

Part One: The Patriarchal DispensationLesson One: Introduction to the Patriarchal Age

## I. Determining the Dispensations of the Bible:

## A. Defining Dispensation:

1. Dispensation is defined, "a system of rules for ordering affairs." Thus, when speaking of the Patriarchal Dispensation or the Mosaic or Christian, we are referring to the system of rules peculiar to that time.
2. According to the Bible, we must rightly divide the Word (2 Timothy 2.15). This is especially true when determining the different systems of law. For if we do not correctly divide these systems of law then we may bind what is no longer bound or we might loose what should not be loosed. Notice Hebrews 9.16-26.
  - a. A "will," that is, a legal document in which a person declares to whom his or her possessions are to go and what stipulations they must meet to possess the inheritance, is in force after a person is dead (vs. 16,17).
  - b. The first "will" or "testament" was dedicated by blood. Thus, so was the second "testament" dedicated with blood.
  - c. By this, the Hebrew author determines two different systems of law. If the inheritors would receive the inheritance under either law, the inheritors must follow the stipulations given in the law.
3. By this we determine that there are at least two different laws! However, we speak of three systems of law – the Patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the Christian. Before the law of Moses, there must have been a law governing the Patriarchs (Romans 4).

## B. The Patriarchal Dispensation:

1. The term *Patriarch* is defined as "a man revered as father or founder of a family or tribe." The Patriarchal period is described as such because God specifically dealt with the fathers of several households during this period.
2. The Patriarch dispensation extended from Adam to Moses (Genesis 1-Exodus 20). During the period of the Patriarchs, God gave His instructions to the fathers of individual households (Acts 3.13; 7.32). Consider:
  - a. God communicated His instructions to Adam, the first man and father (Genesis 2.6-4.1).
  - b. God conversed with Noah, the father of the new world (Genesis 6.8-22; 9.1).
  - c. God delivered His will to Abraham, the father of the Israelites (Genesis 12.1-3; 18.17-19).
  - d. God continued His will through Isaac, the succeeding father of Israel (Genesis 26.1-5, 24).

- e. God maintained His plan through Jacob, another succeeding father of Israel (Genesis 28.10-15).
  - f. God corresponded with Job, a father of a great family (Job 1.1-15).
3. In the age of the Patriarchs God began a progression. He would first deal with the father and families, then the nations, and ultimately the world!

C. Antediluvian & Postdiluvian, Key Periods Within the Patriarchal Age:

1. The word antediluvian is defined as "the period before the biblical flood." Thus, the antediluvian period is designated from Genesis 1 to Genesis 6. Scripture reveals very little about the antediluvian period. We know that it was a time in which "the sons of God" were distinguished from the "daughters of men" (Genesis 4.26; Genesis 6.2,4). When these two family lines intermingled they created generations wherein wickedness triumphed (Genesis 6.5,11-13). *If sin existed, then a law existed by which sin was defined (Romans 5.12-14).*
2. The term postdiluvian is understood to mean "after the biblical flood." Thus, the time span of the postdiluvian is designated from Genesis 7 to Genesis 11. *It was a unique period in that it was a new world, a second chance to establish righteousness on the earth.* The earth was repopulated by Noah and his sons (Genesis 9.1). This time marked the beginning of earthly kingdoms.
3. Although these two periods are different in respect of time, before and after the flood, both periods were governed by a law of God. The interesting point of these two periods is the development of law, priesthood, prophecy, and sacrifice. In the garden, law was present, but the other elements of a dispensation are not – priesthood, prophet, or sacrifice. Because we do not find a written law during the Patriarchal Age, we shall investigate the Scriptures and find the development and practice of law, priesthood, prophecy, and sacrifice.

Lesson Two: The Nature of the Patriarchal Law

## II. Understanding the Patriarchal System:

## A. The People to Whom the Law Was Given:

1. Unlike the Mosaic and Christian covenants, we do not find a written system of law during the age of the Patriarchs. Thus, it is difficult to determine the specific people to whom the law of God was given. Having said that, we can infer that all men that dwelt on the face of the earth from the beginning were under the one and same dispensation. Twice do we find the world repopulated by a godly family; and twice we find the people of the world leaving the religion of God.
  - a. Adam and Eve (Genesis 1.28; 5.1,2). Direct descendants of God (Luke 3.38). Raised children who worshiped God, Cain, Abel, & Seth (Gen. 4.1,2,25,26). Some children continued in the religion of God such as Seth, Enoch, Noah; some children did not continue after the laws of God such as Cain, Enoch, Lamech (Gen. 5.1-ff; 4.16-24).
  - b. Noah and wife (Genesis 7.1,7). Descendants of the godly lineage (Gen. 5.28-32). Raised children who did not worship God (Gen. 9.18-27). Even though we find Abraham from the lineage of Shem, he was still considered to be an idolater (Gen. 11.10,27-ff; Joshua 24.2,3). From the family of Abraham, however, we begin to find individuals the Lord approved and worked with (Gen.18.19; Rom. 4)
2. During the time of Abraham, we then begin to see a limited view of the Patriarchal dispensation. At first thought, we might conclude that to Abraham's family was the law of the Patriarchs given, but we later find others involved in worship who were not immediate family of Abraham.
  - a. Melchizedek, king of Salem was the priest of the most high God (Genesis 14.17-20). Although it is difficult to determine the location of Salem, history and Scripture speak of Salem and Jerusalem as being one and the same location (Psalm 76.1,2). Abraham was from Ur, the Babylonian region, and Melchizedek was from Canaan.
  - b. The patriarch Job was not of the family of Abraham, but a contemporary with the patriarchs (Job 1.4,5; Genesis 10.23). One of his friends, Bildad the Shuhite, is perhaps of the lineage of Shuah, Abraham's child from his second marriage (Genesis 25.1,2,6; Job 1.3).
  - c. The Ninevites, a Gentile nation were familiar with God and His precepts. At the preaching of Jonah they repented and the Lord stayed His anger (Jonah).
  - d. The Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites God worked with (Deuteronomy 2.4,5,9-12,19-23). These Gentile nations were given land and victory by God.

