

Epistle of Romans XIII Galatians 3

Fred R. Coulter—March 1, 1997

We are in the book of Galatians, the study translation. I want to show you how that Abraham, and the promises given to Abraham, all tie in with everything that God has done from Abraham down to now. That which is related to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, to the nation of Israel and then down to the Church and down to us and down to the Gentiles. All is related to Abraham.

As we've seen in Rom. 4, how everything ties back to Abraham, also in Gal. 3 everything ties back to Abraham. This is the whole point that Paul is making. There is nothing that is not related to Abraham in everything in the Bible, from the time of the calling of Abraham down to the fulfillment of the book of Revelation—everything ties back to Abraham.

Galatians 3:11: "Therefore, it *is clearly* evident that no one is being justified before God by *means of law...*" Why? How is a person justified before God? And 'before God' means *in the presence*.

- *Repentance!*
- *Grace!*
- *Forgiveness!*
- *Sacrifice of Christ!*

All applied to the individual. Is that a defined law? *No!* What is the purpose of law? *To point out what sin is!*

"...because *it is written*, 'The just shall live by faith.'.... [What does that mean? Remember, that ties right back to Rom. 1:17—*the just shall live by faith!* What does that mean? *You live by believing God!* That's what it means. That's how you *live by faith*. Whatever you do then is based upon **believing** what God has said.] ...Now then, the law is not based on faith... [It's not, it just defines. To believe comes from the *inside*. To have a law out here—on the outside—is not faith.] (here's the comparison—see sermons on *the Two Righteousnesses*—this series): ...but, **'The man who practices these things shall live in them'**" (vs 11-12). That's what God commanded them to do.

- Has anyone ever lived within the law, except Christ?
- Has anyone ever perfectly kept the law, except Christ? *No!*
- What happens when you break the law? *Sin!*

'Sin is the transgression of the law' (1-John 3:4)

- What happens when you have sinned?
- Now what state are you in? *You're a sinner!*
 - ✓ Which means you are cutoff from God!
 - ✓ Which means that you are subject to the death penalty!
 - ✓ Which means that you are under a curse!

Verse 13: "Christ has redeemed us from the **curse of the law**... [Notice that you cannot make that read that 'Christ has redeemed us from the law'—but] ...the curse of the law.... [We need the law to tell us what sin is, but when you sin it is **the curse!**] ...having become a curse for us..." (v 13).

Here is how Jesus became a curse for us. In other words, taking upon Himself the penalty for our sins, upon our repentance, but also the sins of the whole world in the overall scheme of God's plan. 2-Corinthians 5:19: "Which *is*, that God was in Christ... [That's something to think about—isn't it? God the Father—through the power of the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ—also experienced human living through Christ. Not directly as Christ did, but God was in Christ] ...reconciling *the* world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them..."

Here again we have the word *imputing*, which we also saw that when we repent and accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and are put in right standing with God the Father—God does what? *He imputes righteousness to us!* So here it says He's not imputing their trespasses to them: "...and He has entrusted to us *this* message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ; *and* God, as it were, is exhorting *you* through us. We beseech *you* on behalf of Christ, 'Be reconciled to God.' For He [God the Father] made Him [Jesus Christ] Who knew no sin **to be sin for us**... [He took the curse!] ...so that we might become *the* righteousness of God in Him" (vs 19-21). So you see how all that ties in with what we covered concerning the righteousness of God. that God gives you. That is something—*isn't it?*

We look at ourselves and we know our own human nature, and we know all the difficulties that we have within us. We know the carnalities which are still there—don't we? We can fool other people but we can't fool God. We can fool ourselves if we have self-deception, but on the other hand, God is willing to overlook that; God is willing to inspire us to want to do His way and serve Him by saying, 'If

you accept My Son Jesus Christ as your personal savior, and take that payment for your sins, then I will count you righteous. Before Me you are righteous.' That's something! The Protestants say, because that's so, 'it doesn't matter what we do.' That's not correct! Because that is so, we are to be inspired to want to love God, to want to change and overcome and serve Him. That's what it's all about when it's talking about 'He redeemed us from the curse.'

Galatians 3:13: "...Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us, (for it has been written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree'), in order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles by Christ Jesus, and that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (vs 13-14). That's the whole bottom line, right there.

Let's understand something concerning that we can't keep all of the law. He's comparing here the law of Israel with the covenant of Abraham. Based upon that, what are the laws that we cannot keep, which were required under the laws given to Israel? There are some laws we cannot keep.

- We cannot keep any of the tabernacle or temple laws—it doesn't exist!
- We cannot keep any of the priesthood laws—the Levitical priesthood does not exist any longer!
- We cannot enforce the death penalty—can we? *No!*
- We cannot enforce the civil penalties!

