
The Old and New Covenants

by Dr. Hoeh. 7 February 1976, Bricket Wood

N.B. The following is an exact transcript of Dr Hoeh's sermon which was sent to all the British ministers in February 1976 following the crisis precipitated by Messrs Hunting/Plache. It has been reproduced below in WP format as an aid in a similar time of crisis.

I said yesterday evening in the Bible Study that I would like to address the question of the relationship in reality and in depth evaluation of the New Covenant, and its relationship to the Old, which is, I think, fundamental to our understanding of why we do the things we do in the Church of God today. The fundamental area of presentation will be from Matthew chapter 5 and the two succeeding chapters which are not that critical for evaluation. I think it's important that you have your Bibles, and we're going to go through it practically verse by verse, and in many cases, word by word.

Before we do, however, I think we must understand something of the background. Now, in a sense, I am addressing perhaps the majority of those who are of Anglo-Saxon descent, and there are those who clearly descend from many and varied human families that God has created on earth. In so doing, perhaps we have a perspective that differs even from our neighbours, because of our general understanding, and we don't expect everyone to have that understanding without study -- of our national identity as a part of the commonwealth of Israel that descended from the Patriarch Jacob who was renamed "Israel."

When I gave this subject from a slightly different perspective at Ungababa on the East Coast of Africa, south of Durban, at the Feast of Tabernacles, I surprised many by a statement which probably would surprise many of you, and I addressed it from the point of view that when God called Abraham God in fact called a Gentile, because there were no Israelites until there was "Israel" -- and Israel hadn't been born because Isaac hadn't been born -- and Isaac wasn't born when God called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, the Land of the Goyim or the Land of the Nations. The whole world was over-spread. What makes an Israelite an Israelite is the fact that God took a man of the Nations, a Gentile, because that's what it means -- it doesn't mean some strange blood versus some

other kind of blood- He took this man and called him OUT from among the Nations, and although he wandered among them he was now to live a separate kind of life in terms of his approach to life and his relationship to his Creator.

Now in this sense, that was very significant to our Gentile brethren at Ungababa who were mostly Blacks and Indians. I would not take quite the same approach here but I think you would understand very clearly, that when God called Abraham -- and many of you are his descendants -- He called a man who was willing, as we read of in the Book of Genesis chapter 17, to walk before God and to be perfect. That is a very significant requirement. There is a covenant made there in Genesis 17. This is one of many covenants that God made with the Children of Israel through different periods of time. And the ratification of this covenant in fact addressed in the Book of Galatians meant that Abraham was heir of the world. And to be heir of the world Abraham was required to walk before God and be perfect. Now that's quite a requirement which cannot be done without faith. The book of Hebrews chapter 11 addresses the question of faith.

Faith there is essentially applied in two areas: One, the faith and confidence to receive the promise. (Abraham of course has not yet received the promise - it remains to be demonstrated whether God's promise is valid - but Abraham has faith that it will be.) But faith is also required, as you will read of in the Book of Hebrews chapter 11, to obey God even to the point of death. That is, to enable you to obey God whether you are obeying Him in the sense of law, requirement, in the sense of asking God to give you some very special gift that He has promised, and you meet the conditions, faith has a role to play, wider perhaps than we realize. There were people who died in faith, and people who escaped and lived in faith. John the Baptist died. Peter lived. They were both in prison. One was beheaded and the other was delivered and they both had faith, because the ultimate will be proved at the resurrection.

Now Abraham was required at the time that covenant was made to walk before God - that means to put out sin, to become perfect in God's sight by means of the Spirit of God, to acknowledge when he was wrong, and to live by faith. Four hundred and thirty years later to the self-same day which is the first day of Unleavened Bread, the 15th of Nisan, the Children of Israel left Egypt. (Ex 12:40) And it is significant that in a sense what Abraham was asked to put out of his life, that he could walk before God and be perfect, is what the Children of Israel were asked to put out symbolically - that is, leaven, which is a symbol of sin.

Now when God began to reach the minds of the descendants of Abraham in the land of Egypt, the Children of Israel, He gave them first of all the Passover. And the reason He did is very simple and clear: unless God should have passed over them, and forgiven them of their sin, because the death angel saw the blood, and when he saw the

blood he was not allowed to go into that house. So God is in control over the angels. In other words, there is the need of the shedding of blood for the forgiveness of sins. Sin is the transgression of law, whether spiritual law or natural law. There are all kinds of transgressions.

But that was only the beginning: to be delivered from sin; to be delivered from the bondage of a nation that was living in sin, the land of Egypt.

Then God gave 7 days of Unleavened Bread. (Seven, in a sense, is a number meaning perfection or completeness, as it is customarily used in the Hebrew.) Seven days in which unleavened bread was to be put out. And that was to tell them that what they needed to do, after being forgiven of their past, was to put out sin from their lives. Now, how God expected them to do it, and how He dealt with them is revealed of course in succeeding chapters in the Bible: in the first 40 years of the experience of the Children of Israel.

You will note, that after God commanded those things, then also while, after crossing the Red Sea they came to the wilderness on the western shores of the Sinai Peninsula, God revealed to them how He intended that they should observe the Sabbath and that He would bless them (Exodus 15) sufficiently with food on the 6th day of the week - that there would be no question that they would have enough for the 7th day - and they didn't have to go out of their way and prepare anything special on that day. So the knowledge of the Days of Unleavened Bread, the knowledge of the Passover, the knowledge of the Sabbath is given to the Children of Israel step-by-step.

And you will note here, that both at this time and later, when Moses addresses the Children of Israel he's really addressing a carnal minded nation. Ezekiel in several places, certainly in chapter 20 and elsewhere shows that the Children of Israel really didn't want to do what God said. They had questions and doubts in their minds. They were not a spiritual, but a carnal people. They were happy to be delivered out of slavery, but they didn't know what it meant to have the freedom of God's law, because most of them preferred to do their own thing, as the expression now is.

Now before I go on and tell you what God proposed to that nation, I want to go back and point up something very important. When God addressed our first parents in the garden of Eden, Genesis chapters 1, 2 and 3, it is interesting when analysing the material there that God opens up to Adam who had no preconceived ideas, because he hadn't lived prior to this time. God proposed to Adam that he could take of the tree of life...eat, and live forever. And God dealt with him by way of example. When God dealt with Adam, He wasn't dealing with a carnal mind. When God dealt with Adam we read about the 7th Day. And then the 7th Day occurs and we read what God did - that

God rested on that day (Gen 2:2) from all His work which He had been making. He "blessed the 7th day and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made." God set apart this day and called it "Holy".