3. Thus, we conclude that the Patriarchal law was given to all men since time began. From the beginning, the classification of Jew and Gentile did not exist. Thus, all were subject to the law of patriarchs, till Jehovah made a covenant with the Israelites alone (Exodus 24.3-8; 31.12-17; 34.27). Yet, what law did the Gentiles continue with after the law of Moses was given to the Jews?
  - a. Possibly the Gentiles continued with the Patriarchal law, and the Jews with the Mosaic, until the time when Christ made a new covenant (Matt. 26.26-28).
  - b. In Romans 2.14,15 the apostle speaks of a law of the conscience that the Gentiles were subject to, seeing they were not under the law of Moses. Perhaps, the Gentiles left the law of the patriarchs and were then subject to their inherent nature of uprightness (Ecclesiastes 7.29).

#### B. The Parts of the Patriarchal Law:

1. The laws of God are usually divided into three parts: 1.) Moral law, 2.) Ceremonial law, and 3.) Civil law. All three can be identified in the Patriarchal age and a few remain as universal laws of morality.
  - a. With regard to the moral law, we find marriage to be a fact of life between a male and a female. It is always right and at all times, when two eligible people (male and female) marry. It is always wrong and at all times, when two ineligible people (same sex) marry. This law was set forth from the beginning (Gen. 2.18-25; Matthew 19.4ff).
  - b. With regard to the ceremonial law, the patriarchs were involved in offerings and sacrifices of worship. The first example of men involved in worship ceremonies is Cain and Able (Gen. 4.3-5). Obviously laws existed that regulated the sacrifices of God.
  - c. With regard to the civil law, we learn in Gen. 9.1-7 laws that regulate the dealings of society. "Whoso shedeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed...." The law of capital punishment is also a universal law which goes beyond tradition and time.
2. Even though we may not have the entire Patriarchal law in written form, we do find laws such as marriage and murder written for us to learn from (Romans 15.4).

Lesson Three: The Priesthood and Prophets During the Patriarchal Age

## III. The Beginnings of Those Who Were Authorized to Perform Sacred Duties:

## A. High Priest and Priests of the Patriarchs:

1. It is evident, in every dispensation there existed a high priesthood. Furthermore, in every dispensation God appointed men He desired to serve in that capacity (Hebrews 5.4).
  - a. Melchizedek – Patriarchal (Genesis 14.18-20)
  - b. Aaron – Mosaic (Hebrews 5.4)
  - c. Jesus – Christian (Hebrews 7.14-28)
2. The point of interest is the fact that Melchizedek served as a priest for the most high God. During the era of the patriarchs, we find the fathers to be the priests. Yet, there is one found greater than Abraham, of a higher order, to whom Abraham gave a tenth of all his spoils (Hebrews 7.4,7).
  - a. Melchizedek is interpreted “*king of righteousness*” and he was the king in a place called Salem, which being interpreted is “*king of peace*” (Hebrews 7.1,2). These names, perhaps, were reflective of the character necessitated to serve in such an office.
  - b. The bible explains that Melchizedek was not from the family of Abraham (Hebrews 7.5,6). His priesthood is shrouded in mystery. According to Hebrews 5-7, Melchizedek was not chosen because of pedigree, lineage, or command, but was called of God to such a responsibility (Heb. 7.14-17).
  - c. From Gen. 14.18-20 we learn the several duties of the high priest in patriarchal times:
    - 1.) To offer sacrifice
    - 2.) To bless
    - 3.) To mediate between men and God
  - d. Note: Because Salem is believed to have been the ancient name of Jerusalem, Melchizedek was perhaps the first priest of God in that famous location (Psalm 76.1,2; 1 Chronicles 11.4ff; 2 Chron. 3.1).
3. Concerning the priests, based upon investigation we find the fathers of the several families to serve in such a manner.
  - a. Noah sacrificed for his children (Genesis 8.20,21).
  - b. Abraham sacrificed for his family (Genesis 22.13,14).
  - c. Isaac served as priest for his household (Genesis 27.3,4,26-29).
  - d. Jacob too was one who led his family through sacrifice and blessings (Genesis 35.1-5).
  - e. Job did likewise offer sacrifices on behalf of his family (Job 1.4,5).

## B. The Prophets of the Patriarchs:

1. Finally, the function of prophet existed in the time of the patriarchs. We do not know the specific duty of the prophets in the patriarchal dispensation, but we find futuristic utterances from the fathers, who also served as prophets. Only one patriarch is formally given the title "prophet," that is Abraham (Genesis 20.7).
  - a. Enoch is said to have prophesied. Although Genesis does not mention any type of prophecy made by Enoch, Jude quotes from the prophecy of Enoch (Jude 14,15).
  - b. Abraham utters the great mystery of God in Genesis 22.7,8 concerning Christ, the Lamb of God!
  - c. Jacob tells what shall come to pass in the last days (Genesis 49.1). Concerning Judah, he speaks of the Christ to come from his tribe.
2. From the beginning, God made use of men to speak His mystery. Although the first prophecy given by Enoch may have made reference to Noah and the flood, Jude also applies it to Jesus and the end of the world. Already, men were uttering the great salvation that would come through Jesus Christ.

Lesson Four: The Sacrifices Under the Patriarchal System of Law

## IV. The Origins of the Sacrificial System:

## A. The First Sacrifice:

1. Without a written law, we still find by implication various types of sacrifices and offerings. From the very beginning, by implication, God implements a sacrificial system for man. An established fact of life is, "*without shedding of blood is no remission*" (Hebrews 9.22). There is no difference in the beginning. Adam and Eve committed sin, and sacrifice was made to remit sin (Genesis 3.21).
  - a. Male and female existed (Genesis 2.7, 21-24). From creation, Adam and Eve were in a state of innocence and purity (Gen. 2.25).
    - 1.) They were both naked and not ashamed – shame suggests the idea of a painful sense of having done something wrong, improper, or immodest.
    - 2.) They were both innocent – innocence suggests the idea of blamelessness, simplicity, and even ignorance from wrong doing. Adam and Eve were ignorant of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 3.5,22).
  - b. After disobedience occurred, Adam and Eve adopted a state of awareness and understanding of the improper, wrong, and immodest thing (Gen. 3.5-7). Temptation disrupted, sin was born, and death was the consequence (James 1.14,15; Romans 5.12-14).
  - c. Before sin existed, sacrifice was not needed. Because of sin, sacrifices were introduced (Gen. 3.21). The animal sacrifices were temporary till the sacrifice of Christ (Gen. 3.15).
    - 1.) Genesis 3.21 implies sacrifice. Because of the coats of skin, it is implied that animals were slaughtered.
    - 2.) Furthermore, blood shed is the only means of forgiveness (Hebrews 9.22).

