

THE COVENANT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS



WRITTEN BY LOUWRENS ERASMUS

© 2015

Hettie Erasmus '07

CONTENTS

A new theology I bring to you.....	3
What does this covenant entail?.....	5
Steps to follow in this covenant.....	7
1. Circumcision.....	8
2. Bread.....	9
3. Slaughter a lamb.....	9
4. Blood of the Lamb.....	10
5. Where was the law?.....	10
6. Who was the covenant applicable to?.....	11
Righteousness.....	11
What happens after I become part of the covenant with the LORD?.....	13
But what does it mean to go into exile, or captivity?.....	15
Consequences of the covenant of righteousness on Israel.....	18
Consequences of the covenant of righteousness on Calvinism.....	22
Consequences of the covenant of righteousness on Dispensationalist doctrine.....	25
Consequences of the covenant of righteousness on the Rapture theory.....	27
Summary.....	32

All quotations from the NASB, emphasis done by the writer.

Website: <http://www.shama.org.za>

Ministry Blog: www.shamaministries.blogspot.com (in Afrikaans)

Personal Blog: <http://louwrense.blogspot.com> (in Afrikaans)

This book is licensed for your own use. If the book assisted you in your relationship with the LORD, please tell your friends about it, or send them to our website where they can look through our other books, videos and articles also.

My life changed dramatically in 1995 after an emergency appendectomy. The first words you hear from the surgeon is that I can actually be thankful that he struggled to get to the appendix and was making space to move the appendix around when he found this tumour in and around my small intestine and immediately knew that it was cancer. So apart from taking out my appendix he also removed about a meter of my small intestine and that was the beginning of my now 30+ struggle with NET cancer. If the tumour is functional, it causes Carcinoid Syndrome, which is just releasing so many different hormones to cause so many different problems. And every person reacts differently which makes diagnosis and treatments extremely difficult. I was also told that if they did not find the tumour I would have probably had less than a year to survive. Not the sort of news that one expects after this "minor" hiccup. So I have been not able to carry on with any full time job as I am in stage four cancer where the next step is death. And that has been the case since 2013.

I do not think that any person is ready to die at age 44. Not that you would have lived at the most for another year. But this episode in my life had the effect that I wanted to be 100% convinced that when I die I would join Jesus, the Father and all the people that are in heaven and to be with them. So after looking at all the books published by so many other people, I decided that the only way I can make sure that I will end up in heaven and spend the eighth day, the day without start or ending, is to go back to our workshop manual, the Bible, and find the answers to the questions I had. Every church grouping has their own sort of way of trying to tell you what they believe in, but none of them answered my questions. Even asking extremely popular Pastors and other clergy, I could not find answers to my questions. So all the books, videos, and articles on my site at www.shama.org.za are the answers I found that helped me in my search for the truth.

So apart from receiving a small pension, we still believe that we will find some people who will donate some money to us to fight my cancer or to give my wife her womanhood back after she had a bilateral mastectomy in her fight against cancer. I must admit that in the past fifteen years we actually had two people donate some money to us even though my books are downloaded at a rate exceeding 200 per month.

So if you want to actually donate some money to us, I have set up a QR code which you can scan with your phone and this will take you to the "buy me a coffee" site, as well as a straight forward link to my donations page at buy me a coffee.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ShamaMinistries>



<https://buymeacoffee.com/louwrens>

A NEW THEOLOGY I BRING TO YOU

A new theology I bring to you. An age-old theology based on a covenant with Abraham, of Jesus and of righteousness. This may sound like a dichotomy, but please bear with me as I will try and explain this dilemma.

I have spent the last twenty or so years trying to find a theology that I believe is the real message of hope from the Bible. After an emergency operation and another follow up operation where cancer was found to be rampant, I had to ensure that I had to take a personal interest in where I will spend eternity. Today 25 years later (2020), I believe I have found most of the answers I had in my own search for the truth that I could underwrite. Most of the answers I had to find myself, and others from various other types of churches. This has taken me from the typical Calvinist churches, to Pentecostal, Charismatic, and even home churches. Some of these churches I attended as a member, some as a visitor, some as a pastor and yet others by visiting their websites. There are a large variety that I have not included in this document as they are simply not well represented in South Africa. An example would be the Southern Baptist group as I know of maybe 4 congregations in South Africa. Some people would keep a tally of how many people they "led" to Christ, how many revival meetings they held or attended, and this would be their pride and joy. It also made for a huge following ensuring financial success. But ask these people some real nitty gritty questions, and they try and shy away from it, or change the subject.

What I found throughout my searches was that people does not understand the Bible, the basis of a covenant, how it is established, and what effect it has on people. When the LORD cut the covenant with Abraham, we find that it entailed the following: *"And He took him outside and said, 'Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.' And He said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness. And He said to him, 'I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it.' And he said, 'O Lord God, how may I know that I shall possess it?' So He said to him, 'Bring Me a three year old heifer, and a three year old female goat, and a three year old ram, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.' Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, and laid each half opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds. And the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away. Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, terror [and] great darkness fell upon him. And [God] said to Abram, 'Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. 'But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve; and afterward they will come out with many possessions. 'And as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. 'Then in the fourth Generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete.' And it came about when the sun had set, that it was very dark, and behold, [there appeared] a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces. On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, 'To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenite and the Kenizzite and the Kadmonite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Rephaim and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Girgashite and the Jebusite.'"* (Gen 15:5-21)

That is how a covenant is made. It is made by cutting a heifer in half symbolizing that if either party does not do what is required as a result of this covenant, the other party can do the same with the offending party. But it is a requirement that you first share communion, as Abram did with Melchizedek. Cutting all covenants requires that blood must flow. That is why when you marry a virgin, as it is supposed to be, blood will flow when she loses her virginity, which is why a marriage is called a covenant and not an agreement. When we understand this, we will never

ever think of divorce, as that is breaking a covenant and is punishable with death. (spiritual). Read 1 Corinthians 7 with that as a background, and then you will understand a covenant between a man and a woman.

I would like to add a very pertinent piece of information at this point in the book, and that is that I spent more than 30 years in the computer industry covering a wide range of functions, from programming to analysis, consulting as well as sales and marketing. This taught me from a young age that I had to find answers for problems mostly on my own, and that I had very little input from other people.

Using this as a background in my searches to find out how I could answer my own question of how I could ensure that I will be in the Heavenly Jerusalem after my own death, what did I find?

I believe in a LORD whose word is consistent throughout the ages. I believe in an age-old covenant with Abraham, the fulfilment in Jesus Christ His son who showed the way to a covenant of righteousness. I would like to give an answer here to a question that I believe most people do not understand. What I found was that there is a huge difference between a testament and a covenant. A testament defines what will happen after the death of the person in question, while a covenant is effective immediately once the people has reached agreement and both people complied with the requirements of the covenant. A testament cannot be changed or annulled, while a covenant can be ended by any one of the parties if the other party should break one or more of the requirements of the covenant. The requirements of a covenant cannot be changed, but you can find yourself excluded from the covenant should you break any of its requirements. And then as Paul says in Romans chapter 6, it is impossible to re-enter into that covenant again.

The LORD took me on a trip through the Old Testament and that is one of the reasons you will find a lot of quotations from the Old Testament throughout this document. But there is a specific reason for this. Most times when Jesus spoke to people, He used parables to detail what His Kingdom looks like and these utterances were recorded for us in the New Testament. However, something that we hardly find mentioned in the Gospels, is what Jesus told His disciples about what Moses and the prophets of old said about Him, especially when they were alone. We find in Luke 24 three different references where Jesus refers to these times. The interesting part about these scriptures, is that Jesus only told them what it meant after His resurrection.