The way it was under the Old Covenant with Israel, if you didn't do these things you were under a curse. Now then comes along the fulfillment of the covenant with Abraham and we have a whole different standard. The standard is this:

1. Christ is the High Priest—so we still have a High Priest!
2. The temple is the temple in heaven above, not on earth—so we still have temple!
3. The sacrifice is the sacrifice of Jesus Christ—so we still have a sacrifice, but it's a greater sacrifice!

Is not the death of the Creator of mankind a greater sacrifice than that of any animal? *Yes!* Greater than the sum total of all animals and all human beings combined together, because He's the Creator! We have laws and commandments to keep—don't we?

4. Those laws and commandments to keep are those which can be written in our hearts and in our minds!

That includes the Ten Commandments; that includes any of the commandments which we can do

personally.

Let's understand something very clearly, so we will understand why we are to keep the Holy Days. One of the requirements that was under the Old Covenant was that when you would keep the three Holy Days—where would you come? *You would come to the place where God chose to place His name*, which was at the tabernacle, wherever it was when there was the tabernacle; the temple in Jerusalem when it was built. Now then, those people who later were in exile could not fulfill those commands—could they? And they weren't in covenant with God because they were exiled.

Jesus came and was preparing the time when the whole type of worship was going to change. We find in John 4:19, the account with the *woman at the well*: "The woman said to Him, 'Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, but you say that the place where it is **obligatory** to worship is in Jerusalem.' Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you shall neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the Father. You do not know what you worship.... [That's where Simon Magus was; that's where the Samaritan Jews were; and so forth.] ... We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is... [He preparing the way] ...when the **true** worshipers shall worship the Father **in spirit and in truth**... [Now then 'in spirit' means *written in your heart and mind*; 'in truth' means *according to the Word of God*.] ...for the Father is indeed seeking those who worship Him in this manner'" (vs 19-23). The place is no longer a requirement. The condition of *heart* is now the requirement. That is the requirement: *in spirit and in truth!*

Verse 24: "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must [duty-bound] worship **in spirit and in truth**." When Jesus came He said, 'I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.' He brought the Truth of God. He brought the Truth of how we are to worship Him and so forth. All of this ties in with what we are talking about here in Gal. 3.

Now we have all of those laws and commandments which we are to keep, that amount to:

- the Ten Commandments
- the Holy Days
- how to conduct our lives

Go through the book of Proverbs and see the daily admonitions for the things day-by-day that we are to do: the wicked/the righteous; the diligent/the slothful and all of that sort of thing. That's all part of it. We must do that. However, because the Church now is no longer a physical nation like Israel, since God

gave sovereignty to all of the nations, God gave to all of the nations the *administration of death*—correct? Whether they followed God’s law or not He gave it to them.

When you have that, you cannot have another sovereign organization come within a sovereign nation and exercise the death penalty. You cannot do that. God would not have that conflict. How long do you think the Church would last if, in whatever nation it were, when their was a transgressor—for example: within a congregation there was adultery, we had a trial, we gave the death penalty—we took them out and stoned them? We would be going against the sovereignty that God gave to the civil governments to do that. In the New Covenant—with the covenant that comes from Abraham down to us through Jesus Christ—we do not have the *administration of death*. That’s very important for us to realize.

Here’s a good example: When Christ was brought before Pilate, what did the Jews say? They said, ‘We have a law that He’s worthy of death because He’s made Himself the Son of God.’ But they couldn’t put Him to death—could they? They wanted to, so what they did, they manipulated and used the civil authorities to do it. That sounds like something you could even watch in the news today—correct? Why was that done? Some people like to say the Jews killed Christ. *No*, they had a part in it. The Jews like to say the Roman soldiers killed Christ. *No*, they had a part in it. Who killed Christ? *Every sinner that’s ever lived!* That’s why God had the Jews, on the one hand, for condemnation; Gentiles, on the other hand, to execute the death; but they were all involved, so that sin comes upon all people—Jews and Gentiles. All have to come to Christ, to that same sacrifice, for the forgiveness of sin.

Galatians 3:15: “Brethren (I am speaking from a human perspective), even when a man’s covenant has been ratified [confirmed]...”—and I explain the difference between covenant and testament:

- **A covenant** is and irrevocable promise, which must be fulfilled or you die. With covenantal law you can’t add to it, you cannot change it. Once the agreement is made, you must stand by it.
- **Testamental law**, for writing a will, says what’s going to happen after you die. Testamental law, with a will, you can change as long as you’re living.