God did not set up the Sabbath in Genesis 2, in the form of a law. There is no statement of law, brethren, because God was setting an example. There was no law because there was no Nation. There was no need of a Constitution. There was no need of some kind of covenant. There was only a need that Adam take note of the example of God. And the one thing we're going to have to learn is that when God gives us an example, as well as a command, we'd better pay attention to what is in Scripture.

You see, when God gave the Sabbath, He gave the Sabbath as an example of what was good for man, and it was man's decision whether or not he would follow God's example on this day. Now this is very important for us to realize, because sometimes we read more into scripture than is there and we fail to read from it what is clearly implied. When God hallows something He asks you to keep your feet off it.

Jehovah's Witnesses (I'm sure you have them over here) on occasion once came to the door of my home on the Sabbath day and they got into this question. I told them which day it was and I wasn't about to enter into any argument. I just said that "I hope you realize that God tells you" (and I think I used the word you instead of we or us) "He tells you to keep your feet off His Holy Day." And they left and turned around and shook the dust off their feet. That is their custom and their habit.

The point that we must make: When God first introduces anything to man, the most fundamental thing He introduced after marriage is the Sabbath. In the case of marriage He does not give any ceremony. He leaves that up to the institutions that are created and the societies that exist to work out an appropriate occasion. But in any case, He was present at the first "ceremony". And He makes certain statements and Adam makes certain responses. And in the case of the Sabbath, God gives an example of His own conduct whenever He's on earth. Because the Sabbath is a period of time that is regulated by the sun's light as it strikes on the earth, the Sabbath was given when man was made because man needs a day of rest. And that is so fundamental to our work, to our occupation, to our mental and physical and if we could only see also our spiritual well-being. The world may see the principles of the first two and they have one day and they make their own choice.

Now was the 7th day of the week intrinsically holy without God's action? The answer is plainly no. The 7th day was a period of time and if God had not hallowed it by His action it would not have been holy. But when God hallowed it, and since time has been measured ever since in weeks, and not in a continuous numbering of seven,

eight, nine, ten, you know, but only one through seven - that whenever that day comes around it is holy, and Jesus addressed that question later. But the important thing is that when God spoke to Adam and when He spoke to Abraham He spoke to them in terms of His example of asking them some of the most fundamental things to do. But when He addresses the Children of Israel in the days of Moses, He asks them, now look, He said, "How long will you refuse observing my Sabbath?" There was something carnal minded in these people. They weren't promised the Holy Spirit. That becomes obvious when you see the covenant as it is drawn up.

✕Next point: There came a time when God chose to make of the descendants of Abraham an organized Church and, in a sense, also a Nation. And He proposed to make what we call the Old Covenant -- it was not then called that, it was just called "The Covenant" -- at Sinai. Basic to this Covenant were 10 fundamental laws. These are called the "Ten Commandments." They are given, as you know, in Exodus 20. The important thing to realize is that apart from the mixed multitude that were there, this was never given to the Gentiles. The Gentiles were cut off from God. No Gentile was ever blessed with having a law like this as fundamental to its constitution. Not only did God say the 10 words which summarize the whole thing, but He also called Moses up to the Mount and revealed to him material that is part of the book of the Covenant - they're the two tables of stone - and then the book of the Law that is referred to there (there is another book of the Law that comes later but this is the one book that blood was sprinkled on).

✕In Exodus 21, 22 and 23 we have judgements made based on the Ten Commandments. And then that book in which those judgements are written was sealed with blood in the sense that it was ratified - the Nation had now agreed, in the same way that a wife agrees to submit to her husband, and the husband promises to provide for his wife....because God made certain promises: "You will be my people"....."I will give you the land that I promised to Abraham that extends between two rivers that you can live on from generation to generation." He further makes it very plain that the children of Israel had now a very special relationship not shared by any people on earth. Very unfortunate!

Now what kind of a law do we find the Ten Commandments are?

They are simple, direct statements. They summarize a total way of life, and later we discover what we might have seen initially - they are only in the letter. That is, they are given in such a way they are enforceable. "Thou shalt not kill." That's enforceable. "Thou shalt not commit adultery." That's enforceable. "On the Sabbath Day you shall not do any work." That gives you plenty of room to enforce it. And it goes down the line with the judgements that follow. This is a Covenant that is made between YHVH,

who is in reality The Creator, and the Children of Israel, the descendants of Abraham. They are now God's people. They are promised physical things. God leads them from Sinai through the wilderness. They get into more troubles, and more laws are revealed. Not only the laws pertaining to ritualistic matters at Sinai in the Book of Leviticus, but laws on occasion, judgements that are made in the book of Numbers.

✘ Then 40 years later a new covenant is made - sorry, let me correct that. another covenant is made. (It's new by contrast to the previous one but we should call it another so as not to confuse the issue.) Another covenant is made in the book of Deuteronomy. This is made with the descendants of most of the people who died in the wilderness, who are now east of Jordan, looking west - Moses is still alive, and he repeats again the principles of the Ten Commandments in his own words and then he shows many other aspects of law not hitherto given. He repeats blessings and cursings at this time in a series of speeches similar to the blessings and cursings found at the close of the book of Leviticus.

Now in looking at the blessings and the cursings you will find that there are blessings in the sky above and the earth beneath, with our trees and our grain. Blessings with our cattle and our children. Blessings in terms of deliverance from our enemies. And curses, of a similar nature, if we do not do what God's law says. And there were priests to administer certain ritualistic matters because when the children of Israel sinned some sinned in ignorance. Some sinned inadvertently. They can be forgiven, but they had to bring a physical offering which would acknowledge Christ as the Ultimate One, or the Messiah, who would come.

✘ Next step: There was also the administration of penalties. That is, whenever there was a violation which was intentional and known, then there were certain punishments...fines, never imprisonments as a basic penalty, and the death penalty administered in certain ways. Or being reduced to servitude in order to pay off a debt. All of these things were given in such a way that the children of Israel recognized that they had a relationship to God that they could grasp as carnal minded human beings that could be judged without having to take into such basic consideration as attitudes and motives. The "Thou shalt not commit adultery" was the act of adultery. The "Thou shalt not kill" we might call the act of murder. And if you couldn't prove that adultery had been committed, or that murder had occurred, then you were not held guilty.