*“Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just exactly as the women also had said; but Him they did not see.” And He said to them, **“O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! “Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?” Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.”**(Luke 24:24-27). “When He had reclined at the table with them, He took the bread and blessed it, and breaking it, He began giving it to them. **Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight. They said to one another, “Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?”** (Luke 24:30-32). “Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, **that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.**” **Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.”** (Luke 24:44-47)*

The final part that I would like to use concerning this, is what Paul wrote to the people of Corinth : *"Moreover, brothers, I would not that you should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized to Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be you idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur you, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. **Now all these things happened to them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come.**" (1Co 10:1-11)*

The second portion comes from 2 Corinthians 3: *"Therefore having such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech, and are not like Moses, who used to put a veil over his face so that the sons of Israel would not look intently at the end of what was fading away. But their minds were hardened; **for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.** Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."* (2Co 3:12-17)

Jesus also told the rich man in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus that the people have Moses and the prophets, and that was all that was required to come to Christ.

So, my argument is that in order build a steadfast doctrine, we will have to start with the Old Covenant as basis, and then only will we have the proper understanding of the New Covenant. So, we cannot build our doctrines around the New Testament as we will be wrong as we will not understand the reason Jesus came to earth, and exactly what he came to do. We can then look at the way the Tabernacle was laid out as it was a replica of what Moses saw when the LORD showed him how to do it. We can then use this information to understand the book of Hebrews and see exactly what Jesus did when He died on the cross. This also spells out the sequence of how we can enter into the presence of the LORD as Jesus gave us the example. But we will still have to decide if that is the road we want to follow, or if we want to stay outside the temple, away from presence of the Father, Jesus Christ His son, and the Holy Spirit.

WHAT DOES THIS COVENANT ENTAIL?

For me, we will have to start with Abraham, the father of all believers. We will also have to remember that Abraham had eight sons in total. The eldest was Ishmael, then Isaac, and then later on six more sons. *"Now Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. She bore to him Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah."* (Gen 25:1-2) The Bible teaches us about the life of the one son He had a special covenant with, Isaac. *"But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this season next year."* (Gen 17:21) The Bible does not teach us anything about the lives of the other sons including Ishmael even though they were sons of Abraham.

Is Israel the only nation of the LORD? No. *"As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And **you will be the father of a multitude of nations.** "No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; **For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.** "I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and **I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you.**"I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout*

*their generations **for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.** "I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." God said further to Abraham, **"Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations."** (Gen 17:4-9)*

Ephesians chapter 2 teaches the following: *"Therefore remember that formerly you, **the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands-- remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. **For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.****" (Eph 2:11-22)*

Now we find what happens before Abram entered the covenant relationship with the LORD as mentioned earlier. In Genesis 14 we learn of someone else. *"And Melchizedek **king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.** He blessed him and said, **"Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand."** He gave him a tenth of all." (Gen 14:18-20). So even before Isaac, there were peoples from other nations that served the LORD. Israel is given to us as an example as confirmed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 10 verse 11. **"Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come."***

Here we find that the first covenant was celebrated with communion between Abraham and Melchizedek, where Melchizedek brought the wine and bread. If we look at the book of Hebrews in chapter 5 from verse 5 we find the following scripture: *"So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, **"YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU"**; just as He says also in another passage, **"YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK."** In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. **Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek"**. (Heb 5:5-10)*

What does this scripture mean? Melchizedek was a priest and was appointed by the LORD himself. He was not a priest appointed because of his heritage and not related to Abraham. Jesus was appointed as a priest according to the order of Melchizedek, in other words, by the Father himself. That is the reason he instituted communion again the night before He was crucified with wine and bread. He had to show the world he was not a priest according to the tradition of the Levites, but appointed again by the Father, and He was also made King of God's people as Melchizedek was also a king.

But what did the covenant with Israel entail? The first point I want to emphasize is that there are always two sides to a covenant. There is a positive side telling us what the benefits are, and a negative side that tells us what the detrimental effects would be if we do not keep the rules governing the covenant. If we look at Deuteronomy chapter 30 we find the rules of both sides of the covenant: *"See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity; in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it."* ***But if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You will not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it. "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving the LORD your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."*** (Deut 30:15-20)

The last part of the passage is extremely important to me. I will have to choose to keep my side of the covenant, and then the LORD will keep His side. The ability to choose between right and wrong was given to us and recorded for us in Genesis 3:22 ***"Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"***. This confirms that because of Adam and Eve's sin, they knew what was right and what was wrong. So, my whole life is about choices I make, some that are beneficial to me and some detrimental.

We also find that David and Jonathan cut a covenant and that is why David looked after Jonathans' son Mephibosheth till his death, as that was part of the covenant. In this covenant they exchanged clothes which is another sign of a covenant. Everything that was his becomes yours and vice versa. That is the reason why when we become part of the covenant with Jesus we receive His everlasting life, and why we know that He paid for our sins on the cross, as we swapped everything when we become partners, covenant partners. That is why still today we find that most marriages the woman would take on her husband's surname to show that she is in a covenant relationship with her husband. Another fact is that the LORD wants a woman to keep her virginity till she gets married as when a woman loses her virginity there is blood flow, which is the part that the heifer placed in the covenant between Abram and the LORD. That is why the LORD asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, as He knew that He would have to give His son and that His blood will flow to "cut" the covenant. So that is why all the other covenants that people claim are promises and not covenants, as they do not follow the rules of a covenant.

STEPS TO FOLLOW IN THIS COVENANT

The second point I want to investigate is the steps required in a covenant relationship. This is clearly described to us during the exodus of Israel from Egypt. Israel had to get to Canaan, the Promised Land, and they had to confirm all the steps of the covenant during this time. That is what Israel had to do physically, and what we will have to do to inherit our Canaan, our destination as God's people. That is what the LORD has in store for us. I will look at what Israel had to do and then explain what we as Christians should do.

But firstly, why did the LORD decide that it was time for Israel to leave Egypt? *"Now it came about in the course of those many days that the king of Egypt died. And the sons of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry for help because of their bondage rose up to God. So God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac,*

and Jacob. God saw the sons of Israel, and God took notice of them." (Exo 2:23-25) *"The LORD said, "I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings. "So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. "Now, behold, the cry of the sons of Israel has come to Me; furthermore, I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians are oppressing them."* (Exo 3:7-9)

The LORD also tells us about the roles of the various people in this scenario. *"And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, and my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them. And Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded them, so did they."* (Exo 7:1-6) So Moses represents the LORD, Aaron the prophet and the Pharaoh the Satan.

With this as background, we can now look at the various steps of the covenant.

1. CIRCUMCISION

- Covenant before Christ: **Circumcision, as they had to have a physical sign that they belonged to the LORD.** : *"The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the Passover: no foreigner is to eat of it; but every man's slave purchased with money, after you have circumcised him, then he may eat of it. "A sojourner or a hired servant shall not eat of it." It is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, nor are you to break any bone of it. "All the congregation of Israel are to celebrate this." But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he shall be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it." The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you."* (Exo 12:43-49) *"And when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD our God hath commanded you? Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand: And the LORD shewed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes: And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he swore unto our fathers."* (Deu 6:20-23)
- Covenant with Christ as the Lamb: **Our hearts will have to be circumcised.** All people are born in Egypt, a life separate from the LORD, a life in bondage to Satan (Pharaoh). Just like Israel cried out to the LORD for mercy and for Him to lead them out of Israel, I will have to call out to the LORD to lead me to His land, Canaan. I will have to change my ways and leave my sinful life behind me. I will have to come to the realisation that I cannot do anything to save myself. I must believe that Jesus did everything required to put me in a right relationship with the LORD. I must realise that I am a sinner and that I will perish if I continue with my life on my own. I must start living a life of love as explained in 1 John 3. I must start showing in my daily life that I am forgiven. *"So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and*

one who does not serve Him.”(Mal 3:18) *“But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the LORD, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people”.* Jer 31:33.