I bequeath to my son, my daughter, and so and so. Then you find out that they are completely unworthy of it. What do you do? You make what is called a

codicil. You put an attachment to that will or write a new one. You can do it because the will is not in force until you die. In your second will you say, ‘So and so have turned out to be dirty rats. So therefore, I disinherit them. I will give them \$1 and they can have nothing of my estate.’ Covenantal law is different. The promises given to Abraham could not be broken! Nor could they be changed! That’s what he’s explaining here.

“Brethren (I am speaking from a human perspective), even when a man’s covenant has been ratified, no one nullifies *it*, or adds a codicil to it.... [That’s what the Greek literally means.] ...Now to Abraham and to his Seed were the promises spoken.... [He’s going from Abraham to Christ] ...He does not say, ‘and to *your* seeds,’ as of many; but as of one, ‘and to your Seed,’ which is Christ. Now this I say, *that the* covenant—ratified... [a confirmed covenant is standing; it must be executed from the time it’s confirmed] ...beforehand by God to Christ—**the law**... [which was given to Israel—correct?—law covenant to Israel] ...which was *given* four hundred and thirty years later, so as to make the promise of no effect” (vs 15-17). That is exactly what Judaism tries to do! To say that the covenant given to Israel—hence to Judah—is the greatest, most important thing. Therefore, everyone must keep the laws or the Noahide Laws, if you’re a Gentile.

Paul is saying it cannot annul, “...so as to make the promise of no effect.” What was promised? *The Seed!* What was promised? *The covenant, the same kind of covenant that Abraham had!* That is not the covenant that the children of Israel had. They did not have the same covenant. They had a separate covenant. Once we understand these and clarify this step-by-step, it will become very, very clear.

Verse 18: “For if the inheritance *is* by law...”—through law. Let’s look at it this way: We can look at covenantal law and we can look at testamental law. What if you made out a will—testamental law—and you had ten children. You said, ‘I’m going to give ten percent of everything I have to each one of my children.’ What if there was a law of the land which said that the state must first take fifty percent of that? That law will make your will of no effect. At a minimum, it will cut it in half. That’s what we’re talking about here.

“For if the inheritance *is* by law, *it is* no longer by promise.... [God promised eternal life. It starts out with the promise of eternal life to begin with (Gen. 15). So that’s primary to everything else coming down.] ...But God graciously granted *it* by promise.... [Since God did this, what’s the next question?] (If God did this): ...Why then the law? It

was placed alongside *the promises*... [the promises given to Abraham—you can't add to; you can't take away, but you can place it alongside.] ...for the purpose of *defining* transgressions, until the Seed would come to Whom the promise was made... [the promise was made to Christ] ...have been... [the law] ...ordained through angels in the hand of a mediator" (vs 18-19).

Who was the mediator of the covenant given to Israel? Who was the first mediator? *Moses!* Then you have *Joshua*. Later then it split down into two parties to do it. It was the *elders and the high priest*. Then it became the *high priest and the king*. They mediated.

Verse 20: "Now then, a mediator does not *act on behalf* of one..." A mediator negotiates terms between two parties. Did not Moses do that? When did Moses do this particularly? *When the children of Israel rebelled while he was receiving the Ten Commandments*. God said, 'Look, let Me aside, I'll destroy all of them and I'll replace My promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob through you.' What did Moses do? *He said, 'Oh, God, no! Blot my name out of the book of Life, but don't destroy all the children of Israel, lest the Gentiles say that You brought them out here in the wilderness to kill them.'* This is very important for us to understand!

"...but... [in respect to the promise of grace] ...God is one" (v 20). God acted unilaterally. There was no mediating between. God decided He was going to do this Himself.

Let's understand something that the only Mediator that we have today is Christ Who is God. What does this also tell us? Here's a very important principle—I realize this is technical and somewhat complicated, but let's see if we can make it easy: When you pray, is there a Mediator that you go to? *No!* You get right on your knees and you say, 'Our Father in heaven...' Christ is the Mediator at the right hand of God Who is also God. There's no human mediator between you and God—correct? What does this do for a Catholic priesthood? Think on that! *Makes it null and void! Non-Scriptural!* Think of what that does when you create a structure which imposes itself—which it can't do! The truth is, ***no man can come between you and God!*** They can claim that, and if you submit to that, then you're limiting your access to God, because of lack of faith.

- a Catholic priest cannot do it
- a Buddha priest cannot do it
- a minister cannot do it
- a headquarters cannot do it

You have direct access to God! That's exactly what we're talking about here in the overall principle.