✘ This is the level at which God expected the children of Israel to live. They were not asked in terms of the Covenant at Sinai, or the Sabbath Covenant in the book of Exodus chapter 31, or any Covenant that may follow, and not even the Covenant made 40 years later approximately by Moses in the book of Deuteronomy - they weren't asked to walk before God and be perfect. Moses said "Oh that the Lord had given you a Spirit

that you might do His Commandments." But he foresaw that the children of Israel would not. Now God purposed that even if they could live in terms of the letter of the law, this would be such an example that the nations would even be surprised.

2 Cor 3 addresses the question of the law as it was given...in the letter, whether on two tables of stone or in a book. And that law had some glory by contrast to any other national law. When Aeneas Silvius, who later became a Pope in the 15th Century, travelled in Corinthia, in Austria, he marvelled at German justice, which is not so different from 20th Century German justice. He wrote in his work in the Humanistic Period that when a crime was committed in Corinthia the German-Austrian justice required that all who were suspects in the case be brought together and hanged before the trial. And then, after the trial, when it was determined who was guilty, those who were guilty were left hanging, and those who were guiltless were cut down and given a religious burial. Now that was German justice in Corinthia, in Austria, in the 15th Century. It differs somewhat from the law of Moses, which said that nothing can be done without two or three witnesses. It is interesting how it differs. But I think it is important. The Gentile world has been cut off from God entirely.

But God first spoke to Adam and he didn't follow. God spoke to Abraham and he did. God spoke to his children later and they agreed to follow but didn't follow through, as we say. God had to deal with the children of Israel through the prophets, the kings, and I won't go through that at the moment, because we do not have that kind of time.

The important thing is that there was a Covenant that made that nation in a sense both Church and State. It made them God's select people who should have been an example to the Gentiles and turned out instead, as I say to many of my Jewish friends, "When you should have overcome the world by your conduct you were overcome by the world." And none of them have ever acknowledged other than that I am right. That is the important thing. We must overcome the world and not be overcome by it.

There came a time, after most of the children of Israel had wandered away, and most of the Jews have been lost in identity and in reality. Now, how many descend from the Jews whose identity has been lost we don't know. Probably not as many as descend from those whose identity has been preserved. But in any case, Jews were carried along the way into captivity as well. Some survived; came back in the days of Ezra and ...(tape fades and blanks temporarily)....in his lifetime and in his ministry to speak forth on a subject that Jeremiah addressed.

"Behold, a time will come", said Jeremiah (Jer 31:31) pertaining to the period of the second coming of Christ, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel

and the house of Judah." It will be one in which I will not be writing the laws on two tables of stone. (the basic constitutional framework of all sound law) or in the pages of a book, but I will write it in their hearts and in their minds, as Paul points up in 2 Cor 3. That is, what was once on stone that is hard, and in a book that can perish, shall be written and engraven in the spirit in man by means of the Spirit of God. And that will be in our heart and mind - the figurative expression - the heart is used because it reflects the emotion (you know what happens when you're emotional, your heart reacts). It means in your whole being.

How is God going to do this?

The answer of course is by means of the Holy Spirit.

Now Christ came, as we know, to pay the penalty for sin, to die in our stead so that it was no longer necessary to continue to offer a lamb, or a kid for the Passover sacrifice, but to have a memorial of it of unleavened bread and wine. But something happened before that occurred. Christ proposed terms and conditions of a new arrangement, a new Covenant relationship. And we now turn to His message to the disciples in Matt 5.

"Seeing the multitude He went up into the mountain and when He sat down His disciples came to Him, and He says to them, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Now what is interesting here is that there are a series of blessings which I will not read in detail. I will merely summarize that if you are poor in spirit, if you mourn, when there are just causes to, if you are meek, if you hunger and thirst after righteousness and are merciful, if you are pure in heart and a peacemaker you will all be blessed in inheriting the kingdom of Heaven and being comforted and in inheriting the earth, being filled with righteousness and obtaining mercy and seeing God and being called the Children of God. These are all summarized in those first 9 and 10 verses. (side 2, Tape 1) And also you are told that you may be persecuted for righteousness' sake. Those who are, not for their sins, but for righteousness sake, theirs is the kingdom of heaven, or as Luke would mention, the Kingdom of God.

"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven" - that's where it is, and it will be brought when Christ returns - "for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Most people have their reward in banks or businesses. Now we realize here that there is something very parallel to what went on before. That original covenant arrangement that was made with the children of Israel had blessings, too. Half of the Tribes, six in number, went on one side and gave the blessing

- half gave the cursing. Do you remember that story? Gerezim and Ebal were the two mountains in the region of Samaria where the children of Israel spoke to each other, and each side, in a sense, warned the other.

When God made that first Covenant, it was like a marriage arrangement. And like a marriage arrangement, as we discussed last night, God finally discovered that the children of Israel were committing pornea, the Greek word for all kinds of sexual sins, in this case spiritual as well as sexual, the whole thing that reflected what a wife should not do in a spiritual sense in a relationship that the nation has to God. And God divorced the children of Israel. He put them out for their sins - sent them into captivity. He also had to deal with the nation of Judah and put them out. Some of them repented in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah and agreed to come back in terms of that Covenant. And God accepted them, and in a sense lived with them...because you're not dealing with a woman singularly, you're dealing with a whole nation, you see. So those who had repented and came back and agreed to live in accordance with that Covenant in Ezra/Nehemiah had descendants in the days of Jesus. And by His time, most of them were hypocrites and all the other unfortunate things Jesus says because of their terrible character; and there were some honest people among them; some faithful. The religious leaders, unfortunately, had some of the biggest problems, of which they shouldn't have had, but did.

* It is to these people that Jesus comes to propose a solution to the inadequacy of the terms and conditions of the Old Covenant. * What He is proposing is a New Agreement. Since He proposed the first, He's now proposing the second. And since everyone sinned, and is automatically awarded the death penalty under the Old Covenant, and no one could inherit eternal life, Christ now proposes eternal life - not the land of Canaan, not somewhere between the land of Egypt and the land of Iraq, but He's promising spiritual things that affect the individual internally in terms of being filled with righteousness, the presence of God, the government of God, descent from God. All those things are laid out here in the first few verses of chapter 5 of Matthew.

* So, these are spiritual terms. These are not substitutes for the Ten Commandments. * These are blessings that God asks in terms of your attitude. He hasn't even addressed the issue of the Ten Commandments yet. He says you've got to look at your attitude. That's the initial thing. Your concern for others, whether you're vain and proud or meek, whether you hunger and thirst after righteousness or want to do your own things and spiritualize the law away, if you please; whether you're hard-hearted or merciful, whether you make peace or make silly mistakes that lead to further strife, and whether your conduct is righteous.

