

## THE COVENANTS

### Int.

1. Aim: To give a brief review of the three dispensations and how they changed from one to another and which one applies to us today.
2. II Tim. 2:15 - "rightly dividing the word of truth" "Handling aright" = asv
  - a. Greek word "orthotomeo" - means "to cut straight, to make straight and smooth"
    - i. The Greeks used the word in three different connections.
    - ii. First - used for driving a straight road across country. Second - for ploughing a straight furrow across a field, and Third - for the work of a mason in cutting and squaring a stone so that it fitted into its correct place in the structure of the building.
    - iii. So the man who rightly divides the word of truth:
      - (1) Drives a straight road through the truth and refuses to be lured down pleasant but irrelevant bypaths
      - (2) He ploughs a straight furrow across the field of truth and
      - (3) He takes each section of the truth, and fits it into its correct position, as a mason does a stone, allowing no part to usurp an undue place so knock the whole structure out of balance. <sup>1</sup>
3. A correct understanding of the different ages is essential to learning the truth.
4. Many of the problems in the religious world are caused by this simple problem.
5. We will study the three Bible dispensations and show that the first two of these have already been completed and notice how some people lived under the first law until the time of Christ.

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<sup>1</sup> William Barclay, Letters to Timothy p. 199

## Discussion

### I. **OVERVIEW** - Chart on all 3 dispensations

A. These three dispensations are called:

1. Patriarchy - a family religion
2. Judaism - a National religion - or Mosaical
3. Christianity - an international religion

B. The first one started with Adam and today we are living under the last or Christianity.

### II. **PATRIARCHY** - Chart on Patriarchy

A. Patriarchy

1. Means "Father" - In this age God spoke to the fathers
2. They had a family type worship - They offered animal sacrifices - an example is found in Gen. 4 with Cain and Able.

B. Started in the Garden of Eden and continued until the time of the Red Sea when the Children of Israel came out of the land of Egypt.

1. This was a period of about 2500 years.
2. The last 400 + years were spent by the children of Israel in Egypt.

C. Flood

1. There came a time of Great wickedness - Gen. 6
2. God destroyed the world with a flood
3. Noah built the ark and he and his family survived. 8 souls.

#### D. Abraham

1. God called Abraham and told him that he would be the Father of many and they would bless all nations.
2. Gen. 12 - Called from Ur
3. The remainder of the O.T. tells about his descendants and how this promise was fulfilled
4. This covenant did not include the Gentiles - Gen. 17:9 "And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations."
5. His descendants were called Jews or Hebrews

#### E. His Sons

1. Isaac -
2. Jacob - named changed to Israel
3. Twelve sons - Joseph
4. Jealousy - sold

#### F. Slavery

1. Taken down to Egypt for food
2. They were put in slavery
3. Moses was born - he became the leader and deliverer.
4. They left after the 10th plague which was the death of the 1st born.
5. After crossing the red sea they were free!

### III. **JUDAISM** - Chart on Judaism - Mosaical

#### A. Mt. Sinai

1. A three days journey gets them to Mt. Sinai
2. They camp here for one year and receive the law of Moses
  - a. Ten commandments
  - b. Instructions about the tabernacle and how to worship
3. This law is given to Abraham's seed
  - a. It did not include the Gentiles
  - b. Nowhere is it stated that the law of family worship ended at the giving of the law of Moses.
4. This law was given 430 years after the promise was made to Abraham - Gal. 3:16-17 "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. 17 And this I say, [that] the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."

#### B. Wilderness

1. They wandered for 40 years
2. All the old generation died and the new generation was allowed to enter the Promised Land.

#### C. Three different kinds of rulership

1. Judges
2. Kings - Saul, David, Solomon
3. Divided Kingdom

D. This dispensation lasted about 1500 years

1. Most of the O.T. books are about this period of time
2. But the Patriarchal age lasted a little over 2500 years.

E. Christ was born under the Law

1. Gal. 4:4-5 "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. "
2. Christ lived and worked during the time that this law was in effect.
3. He observed the 10 commandments and all the laws of Moses.
4. Christ is this seed of Abraham who is to be a blessing to all mankind. - Gal. 3:16  
"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. "

#### **IV. CHRISTIANITY** - Chart on Christianity

A. Christ established his kingdom

1. Mt. 16:18 "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
2. On the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ the church was started.
  - a. The Law of Moses ended at the Cross - Col.2:14 "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; "
  - b. It was no longer in effect
3. Peter preached the first sermon and 3,000 were added to the church that day.-  
Acts 2

## B. This dispensation is still in effect today

1. It is about 2,000 years of age
2. It will continue until the end of this earth and the judgment day.

## C. The laws of Christ

1. Are found in the New Testament
2. Jesus is our lawgiver - He is our Savior
3. They apply to everyone - Jews and Gentiles - International - to all nations

**V. THE COVENANTS** - Use chart on the Covenants

## A. Eden

1. The first dispensation began at the Garden of Eden
2. God spoke directly to the fathers in this "FAMILY WORSHIP"

## B. Abraham

1. God called Abraham and made the promise to him
  - a. Gen. 12:3 "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."
  - b. Gen. 22:18 "And in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed."
2. His descendants are Jews
3. And the land promise was made only to them - Fulfilled in Josh. 21:43 "And the LORD gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein."
4. But the spiritual promise included all people for it said that he would be a blessing to all people

5. But what about all those other people who were not Jews?

C. Cornelius is an example - Acts 10

1. Acts 10:1-2
2. This devout man was of good report among all the nation of the Jews
3. Cornelius is a patriarch worshipping around the family altar.
4. But he was lost and he needed to hear the gospel and obey it to be saved.
5. The time has come for this system of worship to end.

D. Eph. 2:14-16

1. When was the middle wall of partition broken down? When Jesus died!!
2. What was the enmity? The law.
3. What was the purpose of nailing the law to the cross? To make in himself one new man, so making peace. "For to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross."
4. What is the one New Man? It is the one body. What is the one body? It is the church.
5. When were the twain [Jews and Gentile] reconciled unto God? When the gospel went to the Gentiles -
6. Eph. 2:18 "For through him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father."

E. Vision for Peter

1. Acts 10:9-16
2. God taught Peter not to call the Gentiles "common or unclean"
3. This helped Peter understand that the gospel was for Gentiles as well as for Jews

4. Acts 10:34,35 "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
5. This same Apostle who preached that first sermon to the Jews on Pentecost is the one to preach the first gospel sermon to the Gentiles - Remember Christ had given him the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. Mt. 16:19

#### F. Summary

1. The law to the Jews [Moses Law] ended at the Cross.
2. The law to the Gentiles [Patriarchy] ended at the house of Cornelius.
3. A baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred when the Gospel of Christ went to the Jews
4. A baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred when the Gospel went to the Gentiles.
5. The gospel is preached to the Jews on Pentecost.
6. The same gospel is preached to the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius.

#### Conclusion

1. The same sermon preached today will save us as it did the Jews and the Gentiles in the first century.
2. We must preach this truth to all people and learn how to properly handle the truth.
3. God in His mercy and goodness has made provisions for every one of the human family for every moment of time for all ages.
4. Will you be prepared by accepting his terms today for salvation?
5. Today we are living in the Christian age and must obey the laws of the N.T. that teach us how to be members of the Church which Christ established, His Church, the one purchased with His own blood.

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## Sources

1. Sermons Chapel Talks and Debates by Arvy Glenn Freed - "The Covenants" P. 142
2. William Barclay - Letters to Timothy p. 199

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