Verse 21: "*Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? MAY IT NEVER BE!*.... [Most emphatically—'me ginoito!' Why? Because the laws came from the mind of God. They're not contrary to the promises. But they cannot replace the promises. That's what we're talking about.] ...For if a law had been given that had the power to give life, *then* truly righteousness would have been by law." What if there was a law which said if you kept the Sabbath perfectly for a thousand times you would make it into the Kingdom of God and be granted eternal life, and you did 999 and you died? God says, 'Nope, you didn't do it.' What if you had a long life and you did your thousand Sabbaths early—right around 20-years of Sabbath-keeping—now you are qualified, you are guaranteed to get in. God must give it to you. Therefore, by law, you can do anything you want to now and go sin, and God must take you in because you have fulfilled the law of the 1,000 Sabbaths and you kept them perfectly.

Now, do you understand why it cannot be *by law*? It has to be by promise and continuous faith and belief in God. "...For if a law had been given that had the power to give life, *then* truly righteousness would have been by law." What does the law have power to do? *To bring death! Not life!*

Verse 22: "But the Scriptures have shut up all things under sin..." That is a great and profound verse! That ties in with Rom. 3: 'All have sinned and come short of the glory of God!' All are shut up under sin! That means that God has said that everyone that 'I do not personally deal with, I will let them remain in a condition of sin. They can do good or evil, but unless I call them they are going to have to wait'—as we know for the second resurrection. But He 'shut them all up under sin.' When you watch the news and you see all this sin going on, don't say, 'How can that be? Isn't that terrible?' *NO!* God has just closed them off to sin. They can't understand! Shut them up!

There's going to be a great lesson learned in the long run, but the reason is this: "...so that by *the* faith of Jesus Christ... [Christ's own faith] ...the promise might be given to those who believe" (v 22). This belief then is based on loving God *with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul and all your being!*

- When you have that kind of belief and faith, do you want to sin? *No!*
- When you understand the laws of God as they apply to us today, are you not going to regulate your life with God's Spirit so that you're going to keep those laws? *Yes!*

That's the whole operation by faith and belief as we covered last time, by those who believe!

Verse 23: “Now before faith came, we were guarded under law... [He shut up everything unto sin, but then with the covenant to Israel that was a better state of being. That guarded you!] ...having been shut up unto the faith that was destined to be revealed. In this way, the law was our tutor *to lead us to Christ...*” (vs 23-24). The *King James* says ‘schoolmaster’ and that sounds kind of harsh, but the Greek really means ‘tutor’—*to teach*.

Have you ever had a tutor? I had to have two tutors. When I started college, after being in the service and worked in a restaurant for a couple of years, my English was so bad, I sort of snuck into the ‘bone-head’ English class, without taking a test. Six weeks down into it, the head of the department came in and asked, ‘How did you get in this class?’ I was getting a courtesy D-minus. It was bad! ‘You’ve got to take a test.’ That was Dr. Sharp who was also head of the German department. He had these blazing, steely eyes! So I took the test and it came back that I qualified for the bottom 25% of the class for English for the foreign born. That’s right! I was stuck with a problem! I had to pass ‘bone-head’ English or I could not continue at the college. I could not go back and take it the second time.

I asked if I could stay in the class if I get someone to help me. So, I got this private school Dr. Moore and she said come on over and they got a teacher. They had a private school which was in three homes, and it was only three block from my apartment. This teacher said, ‘Let’s see where you are, go to the blackboard.’ It brought back all those miserable days in English. She took out the seventh grade workbook and said, ‘Write out this sentence and diagram it.’ The thing I hated—I hated diagramming—came upon me! She said, ‘Okay, let’s try the sixth grade book. Fred, here’s the subject and here’s the verb—you got that?’ Finally, the third grade book—this is literally true!—third grade book! That’s where I started. I went three days a week and she had me stand there everyday, diagramming!

To make along story short, I brought my English up. Incentive to learn, incentive is a good thing and I had it. I learned it. I brought my grade on it, and I got a A-minus for the last six weeks and an A-minus on the final test, so I passed that course with a B-minus and went on to English 101. My other tutor was a German tutor. But I have to tell you, I learned more about English taking German than I did studying English. That’s what a tutor will do for you.

“...*to lead us to Christ...*” (v 24) That’s what it’s to do. To show us, to lead us to the point that we understand that we’re helpless;

- we need God’s way
- we can’t keep the law without God’s Spirit
- we need God’s forgiveness
- we don’t to die
- we do want eternal life

—and that comes *by promise!* That has to come from within your being because of what you believe.

Verse 25—this is the one where the Protestants tear everything apart: “But since faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor...” ‘Hooray! We don’t have to keep any law! No law!’ *Not so!*

Let’s go to Hebrews 10:12—I don’t know how they explain this: “But He [Christ], after offering one sacrifice... [of Himself] ...for sins forever... [It is profound that it is one sacrifice for all sins forever, so therefore, it had to be the Creator Who took that upon Himself. Only the Creator can make right what went wrong with what He created. That’s how He makes it right!] ...sat down at *the* right hand of God. Since that time, He is waiting until His enemies are placed *as* a footstool for His feet. For by one offering He has obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified.... [That is those who are called and receive the Holy Spirit.] ...And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said, “This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,” says *the Lord...*” (vs 12-16). That is after the days that the covenant with Israel would cease. Technically, when did the covenant with Israel cease? *When Christ died!* Technically, that’s when it ceased! There was the overlap of 40 years until the transition from the temple service over to the New Testament Church.