## B. The Various Sacrifices of the Patriarchs:

1. Throughout Genesis sacrifices for sin, thanksgiving, formal agreement, etc. can be identified. Note, men were involved in worship and worship needed to be done correctly. The erection of alters, the burning of sweet savors, etc. were a part of the primitive man's life.
  - a. Sacrifice of righteousness – Cain & Abel (Gen. 4.3-5; Heb. 11.4).
  - b. Sacrifice of thanksgiving – Noah (Gen. 8.20-23).
  - c. Sacrifice through tithe – Abraham (Gen. 14.18-20).
  - d. Sacrifice for covenant – Abraham (Gen. 15.9-18).
  - e. Sacrifice of sin (Gen. 22.13,14; Job 42.7-10).
2. Alters were regularly erected to sacrifice (Gen. 8.20; 12.7; 28.16-22; etc.).

Part Two: The Mosaic DispensationLesson One: The Nature of the Mosaic Law

## I. The Beginning of the Covenant With the Israelite Nation:

## A. The People to Whom the Law Was Given:

1. During the Patriarchal age, the Lord told Abraham, *"I will make of thee a great nation..."*, and from that nation a Savior would come (Genesis 12.1-3; 15.5). The promise made to Abraham was the beginning of God's plan to bring forth a Savior for the entire world (Gen. 22.18). However, a covenant was made as well. This covenant was made solely with Abraham and Israel (Gen. 17.1-9).
  - a. The promise: *that all families/nations of the earth would be blessed* (Gen. 12.3; 22.18). This was a promise not yet fulfilled, till Jesus Christ would come (Galatians 3.8,14,18). This was a promise to the whole world (Acts 2.39)!
  - b. The covenant: *between Abraham and his seed—the Israelites*, (Genesis 17.1-9). The Israelite nation would be a special people to God for they would be taught the faith of their father (Gen. 18.18,19). Herein is prophecy regarding the covenant God planned to make with the nation of Israel alone. Abraham would begat a nation; the nation would be oppressed; God would deliver Abraham's children and make a covenant with them (Exodus 1.7-9; Gen. 15.13-16; Ex. 2.23-25; Gen. 17.7,8; Ex. 19.3-6; Psalm 105.8ff).
  - c. The promise & the covenant: *the covenant God made with Abraham and Israel can not cancel the promise God made with the world* (Galatians 3.17). The law is not against the promise God made with the world, but served to control sin till the time of Christ (Gal. 3.19,21). The promise and the covenant of Israel were not the same but related by Abraham's involvement.
2. The assertion is frequently made that the Mosaic law was given solely to the nation of Israel. The Scriptures substantiate the fact of Israel's exclusiveness to the law of Moses. A lack of understanding concerning the recipients of the old testament is detrimental to the overall exegetical process. Therefore, let us consider the passages which prove Israel subject to the Law of Moses.
  - a. Exodus 19.3-6. As the nation of Israel approaches Mount Sinai, the Lord directs Moses to plead with *"the children of Israel."* Those to whom the Lord was speaking are mentioned—*"the house of Jacob"* (19.3). Jehovah introduces the covenant He would make between Him and the Israelites; also, the special relationship they would have with God (19.5). As a result, Israel would be a *"holy nation"* which suggests distinction from all other nations (19.6).

- b. Exodus 34.27. Chapter thirty-four of Exodus deals with the second giving of the Ten Commandments. The Lord reminds Israel of the covenant he would make with them, and with no other nation. Thus, in verse twenty-seven God speaks, "*Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.*"
- c. Consider these other passages as well: Exodus 24.3-8; 31.12-17; Psalm 105.8-13; Romans 9.4,5; Ephesians 2.11-13.

#### B. Defining the Covenant:

1. The Divine Record speaks concerning covenants made by God with specific peoples. Yet, what is meant by "covenant" when the Bible speaks of the several which were made?
  - a. In the English language, *covenant* is defined, "a formal, solemn, and binding agreement; a written agreement or promise under seal between two or more parties especially for the performance of some action."
  - b. In biblical Hebrew, *covenant* is defined, "that which binds together the parties; a solemn mutual agreement; an obligation imposed by a superior upon an inferior."
  - c. In Greek, *covenant* is defined, "a disposition, a contract, a devisory will, covenant, testament."
2. Consider the text of the Bible with regard to these definitions.
  - a. *That which binds together the parties; a solemn mutual agreement.*
    - 1.) Of man (Joshua 9.6; 1 Samuel 11.1)
    - 2.) Of God (Exodus 34.27; Proverbs 2.17).
  - b. *An obligation imposed by a superior upon an inferior; a contract; a devisory will* (Exodus 19.5; Leviticus 26.14,15; Jeremiah 31.31-ff; Hebrews 9.16-20).
3. Having learned these concepts, the covenant Jehovah made with Israel was a binding agreement between Israel and God; also, it obligated Israel to obey the Lord's commandments. The covenant God made with Israel was not the last covenant He would make. When Christ died and shed His blood, then, a new covenant would come into effect (Matthew 26.28; Hebrews 10.9). All nations are obligated by the covenant of Christ to obey His word (Romans 16.25,26).

#### C. The Parts of the Mosaic Law:

1. The Law of Moses is customarily divided into three parts:
  - a. The Moral Law (Ten Commandments) – Exodus 20.1-17
  - b. The Judicial/Civil Law – Exodus 21.1-23.33
  - c. The Ceremonial Law – Exodus 25.1-31.18
2. Seeing this, we learn that the law covered every aspect of life and worship.

