

II. THE CONTINUING DESIGN OF MARRIAGE

There is much controversy over what Moses taught, what Jesus taught, and what the apostles taught about marriage, divorce and remarriage. Looking at the historical background* for their interpretations, my perception is that a chief problem has been that the leaders have a misunderstanding and disagreement on the different covenants that God has made with man (Hebrews 1:1-3; 2:1-5). Hopefully by taking the covenant approach we can find common ground and proceed from there. If we cannot agree on the covenants, we cannot possibly agree on the true teaching on this important subject. *See **Appendix**.

In addition to written and unwritten covenants, we will consider God's laws that have been revealed to all mankind.

II.1 *DISPENSATIONS AND COVENANTS*

There are principles approved by God from both the beginning and after the fall that have continued. They are reconfirmed as applicable in successive eras and covenants.

“That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; [even] in him” (Ephesians 1:10).

“If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward” (Ephesians 3:2).

II.11 DISPENSATIONS

Dispensations. A dispensation (Greek: *oikonomia*^{G3622}) is an administration and management of “household” affairs. As applied to God's affairs with men, we are living under what some men have called the “dispensation of the grace of God.” Generally, Bible scholars consider at least three major dispensations of God's managing mankind. First, there's the Patriarchal, where God appears to deal directly with the family through the "priesthood" of the father (e.g., Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob). Second, there is the Mosaic, where God deals with the families of the earth through Israel with a written covenant of laws. Third, there is that of Christ, where God deals with mankind through His Son Jesus (Hebrews 1:1-3) with His written covenant.

The "Patriarchal" is a convenient way to denote God's governance before the Mosaic Law was given. Hebrews 1:1-3 is a passage used. However, this passage is really talking about the Mosaic dispensation. The term "patriarchal" is used because God is pictured as communicating directly with the elder father who usually in turn appears to serve as the priest at the altar for the family. This is especially true with Job. **However, Job also served as priest for "his friends"** who were not members of his household. Abraham is also referenced as the patriarch of his family; although Abraham offers sacrifices, he in turn pays tithes to **Melchizedek** the priest king of Salem (Genesis 14:20). Abraham is called a prophet (Genesis 20:7). Jethro of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, is called a priest. All the while, God communicates to kings, Abimelech and Pharaoh in their dreams. For our purpose I wish us to look at God's delineated covenants in regard to marriage.

I grew up in Tennessee when religious groups formally debated what the Bible said on a subject. The public was invited. I remember one important point argued at the commencement of the debates: the disputants **must agree** on something basic in order to proceed. It's called *a posteriori*. Hopefully, dear reader, you and I can agree on the covenants in the Bible and will use this as our foundation of agreement.

*"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing** the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15, KJV).*

II.12 WHAT IS A COVENANT?

"Covenant" in English is translated from the Hebrew word *briyth* (*Strong's* H1285). *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* states that the word *briyth* is associated with "salt" that is used in eating food with friends and/or in sacrifices. Offerings to God were to be by a statute forever, "*a covenant of salt for ever before Yahweh*" (Numbers 18:19). *Mickelson Dictionaries* defines *briyth* as "a compact." The Greek word translated from the Hebrew is *diatheke*^{G1242} which is defined by *Thayer's Greek Definitions* as "1. a disposition, arrangement, of any sort, which one wishes to be valid, the last disposition which one makes of his earthly possessions after his death, a testament or will; 2. a compact, a covenant, a testament." *Strong's* and *Mickelson's* define the Greek word as "properly a **disposition**, that is, (specifically) a **contract** (especially a devisory will): - covenant, testament."

At least one source states that the Hebrew *berith* or *briyth* and its Greek translation *διαθηκη* refer to legal dispositions or pledges “which may or may not have the character of an “agreement.”ⁱ It appears to me that every “covenant” mentioned in the Bible is a compact, a binding agreement, especially the ones between God and men and there is power to enforce it.

“In the light of the foregoing evidence we can say that the covenant is a bond, an alliance, an agreement, a compact, a treaty, a pact, a contract. Its essential idea is union between God and man. God offers man partnership with Himself. It is a union and partnership based on a binding legal contract. It cannot be stressed too strongly that while the covenant is a fellowship between God and man, **it is a fellowship which has a legal basis.**”ⁱⁱ

II.121 Covenant of matrimony

God calls marriage between a man and woman **a covenant**: “. . .yet she is your companion and your wife by **covenant**” (Malachi 2:14). Men break covenants as Israel did with the Sinai covenant: “Which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord” (Jeremiah 31:32b).