But He’s saying right here, v 16: ““This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,” says *the Lord*, “I will give My laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds.”” To actually etch them, and we know now, scientifically, that’s how we learn. Our brains are actually programmed by electronic chemical etchings in the brain. That’s where He wants the laws. Not on a tablet of stone that we can look at and say ‘that’s a nice memorial, look at that, that’s good.’ ***God wants it in your heart and your mind!*** That is the covenant that we are talking about here.

Galatians 3:25: “But since faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor... [We are directly under what? *God! Christ!* That’s what’s important!] ...because **you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus**.... [That’s what we all need to understand! We’re all sons of God! There aren’t any greater or lesser. Christ is the greater and all the rest of us are the lesser—if you want to put it that way.]

...For as many *of you* as were baptized into Christ did clothe yourselves in Christ” (vs 25-27). That’s an interesting expression—isn’t it? Referring to the garments of righteousness.

(go to the next track)

What is this telling us? Everything that we do is centered around Christ! You have “...clothed yourselves in Christ.” Let’s ask some simple questions:

- Did Christ ever sin? *No!*
- Are you to sin? *No!*
- If you are clothed with Christ, how does God look at you? *As if you are Christ!*

Isn’t that an amazing thing? You stop and think about that! ***God the Father views you exactly as He views Jesus Christ!*** This is to encourage us. In the long haul, if you don’t understand that, and how God has brought you into this relationship with Him, and you try and do things on your own, sooner or later what’s going to happen? *You’re going to get overwhelmed because you of yourself cannot stop sinning!* How infrequently you sin, you have a sinful nature, and you can’t stop sinning. That leads you to despair! God says, ‘Look, let’s reverse this whole thing!’

- you *believe* in Jesus Christ
- you *believe* in Me
- you *believe* in His sacrifice
- you *believe* that your sins are forgiven

Come to God in repentance and ‘I will count you as righteous as Christ.’ You’re going to have to do something. You’re going to have to be baptized into Christ.

Romans 5:20: “Moreover, *the* law entered, so that the transgression might abound; but where sin abounded, the grace did super-abound; so that even as the sin... [when you have a sinful nature, that’s what it’s called: *the sin!*] ...reigned unto death, in exactly the same way also, the grace... [which comes from Christ] ...might reign through righteousness unto life eternal through Jesus Christ our Lord” (vs 20-21).

Romans 6:1: “What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound?... [NO! NO! God does this magnificent, wonderful thing that, through grace, He deals with you] ...MAY IT NEVER BE!... [‘me ginoito’] ...We who died to sin... [we’re going to see how we died to sin] ...how shall we live any longer therein?” (vs 1-2). What happens when you find yourself sinning, and you don’t repent? *You get miserable—right? Why do you get miserable? Because God’s Spirit is leading you to repentance!* That’s what it’s doing!

“...how shall we live any longer therein?”

“Or are you ignorant that we, as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death?... [That’s the whole purpose and meaning of baptism.] ...Therefore, we were co-buried... [that’s what the Greek means] ...with Him through the baptism into the death... [His death] ...so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, in exactly the same way also, we should walk in newness of life. For if we become conjoined together in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be *in the likeness* of His resurrection” (vs 3-5). That is a marvelous thing, brethren! Tremendous thing to understand that!

“Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with *Him* in order that the body of sin might be destroyed... [*co-crucified!* Remember what Jesus said, ‘If any man follow Me, let him take up his cross and come after Me.’ So, not only did all humanity crucify Christ because of their sins, all humanity *will be* crucified through Christ, through the forgiveness of their sins—hand-in-hand] ...that our old man was co-crucified with *Him* in order that the body of sin might be destroyed... [progressive thing: growing, changing, overcoming] ...that we should no longer be **enslaved** to sin. Because the one who has died to sin has been justified from sin... [that is through the operation of baptism] ...Now if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him” (vs 6-8).

You see then how Romans helps clarify Galatians. I think one of the biggest mistakes that too many people do is that they immediately run to Galatians, start drawing all kinds of conclusions when they don’t understand Romans and they don’t understand Hebrews. That’s why going through the book of Romans, now when we come to the book of Galatians it’s easier to understand.