“And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God. “But as for those whose hearts go after their detestable things and abominations, I will bring their conduct down on their heads,” declares the Lord GOD. (Eze 11:19-21)

*“For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; **and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;** having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”(Col 2:9-12)*

What does Paul say about this? *“Or is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since indeed **God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one.** Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law.” (Rom 3:29-31) “But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; **and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God”.** (Rom 2:29)*

2. BREAD

- Covenant before Christ: They had to eat unleavened bread, as yeast has the same effect as sin, it makes you puffed up. Eating unleavened bread indicates that you have received forgiveness of sin. *“Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” (1Co 5:6-8)*
- Covenant with Christ as the Lamb: Jesus is the bread of life. He was sinless as He is also God. *““Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. “This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.”I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; **if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever;** and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.” (John 6:49-51) “While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” (Mat 26:26)*

3. SLAUGHTER A LAMB

- Covenant before Christ: They had to slaughter a lamb as the blood would bring forgiveness of sin. *““Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, ‘On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers’ households, a lamb for each household. ‘Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbour nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons in them; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb. ‘**Your***

lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 'You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight'. (Exo 12:3-6)

- Covenant with Christ as Lamb: ***"And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they *sang a new song, saying, 'Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.' You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth." Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing."*** (Rev 5:6-12) I must come to the place in my life where I need the workings of the cross in order to receive everlasting life. He gave up His life so that we can live. Even in the time of Adam and Eve we find that they could cover their sin by hiding it behind fig leaves, but the LORD showed them that blood must flow in order to forgive. That is why He slaughtered a goat to give them clothes to wear.

4. BLOOD OF THE LAMB

- Covenant before Christ: They had to put some of the blood on the doorposts and lintels. ***"For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments--I am the LORD. 'The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.'"*** (Exo 12:12-13)
- Covenant with Christ as Lamb: We must place ourselves under His blood. ***"And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.'"*** (Mat 26:27-28) This confirms to us that when we share communion death has no hold on me as I have received everlasting life.

5. WHERE WAS THE LAW?

- Covenant before Christ: on stone tablets. Exodus 20. Moses also highlights another aspect: ***"Moreover, the LORD showed great and distressing signs and wonders before our eyes against Egypt, Pharaoh and all his household; He brought us out from there in order to bring us in, to give us the land which He had sworn to our fathers.' 'So the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God for our good always and for our survival, as it is today." It will be righteousness for us if we are careful to observe all this commandment before the LORD our God, just as He commanded us.*** (Deu 6:22-25) **So their righteousness was obtained through keeping of the law.**
- Covenant with Christ as the Lamb: Written on our hearts. ***"And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, 'But this is the covenant which I will make***

with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, **"I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people"** (Jer 31:33) **"Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. "In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, 'The LORD our righteousness.'"** (Jer 23:5-6). Our righteousness will be through Christ alone.

6. WHO WAS THE COVENANT APPLICABLE TO?

- Covenant before Jesus: Both Israel and foreigners. **"The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you."** (Exo 12:49) **"A mixed multitude also went up with them, along with flocks and herds, a very large number of livestock."**(Exo 12:38) This scripture confirms that strangers became part of the covenant nation during the exodus of Egypt. This is a confirmation of what the LORD promised Abraham. **"No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations."** (Gen 17:5) So here we find that even before the exodus and the long trek to Canaan that Israel operated as a Church and not as a nation. That is what they are referred to, as a congregation in Exodus 12 verse 47 above, and not as a nation. One further point to make here is that when we look at the first five books of the Bible, and especially those written by Moses, we find that the word congregation, referring to those people who left Egypt, is used 250 times in these books. This I believe is enough proof that even Moses and the LORD saw them as a Church, a congregation, and not as a nation.

225 verses found, 250 matches

Exodus	48 verses found	49 matches
Leviticus	50 verses found	57 matches
Numbers	120 verses found	134 matches
Deuteronomy	7 verses found	10 matches

If we include the rest of the Old Testament, we find that they are referred to as a congregation 363 times in 330 verses.

- Covenant with Christ as Lamb: There **is no change as it does not need to change**. The rules governing the covenant already made provision for everyone to become part of God's people, His nation. Jesus did not and could not change any provisions as He had to come and take the sins of the world and die for everyone, Jew and gentile, to be saved by His blood only. This covenant is for everyone that believes that Jesus is the Lamb, both Jew and gentile. **"In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will dwell in safety; and this is the name by which she will be called: the LORD is our righteousness."** (Jer 33:16) **We can now live in righteousness, as Jesus is our righteousness.** **"Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."** (Heb 4:16)

RIGHTEOUSNESS

Paul writes the following to the Romans: **"For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes that the man**

who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness. But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: "DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?' (that is, to bring Christ down), or 'WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)." But what does it say? "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART"--that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation". (Rom 10:3-10)

When do I become a member of this covenant? The first time I share communion, when I make that public announcement that I share in His blood and His body. This also means that no uncircumcised person may share in communion, as communion shows that I have submitted myself to the lordship and obedience of the LORD.

What does the New Testament teach about this? When do I become an overcomer, and how do I overcome? *"And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death."* (Rev 12:11)

What are the similarities with the covenant before Christ?

- overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb (Blood on the door posts)
- because of the word of their testimony (Circumcision)
- they did not love their life even when faced with death. We must take up our cross daily and die of our own will. *"And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it."*(Luk 9:23-24)

This then is a quick explanation of the covenant. We all become partakers of this covenant when we find that we need to receive forgiveness of our sins and decide to follow Christ and lay down our lives at the cross. Everyone that knows the Bible must follow Israel and their example of how to get to Canaan, in our case, that which the LORD has prepared for us. When we die, that is all people who became part of the covenant with Abraham; we will learn to know who the LORD really is in order to live forever in the New Jerusalem. *"And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways And that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."* (Isa 2:3, Micah 4:2)

The Holy Spirit is the one who will work in us and in every human being on earth to get us to this point in our lives. *"But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged."* (John 16:7-11)

This clearly shows that all people can choose as the Bible declares that the Holy Spirit came to earth to convict all people of their sin, and then to teach them the way of righteousness. *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, **that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.** "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."* (Joh 3:16-18)

We have to believe that Christ was the perfect offering for sin, and that only through what He did, we can receive forgiveness and everlasting life.

If you decide that this “religion thing” is not for you even though you heard about it, you will not see the thousand-year rule of Christ and will be found guilty at the final judgement. *“Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. **And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.**”* (Rev 20:11-15)

What then is the true meaning of the covenant of righteousness?

I believe the following is an apt definition.

The right to enter into the presence of the LORD, without guilt, condemnation or inferiority. It is to be in the right relationship with Him the Creator. This can only be achieved when we have received an overwhelming gift of righteousness.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I BECOME PART OF THE COVENANT WITH THE LORD?