Jesus warns against breaking the marriage covenant, saying, “Therefore what God has joined together, let no man separate” (Matthew 19:6). It is not that men CANNOT separate such, but that they had better NOT separate it. A noted commentator wrote that only God can put asunder (separate) a marriage and that He does that by death. I don't know where he arrived at that conclusion. Jesus says, "Don't lie"; that means you have the ability to lie and you can lie but Jesus doesn't want you to lie. Jesus says, "Don't put asunder a marriage"; that means you have the ability to put asunder a marriage and you might do that, but Jesus doesn't want you to do that. God judges you if you do that.

Notice also that Jesus doesn't say, "Do not divorce". He says, "Do not separate" or KJV's "asunder." Divorce terminates legally a marriage but God did not divorce northern Israel until they had broken the covenant with adulteries. “**My covenant that they** [Israel and Judah] **broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD**” (Jeremiah 31:32b, ESV2011). “**She saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce**” (Jeremiah 3:8, ESV2011). God had divorced northern Israel but not Judah at the time of the writing of this passage although she, the treacherous sister Judah, “feared not, but went and played the harlot also.” See

VIII. GOD DIVORCES ISRAEL (according to the Law).

II.122 God's Covenant With Noah

The Bible says that God made a covenant with Noah and **to his seed** after him (Genesis 6:18; 9:9; etc.). Noah offers an offering to God. Hence, the basic meaning of “covenant.” That covenant continues **with us** who are Noah's seed, today. Every time you see the rainbow it is a reminder of this covenant. It should remind us of God and His divine covenant with Noah's seed.

The “Open Bible” catalogs a list of covenants of God with man and begins with the Garden of Eden. This is followed by the Covenant of the curse, then the Noahic Covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant, the Mosaic Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, and finally the New Covenant. The “Open Bible” is correct if we accept strictly the definition of “covenant” as “agreement.”

In his book *The Scope of the Covenants*, James D. Bales makes the observation, “Although not called a covenant, God had some **agreement** with Adam and Eve.”ⁱⁱⁱ There is no sacrificial offering either to bind this agreement or that of the subsequent curse. This original creation scene is not specifically called a “covenant” in the Bible but is suggested as one in the *Open Bible's notes*. The second covenant identified is said to be the curse given after Adam and Eve's sin recorded in Genesis 3. Again, the word in Hebrew for covenant *briyth* is not used.

But the first time the Bible actually uses what is translated “covenant”^{iv} is that agreement God gives to Noah after the earth was destroyed by the Great Flood (Genesis 6:18).

II. 2 OVERVIEW OF THE COVENANTS

There are principles approved by God from both the beginning and the fall that have continued. They are reconfirmed as applicable in successive eras and covenants.

God's laws and promises originate from Him by means of covenants given to men through His prophets. "*Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world*" (Hebrews 1:1-2, ESV2011). All of God's laws concerning marriage are given in God's covenants.

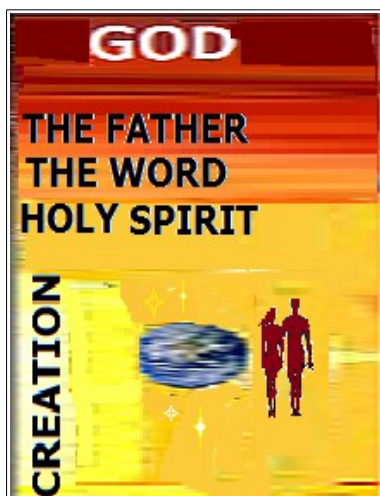


When the Bible in the "Old Testament" speaks of God, Jesus is included (John 1:1-3; Genesis 1:1, 26; Hebrews 1:1-3) as the "*Word*" in the Godhead (Acts 17:29). That means that Jesus is the author of the Old Testament as well as the New.

God has made a series of covenants with mankind. All were made according to His pleasure according to Ephesians 1.

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will" (Ephesians 1:4,5).

II.21 COVENANT BEFORE THE FALL



Creation. The word "marriage" is not in the KJV. It is a word derived from "matrimony" coined during the Middle Ages. According to the *American Heritage Dictionary* the word "matrimony" comes from Old French *matrimoine*, from Latin *mater* (mother). In this sense the word "marriage" has to do with bearing children. The first mother was Eve who was created from Adam in the beginning. Man and woman were duty-bound by virtue of creation to marry and bear children. Duration of this marriage initially was eternity which depended on an access to the tree of life.

In the Bible, marriage was called “*taking a wife [woman]*.”^v Examples in KJV: Genesis 24:3,4,7,37,38,40; 27:46; 28:1,6; Leviticus 18:18; 20:14; 21:7, 13; 22:13; Judges 14:3.