D. God's Attitude Towards His Law:

1. The Lord has always demanded holiness from His creation. Since the days of Abraham He called and said, *"walk before me and be thou perfect"* (Genesis 17.1). Though the time changes, the attitude of God regarding His law is complete obedience!
  - a. The people of God are called to be holy (Leviticus 19.2; 20.7,8).
  - b. Those who tampered with the law of God were destroyed of fire (Leviticus 10.1,2). This proves the strictness of God with regard to obedience.
  - c. Even if one perhaps had good intentions, it was never justified to disobey the command of God (2 Samuel 6.6,7).
2. In a final word, the attitude one must approach the worship of God with during the Mosaic age was one of sincerity and truth (Joshua 24.14).

Lesson Two: The Priesthood and Prophets of the Mosaic Law

## II. The Stranger That Comes Nigh Shall Be Put to Death:

## A. The Threefold Division of Temple Service:

1. Under the Mosaic dispensation, the Lord commanded three groups of individuals to serve Him in the temple. These three are easily understood in the words of Numbers 18.1–7.
  - a. *“Thou and thy sons and thy father’s house with thee shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary...”* (Num. 18.1).
  - b. *“Thou”* has reference to Aaron, *“thy sons”* speaks of Aaron’s offspring, and *“thy father’s house”* tells of Aaron’s tribe, the Levites.
  - c. Aaron was chosen as High Priest (Exodus 28.1; Hebrews 5.1-4). Aaron’s sons—Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar—were chosen to serve as Priests under Aaron (Ex. 28.1; Num. 18.1,7). The families of the tribe of Levi—Gershon, Kohath, and Merari—were called to be servants in the temple for the priests and the transportation of the holy things (Num. 18.2-4,6; Num. 3.5-10).
2. This threefold division of those who could come near the alters and make sacrifice is very different from the Patriarchal system of law. The commands of the Mosaic Law are explicit, *“the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death”* (Num. 3.10; 16.5; 18.4,7). Unlike the Patriarchal age when the fathers served as priests, the Mosaic dispensation authorized only the priests of the tribe of Levi to make sacrifice!

## B. The High Priesthood and the Priests:

1. The selection for the priesthood, to serve as High Priest or Priest had to meet a criteria of lineage and flawlessness. Only the immediate family of Aaron could be chosen as priests and from among them, a high priest (Exodus 6.18,20; Ex. 28.1; 29.29,30). Even so, the candidate for priesthood had to be flawless physically (Leviticus 21.17-ff). Consider the phrase, *“whosoever he be of thy seed in their generations...”*, for it tells of the criteria of lineage for the choosing of priests (Lev. 21.17,21). Also in Leviticus 21, we have some divine requirements with regard to marriage, funerals, and physique.
  - a. Priests could not be defiled by coming near to a dead body, save only his immediate family (21.1-4).
  - b. Priests could not involve themselves, nor have any appearance of pagan rituals (21.5,6).
  - c. Priests could not take a wife having been divorced, or one that was profane (21.7,8).
  - d. High Priests could not defile themselves for any deceased family member (21.10-12).
  - e. High Priests married virgins to maintain purity of lineage (21.13-15).

- f. High Priests or priests could not have any type of physical blemish (21.17-24).
2. The duties of the priesthood encompassed several activities around the temple and at the alters. Numbers 18.3 forbade anyone else but the priests to come near *"the vessels of the sanctuary and the alter."* This determines, to some degree, the duties placed upon the priests alone.
  - a. They were to burn incense on the golden alter every day, trim and light the lamps daily, prepare and present the bread every Sabbath for the table (Exodus 30.7,8; 27.20,21; Lev. 24.5-8).
  - b. Priests were to continually offer burnt offerings, the fire could not cease (Leviticus 6.9,13). Along with those duties, priests were to offer sacrifices morning and evening (Exodus 29.38-44). They were in charge of offering sacrifices on a daily basis for the people, pronouncing blessing upon them afterwards (Lev. 1-7.35-38; Num. 6.23-27). Furthermore, the blowing of trumpets, calling of festivals, etc. (Leviticus).
  - c. The priests were also involved with inspection, appraisal, and purging of certain diseases (Lev. 13-14; Num. 5.15-30; Lev. 27.2-ff). They taught the law of God and judged certain difficult matters (Malachi 2.7; Deut. 17.8-12; 19.17-19; 21.5). Finally, they also addressed the soldiers before war (Deut. 20.2-4).
  - d. The High Priest performed several duties which were solely his. The offering of sacrifice on the day of atonement for himself and then the people (Lev. 16.2,6,17). The clothing was different for the High Priest as well (Ex. 28.1-39). Replaced by son (Lev. 16.32ff).
  - e. Duties of priests rotated by family and continued even during the time of Christ (1 Chronicles 24.1-19; Luke 1.5-9).
3. The spiritual condition of the priests was to be one of holiness. It was commanded of all to be holy (Leviticus 19.2; 20.7,8). But holiness was especially required of the priests. In the beginning, the priests were consecrated (Lev. 8; Ex. 29). And throughout their service, the priests were expected to maintain cleanliness (Lev. 22.2,3).

### C. The Levites:

1. The Levites were chosen instead of the first-born that Jehovah saved during Egyptian bondage (Numbers 3.12,13). They were called of God to serve in the tabernacle or temple, as helpers to the priesthood (Num. 3.6-10). The three sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari (Genesis 46.11; Num. 3.17). Each family of Levi was given responsibility over a particular part of the tabernacle so long as it was transported (1 Chronicles 23.24-32).
  - a. Gershon's charge (Num. 3.25,26).
  - b. Kohath's charge (Num. 3.30,31). => Do not touch (Num. 4.5-15).
  - c. Merari's charge (Num. 3.36,37).