We must leave Egypt, by getting baptised. That is the place where the might of Satan, in Israel’s time the Pharaoh, is broken in your life and you will live a life totally devoted to the LORD. That is the time when you find out that you longer must make bricks to expand Satan’s empire, but you can now work on expanding the LORD’s empire. That is the time when you find out that sin no longer has a hold on you. *“Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. **Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.** What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?”* (Rom 6:11-16)

This is then what baptism means to us as Christians. The might of Satan is completely destroyed in baptism and I will arise as a new being from the water. So, I change ownership during baptism, as the Satan is drowned in the water and I arise as a follower of the LORD and under His Lordship.

Then, like Israel we must receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. *“Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him; and He took of the Spirit who was upon him and placed Him upon the seventy elders. **And when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did not do it again.** But two men had remained in the camp; the name of one was Eldad and the name of the other Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them (now they were among those who had been registered, but had not gone out to the tent), and they prophesied in the camp. So a young man ran and told Moses and said, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.” Then Joshua the son of Nun, the attendant of Moses from his youth, said, “Moses, my lord, restrain them.” But Moses said to*

him, **"Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD'S people were prophets, that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!"** (Num 11:25-29)

How did Jesus put it? *"Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 'He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'"* **But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive;** for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7:37-39)

Once we reach Sinai, we will spend time to learn the LORD's ways. That is when we will receive the law written on our hearts, where we will learn to distinguish between right and wrong. That is what our local congregation is supposed to teach us, as that is what happened to Israel at Sinai. During this time in the desert the LORD will take us under His wings and provide for us like He did for Israel by providing manna and quails.

As soon as our training is completed, we will be told by the Holy Spirit what our ministry will entail in Canaan. **That is when we move on from the sixth day to the seventh day of the LORD, when we realise that nothing that we can do will save us from damnation. We can only get there through faith in Jesus Christ.** This is what we learn in the book of Hebrews: *"Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. **For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, 'AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST,' although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He has said somewhere concerning the seventh day: 'AND GOD RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORKS'; and again in this passage, 'THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.'**" Therefore, since it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience, He again fixes a certain day, "Today," saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS."* For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience." (Heb 4:1-11)

Remember that we cannot wait to enter the rest of the LORD, as each day is today. We cannot delay this calling in saying we can do it later, as the Bible clearly says that today when you hear My voice. We all have a calling on our lives, and that is to make disciples of people, to show people what true love is. That is the difference between the sixth day and the seventh day. If you do not believe that you have a calling to make disciples of all people, you will die like most of the people in the dessert even though they were baptised as the seventh day is the day of rest, and that is what the LORD wants from us.

Most of the people who enter Canaan will believe that they must serve a king like Israel did. (A king is someone that will rule over you and could be a spiritual father or your church grouping.) The first book of Samuel recorded it as follows: *"But the thing was displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, 'Give us a king to judge us.' And Samuel prayed to the LORD. **The LORD said to Samuel, 'Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them. 'Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day-- in that they have forsaken Me and served other gods--so they are doing to you also. 'Now then, listen to their voice; however, you shall solemnly warn them and tell them of the procedure of the king who will reign over them.'**"* (1Sa 8:6-9)

Most of these people that enter Canaan will die whilst serving this king, while a remnant will be called to go into captivity. *"You shall also say to this people, 'Thus says the LORD, "**Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death.**" He who dwells in this city will die by the sword and by famine and by pestilence; but he who goes out and falls away to the Chaldeans who are besieging you will live, and he will have his own life as booty."* (Jer 21:8-9)

BUT WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO GO INTO EXILE, OR CAPTIVITY?

Let us examine a number of scriptures on this subject. The first scripture is about the physical captivity. During the Biblical times it was custom for the loser of a war to be taken captive as slaves and to be taken to the captor's land. The loser lost all his physical assets and became a slave to his captor. This meant that when someone went into captivity, he had to bring out all of his moveable assets, his furniture, his shoes, his rod, etc., outside of his home and then went into captivity. The only thing he left behind was his house. But what does this mean to us today? We have to lose the war against God in order to become his slave and to be taken away to His Land, His Canaan. I have to place my full trust in Him in order to become completely dependent on Him for all my needs. Just like in the Biblical times He will have to provide for shelter and food, but it means that I must do His work. He already won the war and paid the price for me. He purchased us with His blood, as He overcame death and can now free us from all our sins. I cannot go into exile by myself; I have to surrender to the LORD.

The second scripture which describes our spiritual captivity, comes from Jeremiah 48 verse 11: *"Moab has been at ease since his youth; He has also been undisturbed, like wine on its dregs, And he has not been emptied from vessel to vessel, Nor has he gone into exile. Therefore he retains his flavor, And his aroma has not changed"* What the LORD is trying to tell us is that we cannot continue saying that I am clean, but as soon as someone disturbs me, all the murkiness in my life shows. I must allow the LORD to empty me from vessel to vessel, meaning that He will change my life by getting rid of the lees or dregs in my life. This can only be done after giving my life over to the LORD. If I do not allow Him to empty me from vessel to vessel, then I will take on the taste of the lees or dregs. I must therefore allow Him to separate me from my lees, which is contaminating my life.

This cleansing process is also something that does not happen overnight. I have to allow time in between sessions for the lees to settle at the bottom again before being emptied from vessel to vessel. The LORD explains to them here that they must decide to go into captivity, in order to live. It was not a forceful removal, no; it was a decision that each inhabitant of Jerusalem had to take. Only once they decided to go, could the LORD free them from their lees, that which they depended on.

We found people then that said they will stay put in Jerusalem and that they will not go into captivity, much like people today that says that they are all right, they do not have to be separated from their lees. The answer that the LORD had to them was that should they stay in Jerusalem, they would either die by the sword, or the famine, or the pestilence. There are two questions we can ask to see if we fall into this category. The first question is if you still get taught at your congregation. Can you take a new convert and teach him what the life of a Christian comprises of? Do you know exactly what the doctrine of laying on of hands mean, how it should be used, and if it is still applicable today? This is what happens when we get comfortable as Christians. We stop learning. The moment this happens, we will die of starvation, because if anything in life stops growing, it is either dying or already dead. Have you learned anything this year?

The second question and that is the reason that Jeremiah gave to the people, is that they will die of the pestilence. How do I know if I have the pestilence? As soon as I declare that my group of people, be it a congregation, church group, or followers of a specific doctrine, have eternal life and that all of them will be saved, I have the pestilence. Why? Because we do not like introspection, as it means that I must examine my life and must eyeball and change the areas I find that I am not sure is from the LORD. It also means that I have to look at every principal in my life to ensure that it is from the LORD and can be Biblically explained. How many habits do you have that is not from the LORD? Another symptom of having the pestilence is when I declare that people can continue with their calls for repentance and debating all the issues of the Bible, as they will someday find out that it doesn't matter at all. My life is all right, and we shouldn't exaggerate these issues. This is the group that Jeremiah declares will die of the pestilence.

The third reason why people will die if they stay in Jerusalem is that they will die by the sword. That is the group that decide that they will separate themselves from the others, and thus remove themselves from other Christians and their congregation. They want to go out to the neighbouring areas around Jerusalem, and hence will not have anything to do with those in Jerusalem. Ezekiel also declares in his prophecies the same punishment to those that leave Christianity; that they will die by the sword. We cannot survive without other Christians. It is this group that will get a hold of a passage and build a complete doctrine around it, just to justify them. The Word of God will be the sword that will judge us.