Galatians 3:27: “For as many *of you* as were baptized into Christ did clothe yourselves in Christ... [That doesn’t tell us the whole operation that we read in Rom. 6 about being co-crucified with Him.] (this is spiritually speaking, not physically. Spiritually speaking in your standing before God): ...There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for **you are all one in Christ Jesus**” (vs 27-28).

That does not change our physical being. That is our *spiritual standing!* All men are still men—hopefully! All women are still women—hopefully! That does not change, but our *standing before God changes!* Why is that important? *Under the covenant with Israel, you had this:* You had the Israelites, then you had the Israelite men, then the women; they always had to deal through their husbands. But, not with Christ! We all deal direct

with God the Father—men and women! Free and bond! Tall or short! Skinny or fat! Young or old! We can add all of that too it—you're all one in Christ!

Notice where this ends up, v 29: “Now then, if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to *the promise*”—to receive eternal life! That’s given by promise.

Let’s go back and look at the things concerning Abraham. Genesis 12:1: “And the LORD said to Abram... [Abraham got his new name before the resurrection—didn’t he? We didn’t! God changed it from Abram to Abraham.] ...‘Get out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father’s house into a land that I will show you.’”

I want you to notice the same requirements here. I want you to compare what Jesus said and what He required of Abraham. Luke 14:25: “And great multitudes were going with Him; and He turned *and* said to them, ‘If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.... [Almost identical! He said, ‘Get out of your country, and from your kindred’ and you go!] ...And whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple’” (vs 25-27).

What if Abraham said, ‘Lord, that’s requiring too much.’ That would have been it—right? God would have chosen somebody else—correct? *Yes!* Same thing. With Abraham we’re dealing with the beginning, so God says:

Genesis 12:2: “‘And I will make *of* you a great nation.... [We’re going to see that great nation was not Israel. That great nation is the firstborn at the resurrection, the Church. Is that not greater than any nation on earth? *Yes!*] ...And I will bless you and make your name great.... [Why? *Because everything that God does from this time on comes under the covenants that He made with Abraham! Everything!*] ...And you shall be a blessing. And I will bless those that bless you and curse the one who curses you. And in you shall all families of the earth be blessed.’” (vs 2-3). Notice, that is including all humankind. That’s why when we get back into Galatians it says, ‘There’s neither male nor female, Scythian or bond, and so forth—all mankind.

When God opened eternal salvation to mankind, He opened it to all nations within that timeframe of the apostles. Israel did not have eternal salvation ever offered to them. Otherwise, eternal life would come by law. But eternal life does not come by law. It comes by promise! Here’s the promise: “...all families of the earth be blessed.” You can take this one verse and tie in with that the 144,000 of Rev. 7; the great innumerable multitude of all kindreds and

nations; you can tie in with that toward our day and on back toward Christ; all those that God has ever called of every family, of every nation, of every race.

A very simple account, v 4: “Then Abram departed, even as the LORD had spoken to him.... [He did what God wanted. He believed God.] ...And Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the people that they had gained in Haran....” (vs 4-5). This was a huge caravan, brethren! This is like we would think of after watching some of the movies, a rich Middle Eastern sheik—who had money, wealth, everything! Now he was asked to leave the land. Why is that important? Left his family, left his land. Why is that important? *If you give up land, you virtually give up your status of being anything in that world!* So he had a lot required of him.

Genesis 15—this must have been when Abraham was about 84-years-old—somewhere around there. All the rest of the covenants of God come from chapters 15, 17 and 22, but chapter 15 is the primary. Genesis 15:1: “After these things the Word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, ‘Fear not, Abram, I *am* your shield and your exceedingly great reward.’” You might go through some of the Psalms and look up ‘shield’ and ‘great reward’ and see how God still does that for His people today. You can put in there Eph. 6: We’re to have the ‘shield of faith’ and all of this. That’s all part of it!

“And Abram said, ‘Lord GOD... [He’d been wandering around for about nine years, close to ten years, and he says—notice he talked with God. That’s the kind of relationship that God wants us to have with Him, that we can go to Him and talk to Him]: ...what will You give me since I go childless...’” (vs 1-2). If you’re 84 and you have no children and God keeps telling you that ‘in you shall all the earth be blessed.’ How’s that going to be? This is another lesson. Abraham proposed a way that he could work it out legally.

Here’s what he proposed: “‘...and the heir of my house *is* this Eliezer of Damascus?’.... [It was legal that if you had no children, you could take the leading servant in your house and make him your legal son and be heir to everything that you had. Here he was trying to propose a way, by law.] ...And Abram said, ‘Behold, You have given no seed to me; and lo, one born in my house is my heir.’ And behold, the Word of the LORD *came* to him saying, ‘This man shall not be your heir... [it’s not going to be by law, but by promise] ...but he that shall come forth out of your own loins shall be your heir.’” (vs 2-4). (sermons: *The Impossible Work of God I & II*). Whatever God does He does from an

impossible point of view as humans look at it.