## D. The Prophets:

1. There is no doubt the prophets had a special significance in the Mosaic age, for Numbers 12.6 speaks of God revealing His Word by visions or dreams. Furthermore, with regard to the false prophets, Jehovah says, *"I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them..."* (Jeremiah 14.14; 23.21). As a rule, a prophet was a forth-teller, not necessarily a fore-teller. A prophet was a spokesman for God and his prophecy may have included messages of the past, present, or future! Usually a prophet would begin with, *"Thus saith the Lord..."*
2. The prophets of the Mosaic dispensation were looked upon several ways:
  - a. Spokesman of God with authority (Exodus 7.1).
  - b. A mouth by which God speaks to men (Jeremiah 1.9; Isaiah 51.16).
  - c. The organs of God to communicate His Will (Deut. 18.18,19).
  - d. Holy men who were guided by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1.20,21).
3. With regard to judging truth from error in prophecy, the Mosaic law gave stipulations on how to determine a false prophet in Deut. 18.20-22.
  - a. If he should speak in the name of other gods.
  - b. If the thing spoken does not follow or come to pass.
4. Also, during the time of Samuel on down to Elisha, we learn of a school of prophets (1 Samuel 10.5-13). These men cultivated godly character and were trained to teach the people, preserve their nation's history, denounce sin and pronounce judgment. They were preachers of righteousness preaching pure morality and worked with priests and kings. Certain schools were located in Ramah, Bethel, Gilgal, Gibeah, and Jericho. The prophets were young men who lived together (1 Samuel 19.18-24; 2 Kings 2.3,15; 4.38-41; 2 Kings 5.22; 9.1,4).

Lesson Three: The Sacrificial System and Feasts During the Mosaic Dispensation

## III. The Way of Access to God:

## A. The Purpose of Sacrifice:

1. The sacrifices were gifts brought to a holy God, serving the twofold purpose of illustrating the need of atonement for sin and consecration to God.
2. They were object lessons in holiness. By sacrifice the people were taught God's abhorrence of sin, the necessity of blood shed for remission of sin, and the requirement of holiness on the part of those who would worship Jehovah.
  - a. A key word with regard to the sacrifices is *holiness*. This term is not used until after the crossing of the Red Sea. As God prepares His people to enter the promise land He begins using the concept of "separateness from sin" (Exodus 19.5,6; Leviticus 19.2).
  - b. The sacrifices of God are classified as *the way of access to God*. The first three sacrifices are considered sacrifices maintaining fellowship with God (Burnt, Meal, Peace Offering). The last two sacrifices are considered sacrifices to reconcile fellowship with God (Sin and Trespass Offering).

## B. The Sacrifices:

1. The Whole Burnt Offering (Leviticus 1.1-17; 6.8-13). The burnt offering was an expression of worship and devotion, a symbol of dedication of oneself to God (Psalm 51.16-19). The worshiper sought no blessing for himself, but offered his best to Jehovah, and waited at the altar until he saw his gift consumed by fire. Acceptable animals for this sacrifice were to be clean and without blemish. They might be oxen, sheep, goats, or pigeons, the latter being available even to the poor.
2. The Meal Offering (Leviticus 2.1-6; 6.14-23). The meal offering was a thank offering possible for the lowliest worshiper. A few small cakes or wafers were baked upon the hearth, made with finely ground meal, oil, salt, incense, and without leaven.
3. The Peace Offering (Leviticus 3.1-17; 7.11-38). This offering indicated fellowship with God. A portion of the offering was burned at the altar, and the remainder was reserved for a feast which the worshiper and his guests might enjoy (1 Samuel 1.3-5).
4. The Sin Offering (Leviticus 4.1-35; 6.24-30). The sacrifice for sin was an acknowledgment of guilt, and unlike the first three was not said to be "a sweet savor unto the Lord." For all sins committed through ignorance, whether by a priest, a ruler, or any individual, a sacrificial animal was required, with confession of the sin committed.

5. The Trespass Offering (Leviticus 5.1-6.7; 7.1-7). This sacrifice was for the intentional offender. This involved more than just sacrifice for sin. The guilty one must not only sacrifice, but must also make restitution with added compensation to the one wronged. Both the sin offering and the trespass were made as an atonement for sin.

#### C. The Climax of the Sacrificial System:

1. The Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16.1-34). The day of atonement was the climax in the system of offerings which showed the way of access to God. The high priest entered the Tabernacle alone and sacrificed a bullock for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. He cast lots over two goats to decide which should be sacrificed as a sin offering and which should escape into the wilderness. After the sacrifice of the bullock for himself and his household, he sacrificed the one goat for the sins of the nation and sprinkled its blood for the purification of the tabernacle and the alter. Placing his hands upon the live goat, known as the "scapegoat," he confessed the sins of the nation. The goat was then taken away into the wilderness, there to bear away the sins of the people.
2. Once a year, the day of atonement was remembered. Thus, making the Israelite nation to remember their sins every year (Hebrews 10.1-4).

#### D. The Calender of Holy Days & Feasts:

1. The Sabbath Day (Exodus 20.8; Lev. 23.1-3). The Sabbath was the first in importance of the special days of Israel. The Sabbath was a weekly observance as a day of rest and worship of God.
  - a. All allowed to rest (Ex. 20.10,11).
  - b. No manner of work to be done (Lev. 23.3).
  - c. No purchases made (Neh. 13.15-17).
  - d. No burdened carried (Jer. 17.21).
  - e. Worship on Sabbaths (Ezk. 46.3; Num. 28.9,10).
  - f. Scriptures read (Acts 15.21).
  - g. Necessities may be supplied (Matt. 12.1; Luke 13.15; 14.1).
  - h. Disobedience of observing, stoned (Num. 15.32-36).
2. The Passover (1/14) celebrated Israel's deliverance from slavery in Egypt and the last plague which destroyed the firstborn (Lev. 23.4,5).
3. The Festival of Unleavened Bread (1/15) was immediately celebrated after Passover and bread with leaven could not be eaten for 7 days. This was one of the feasts that all males were required to attend (Lev. 23.6-8; Luke 1.41-43). This served to remind that they were once slaves (Deut. 16.12).
4. The Festival of Firstfruits was to offer a portion of their first crops of the harvest, as well as a year old lamb with no physical defects (Lev. 23.9-14). This feast followed Unleavened Bread (1/22).