Now righteousness is defined in many places, especially in Psalm 119. So we're

blessed if we're persecuted for righteousness sake. that is persecuted for doing the will of God.

* What I want to have us realize here is that Moses gave blessings and cursings, whether in Deuteronomy at the time a covenant was made again with another generation: whether in Leviticus, which was after the Old Covenant, because you know the Old Covenant was really complete with Exodus 23. Most people are not fully aware of all this. *There were laws added after the Covenant. A husband who marries a wife doesn't say that after we're married I can't command you or ask you to do anything more. Marriage is an on-going relationship, a mutual sharing of responsibility. More blessings came, and curses if there was disobedience, and more requests as the children of Israel grew in experience or should have grown in experience. So the Old Covenant really was ratified in Exodus 24, and it is that point at which a book was sealed. And that was renewed - it was renewed in one form or another, or renewed with a totally new covenant as in the book of Deuteronomy, which is in a sense the book of the Law most commonly referred to. And that had many other things not initially given. That was something separate just like the covenant pertaining to the Sabbath is separate in Exodus 31 that Mr. Armstrong has referred to.

So Paul in the Book of Galatians (he means Eph 2:12) says that the Gentiles were without God and without hope in the world, and were doing all kinds of things when they knew not God. But to the children of Israel initially, and the Jews later as the only living descendants who had the sign that they were really God's people, the Sabbath - to them pertained the blessings and the covenants of promise. Plural, covenants, not just one. * * * Now, there isn't a single covenant that God ever made with the children of Israel that is not in fact, in its fundamental characteristics, the letter of the law. In its fundamental characteristics. I know there are high statements like, in the law of Moses, "you shall love your neighbour as yourself, and you shall love God with all your heart, soul, mind and might." That's not in the Ten Commandments, those are in the Law of Moses, the civil code of Moses in that covenant in the book of Deuteronomy, and it's repeated also, part of it, in Leviticus. But that's a broad statement that didn't clarify too much without further clarification which was not then given, except over a period of time through the prophets, who dwelt on the question of attitude.

* But in all these covenants that the children of Israel were asked to agree to, or agreed to voluntarily, even in advance some times of hearing them, there were things which the children of Israel never lived up to, and every one was broken in some way by every body. And that was the problem.

How would you solve it? Jesus died, and when He died the penalty was paid so that all the children of Israel who knew about the covenants and the laws in

them....whether the covenant pertaining to the Sabbath (Ex 31)....whether the covenant made at Sinai....whether the covenant made in the days of Moses or the renewal of any of it or any separate law that was added apart from a covenant. Every one which had been broken in one way or another could be forgiven.

Now, in forgiving, Christ offered Himself, because if we had to pay the penalty, there would just be eternal death, and God didn't propose that solution because He'd proposed that we should inherit eternal life ultimately, but He didn't make that a part of any of these agreements with the children of Israel from Moses' time on until Jesus came. But we all, if we descend from Israel in one way or another have violated that law, or those laws, those covenants, in every generation. Christ came to pay the penalty so that ~~any~~ ^{any} person who descends from Israel who looks at any of the covenants from Exodus in this case through to Deuteronomy and including Deuteronomy, and any renewal that follows later in the history, can say "God, in this book that you gave to your children, Israel, I find that I am condemned by the very nature of the fact that I am flesh, and even in the letter of the law so simple as it is given, I find no strength in me to live holy and in accordance with them, and even if I could all I would have would be material blessings. And I would still die the death that we all do from the days of Adam."

~~I~~ I think we need to get that straight. People who glibly talk of the law of Moses as if it includes everything from Genesis to Deuteronomy or Malachi completely misunderstand the nature of the separate agreements that were made. And if you have not read these - each one is a sermon - Mr. Armstrong's first sermon was on this covenant pertaining to the Sabbath in the book of Exodus as a separate covenant altogether.

Beginning with verse 12 (Ex 31): "The Lord said to Moses, Speak to the children of Israel, Verily my sabbaths you shall keep..." I won't read the rest, that's just one. And then you can read Exodus 24, and you will find several covenants, separate laws, these laws may define right from wrong, they may be reminders of sin to help you know it, that you would be aware of it, something you wear on yourself, or on your garments; they could be laws that say, look, if you sin in ignorance then you do this; if you know that you've sinned then there's the penalty, the law that told the judges what to do if there was outright known sin. These are all different relationships. ~~The law of Moses may be used in different ways.~~ It's used certainly differently in terms of Malachi than it is in Act 14 and 15.

But, we're not making an issue of that. We just want you to know that there were covenants, not just one, and all of them were broken and every single human being who descended from Abraham was found guilty of not having even lived up to the letter of the law in any of them.

Christ then, if we ask Him, volunteers His life to pay the penalty in our stead. We therefore die to ^{the penalty of} the law. All people who descend from Israel through Christ die to the law. That is, they pay the penalty through Christ. Christ is the one who dies in their stead, so that any guilt that comes on any son of Israel can be forgiven for having broken any of the law agreements God ever made, or any of the covenants.

Now what does God propose? Now that you have died to the law, in the sense that you have petitioned God through prayer to accept Christ in your stead, you stand guiltless. You understand? You are now guiltless.

I haven't addressed the Gentiles yet. They aren't - they aren't even around! They don't even have this revelation during this period of time, and they have an awfully poor example from the children of Israel.

Shall we now go back under the terms and conditions of the letter of the law as it was given on two tables of stone at Sinai: in a book from Exodus 21 through 23 inclusive; shall we go under any of these covenants as they were given in the letter of the law? And begin to have those laws as such, and those covenants a part of our national or Church society, where, without the Spirit of God, we say not I'm going to try to do all these things in my strength, like they did in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Well, in a sense, that wouldn't accomplish anything, because the children of Israel would have been right back where they were. They would have been convicted of sin, and even if they had known Christ there would have been no eternal life because unless the Spirit of God comes then what are you going to do? You're just having to struggle, as some people do, and they think they're converted when they're notstruggle in their own strength.

Now let us take the note - take a note of the fact: Christ does not ask us to enter into any of these relationships, and renew any of those letter of the law covenants. Not just one, but any of them. ~~But~~ the interesting thing is God gave those covenants in the first place as the way that would lead to life! And any way the Gentiles had that was different from that would lead to death! But the life that was promised was just, essentially, physical life in this time: because no man, by perfect obedience to any of those covenants, could ever have been made immortal by himself by any of those deeds of righteousness. It has to come as an absolute gift of God.