God created man (*anthropon*, singular in Greek LXX, Genesis 1:27) in two parts, male and female, at the very beginning. The two parts equalled one. They were in the image of the Godhead (compare John 1:1). This oneness in innocence was forever and ever as long as they had access to the tree of life. Their rebellion against God's command was sin. Sin separated them from the tree of life. So "forever" was not to be.

II.22 COVENANT AFTER FALL

Curse of sin. The first time the word “sin” is used is with Cain Genesis 4:7. The Hebrew word is *chattâ'âh chattâ'th*^{H2403}. The LXX Greek translation is *hamartano*^{G264} (Strong: “(properly) to miss the mark”). However, it is usually conceded that the act of Adam and Eve qualify as sin. Marriage is modified by the curse of sin. The curse of sin brought pain upon pain and sweat with a harsh environment. It brought death and its termination of marriage. The roles of marriage were defined with the woman being in subjection to the husband while the husband was a provider from the soil. Woman suffers in childbearing.



There was no restriction on whom to marry (per revelation). Incest is allowed. Cain has to marry his sister. No mention of divorce. They are to be "one flesh." There was *hardness of heart* because of sin: "*Every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*" (Genesis 6:5b, ESV2011; compare to Hebrews 3:8-19).

II.23 COVENANTS AFTER FLOOD (Genesis 9ff)

Post-Deluge. Marriage is reconfirmed. "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" is confirmed. They are to be "one flesh." The history recorded by Moses is understood **to be relevant to the Law** given through him. Hardness of heart in men of accountability is reconfirmed: "*I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart [is] evil from his youth*" (Genesis 8:21). A modification of man's role is that now he may provide food from meat but not the blood. During this

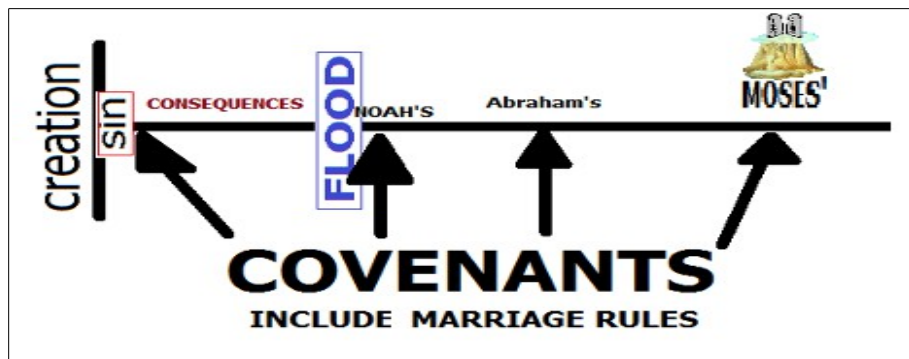
"Patriarchal period", **God commands Abraham to divorce** (Hebrew, *garash*¹⁶⁴⁴) **his second wife (Genesis 21:10)**. His "putting away" of the woman matches a prevailing Mesopotamian code that includes doing so **without** giving her a bill of divorcement. No restrictions on whom to marry.

II.231 Covenant With Abraham (Genesis 12)

Divorce is commanded. The covenant of promise and of circumcision is made with the individual Abraham that affects the Messianic promise and the nation of Israel. Divorce is commanded for Abraham to **put away** his second wife Hagar and her offspring because of her behavior towards his first wife Sarah and her son Isaac. No bill of divorce was required. This divorce was authorized because of Hagar's marital social violations. See [V.241.2 Sarah and Hagar](#).

II.232 Covenant At Sinai (Deuteronomy 4:13)

II.233 Deuteronomic (Moabite) Covenant added (Deuteronomy 29:1)



Sinai and Post-Sinai. These covenants complement that of Abraham's covenant. **Roles are reconfirmed by Law.** Man reconfirmed as head. **Wife is subject to her husband. Incest is forbidden.** Divorce is conditional upon finding in her an "**unclean command.**" In the New Testament Jesus calls it "fornication." The Law defines divorce as requiring, unlike the Mesopotamians' codes, not only a just cause but also a written bill of divorcement. Although the male is the one authorized to terminate legally and Scripturally a marriage, he must satisfy his role as husband or initiation is passed from him to his wife if she be neglected by provision of (1) food, (2) shelter, and/or (3) sexual duty. Initially, under the civil and social aspects of the Law of Moses, sexual violations were capital crimes and were not subject to divorce. However, in the Prophets, God extends divorce to include even these crimes by what He does and will do to sinful Israel because of their

unfaithfulness. Hence, what were formerly capital crimes such as adultery apparently are also understood as causes for divorce. This may be regarded as an act of mercy to the woman.