We find that some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem insisted that they wanted to return to Egypt. They took Jeremiah with them to Egypt, but none of these people ever returned to Jerusalem. *""Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Behold, I am going to set My face against you for woe, even to cut off all Judah. **'And I will take away the remnant of Judah who have set their mind on entering the land of Egypt to reside there, and they will all meet their end in the land of Egypt; they will fall by the sword and meet their end by famine. Both small and great will die by the sword and famine; and they will become a curse, an object of horror, an imprecation and a reproach. 'And I will punish those who live in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, with the sword, with famine and with pestilence. 'So there will be no refugees or survivors for the remnant of Judah who have entered the land of Egypt to reside there and then to return to the land of Judah, to which they are longing to return and live; for none will return except a few refugees.'"*** (Jer 44:11-14) The few refugees that did return to Jerusalem were the family members of Jeremiah and Baruch who were taken to Babylon when Nebuchadnezzar took over Egypt, as they were forcefully taken to Egypt. **This means I cannot return to my previous life in Egypt, as I will then face the second death we read of in Revelation.** This is what we read in the book of Hebrews about the same subject: *"For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame."* (Heb 6:4-6)

The reason for this is that the LORD wants us to come out from under the ruling of our earthly king, be it our local congregation or even our church grouping and put our trust in Him alone. We have to separate ourselves from the idea that our membership of our congregation ensures our everlasting life. We have to declare that we belong to the Church that the LORD is building. You see He is not preparing many brides, no He is preparing His bride, and She has to be perfect and without blemish. This does not mean that you have to end your membership of your congregation and now become a "churchless member" of the Church of Jesus Christ. No, I have to put my trust in Jesus alone. This will invariably mean that we would be willing to take a stand for God, even like Daniel did when told that he could not pray to the LORD.

This group of believers not only asks for revival, but for true reformation. What is the difference? To me revival means that I have to find the method that brings life to something that was alive before and proclaim this. If there was life before, this message will then bring this person back to life again. Reformation on the other hand means that I will rid myself of everything that is not from the LORD and start anew. That is the reason the LORD uses the term of captivity or exile, as one has to be separated from that which is not from Him.

How do I know this is true? The same question is asked to the believers in Revelation. *“And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”* (Revelation 18:4).

This subject tells us that if we do not go into captivity, we are busy with religion, and religion is the same sin as adultery, leaving us as members of the whore of Revelation 18. I know I want to be, and I am sure that you want to be part of the Bride of Christ, and hence will go into captivity.

As soon as these people have served their time in captivity they will return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple and Jerusalem, the real church.

This then the short explanation of the **everlasting covenant, and what it means to us as Christians.**

What are the consequences of this covenant on our common theological viewpoints?

CONSEQUENCES OF THE COVENANT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS ON ISRAEL

What about Israel as nation and country today? They also have to become partakers of the covenant with Jesus. As we have noted earlier there is one law for Jew and Gentile. The nation of Israel and the country of Israel have **NOTHING** in common with the Israel of the Bible. How did Jesus put them? *"Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who PLANTED A VINEYARD AND PUT A WALL AROUND IT AND DUG A WINE PRESS IN IT, AND BUILT A TOWER, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey. When the harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce. The vine-growers took his slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third. Again he sent another group of slaves larger than the first; and they did the same thing to them. But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' They took him, and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?" They said to Him, "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons." Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures, 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES'?" Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it. And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust. When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them. When they sought to seize Him, they feared the people, because they considered Him to be a prophet." (Mat 21:33-46)*

Luke documented another saying of Jesus: *"When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, 'If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.'" (Luke 19:41-44)*

This shows us that Israel and its inhabitants and all people who practice the Jewish faith worldwide, must become partakers of the covenant with Jesus to receive everlasting life. Jesus is the only way, the life, He alone. That was the message that Paul, Barnabas and all the other Apostles preached. They did not have one message for the Jews and a different message for the gentiles.

In fact, when we look at the book of Acts, we find that both Paul and Barnabas went to the Jewish synagogue every time they arrived in a city. Many people believe that they only preached to the gentiles, but the book of Acts gives us a different story.

- Acts 13:14 *"But going on from Perga, they arrived at Pisidian Antioch, and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down."*
- Acts 13:42 *"As Paul and Barnabas were going out, the people kept begging that these things might be spoken to them the next Sabbath. Acts 13:43 Now when the meeting of the synagogue had broken up, many of the Jews and of the God-fearing proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, were urging them to continue in the grace of God."*

- Acts 14:1 *"In Iconium they entered the synagogue of the Jews together, and spoke in such a manner that a large number of people believed, both of Jews and of Greeks."*
- Act 17:1 *"Now when they had travelled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. Acts 17:2 And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, Acts 17:3 explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ.""*
- Acts 17:10 *"The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews."*
- Acts 17:16 *"Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols. Acts 17:17 So he was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and in the market place every day with those who happened to be present."*
- Acts 18:1 *"After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth Acts 18:4 And he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks."*
- Act 18:19 *"They came to Ephesus, and he left them there. Now he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews."*
- Act 11:25 *"And he left for Tarsus to look for Saul; Act 11:26 and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch."*

So, if we say that Paul knew a mystery and that mystery is that there is a difference between the Church (Christians as from the passage above) and the Jews and use that as an argument why there would be a rapture of the saints in order for Christ to come back to earth and become the physical king of the Jews, his ministry was in vain as he always went to the Jewish synagogues to convince the Jews and others that Jesus is the Christ. They were already known as Christians and the church.

The rejection of Israel is also seen in the following verses:

- Jer 6:30 ***"Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the LORD hath rejected them."***
- Jer 7:15 *"And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim."*
- Jer 12:7 *"I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage; **I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies."***
- Jer 15:6 *"Thou hast forsaken me, saith the LORD, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, **and destroy thee;** I am weary with repenting."*
- Jer 30:12 *"For thus saith the LORD, **Thy bruise is incurable, and thy wound is grievous."***
- Jer 31: 36-37 *"If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, **then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.** Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, **I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD."***
- Ps 53:6 *"There were they in great fear, where no fear was: for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee: thou hast put them to shame, **because God hath despised them."***
- Ps 78: 58-59 *"For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images. When God heard this, he was wroth, **and greatly abhorred Israel:"***
- 2 Kings 17:19-20 *"Also Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. **And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel,** and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, **until he had cast them out of his sight."***

- 2 Kings 23:27 *"And the LORD said, **I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there.**"*
- 2Ch 7:19-20 *"But if ye turn away, and forsake my statutes and my commandments, which I have set before you, **and shall go and serve other gods**, and worship them; Then will I pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have given them; and this house, which I have sanctified for my name, **will I cast out of my sight, and will make it to be a proverb and a byword among all nations.**"*
- Hos 4:6 *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, **I will also reject thee**, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will **also forget thy children.**"*
- Hos 9:17 *"**My God will cast them away**, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations."*
- 1 Th 2: 14-16 *"For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: **for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.**"*

We also find that people are saying that the Jews must be saved first, but do not even know what the Jews are being taught by their priests and the Talmud today. But this is a small section about what they are being taught today:

- *"* "Yashu' (derogatory for 'Jesus') is in Hell being boiled in hot excrement." (Gittin 57a)*
- *['Yashu' is an acronym for the Jewish curse, 'May his (Jesus) name be wiped out forevermore.']*
- *Yashu (Jesus) was sexually immoral and worshipped a brick." (Sanhedrin 107b)*
- *"Yashu (Jesus) was cut off from the Jewish people for his wickedness and refused to repent." (Sotah 47a)*
- *"Miriam the hairdresser had sex with many men." (Shabbath 104b, Hebrew Edition only)*
- *"She who was the descendant of princes and governors (the virgin Mary) played the harlot with carpenters." (Sanhedrin 106a)*
- *"Christians who reject the Talmud will go to hell and be punished there for all generations." (Rosh Hashanah 17a)"*

Just to explain the grafting in process, I would like to explain the process here.