So, in Matthew 5, what Christ is doing is proposing something. He tells about the spirit of God elsewhere. What He is saying, and I will summarize that, is that if you repent and believe and are baptized (that is you repent of all your sins, you Israelites, that you knew that you committed in terms of any covenant that God ever made) and that you

believe that I am your Lord and Master (and that's what's mostly forgotten) and that you are willing to be baptized which means that you reckon yourself dead, that you're no longer going to do your own thing.

~~XXX~~ Now - Jesus says you can come up out of that water and I will give you my Holy Spirit: and the New Covenant arrangement is not some different kind of law but it is where I am going to put the law - in your hearts and in your mind. And when Paul addresses 2 Cor 3 he says that instead of having it written in tables of stone, and in a book, it's going to be written in us. And in addressing this question Jeremiah says the same thing. "I will write my laws in their hearts and minds, and they shall know me." "Now whoever knows God and keeps not His commandments" you know the rest of the quotation.

So what we discover is something very interesting. Christ is not proposing that we come under the terms and conditions of the letter of the law as written from time to time, but that we now submit to him as Lord and Master and ask Him for His Spirit, and let Him live His life in us so that the laws that were those covenants at that time, which have all been broken by us as human beings, that those laws which then promised physical things and blessings to go with them because God blesses, that those laws could be in us and if we live according to the intent and purpose of those laws and perceive their eternal character, their quality, note our attitude as these laws reflect themselves in our lives, then we can have eternal life. Because Christ is not the minister of sin. Christ does not say that you can continue in sin. He says you must quit sin. Obedience, however, is still insufficient because you have to have the Spirit of God - all obedience is not enough. Having the Spirit of God, Christ asks you to come out of the waters of baptism.

Is that clear? To let Him live His life in you and the life that He lives in you is the life also that He lived when He was on earth in the days of Herod and Herod's sons. That life is the kind of life we should live. Christ set us an example that we should do as He has done. He fulfilled the law, and we fulfil the law because Christ is in us.

Now what He proposes, in other words, is that the terms and conditions of the laws given in these various covenants should now be seen in their full intent and purpose; or as Isaiah 42:21 says, Christ (that is God) will magnify the law and make it honourable; and it is a chapter devoted to the mission of the Messiah and His servants who continue to magnify the law and make it honourable.

The law needed magnification. It needed to be raised to that level that would give it the kind of honour, of spirituality, and not merely of legality. It is a mistake to assume that any of those covenants that I have referred to ever promised eternal life, other than

the one that God would have made with Adam's descendants but never was made because he sinned and that God made with Abraham, which did not involve being perfect. But the children of Israel weren't asked ever to be perfect in any of those other arrangements. But those other arrangements, those laws, those covenants, all had blessings.

Now, what we find is that that is the way a man should go. The whole of Psalm 119 discusses it. It's the way he should go, but it's till initially written in the letter of the law. Now what we must have is a law form that is entirely different, and we'll come to that in a moment.

NEW COMP. Part
We're asked now to come under the terms and conditions of a new kind of arrangement in which we become the salt of the earth (Matt 5:13), in which we become the light of the world by our conduct (vs 14), in which we let our light shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify God in Heaven (vs 16). Now in this connection it may be very easy to say if we have died to all these covenants, that is we've paid the penalty - the question is now should we live like Gentiles and do opposite to the intent of those covenants?

You see, the people who reason say since the covenants that God made did not give eternal life we can now live like the Gentiles. I'm not saying we go back to the letter of the law, covenants, made in those days. Those were separate agreements made through succeeding generations, and they brought death.

X Now the question is, and where people stumble: we do not go back to an arrangement that has the Ten Commandments on tables of stone, an arrangement of the letter of the law in a book, or another book of the law. We now ask God to help us see all that God has spoken, and in the days of Christ I would say from Genesis to 2 Chron as it was organized, or as far as your King James' Version from Genesis to Malachi, we are told that we should live by every word of God: that we examine, and if we find that God says in Exodus 20 that there are ten fundamental approaches to life in different areas and facets of our experience; that we now look at that - not as a covenant from Sinai, but we now look at it in terms of its ultimate intent and purpose.

Now we'll come to see how Jesus dealt with - dealt with this. That we look at all these laws in terms of the intent and purpose, and we seek now, in accordance with the spirit of the law and not the letter of the law. The spirit gives life - the letter kills. We look at all of this in terms of the intent. Why did God say what He did? When He gave it in those few words did He mean something more that we should take note of?

Now, to go back to Matthew 5. Jesus was addressing this question. Do you

remember once about entering into life He said keep the commandments. But you can keep the commandments in the letter of the law and you'll die like the scribes and Pharisees. Something more is necessary and we'll see now how Jesus proposes to have the New Covenant written.

^{NEW} First of all, all of you should know, says Jesus, that is don't think that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am come to fulfil them; that you didn't fulfil, in terms of the law, and of course not every prophecy pertained to people anyway. It pertained sometimes to Christ. Most of the prophecies they fulfilled were breaking the law when the law, the prophecies said that's what they would do.

"Verily I say to you, till heaven and earth pass, not one jot or one tittle" (that is not the smallest letter or little adjunct to the letter in any of the Hebrew manuscripts) "shall in any wise pass from the law till it all be carried out."

????? (unclear).....where excised any portion; we have every portion...???? (unclear)...of course who have attempted to tamper with the scriptures.

He Himself came to fulfil all of that, and nothing that was yet to be fulfilled would in any sense of the word pass - not even one jot nor one tittle of the totality of it before heaven and earth pass - that is, natural law will have to pass away before this revelation of God's mind.

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments" (in any of those covenants) "and shall teach men so 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."

Now, don't assume that because Jesus said this that we now are going back under the terms of a letter of the law covenant. He said I'm asking you not only to follow my example, but to let me live my life in you, and that you don't even break or teach men to break the least of these. But that you learn to do what I say in terms of example, and in terms of instruction. "Whosoever shall teach and do them will be called great."

"For I say unto you," that is the nature of the distinction between the kind of righteousness I expect when you fulfil the law as distinct from the scribes and Pharisees as this: "For I say unto you that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees (who were related to the letter of the law, and tried to keep it in the letter, He said) you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." If we keep any of those laws or covenants in the letter as the scribes and Pharisees did, who

were not concerned as they should have been with mercy and justice and judgement, your righteousness, if it doesn't exceed theirs. will deny you entrance and you can have all the natural righteousness you can imagine but without the Spirit of God that will enable you to ascend above the level of the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, there is no hope of eternal life.