II.234 Covenant With David

This is an individual covenant made with David that affects the Messianic lineage. It complements the Covenant of Moses. No changes in marriage rules.

II.235 Writings and Prophets Added

The inspired Psalms and Prophets are given that support and enhance the Covenants and rules given at Sinai and Moab.

II.236 The Fruition of the Covenants Of Abraham, Moses, David

Prior to cross. Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, reconfirms the moral teachings of the Law. He reconfirms the continued "hardness of heart", clarifies and reconfirms the Mosaic rule for divorce limited to cause ("unclean command") with its requirement of a written bill of divorcement before "the putting out of the wife." This opposes the Pharisees' invented "oral traditions". Later, Jesus reconfirms to the Pharisees the divine purpose of God cleaving and man becoming "one flesh" in the married state. Rather than condemning divorce as the modern-day "Pharisees of oral traditions" declare, Jesus attacks anything that breaks asunder the sanctity of the marriage union such as the false teachings that the Pharisees were teaching the Jews.

II.236.1 The Earthly Ministry of Jesus

Contrary to popular teaching today, Jesus was not under His New Covenant but was born and died under the Covenant of Moses (Galatians 4:4). During the first century BC and AD, the Pharisees were developing what was called their "oral traditions." These were supposedly written down and compiled within another hundred years. Their premise was that the written Torah was given to authorize the rule of their "interpretations" which they claimed to have been given to Moses to pass down, only by mouth, through the generations. These oral interpretations were to take precedence over any written statement. The problem with the subject of divorce was that there were strong disagreements over what the "oral interpretations" were supposed to have been. This highlights the frivolousness of their position.

II.236.2 Jesus Deals with the Oral Traditions

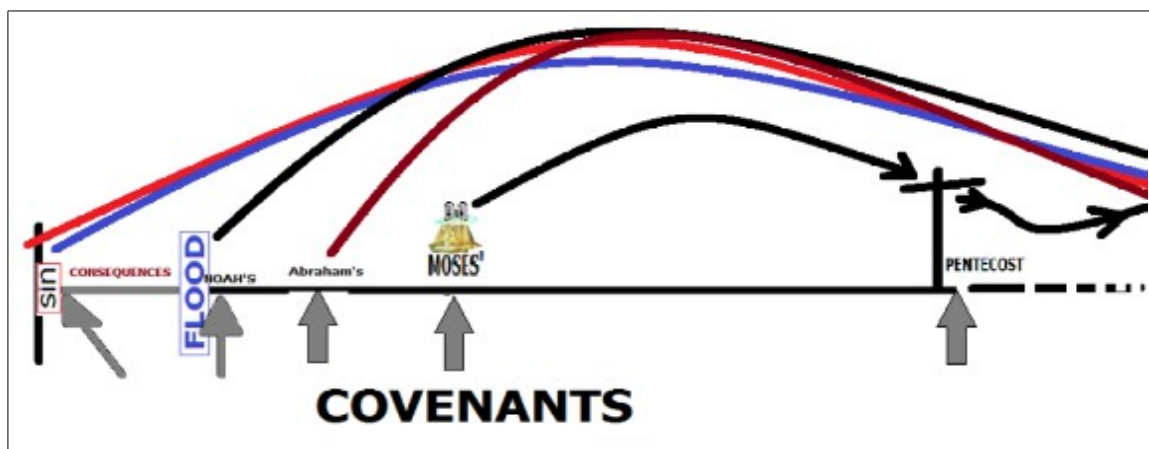
Hillel the Elder of the Sanhedrin (c.60 BCE – c.10AD) had legalized his "oral tradition" of Moses giving man authority to get a divorce for any and every cause (later included in the written Jewish "oral" Talmud). Shammai was the most eminent contemporary and the opponent of Hillel and he replaced Hillel at his death. Shammai in his powerful role said that the "oral tradition" of divorce was for a man to only divorce his wife for a serious transgression. These "oral" teachings [of both Hillel and Shammai schools of thought] dominated the lessons presented by the Pharisees and Scribes to the people. These teachings are what Jesus addressed as, "You have heard" and not "What is written."

This was the heart of the matter when Jesus dealt with the teachings of the Law of Moses on divorce (in the sermon on the mount; later at the Perea confrontation). Jesus prefaced his comments on divorce with His personal guarantee that He was not destroying (altering) Moses on the subject. His collision was with the false teachers of the first century. Jesus did not violate nor teach against the Law of Moses (Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 4:14).