I would like to use the example of Paul in Romans to describe how and where we fit in. *"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. **For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?** For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. **Well; because of unbelief***

they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.” (Rom 11:11-20)

I believe all of us know how to graft a new growth unto an older or prepared rootstock. When we buy the end product, it has the flowers or fruit that we want, and not that of the rootstock. The new growth depends on the rootstock for its nutrients and will die without it. And that is how we as Christians became children of the LORD. He removed the original growth, Israel, and grafted us into Him as the rootstock. We also know that when you allow the original plant to start bringing forth its original branches, that the plant grafted in will die. And that is what will happen to us as Church if we start following the Jewish root doctrines. We, as Church, will die. That is why there will be no rapture or anything connected to the Jews of today, as the moment we believe that they must be grafted back using a different way as what we have to follow, we as Church will die. Run from anyone teaching these false doctrines, or as the Bible calls them, the antichrist teachings. The Jews must follow the same road as us to be grafted back into the rootstock. Unfortunately, nearly 80% of Americans believe this lie of the rapture, so it really makes me sick to the core when they do not see their teachings as that of the antichrist.

These were also the same Jews, the unbelieving ones, that left Paul for dead after stoning him, and which we read of in the Acts of Barnabas: *“And having bound him to take him away to the governor, and a pious Jebusite, a kinsman of Nero, having count to Cyprus, the Jews, learning this, took Barnabas by night, and bound him with a rope by the neck; and having dragged him to the hippodrome from the synagogue, and having gone out of the city, standing round him, they burned him with fire, so that even his bones became dust.”* To now try and convince people that Christ has to come to earth again to save these people, who have exactly the same status as any other non-believer, is utter rubbish and insane and in direct conflict with events in, and the message of, the Bible.

Then what about Calvin and his doctrine of election? My own viewpoint is that it finds acceptance by people who like philosophy. They can think and write about subjects from all sides and enjoy coming to conclusions that ask questions from their readers. These results most of the time cannot be substantiated by the real message of the Bible. And then, like so many other people before and after him, they do not want to look at Israel as an example for us to follow, as they are worried that the LORD will reject them as He did Israel. I remember a service I attended years ago where the preacher used Israel as an example in his sermon, and he was immediately confronted by the elders following his message and nearly got shunned by them for using Israel as a parallel in his sermon. So, Calvin built a philosophy and doctrine only on the New Testament disregarding the covenant, or only taking parts of the covenant that will enhance his doctrine. But that is what happens when you build your doctrine only on selected parts of the Bible, just like the Catholics, Luther and his saying, and a bunch of other groupings. Remember that Luther and Calvin both came from the Roman Catholic Church and only modified their doctrine where they disagreed with the official standpoint. The fact that the apostles and disciples only had the Old Testament to use and to preach the gospel of Jesus is apparently not important. Acts chapter 17 teaches us the following: *"The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, **examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.** Therefore many of them believed, along with a number of prominent Greek women and men."* (Act 17:10-12) I assume the only scriptures they could check were Moses and the prophets. Something else that negates Calvin as someone to follow comes from Hebrews: *"Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith."* Calvin's own testimony is as follows: *"Honour, glory, and riches shall be the reward of your pains; but above all, do not fail to rid the country of those scoundrels, who stir up the people to revolt against us. **Such monsters should be exterminated, as I have exterminated Michael Servetus the Spaniard.**"* Calvin disqualifies himself by his own admission in not only that he took someone else's life but encourages his followers to follow him and commit murder and is certainly not something worth following. *"These things I have spoken to you so that you may be kept from stumbling. They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God. These things they will do because they have not known the Father or Me. But these things I have spoken to you, so that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them. These things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you"*. (Joh 16:1-4)

They also do not believe that you must first come to the realisation of the need for a redeemer, as you are one of the elected people. That means that you do not have to come to the cross and accept what Jesus did for you to establish the covenant of righteousness, as you are fine just as you are. With the exodus of Israel from Egypt and their rebellion over the Promised Land, the LORD did not punish the children under the age of twenty years old. No, the Bible declares it is follows: Num 14:29 ***"your corpses will fall in this wilderness, even all your numbered men, according to your complete number from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against Me."*** Thus, the children first had to reach the age of 21 before they were treated as adults. Only then can they decide that they need to leave Egypt and take responsibility for their own lives. Only then can they be baptised. Trying to baptise infants has absolutely no effect on their lives. That is one of the reasons Calvinists give in to temptation more quickly than those who were not baptised as babies, as they still find themselves under the jurisdiction of the Pharaoh. They are still in Egypt and have to make bricks to expand his kingdom. They are members of the covenant, and that is one reason they will only learn after they die who the LORD really is. *"And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to*

Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them. **If the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them; it will be the plague with which the LORD smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.**" (Zec 14:17-19) What is so special about the Feast of Booths? "It had to remind them of the time they left Egypt. **"Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'On the fifteenth of this seventh month is the Feast of Booths for seven days to the LORD. 'On the first day is a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work of any kind. 'For seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation and present an offering by fire to the LORD; it is an assembly. You shall do no laborious work. 'These are the appointed times of the LORD which you shall proclaim as holy convocations, to present offerings by fire to the LORD--burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings, each day's matter on its own day-- besides those of the sabbaths of the LORD, and besides your gifts and besides all your votive and freewill offerings, which you give to the LORD. 'On exactly the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the LORD for seven days, with a rest on the first day and a rest on the eighth day. 'Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. 'You shall thus celebrate it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh month. 'You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths, so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.'"** (Lev 23:34-43)

Children that have not come of age yet is the responsibility of the father and he has to take responsibility for them and what they do. *"Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave although he is owner of everything, but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by the father."* (Gal 4:1-2)

A further major problem I have with Calvin and his teachings is his limited atonement as Jesus only came for the elect. John recorded Jesus as saying: ***"And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me;"*** (John 16:8-9) So no person in the world will be able to say that they did know about sin and righteousness, as that is the work of the Holy Spirit. So that in a nutshell negates the limited atonement of his teaching.

I do not know how the Calvinists interpret the following passages: *"Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live? But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die. Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal? When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die."* (Eze 18:23-28)

And then the following passages Also from Ezekiel: *"When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the*

wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.” (Eze 33:8-9) This is especially necessary in what Paul describes in 11 Cor. 10 “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” (1Co 10:11)

CONSEQUENCES OF THE COVENANT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS ON DISPENSATIONALIST DOCTRINE

They are trying so hard to make the Bible fit their doctrine that they sometimes say and do hilarious things, and off course also rejecting what Jesus himself said. On the cross Jesus said ***"It is finished"***. But apparently not so. Jesus has to return to earth and restore the physical nation of Israel, even though He told them that He will take away their heirloom, which I quoted earlier. ***"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it."*** And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust." ***When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them."*** This parable does not have an additional section telling the Jews that they will be forgiven and that the LORD will change his mind and appoint them again as heirlooms of the vineyard. If it was to happen surely Jesus would have told them so as He is God and knows everything.

That is exactly what Israel was expecting in the days of Jesus. They wanted a physical kingdom. Now these people are doing exactly the same, expecting a physical kingdom on earth.