5. The Festival of Harvest followed the Festival of Firstfruits by 7 weeks. An offering of bread was to be made, and several animals sacrificed (Lev. 23.15-22). This was another of the feasts which required all males present at the Tabernacle. Otherwise known as Feast of Pentecost. This feast was to recognize that Israel depended entirely upon Jehovah for their prosperity.
6. The Festival of Trumpets (7/1) was a celebration wherein trumpets are blown (Lev. 23.23-25). This day was observed as a day of solemn rest and trumpets sounded as a memorial of the great provision of the Lord.
7. The Day of Atonement (7/10) was a day of fasting contemplating their sorrow for sin. On this day, atonement was made by the high priest for himself and the people (Lev. 23.26-32).
8. The Festival of Shelters (7/15) was a festival wherein families made makeshift shelters from tree branches to commemorate the wilderness wanderings. This was the third festival all males were to be present for (Lev. 23.33-44). Otherwise known as Feast of Tabernacles or Booths.
9. Two feasts mentioned in Scripture, yet not given explicit commands:
  - a. Feast of Lots was organized during the time of Esther. Its purpose can be found in Esther 9.17-31. The idea is a memorial of having been saved from Haman's holocaust.
  - b. Feast of Dedication is one remembering the purification of the Temple, restoring true worship. This feast was organized during the period between the testaments (Maccabeus, 164 BC), and it continued during the time of Jesus (John 10.22).
10. Other times of importance include: The Sabbatical Year (Lev. 25.1-7); The Year of Jubilee (Lev. 25.8-24); etc.

Lesson Four: The Tabernacle and Temple

## IV. Make Me A Sanctuary; That I May Dwell Among Them:

## A. Origin and Transformation of the Tabernacle:

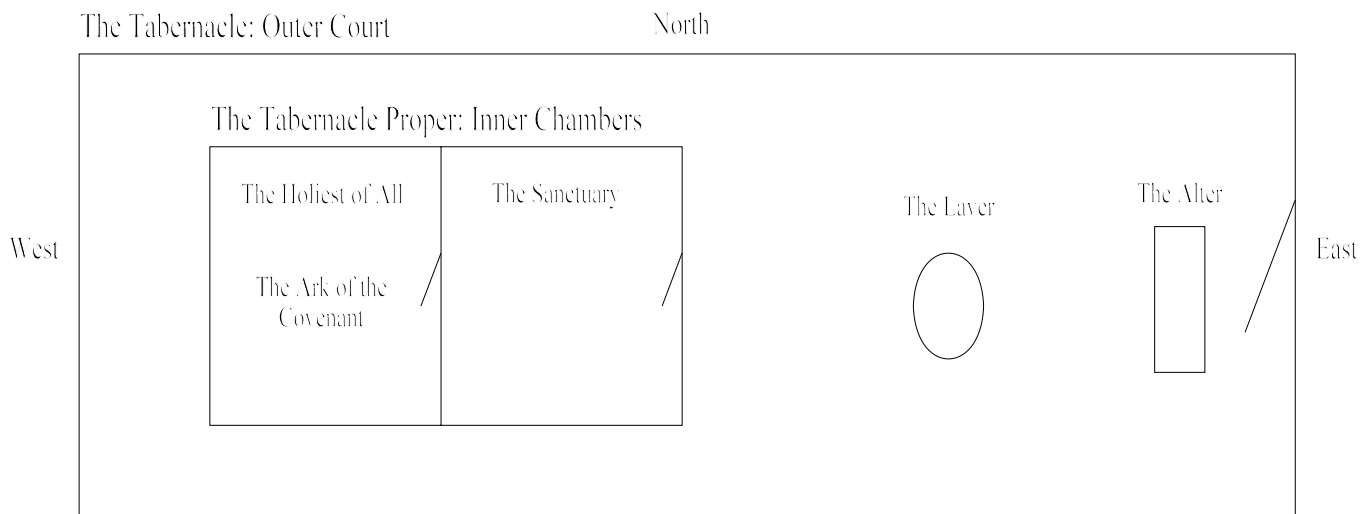
1. The nation of Israel was given instruction from God on the construction of a sanctuary that He might dwell among them. Details of the tabernacle, furniture, etc. are found in Exodus 25-40.
  - a. During the writing of the Exodus, the Israelites were traveling to the promise land. Because of the circumstances, the instruction given regarding a sanctuary can be described as a blueprint for a portable sanctuary.
  - b. However, Moses speaks of a permanent dwelling place for the sanctuary of God in the future (Deuteronomy 12.10-14).
2. The permanent temple of God would not be realized until the conquering of Canaan and the time of Solomon (2 Samuel 7.10-13; 1 Kings 5.1-5). The reason why Solomon was allowed to erect the house of God is explained in the history of the Chronicles (1 Chronicles 22.8; 28.3).
3. Finally, the sanctuary of God would go through four stages in Old Testament history.
  - a. The Tabernacle (portable sanctuary, Ex. 25.8,9).
  - b. The Temple of Solomon (first temple in Jerusalem, 1 Kings 5-6).
  - c. The Temple reconstructed by Zerubbabel (after Babylonian exile, Ezra 1.1-4; 3.8-ff).
  - d. The Temple reconstructed by Herod (before the time of Christ, 46 years in remodeling, John 2.20).

## B. Names of the Tabernacle and Temple:

1. The term *tabernacle* literally meant "dwelling place." With regard to the tabernacle of God, *the dwelling place of God*.
  - a. Sanctuary - a consecrated place, derived from the Hebrew verb meaning "to be holy" (Exodus 25.8,9).
  - b. Tent of testimony - the place that held the ten commandments (Numbers 9.15).
  - c. Tent of meeting - the place God met His people, and where the people came together (Exodus 33.7).
  - d. The House of the Lord - the place the Lord resided (Exodus 23.19).
2. When the tabernacle was no longer portable, but permanent, the place of God was then called *the temple*.
  - a. Thy holy temple - a temple undefiled by unclean persons or worship (Psalm 79.1).
  - b. The house of my glory - where God's spirit dwelt (Isaiah 60.7).
  - c. House of sacrifice - where sacrifices were made (2 Chron. 7.12).