If you put it today and you put it into today's world, and you said, 'Okay, let's take bets on this. What's your bet that at 100-years-old he's going to have a kid?' I don't know what the odds would be.

"And He [God] brought him outside and said, 'Look now toward the heavens... [So we know this has to be at night.] ...and number the stars—if you are able to count them.' [I think the *Schocken Translation* says, 'Now count the stars, count them if you're able to number them'—with that double emphasis.] ...And He said to him, 'So shall your seed be.' And he believed in the LORD. And He accounted it to him for righteousness" (vs 5-6).

Let's go to the book of Daniel 12. If the seed are going to be as the stars of heaven,' what is He promising first, before Israel? Daniel 12:1: "And at that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands for the children of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even until that time. And at that time your people **shall be delivered**—every one who shall be found written in the book.... ['delivered' means *raised*, because your name is in the book of Life.] ...And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they who are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament..." (vs 1-3) That's how you're going to be in glorified form.

So, what God was telling Abraham right at first was, He was giving him His promise of 'a great nation, of spirit beings who will shine like the stars.' That's why He didn't take him out onto the desert. There's a lot of desert in the Middle East and it would be very easy to do so—right? And say, 'Abraham, look at all this sand, so shall your see be.' He took him out and showed him the stars, because it is a promise of eternal life; everything hinges on that.

I think that it's amazing that when you begin to understand how much Abraham is involved in the plan of salvation, beginning from Gen. 15, it helps clear up so many different things. We're going to see all the way through the New Testament that Abraham is mentioned.

Matthew 13:43, talking about the time of the resurrection: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father... [eternal life; eternal glory—that ties right back in with Gen. 15] ...The one who has ears to hear, let him hear."

I want you to understand the consistency of God's promise given to Abraham flowing through the whole of the Bible. All of these verses we have

covered before, but never have we put them together in this sequence. The reason that I'm putting them together in this sequence is very important. The Bible tells us that we learn 'precept upon precept; here a little, there a little' and when you go back over these things you build. God gives the understanding: building and building and building and putting it together—very important.

1-John 3:1: "Behold! What *glorious* love... [there again, we have it based on love—don't we? God loved us first!] ...the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, **now** we are the children ['teknon'] of God... [Why does he say 'now' though we're not? *When God says something, it's going to happen*—correct? *Yes!* God has the power to make it happen.] ...and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is." (vs 1-2). We'll be like Him!

Revelation 1:13: "And in *the* midst of the seven lampstands *one* like *the* Son of man, clothed in a *garment* reaching to the feet..." Didn't we read where we 'clothed ourselves with Christ'? That means

- with His attitude
- with His love
- with His obedience

—and those translate into the righteousness of the saints are the fine linen—correct? This is marvelous, brethren, how this ties in from Gen. to Rev.

"...and girded about the chest with a golden breastplate. And His head and hair *were* like white wool, white as snow; and His eyes *were* like a flame of fire; and His feet *were* like fine brass, as if *they* glowed in a furnace; and His voice *was* like *the* sound of many waters. And in His right hand He had seven stars, and a sharp two-edged sword went out of His mouth, and His countenance *was* as the sun shining in its *full* power" (vs 13-16). Jesus said that the 'righteous shall shine as the stars of heaven.' Now we are the sons of God. All of this goes clear back to Gen. 15.

That's why when He solidified the promise to Abraham, he started with eternal life, *for a purpose*, and did it when Abraham was in circumcision, *for a purpose*. So that he would know that it would go to all people. Can you imagine the legal precedent that people would stand by if He did it *after* he was circumcised? If you think they had a feud about circumcision in the New Testament Church at the beginning of it, think of what would have happened if Abraham would have been

circumcised first, before this promise! All of these things are profound, fundamental building blocks.

Genesis 15:5: “And He brought him outside and said, ‘Look now toward the heavens and number the stars—if you are able to count them.’ And He said to him, ‘So shall your seed be.’ And **he believed** in the LORD.... [Believing God is the most important thing! Then you will act upon that belief! Whatever you believe you act upon.] ...And He accounted it to him for righteousness” (vs 5-6).

Read John 14, 15, 16, & 17—that is what Jesus instructed the disciples, and it is a detailed explanation on the Passover night of eternal life. That was the same night that He took Abraham out and said, ‘Look!’

Verse 18: “In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, ‘I have given this land to your seed, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates’—and so forth. There was the covenant. It began with eternal life, came down to the children of Israel, the land and so forth.

