones to point out that, "We don't have to go to church on Sunday night or during the mid-week. The Bible doesn't say anywhere that we have to." Some members of the church are very good at this. And they are somewhat correct to make the statement that, "Nowhere in the Scriptures is there a 'Thus saith the Lord' to be found concerning this thought". But did you know that neither do we find the commandment to "come together" at all on Sunday mornings?

Please note carefully that the word "commandment" was underlined above. When we follow a New Testament practice, we do so because of a direct commandment, apostolic example, or necessary inference. A careful study of the scriptures will show there exists no direct command to "assemble" on Sunday morning, i.e. no "Thus saith the Lord". We must not, however, overlook the admonition of Heb. 10:25.

The reason that we do assemble on the first day of the week is because we have been given a divine example to follow: "*And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight*" (Acts 20:7). This verse shows that the early Christians "*came together*" on the first day of the week (Sunday) to "*break bread*" (partake of the Lord's Supper). The Word of God does not specifically say here: "You must go to church on Sunday morning." It simply is not written in commandment form. Nevertheless, this example is binding on us today because we know it is according to God's plan and pleasing to Him.

Likewise, we find in the Bible examples of Christians who gathered together daily. Acts 2:46, "And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." We even have an example of the church coming together for a special meeting! Acts 15:22, "Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren." Thus we have our basis (divine example) for attending services on Sunday night, Wednesday night or any other time that the congregation has set aside. If we attend services on Sunday morning because of an example we read in the New Testament, then why not attend services at other times during the week considering the examples we have just reviewed?

It is my prayer that these thoughts will convince us to no longer use the argument of "The Bible doesn't say we have to go to church on Sunday night or mid-week". By the same token someone could say, "And the Bible doesn't say we have to go on Sunday mornings, either". Now we don't have a leg to stand on, do we? If our congregation decides to assemble at a certain time, it is our duty to be there if we are physically able. Brethren, instead of trying to find ways for getting out of going to church, let's find ways to be there!

RAY

Interest has been expressed in starting a congregation at Milwaukee, WI. Any info regarding potential contacts would be appreciated.

Write to: Jack Nance, 4028 Snyder Road,
Winston-Salem, NC 27107
Phone (919) 788-3764

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place & Time</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
June 27-29 (F-Su)	Fairview Church Oxford, AL 7:00pm Fri & Sat 10:45am & 6:00pm Sun	Richard Sargent Marty Livingston * Terry Price David Carter
July 6-11 (Su-F)	West Broad Street Wedowee, AL [10:30am Sun.] 7:30pm	Sammy Dick (Cave City, KY)
July 6-12	Athens Church near Liberty, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
July 11-13	West Gadsden Church Gadsden, AL	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
July 13-19	Leitchfield, KY	Lindeal Greer (Bogue Chitto, MS)
July 20-25	North Warren McMinnville, TN	Lindeal Greer (Bogue Chitto, MS)
July 20-25	Oak Grove Church near Wedowee, AL	Bill Prince Jr. (Oxford, AL)
July 20-26	Stratford, OK 7:30 each evening	Harry Cobb (Conley, GA)
July 20-27 (Su-Su)	Arcadia Church & Ebert Street Church 1532 Ebert Street Winston-Salem, NC	Local Brethren
July 25-27 (F-Su)	Fairview Church Oxford, AL 7:00 each evening	Terry Newell (Earlsboro, OK)
July 27 through Aug. 2	Temple Hill Church Smithdale, MS	Harry Cobb [Sun.] Terry Newell [re- mainder of week]
July 27 through Aug. 2	Napolean Church near Wedowee, AL 7:00 each evening	V.W. Boland (Gadsden, AL)

* - Editor's Note: This name was incorrectly listed as Terry Milner in last month's issue. I apologize for the error.