(Tape 2)

Now, before I explain the rest of the chapter, let us take note: How does the Gentile come into this?

Well, the answer is that when a Gentile comes to know that there was an Abraham, there is a Messiah, there is a revelation from God to man, and he looks at all the things that were asked there of the Israelites even in the flesh, and he compares that with what he was doing, then he has to repent of sin of things that he did when he had no knowledge of law. And he's asked to repent of all his past. Sinners of the Gentiles is Paul's definition of culture and life in Africa, the Latin world, all of Asia and most of Europe, and every other area that isn't named in that category. And when they see that the covenants that had any promise were made to Abraham, they are now asked as Gentiles, as some of you, to come into a relationship with the children of Israel - not in terms of agreeing to an Old Covenant, an old renewal of the Covenant, or any of those, in that form in which it is given, but in relationship to Christ as your Lord and Master, who will enable you to do what was said in all those covenants and agreements - not according to the letter of the law but according to the intent and purpose of the law.

In other words, you're asked to be a Jew inwardly as every Jew is asked to be.

Now....Jesus tells us then that this is the Word of God; man shall live by every word of God. It's not enough to look at any one covenant. You must look at them all. It's not enough to look at any one Book. You must look at them all. And we're to learn to live by the intent and purpose of every word of God, and now he defines how we look at law, how we look at the covenants. "You have heard that it was said by the teachers of old, by them of old time, 'Thou shalt not kill'." Now God said from Sinai "Thou shalt not kill" - that's enforceable. "And whosoever shall kill shalt be in danger of the judgement". That is, that there is a likelihood that unless the axe-head flew off the handle you were in danger of the judgement and death. "Now I say to you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgement."

Jesus looked to that commandment and in no sense set it aside. He said I want you to take another look and to look at its intent. It said "You shall not kill". It didn't say "You shall not be angry." That wasn't even mentioned. The judges weren't concerned

with anger; they were concerned with murder. Now Jesus said, "I want you to know that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgement", and He doesn't address the commandment "Thou shalt not kill". He said "You heard that..."

What you're doing is you're taking that and looking at it with new understanding. Now He says, "How....what leads to killing, what leads to murder? Well, mostly, anger. So whoever is angry with his brother without a cause will be in danger of the judgement. "Whoever shall use some derogatory term, untranslated as "Raca", shall be in danger of the council." In other words it's an attitude. "Whosoever shall say Thou Fool shall be in danger of Gehenna fire." Now the Bible uses the word "fool" in appropriate places, and there are the people who call other people "fools" when they ought not. So Jesus says your attitude, the names you call people, your anger toward individuals with respect as to whether there's a cause or not - all those things you're now having to take into consideration. He says you don't....He's not even concerned at this point with arguing the question whether we keep the commandment "Thou shalt kill or not kill." He had already said in His lifetime undoubtedly many times "If you will enter into life keep the commandments." But how do you look at the commandments? You have to do more than the scribes or the Pharisees. You have to look at the command "Thou shalt not kill." Not only shouldn't we murder, but we shouldn't be angry, we shouldn't use derogatory terms that are absolutely inappropriate or treat another man with disrespect and as a fool when he does not deserve it.

Now. In this connection He said if you bring a gift to the altar and there you remember that you have anything against your brother, leave your gift there before the altar and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother and then come and give your gift. Because if you've reconciled yourself to your brother then God can then reconcile Himself to you. Or you can reconcile yourself to Him is the proper term, though God does initiate the main part of the action by bringing you to him in the first place.

"Agree with your adversary quickly while you are in the way with him - lest at any time the adversary deliver you to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the officer and you be cast into prison. I say you won't even come out until you've paid the utmost farthing",, if you know how the judges act in so many lands....through verse 26.

And all of this is an insight into the commandment "Thou shalt not kill." It's an evaluation of the commandment "Thou shalt not kill."

"You have heard it said of them of old," verse 27, "You shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her commits adultery already in his heart." Jesus didn't say "It's alright to murder and alright to

commit adultery, but you just shouldn't look on a woman and you shouldn't hate somebody. He's assuming the Ten Commandments stand as they are, but we see it in a new light, and that our relationship is that we look at all those things that are written there and instead of drawing up a new set of Ten Commandments in the letter of the Greek. He's merely giving certain letters of the Greek here that become words and phrases and clauses and sentences that give you an idea of how to approach the law with new understanding. And He's not drawing up all kinds of terms. He's saying the basic principle in other words is already given to you in the Old Testament. You're asked now to take a new look at it, and to see it. Look at that commandment "Thou shalt not kill." Did you ever realize how much it might reflect on your attitude toward others in terms of coming to an agreement, and to live at peace with one another? It goes down into all the areas of peace in terms of your words, in your deeds, your reconciliations.

Now, with respect to this other: "If your right eye offends you pluck it out and cast it from you." etc... You've read that. Jesus is showing here, and in figurative language, that we have to be willing to deny certain aspects of our human nature. It's not enough to say "I won't hold a prostitute in my arms." "I won't hold another man's wife in my arms." WE are asked to put the very thought of adultery out of our mind and He uses eyes and hands because those are aspects of human bodies that are used in expressing love in marriage or sexual sins outside of marriage. And you must learn to govern even every aspect of your body that can affect your thinking in this connection.

Now. "It has been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a bill of divorcement." (Deut 24) "I say unto you," in addressing the question of divorce, "whosoever shall put away his wife saving for the cause of pornea causes her to commit adultery; whosoever marries her that is divorced commits adultery." That is, if you put a woman away for any sin outside of marriage other than this, there is no justification - and if you remarry you are involved in adultery.

Note: Jesus addresses the commandment "Thou shalt not kill." and the commandment "You shalt not commit adultery," and then He addresses another verse in the Old Testament in Deut, the Book of the Law that pertains to divorce. Three point so far.

Did you note that He has only addressed two of the Ten Commandments? I'll explain why later.