Genesis 17—another 15 years later, still waiting, 99-years-old; God wanted it not to be just difficult, He wanted it to be absolutely impossible! Nothing’s impossible for the Lord. Genesis 17:1: “And when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, ‘I *am* the Almighty God! Walk before Me and be perfect.’ Same requirement we have for the New Testament—right? *Yes!*

“And I will make My covenant... [Why does He have to make another covenant? Did we just not read that the Lord made a covenant with Abraham (Gen. 15:18)? *Yes!*] (Why does He come and say: ...I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly” (v 2). Why is there another covenant? We have one covenant, this is number two covenant—why? *You cannot add to (Galatians)! But you can make another covenant—correct? Yes! That’s why! Here’s another aspect to fulfill the covenant to the physical nation of Israel.*

Verse 3: “And Abram fell on his face. And God talked with him, saying, ‘As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations.... [then He begins defining it a little more] ...Neither shall your name any more be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. And I will make you exceedingly fruitful... [no child yet!] ...and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you.... [now we’re talking about nations on the earth and kings on the earth] ...And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your seed after you in their generations for an

everlasting [age-lasting] covenant, to be God to you and to your seed after you. And I will give the land to you in which you are a sojourner, and to your seed after you, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession. And I will be their God.’ And God said to Abraham, ‘And you shall keep My covenant, you and your seed after you in their generations. This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your seed after you. Every male child among you shall be circumcised” (vs 3-10).

Now we’re down to the physical nation, so we have a physical token. Before it was eternal life and then got down to the physical nation, but it was basically eternal life. Therefore, it was belief with no circumcision. Now then, here is a physical covenant being established:

“...Every male child among you shall be circumcised. And you shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin. And it shall be a sign of the covenant **between Me and you**.... [this is an entirely different situation than the first one. Gen. 15 has nothing to say about circumcision.] ...And a son of eight days shall be circumcised among you, every male child in your generations; he that is born in the house, or bought with silver of any foreigner who *is* not of your seed. He that is born in your house, and he that is bought with your silver, must be circumcised. And My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting [age-lasting] covenant” (vs 10-13). Then He gives the blessing to Sarah and so forth.

Verse 15: “And God said to Abraham, ‘As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but her name *shall be* Sarah. And I will bless her, and give you a son also of her. Yes, I will bless her, and she shall be a *mother* of nations—kings of people shall be from her.’ And Abraham fell upon his face and laughed, and said in his heart, ‘Shall a *child* be born to him that is a hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear?’ And Abraham said to God... [Let’s be practical about this!] ...‘Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!’.... [After all, Sari even encouraged that, Lord.] ...And God said, ‘Sarah your wife shall bear you a son indeed. And you shall call his name Isaac. And I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him” (vs 15-19). Then we’ll see in Gal. 4 that has to do with the Church. This also is a type of Christ.

Verse 20: ““And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. But I will establish My covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you **at this set time** in the next year.’ And He left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham” (vs 20-22). And

Abraham sharpened up his knives and they had a circumcision party.

I'm summarizing in modern language. What was the relationship that the servants had? They shared in the blessing, physically, that God gave Abraham. This is not an eternal life blessing here. This is physical blessing; this is raising up the nation of Israel through Isaac. They're being circumcised because they are the servants of Abraham and in the case of Ishmael because he was the son of Abraham, but Ishmael is not counted toward the promise; he's just one of the sons of Abraham. That's what happened here.

Verse 25: "And his son Ishmael *was* thirteen years old, *when* he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. In the same day Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised" (vs 25-26).

Genesis 22 actually relates to the sacrifice of Christ; there are quite a few parallels.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order* by Fred R. Coulter; except where noted

Scriptures in Romans from *The Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Romans, An In-Depth Bible Study* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptures in Galatians from *The Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Galatians, An In-Depth Bible Study* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Galatians 3:11-13
- 2) 2 Corinthians 5:19-21
- 3) Galatians 3:13-14
- 4) John 4:19-24
- 5) Galatians 3:15-25
- 6) Hebrews 10:12-16
- 7) Galatians 2:25-27
- 8) Romans 5:20-21
- 9) Romans 6:1-8
- 10) Galatians 3:27-29
- 11) Genesis 12:1
- 12) Luke 14:25-27
- 13) Genesis 12:2-5
- 14) Genesis 15:1-6
- 15) Daniel 12:1-3
- 16) Matthew 13:43
- 17) 1 John 3:1-2
- 18) Revelation 1:13-16
- 19) Genesis 15:5-6,18
- 20) Genesis 17:1-13, 15-22, 25-26

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 1:17
- 1 John 3:4
- Romans 3
- Revelation 7
- Ephesians 6
- John 14-17
- Genesis 22

Also referenced: Sermons:

- *The Two Righteousnesses I & II*
- *The Impossible Work of God I & II*

FRC:bo

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