I want to quote part of the doctrine of a local church that believes this doctrine. *"Just because Daniel does not say that 2000 years will pass between two verses in Chapter 9, and that Zechariah 9 also not specify 2000 years between verses 9 and 10, and that Micah also does not mention the 2000 year gap in chapter 5 between verses 1 and 3, does not mean that these prophecies have to be continuous and have to be fulfilled during the same time. THE KEY IS THE MYSTERY."* Their attitude is that those who oppose this view, does not belong to the LORD as they do not understand the mystery. The fact that Paul spells out this mystery in many of his letters to the different congregations, does not carry any weight. *"Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."*(Col 1:25-27)

Another belief is that they do not believe that Jesus came to do away with the difference between Israel and the Church. **But the covenant shows clearly that all people who become partakers of this covenant will be His people. Paul declares that it is the mystery which the prophets did not know of, as quoted above.** If these people would only accept the Bible alone as their teachings, and not those of people. The covenant teaches us that there is no difference. These people make the same mistake as the Muslims, the Mormons and so many other people in clinging to the doctrines of man. I actually want to use the quotation I used earlier just to cement this fact. Ephesians chapter 2 teaches the following: ***"Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands-- remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the***

saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. (Eph 2:11-22)

They also teach that there will be a secret rapture of the saints when Jesus returns the first time. (According to them Jesus will return more than once, sort of like a shuttle service.) They say it will be a secret, yet they use a verse that says the opposite. ***“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.”*** (1Th 4:16-17) Now I am just wondering how nobody will know about it if it says the opposite.

“And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.” Apparently, this verse is also not applicable to them, as they can even pray a short sinner’s prayer on behalf of someone and then that person is saved. The fact that only the LORD can add people to His nation does not worry them at all. *“Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh. But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, **but a new creation. And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.**”* (Gal 6:12-16) (See circumcision earlier in this document) The last part of the passage is very interesting. It is not the God of Israel, but the Israel of God, **so not the physical Israel, but the new Israel; those who choose to serve Him and become part of the covenant.**

CONSEQUENCES OF THE COVENANT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS ON THE RAPTURE THEORY

We find these people in all sorts of belief systems. They span the whole spectrum from starting at the Dispensationalists, Calvinists, Pentecostal, Israel vision, British Jews, Charismatic's and a whole bunch of different people. Their prime scripture is Daniel's prophesy in chapter 9 concerning the seventy weeks and that it will only be completed during and after the seven-year tribulation. According to them we as 'non-Jews', or Christians, will be in heaven, whilst Christ will rule on earth during the millennial age. According to them, there are still things for Christ to do on earth **and that He lied on the cross when He said:** *"Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, **"It is finished!"** And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit."* (Joh 19:30)

This doctrine is based on the fact that we are living in a dispensation of grace, that Jesus would come to rapture the Church before, during or after the tribulation, that the Jews would be restored to their former state, and that they will be given a second chance to come to Jesus, and that Jesus would then judge the people of the earth. The advocates of this doctrine maintain that there is a difference between Israel and the Church, and then refer to a mystery that Paul says was revealed to him. These advocates then claim that only certain people have the ability to interpret certain sections of scriptures, and that Paul's mystery is one of these scriptures as it refers to the difference between the Church and Israel and the way the LORD will deal with them. They use the prophecy of Daniel regarding the seventy weeks as their main argument that the last week of this prophecy has not yet been fulfilled, and that this is part of the mystery of what Paul refers to. The fact that both Jesus and Paul tell us what the mystery is, and that the gospel will be preached all over the world, is apparently not the mystery. *"Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, **the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**"* (Col 1:25-27)

However, we have already concluded that there is no difference between Israel and the Church. How do we then interpret Daniels prophecy, and has the seventieth week been fulfilled? I know that people have written many books about the rapture and its effect, and that many people have used it as scripts for their doctorate degrees, but is this doctrine correct?

The rapture is one of those doctrines that have a very calming effect on Christians, as it gives us a sense of relief that we do not have to worry about all these nasty things that will happen during the tribulation. The tribulation is only for Israel and the unbelievers, or that is what we are taught. If we however see ourselves as the new Israel, we end up with a problem in that we have to face the tribulation, and then things get slightly out of hand.

Many people have written books concerning Daniel's seventy weeks, and how it must be interpreted. The first 69 weeks we find that most people agree with in that it gives us the time from the return of Israel from exile, up to the coming of Jesus. **And then we also have the fiction writers with their Left Behind series that many people take as the absolute truth, even though the writers themselves declare that their books are fiction. For this they have even received prizes as the best Christian fiction writers.**

The last week is the week that all the fuss is about. This fuss only started about 160 years ago when a certain Darby gave a different meaning to this, and now we find that most people who are not strong in their faith, are running after him. Before Darby there was no doctrine about the rapture or someone claiming that there is a difference between the Church and the latter-

day Jews. This doctrine has the effect that people are spending lots of money to go to Israel and to celebrate Shabbat, to fight for Israel's right to the temple mount, and to try and establish new sacrifices to the LORD, as Jesus did not do away with animal sacrifices. The fact that most of these Jews came from Europe are also disputed by these people. The majority of Ashkenazi Jews are descended from prehistoric European women and are the people that occupy Israel and are known as Jews today. They have very little in common with the Jews in the time of Jesus. They are the people that Hitler murdered, and they were also the theme for Luther's book, "On the Jews and their lies". In this book he urged the Germans to burn their synagogues and a host of things that I will not use in this document. This will also never be used in any sermon by any preacher, as it promotes anti-Semitism.

What a great many people do not know is that the reason the Christian Zionists believe that we now live in a period of grace that fits in between week 69 and 70 of Daniel, is that both Jesus Christ and God the Father did not know that the Jews would reject Jesus. There are so many writings that hold on to this belief. I must admit that it is extremely difficult to find a single definition of why there will be a rapture as almost every teacher of this theory has his own interpretation.

But what does the seventieth week of Daniel actually proclaim *"And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."* (Dan 9:27) Daniel, in this prophecy, says that in the last week, which is actually seven years, a new covenant will come in effect. When we examine our Lord Jesus Christ's ministry on earth, we find that He spent three and a half years trying to convince the Jews that He was the Christ, and that they had to change their ways and accept Him as the Christ. After this period, and as Daniel puts it, in the middle of the week, Jesus was crucified. We know that Jesus was the complete and perfect sacrifice and accepted by the Father, which is why the daily sacrifice ceased in the middle of the week, as it was no longer required.

Let us examine this scripture chronologically as Daniel wrote it. The covenant that Jesus entered into with the God the Father is the strong covenant that Daniel prophesied about, as it is the covenant between God the father and His Son, Jesus Christ. This covenant was established on our behalf. We also know that Jesus Himself said that He came to fulfil and not to establish something new. That is why He was sacrificed, and that is the reason why this is the strongest covenant that can be entered into. ***"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."*** (Mat 5:17) This confirms then that the covenant Abraham entered into was fulfilled, which required all male persons to be circumcised, and that only those that were circumcised were treated as children of Abraham. When the LORD asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac his son, the LORD declared that He would sacrifice His Son, as one rule applied to both parties of the covenant. By asking Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, the LORD declared that He would do the same. This first covenant had to be confirmed by continually bringing sacrifices, and by circumcising all males. In addition to this the Israelites had to bring their tithes to the Levites for their service at the temple, and all first born had to be sacrificed to the LORD. The circumcision and sacrifice of the first-born was required as the LORD cursed the entire first born in Egypt as part of the plagues in Egypt. That is another reason Jesus had to die, as he had to nullify that curse.

The following is a short form summary of the vision Daniel received and the interpretation he received from Gabriel.

"At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision." Daniel 9:23

1 - *"Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city"* (also see Lev 25:9 *"You are also to count off seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years"*) So the seventy weeks are actually 490 years.