Now He says "You have heard it said of old time you shall not forswear yourself but perform your oaths to the Lord your God." That is take God's name in court, or as they say "Raise your right hand - do you promise to swear," you know, and the rest of it. "I say unto you don't swear at all; neither by heaven, for it's God's throne, nor by

the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem for it's the city of the great King; neither shall you swear by your head, or any other aspect, but just say yes and no whenever you are in a legal situation. Whatever is more than this gets into sin and it is better just to say that you do or do not know. If you take an oath with God's name what's going to happen is that God isn't going to back it up because He is no party to it. Now the time when we shall use God's name is when we shall be God. Born of God in the resurrection. Like Jesus Christ. But in this life we are asked not to do that. Now the children of Israel were permitted to in the flesh. Jesus says take a look at that law and realize the situation - that you don't know far - you don't know nearly as much as you need to. So let's not take God's name and say "I promise to tell the whole truth so help me God," which means let God strike me down if I don't. That's what they're really calling upon when they say an oath in His name.

The answer is, leave God out of it. And Jesus addresses here the question of the courts. And then He says "You have heard it said an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." And He's looking at that part of the law which deals with justice. "I say to you that whosoever shall resist (pardon me) - that you shall resist not evil," (and we'll define that in a moment) but whosoever shall smite you on the right cheek turn to him the other also." Here evil is not talking about sin, it's talking about an evil one - one who smites you in an evil capacity. It's not talking about somebody who wants to break into your house and wants to rape your wife and you happen to be at the door, and he smites you on one cheek and you turn so that he can smite you on the other and then go ahead and rape her. He's saying, next, He's defining the situation.

"And if any man will sue you at the law, and take away your coat, let him have the cloak also. Whosoever shall compel you to go a mile, let him go two." The Romans required them to go that distance to deliver mail or to deliver something else. "Give to him that asks you; from him who would borrow from you turn not away." Jesus also says to live by every word of God and we note that there are some aspects of this that we should take special note of in the Proverbs.

Jesus gave a general statement. There are people who would take away your wife, and take away your children and property. We're talking here of the need of another.

"You have heard that it has been said You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy." Well the hate your enemy was the general interpretation added but that was the intent of the way the law was given. "I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them which despitefully use and persecute you. That you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and

unjust alike.

So here we are told, love your enemies, bless them, do good, pray for them. "For if you love only those who do good to you what reward do you have? The publicans, who are sinners, do the same thing. And if you salute your brethren, do you do more than any others who won't inherit the Kingdom of God?"

That's six points. Let's notice where the points begin: With verse 21, 27, 31, 33, 38 and 43. Those are the six points that Jesus addresses.

The seventh point: "Be you therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." That covers all the rest.

Now you know what it all means. Did you have ears to hear? Did the disciples have ears to hear? Jesus is not here doing anything more than expounding what the law should be that was once in a Book, or Books, and tables of stone. And He's saying I am giving you an approach to all the covenants of promise, but you now look at it not as a carnal minded individual, not as the children of Israel who made those agreements but you look at that everything, if you please, from Genesis to 2 Chron. You take a look at everything and you evaluate it in terms of the intent and purpose.

Now, for clarity sake, he said let me take just two commandments and we'll illustrate the point. "Thou shalt not kill." "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Now He said let me address one other question, the matter of divorce, so you get the point there. And if you're involved in the case of the court, how do you behave in terms of swearing. How do you behave in terms of the justice, if you're asked to be involved in any decision making. How should you look toward one another in let's say retribution. God reserves retribution to Himself. And what about your enemies. Now, how you love your enemies is very important. And of course He said I could go on and on and have a whole new letter of the New Testament but He proposes not to do that. He said, "Let's just summarize everything else - be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." How do we be perfect? Answer is we study the Bible; we look at it carefully; we examine it; we look at the example and the teachings of Moses, and of Prophets; Jesus Himself and the Apostles and anybody else who happens to be included in the pages of the whole Bible now.

Now Jesus puts a responsibility on us as individuals. He says these things, and you think now that the spirit of the law is made very plain.

Now you understand the whole spirit and intent. Let me see if you really do.

"Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause"....Jesus says in the letter of this Greek statement. cause that's what it's written in. "without a cause." Now brethren, what is a just cause? Do you know that He leaves that to you to decide? And you're going to be judged in the judgement for whether there was a just cause or not. There are some people more sensitive than others. What might be a just cause for me would be no excuse for you. Maybe I'm sensitive in a certain area. Now maybe it's the other way around. Some people think I'm hard...ah, what do they call it....that I'm , let's say, tough hided! That I can take barbs and it doesn't matter. Maybe somebody else can't. And I have no excuse to use the same cause that a far more sensitive person might.

Jesus could have had a whole Talmud of the New Testament and for all the questions He would have answered you would have thought of another Talmud to evaluate all the things He forgot to include; because there are so many experiences in life. That's why Jesus never did more than take two of the Ten Commandments that were easiest illustrated by works. When it came to the Sabbath He illustrated it by deeds, because it was most easily illustrated by deeds. And He doesn't address any of the other commandments here because, look, if you know how to handle these two, you'll handle the rest!

And there are some critical other areas like divorce and your relationship to the courts and your enemies so that you know how to conduct yourself as an upright citizen.

Let's then note: Jesus left it for you then to decide what is a just cause. He left it for you to decide when in your mind it is the spirit of adultery. You can look on somebody, and a woman can say "isn't he handsome" and still love her husband, and not want another man. A man can look on a woman and say "aren't your children beautiful" or "your children have a beautiful mother" and it doesn't have to be adultery at all. You are left responsible for determining the nature of your thoughts when you are involved in this. With respect to pornea, you are allowed to make that decision whether that pornea is a just cause for you or not. Because maybe the person who committed pornea did it deliberately. Maybe the person was caught off guard. Maybe the person has not repented. Maybe the person has. You must decide whether you're hard-hearted, whether you're just, whether you're merciful or at what level you will operate and you're going to be judged. It's not the minister's responsibility to make all these decisions any more than Jesus took upon Himself to define what the cause is, in terms of anger; what looking on someone else is - if it isn't lust He leaves that decision to you; and whether or not you will use pornea in the case here, going down the line, I've just dropped because we only have a short time.

It says "Love your enemies, bless them. do good, and pray for them." How long

are you going to pray? How much good are you going to do? What do you mean bless? All that is left to you. Left to me. Did you know that? I don't think most of us really gave as much thought to it. I hope you knew it! Now it doesn't say that to love your enemies you've got to pray 10 hours a day for them. It doesn't say that you must only pray 10 minutes. It is never discussed. It is left to you because it is all summarized in the statement "Be you perfect, as your Father in heaven in perfect."