## C. A Description of the Tabernacle:

1. The tabernacle consists of two parts: the tabernacle proper which was the inner part.
  - a. The tabernacle proper was rectangular and divided into two rooms: the sanctuary and the holiest of all (Hebrews 9.2,3). In the sanctuary the seven branch candlestick, the table, and shew bread resided. In the holiest of all remained the ark of the covenant.
  - b. The tabernacle proper was 45 feet long, 15 feet wide, and 15 feet high.
2. The second part of the tabernacle was the outer court: this surrounded the inner rooms.
  - a. Like the tabernacle proper, the outer court was rectangular. The entrance was on the east.
  - b. The outer court measured 150 feet long, and 75 feet wide.
3. The significance of the inner and outer parts of the tabernacle are understood in the fact that God's glory resided in the holiest of all. There upon the ark of the covenant, the glory of God would rest (Exodus 40.34ff).
4. When the tabernacle was erected, when the Israelites camped, Moses and Aaron's family were to set their tents up at the entrance in the east (Num. 3.38). The Levites, then, were required to encamp round about the tabernacle on the north, south, and west (Num. 1.53). Further instruction on how the tabernacle would proceed when the tribes marched can be found in Numbers 1-4.



Part Three: The Christian DispensationLesson One: The Nature of the Christian Law

## I. Made Known to All Nations For the Obedience of Faith:

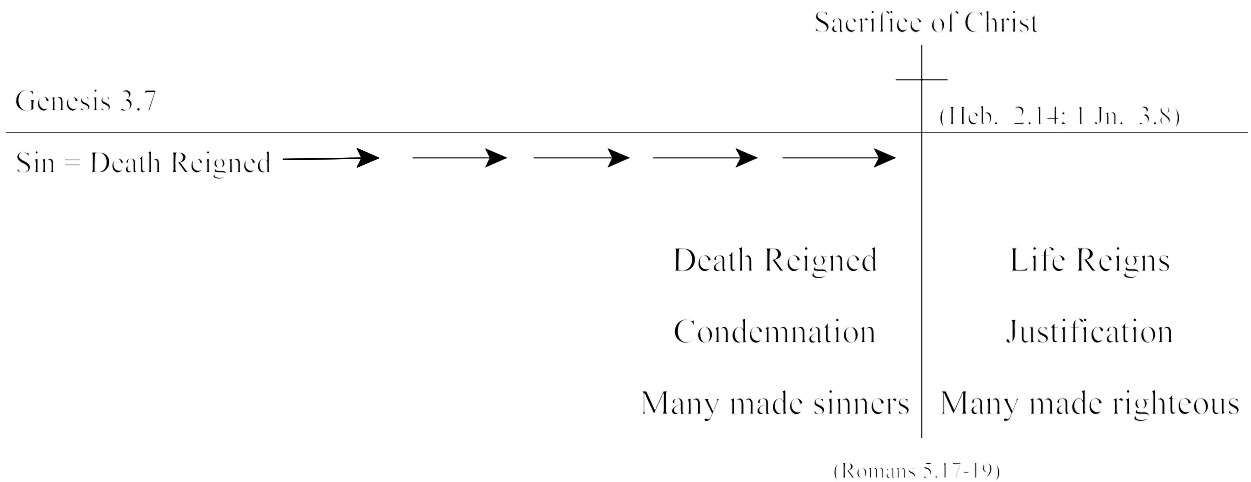
## A. The Universality of the Christian Law:

1. Much like the Patriarchal and Mosaic covenants, the Christian dispensation is sealed by the blood of Jesus Christ in sacrifice (Hebrews 9.16-28).
  - a. The Mosaic Dispensation (Exodus 24.3-8).
  - b. The Christian Dispensation (Matthew 26.26-29).
2. The covenant that Jesus established is between God and the world & church.
  - a. It was God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself (2 Corinthians 5.18-21; 1 John 4.14).
  - b. It was God who gave the commandment for the mystery to be revealed and preached to all nations for the obedience of faith (Romans 16.25,26).
  - c. It was God whom Jesus was trying to restore fellowship with (John 14.6).
  - d. The entire world has opportunity for salvation, hence the covenant with the world (1 John 2.2). But salvation and the covenant is especially with those who believe unto obedience (1 Timothy 4.10). Faith in Jesus Christ grants access into the grace of God (Romans 5.1,2).
3. Knowing this, let us now consider the universality of Christianity. There is nothing limited about the law of Christ. His authority is extended in heaven and earth (Matthew 28.18).
  - a. Beginning with His sacrifice, we learn it was for the sins of the whole world (John 1.29; John 3.16). The sacrifice of Christ was universal, encompassing all men.
  - b. Next, from His command of repentance we learn the universality of Christ's rule (Luke 26.46,47; Acts 17.30,31). All nations of men were to repent, not just a limited number!
  - c. Still further, the proclamation of the Gospel and salvation was for Jew and Gentile—for all nations (Romans 1.16; 16.25,26; 1 Timothy 2.3-5; Galatians 3.27,28).
  - d. Even more, the great commission proves that Christianity was universal in nature (Matthew 28.19,20; Mark 16.15,16).
  - e. Finally, the prophecies and fulfillment make reference to a universal dominion by Christ our King (Daniel 7.13,14; Revelation 1.5,6; Philippians 2.9-11).

## B. The New Covenant Superior to the Old Covenant:

1. In Hebrews 8.7-13, a prophecy found in Jeremiah 31.31-34 is given as proof that God planned for a new covenant.
  - a. Notice that the new covenant was not going to be according to the first covenant God made with Israel (Heb. 8.9).
  - b. The new covenant is a better covenant (Heb. 7.22; Heb. 8.6).
  - c. The new covenant has been purified by better sacrifices (Heb. 9.13-26, 23).
  - d. The old covenant could not make the worshiper perfect by animal sacrifices, laws concerning food, or carnal ceremonies (Heb. 9.9,10). The commandments of the old covenant were imposed upon Israel until Christ would reform the covenant.
  - e. God never intended the first covenant to give life (Galatians 3.21). In fact, the works of the law are described as *"the curse,"* by which *"no man is justified..."* (Gal. 3.10,11).
  - f. What purpose, then, did the law serve? The covenant was given because of sin (Gal. 3.19). In other words, the law controlled sin until Christ came to take away sin (Gal. 3.22-27). Subsequently, God made the first covenant the old covenant, which is now obsolete (Heb. 8.7,13).
2. Thus, the new covenant is superior to the Mosaic system of law.
  - a. *"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepard of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant"* (Hebrews 13.20).
  - b. The apostles argued for a New law because the Jews did not understand that the Old law was "taken away." The Jews continued to argue for the keeping of the Sabbath, holy days, circumcision, etc. Thus, the apostles explained that we are no longer bound to the Old law, to serve in the oldness of the letter, but, we are bound to the New law to serve in the newness of Spirit (Romans 7.1-6). The apostles, nor the disciples commanded or taught that one must keep the Old law and its customs!
3. We are no longer bound to keep the law of Moses, but the law of Christ.
  - a. *"Certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye much be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment"* (Acts 15.24).
  - b. *"Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"* (Acts 15.10).
  - c. *"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses"* (Acts 13.38,39).