2 - *"to finish the transgression,"* That during this last week the ungodliness of the LORD's nation will end after they received the gift of the Holy Spirit, where the heart of stone is replaced by a heart of flesh. We will be purchased by Jesus as He died for our transgressions.

3 - *"to make an end of sin,"* That an end will be made to the time of the law, as Jesus will be the complete sacrifice for sin and the law will be abolished as measurement of our salvation.

4 - *"make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness,"* That was the prime reason for Jesus to come to earth as He would bring everlasting righteousness to those who believe that He was the Messiah, and the righteousness of fulfilling the law was done away with. So, we are no longer seen as sinners but are people washed by the blood of Jesus.

5 - *"to seal up vision and prophecy"* To bring an end to all the prophecies surrounding the first coming of the LORD Jesus Christ.

6 - *"and to anoint the most holy".* Jesus also had to be anointed as King, Redeemer, and Prophet.

This is what was spoken of by Gabriel to Daniel. He then goes further and explains in detail what was going to happen during this 490 years or 70 weeks.

- *"So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks".* So 49 years after their return from exile the temple will be rebuilt.
- *"and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress."* So from the time of rebuilding the temple to the start of the ministry of Jesus would be 434 years. (62x7)
- Dan 9:26 *"Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off, (so during the 70th week) and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined."* So Gabriel explains to Daniel that Jesus will be cut off or killed with no benefit for Him, and then continues with what will happen to Jerusalem. The end of Jerusalem will come by the people of a prince to come, in other words someone who was not a prince in the days of Daniel, exactly as it happened when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. Gabriel says that it will be by a flood, but we find that in Daniel 11 verses 22, 26 and 40 soldiers are said to come as a flood. The last part Gabriel says that right up to the end of time there will be wars and desolations in, around and over the jurisdiction of Jerusalem, exactly as is still the case today.
- Dan 9:27 *"And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."* Here we learn that a new covenant will be formed during the last week of the prophecy. When we look at the ministry of Jesus, we find that He went through the land of Israel for three and a half years doing wonders and preaching to the people that He is the Christ. So as Daniel puts it, in the middle of the week, thus three and a half years into the ministry of Jesus, He

was crucified. We know that His sacrifice was acceptable to the Father, and that is why the sacrifices would stop, because it was no longer required, as Jesus was accepted as the complete sacrifice. That was also the start of the new covenant, or the covenant of righteousness, and was the firm covenant that Daniel wrote about. The covenant was made between God the Father and Jesus Christ His son, who took our place for our sins. Jesus declared this in Matthew 5:17: *"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill."* This shows that Jesus did away with the laws governing the old covenant. When God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son, He also knew that He had to give His son as a sacrifice. And that is what Jesus came to do. He also did away with the circumcision and did away with the law surrounding the first born. We also do not need any Levites as a go between us and the Lord as we now appear before the Father covered by the blood of Jesus.

Many of the advocates of the rapture says that the daily sacrifice only ended when Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D., and that we cannot use this as an indicator. What they forget however, is that if we believe that Jesus was the Christ, no sacrifices were required after His death. He was the perfect sacrifice required by the Law of Moses. So no sacrifices were required anymore. So, if they want to use this as an excuse, then they declare that Jesus was not the Christ as the LORD still accepted the sacrifices done in the temple by the Levites.

We find another reason why Jesus could be sacrificed and why He was acceptable to the LORD, and why the Father did not look favourably on the offer of the High Priest. The following events took place the day Jesus was brought before the High Priest: *"And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy."* (Mat 26:61-65) The clothing of the High priest had to be made of a single cloth, without any seams. *"These are the garments that they shall make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a coat of checker work, a turban, and a sash. They shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons to serve me as priests. They shall receive gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine twined linen. And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and of fine twined linen, skillfully worked. It shall have two shoulder pieces attached to its two edges, so that it may be joined together. And the skillfully woven band on it shall be made like it **and be of one piece with it**, of gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine twined linen."* Ex 28:4-8. By tearing his clothing, the High Priest could not enter into the temple the next day for the sacrifice. The only way he could do it, was by sewing it together, but then it would have a seam, and would thus be rejected by the Father, as it did not comply with the Law of Moses. That is why the sacrifice Jesus brought was accepted, and the reason why His clothes were not torn, but the lot cast over it. *"And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take."* (Mar 15:24) Here we see that His clothes were not torn but given as complete clothing which complied with the Law of Moses.

We must remember that Jesus was crucified at the time of the morning sacrifice, and that He died six hours later. He was crucified outside the town, as He also had to complete that sacrifice that had to be slain outside the town. *"We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him*

without the camp, bearing his reproach.” (Heb 13:10-13) As mentioned earlier He also did not bring His sacrifice in the earthly tabernacle, but in the heavenly one: “It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” (Heb 9:23-28)

When the veil was rent in the temple, Jesus was accepted in the Heavenly tabernacle. That was also the end of the first half of the last week of Daniels’ prophecy.

The second half of the week was the time the apostles spent in Jerusalem to convince the Jews that Jesus was the Christ, and ended with the vision of Peter: *“On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.” (Act 10:9-15)* This was also about the same time that Stephen was killed by the Jews. This was the end of the last half of the week as seen by Daniel, and at this time we as believers became part of the LORDS’ nation. The one thing we have to remember is that the Jews expected a physical king to rule over them again like in the days of Saul and David, but failed to realise that these kings only ruled over them because they rejected the LORD. *“And the LORD said to Samuel, Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.” (1Sa 8:7)*

Daniel also declares that at the end of the week abominations will start and it will continue until the end of time. Because of this, Satan is now trying to destroy all flesh, and as Daniel says, it will last till the end of the earth.

I mentioned earlier that the advocates of the rapture also refer to the mystery of Paul. These words are normally used completely out of context in order for them to deceive the people and to convince people of their doctrine.

To conclude the last week then; it started with the ministry of Jesus to the Jews and ended when the message of the gospel came to us as gentiles. From this we can also conclude that there will not be a separate rapture of the Church, but that we as gentiles are one with all believers. Jesus himself said that we must hold on to our faith till the end, and not to think that we will not go through the tribulation. Even in Paul’s time we had people that did not understand the message of the gospel: *“As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, **Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do. Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.”** (1Ti 1:3-7)*

So, in summary, the covenant that Jesus made on the cross was the strong covenant of Daniel, as it removed the curse of the first born, and fulfilled all the sacrifices the Levites and high priest had to bring. Jesus also paid for all our sins for us to appear in righteousness before the Father without blemish or sin. So He is our righteousness, and now we can do what the writer of Hebrews says: *"Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."* (Heb 4:16) This we can only do because of what Jesus did for us.

One major problem I also have with the doctrine of the rapture and those who believe this, is that they form part of the antichrist. The apostle John gives us a very clear definition of this: "2Jn 1:7 ***For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.***" The Jews do not believe that Jesus was the Christ, and by siding with and supporting the Jews of today, they become part of the antichrist.

SUMMARY

My point of view is that we all live once, and then we die. Those that became partakers of the covenant will live with Christ in the millennial age to get rid of our own way of how to serve the LORD, about who is saved and who is condemned. After the battle in which Gog and Magog, the Satan and all the people that did not serve the LORD, will be defeated, will we appear before the white throne. Those that lived as overcomers will live in the New Jerusalem forever.

As a closing comment I would like to stress that whoever partakes in the LORD's supper as a sign to show his faith and to show that he enters into a covenant with the LORD, will be part of the first awakening. Exactly where we will find ourselves, is a different story.