Now I think that if we ever got this straight in our minds, we could see that Jesus is proposing that we take a look at the Bible; instead of throwing out the Bible and going the way of the Gentiles, which was the way of sin, where they had no covenants or promise at all, and those promises of course were only fleshly, now we're asking that you come as Israelites by descent or as Gentiles by descent and recognize that any penalty whether you sin with the law as an Israelite or sin without the law as a Gentile that you have Christ pay the penalty of that law. And once He's paid the penalty now you're asked to live, listen carefully, to live in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of letter. And yet there are people who can't understand this and have thrown out all the law. That's what the whole world has done. They only keep the laws that they discover they have to live with anyway, to even have a viable society. We're not coming under the terms of an Old Covenant. We're coming under the terms of a New, but what we look at is what Christ asked the children of Israel even originally. And we must remember Jesus said He came to fulfil and we're asked even to do even the least of them. Not according to the letter of the law but according to the spirit and intent. We're not concerned with fringes, which is a reminder of what you ought to be doing; we're concerned with whether we have the Bible telling us; we're concerned with whether we can remember what is here; and whether we have the Spirit of God to remind us of the Law. And if you have to tie a knot on your - a string on your finger - to remind you of something, you can do physical things if you want to like that. You know, that's what the Jews did. They put something on their hand, on their forehead, on their, you know, on the fringes of their garment.

Now Jesus leaves it up to you to judge those things. do you need that kind of thing today or do you have the Spirit of God and can you look here. Are you mature enough to say I can look at the Ten Commandments; that I can look at every other one including the Sabbath and I can see that Jesus set us an example of the way we should live. Jesus at no point told anybody, that unfortunately we're booting out the Sabbath or any of the Holy Days. He set an example how we should live. He said it's lawful to do good on the Sabbath. And He leaves it to your judgement as to how much work is involved in "good." If you have a sick and ailing, unconverted relative at home who can't come here, you may have to spend several hours doing good, that if anybody else were doing that just for money. It's left for you to judge all of these things.

Now the commandment on the Sabbath was, unfortunately, made a kind of test case. Jesus doesn't address it by word, because it already had plenty of words in the Old Testament as to what you should or shouldn't do. He addresses it by deeds. And all the rest of His life, recorded in the Gospel, supplements and compliments what is here.

Now, in addition, He addresses the question about giving alms in chapter 6, first 4 verses, about praying, beginning with verse 5; not laying up all kinds of treasures in verse 19; not getting involved in serving two masters in verse 24. These are broad principles or approaches but "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness...", all His commandments are righteousness, "and all these things will be added to you."

And in chapter 7: Be careful not to get involved in sitting in judgement of other people. He's dealing with a judicial situation. Don't give that which is holy to dogs; ask and seek and knock, verse 7 of chapter 7; enter into the straight gate -verse 13. I don't think we realize how many think they're walking in the middle of the broad way, the broad way leads to death. It's the narrow and straight road that leads to eternal life.

Beware of false prophets verse 15 and we can go on and on.

He taught them in verse 29 as one having authority. And then the rest of His life becomes an epistle in terms of conduct. So now we discover that Christ asks us to come into a relationship with Him that involves a renewal of every one of these covenants in terms of the intent and purpose. And when we see the nature of Christ's work and His sacrifice and the coming of the Spirit of God we won't be arguing over fringes on a garment and we won't be arguing over all kinds of sacrifices which were reminders of sin which were pointing a way, you will be able to ????????? (tape unclear).

????? (tape unclear) that tells us the way we should go. The law involves what we call morals. It involves what we call holy things. There are individuals who have said that if God has to make something holy then it is only temporary. Well, let me tell you. When God makes something holy we're told to keep our feet off of it. There are things that God says makes it very plain, as to what we should do with respect to Sabbath and Holy Days. And there are things that Paul addresses that Christ didn't; that Jeremiah addresses in Jer 7: 21,22 that when He first began to reveal the Holy Days he hadn't put on any Mosaic Laws of sacrifices. Those came when the Tabernacle was erected, you know, and God spoke out of that in the Book of Lev.

I will stop here. We could go on and on because there are many things that we can see now that we ought to be doing. The more I go on I merely multiply words. And what we're interested in is the intent and purpose.

Whoever observes the Sabbath covenant in Exodus 31 according to its intent and purpose receives spiritual and eternal blessings that are summarized in Matthew 5 which pertain to all of those covenants. So that we're looking to the Ten Commandments, the old covenant statements in the Book of the Law as its given, the Sabbath covenant and all the other covenants, and we're asking ourselves, now how can we better understand and do even the least of those things whether the ministry here or in Pasadena or Big Sandy or anywhere ever get around to discussing it. Because you're held accountable for every word of God, and the degree to which you have eye sight and time will determine the degree to which God is going to judge you and we need to know it. Don't use a minister's failure to cover a subject as an excuse for you to forget it. I don't have time to go over all the Bible, and you don't have time to listen to me going over all the Bible.

Our relationship is a new covenant relationship that in fact is a spiritual renewal of all the relationships that God ever established with the children of Israel. We're asked to avoid the sins of the Gentiles which were in principle the violation of many, if not most, of the things that are revealed, in what we call the Old Testament.

Now when we get this straight - we're not looking and saying well look , the Bible says this verse tells me what to do - I'm going to do it because it's just there. You need to understand why it is there. You need to see well look , that's a part of this agreement. Yes, God gave that as a blessing to the children of Israel. He wants me to see it in terms of its intent and purpose, because he proposes that I should examine every word of God. "Man shall live by every word of God," and I shall see whether or not it is a physical thing, if it was just a physical ordinance that was not an evaluation of my conduct but only a reminder.

You know people have stumbled over this matter of fringes. Well look, if I can't discern the difference between fringes in my garments that are commanded in the Old Testament in one place between that and one of the Ten Commandments like that "Thou shalt not kill" all I can say is you must be rather blind. To be unable to discern the difference between what was merely a physical reminder for a nation that did not have the Spirit of God and what God asks us to do, in terms of what our proper conduct should be.

Let us look again at these areas and get our bearings straight and when we look at the example of the life of Christ, realize that he said that "he that does and teaches even the least of these commandments shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. But we look at it in terms of intent and purpose. And I think that this should set the stage and the approach for all our future conduct here or wherever our brethren should be. And let us hope as we close this service, that all those who might have misunderstood or never comprehended it and taken some kind of leap beyond Christ and gotten ahead of Him, may come in time to see themselves and to see Christ as the one who forgives sin and who leads us into righteousness.