- d. The apostles, nor the disciples commanded or taught that the Old law must be kept! This is not to say that there was not a law. There was a law and still is, the New Testament which Jesus established (Galatians 6.2)! The Old law is no longer binding today!
- 4. From the beginning, after sin was introduced, death reigned (Romans 5.14). Because of sin, all were held under bondage till the time that Christ would come and redeem men from captivity. Based upon the chart below consider the differences between the Old and New Laws.



Lesson Two: The Priesthood of the Church of Christ

## II. Our High Priest Who is Set on the Right Hand of the Throne:

## A. The Aaronic Priesthood Versus the Priesthood of Christ:

1. The Aaronic priesthood was insufficient because the High Priest was ever changing due to death. Furthermore, the Law of Moses was a temporary law and was never intended to give life. Consider the following reasons why the Aaronic priesthood by necessity was changed:
  - a. Imperfect men offered imperfect sacrifices (Hebrews 10.1-4).
  - b. Imperfect sacrifices could never make one perfect as pertaining to the conscience (Hebrews 9.9).
  - c. There was a continual changing of priests because of their imperfections and mortality (Hebrews 7.23,24).
2. An argument is made with regard to the lineage of Christ, how He was not of the tribe God commanded priests to be chosen from (Hebrews 7.13-16). According to the law of Moses, priests were chosen from the lineage of Aaron. The High Priesthood of Christ was not based on a commandment, but by Divine appointment!
  - a. Christ was called to be a High Priest after the same manner of Melchisedec (Hebrew 5.5,6). Melchisedec was not chosen by commandment, nor by pedigree, but by Divine appointment from God (Heb. 7.3,15,16).
  - b. Like Melchisedec, Jesus is both King and Priest (Zechariah 6.12,13; Hebrews 8.1).
  - c. He abides a High Priest forever (Heb. 7.15,16).
3. The Hebrew author in summation glorifies the priesthood of Christ and explains His priesthood to be greater (Heb. 8.1-6; 9.11).

## B. The Characteristics of Our High Priest:

1. Christ was Divinely appointed (Hebrews 5.1-5; 7.11-16).
2. Christ is human as well as Divine (Hebrews 2.17; Romans 1.1-5).
3. Christ is an eternal High Priest (Hebrews 6.20).
4. Christ is a sinless High Priest (Hebrews 7.26).
5. Christ is sympathetic with our infirmities (Hebrews 2.18; 4.14,15).
6. Christ is our exalted High Priest (Hebrews 8.1).
7. Christ is the sanctified and sinless offerer (Hebrews 7.25-27; 10.11-14).
8. Christ is the sanctified and sinless sacrifice (2 Corinthians 5.21; Heb. 10.5-8).
9. Christ is our mediator and intercessor (1 Timothy 2.3-5).
10. The priesthood of Aaron may have possessed similar qualities, yet overall the Aaronic priesthood was insufficient. Thus, The Priesthood of Christ is better (Heb. 8.6).

## C. A Kingdom of Priests:

1. Like ancient Israel, the church of Christ also has priests. Although we are under a new system of law, there are many similarities between the priests of the Mosaic and Christian dispensation.

Mosaic

- a. Priests were only from Aaron's lineage, from the Levites.
- b. Priests served under the High Priest.
- c. Holiness was demanded from priesthood.
- d. Acceptable sacrifice had to be made according to the Law.
- e. Sacrifice was made for themselves and on behalf of others.
- f. Sacrifice could only be made in the temple.
- g. Priests carried out work of the temple.

Christian

- a. Priests are only from the church of Christ (1 Peter 2.9).
  - b. Priests serve under Jesus Christ, the High Priest (1 Peter 2.5).
  - c. Holiness is demanded from the priesthood (1 Peter 1.15,16).
  - d. Acceptable sacrifice is made according to the law (1 Peter 2.5).
  - e. Sacrifice is made for self and on behalf of others (James 5.16).
  - f. Sacrifice can only be made as members of the church of Christ (1 Peter 2.5; 1 Corinthians 3.16,17; Ephesians 1.3).
  - g. Priests carry out work of the church/temple (Ephesians 2.10).
2. Like the priest of ancient Israel, a priest in the body of Christ is defined in this manner:
    - a. Priest - (Eng.) a person having authority to perform the sacred rites of a religion.
    - b. Priest - (Gk.) one who offers sacrifice and is busied with sacred rites.
  3. Jesus Christ, the High Priest, has ordained the members of His kingdom as priests. Revelation 1.6 says Jesus has "*made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father...*" (cf. Rev. 5.10). For this reason, the apostle Peter describes the brotherhood as "*a royal priesthood*" (1 Peter 2.9,5). Our duties as priests in the body of Christ are much like those of ancient Israel (Num. 16.40; 18.1-7; Deut. 33.10). The New Testament priest must offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God (1 Peter 2.5).
    - a. Romans 12.1 - the giving of our entire self to God.
    - b. Hebrews 13.15,16 - the praise of our lips by singing, praying, preaching. Also, the distribution of benevolence & general good.
    - c. Philippians 4.18 - the distribution of financial assistance for missions.
    - d. Ephesians 5.2 - the walking in love and forgiveness of Christ.
    - e. 1 Corinthians 10.16-21 - the partaking of the Lord's Supper.
    - f. These sacrifices are after the figures in Psalm 141.2; Hosea 14.2; Revelation 5.8.
  4. Holiness was demanded from the Israelite priesthood (Lev. 22). Likewise, the N.T. priest must be separate from sin (2 Cor. 6.17,18; 7.1; 1 Peter 1.15ff).