II.24 NEW COVENANT OF JESUS

(Jeremiah 31:31-33; Hebrews 8:8-13) **effective beginning at Pentecost after cross**

Post- Cross. After the cross, **roles** in marriage are reconfirmed "from the Law" by the New Covenant of Christ. Married couples have the Lord and His church as a model. The apostle Paul reconfirms what is bound and what is loosed in marriage in his epistles. Peter also reconfirms the relationship roles in marriage.



The commandment to love God is reconfirmed, but shadows given by the Law of Moses forecasting Jesus' sacrifice and that were contrary to Jew and Gentile are affirmed as terminating at the cross. Shadows include animal sacrifices, priesthood, place of worship, how to worship, eating of meats, observing holy days, and sabbaths and laws contrary to fellowship of Jew and Gentile. These are nailed to the cross. Marriage laws are not included in the shadows (e.g., "as also saith the Law", 1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:8-14; Ephesians 5:20-32; 1 Peter 3:1-7) but are reconfirmed.

Moral obligations from the Law are reconfirmed. To **love your fellowman and fellow-woman** is reconfirmed which list the six commandments which Jesus had emphasized obedience to them from the heart.

Marriage roles are reconfirmed with the emphasis of man and wife, "cleaving" and "the one flesh." Man is to love his wife as his flesh and to love her like Christ loves the church. Woman is to be subject as the Law of Moses said and reverent to her husband like the church is to be to Christ. Marriage partner selections reconfirmed from Law of Moses. The divorce exception rule from the Law is reconfirmed, identifying the Hebrew "*unclean thing*" with the Greek word "*porneia*", translated in the KJV as "fornication." The Spirit through the Jerusalem "council" of Acts 15 reconfirms the following prohibitions from Noah and Moses: "eating meats offered to idols", "eating food that's been strangled", "consumption of blood," and "**fornication.**"

Capital offenses and civil disobedience are subject and punishable by the world's civil governments and not the church.

With the establishment of the church, the apostles' doctrine reinforces the moral teachings of God. The apostle Paul elaborates on marriage and clarifies its requirements. There is no problem of Paul contradicting Jesus (1) since Jesus spoke **before** the cross under the Law of Moses and Paul speaks after the cross, when the new covenant comes into effect and (2) since the same Spirit of God spoke through each one. God is the same today and forever and does not wince or change to suit man's nature as some would argue.

II.3 GOD'S LAWS

II.31 LAW IS THE TARGET FOR MAN'S LIFE

Deism is the view that an extremely intelligent and powerful being created the universe, but he no longer has any contact with the universe. Nor does this being respond to the prayers and concerns of people. This creator is akin to a watchmaker who makes a watch, winds it up, and then walks away

from it forever. Deism was popular among American and European elites during the time of the American Revolutionary War. Thomas Jefferson is said to have been a deist.^{vi}

A variation might be the view of a Creator who finally decides to inspect His creation, comes back and sees a troubled world and decides to save some of the creatures. However, the God of the Bible is not like that. He has always cared for His creation. One proof is in His Laws.

"Law" in Hebrew, according to the *Ancient Hebrew Lexicon of the Bible*, is **towrah**^{H8451} and means, "teaching: The direction one is to take in life." Brown-Driver-Briggs' Hebrew Definitions defines it as "law, direction, instruction" and says it originated from **yarah**^{H3384} that has the idea of being directed, thrown or shot (like an arrow)." The equivalent in Greek is **nomos**^{G3551} that carries with it the same idea of "law (through the idea of prescriptive usage)."^{vii}

II.311 Sin Is Falling Short Of Our Target

The image of law is suggested to me by a shooting arrow that is aimed to hit a specific mark, such as a bullseye. And to miss that mark is "sin."



Sin: "To miss the mark"

Mickelson's Dictionary defines the Hebrew for *sin* as "to miss."^{viii} *Thayer* identifies the Greek as "to miss the mark; to err, be mistaken; to miss or wander from the path of uprightness and honour, to do or go wrong; to wander from the law of God, violate God's law, *sin*."^{ix}

The Bible defines *sin* by describing it. "All unrighteousness is sin" (1 John 5:17). Again, sin is "lust conceived": "*Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin*" (James 1:15). One can sin by being a respecter of persons: "*But if ye have*

respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors" (James 2:9). One who knows to do good can sin by not doing good (James 4:17). "*Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law"* (1 John 3:4). If one doesn't believe in Jesus today, he has sinned; he misses God's target in life for him (Galatians 3:22).

In short, God's law is what we are supposed to do in life and sin is not doing it. We can say that God has given man a target for life. If he misses his target, he is a sinner.

We sometimes think of God's Law as being only commandments, but God's Law is more than that. For example, God's "perfect Law" in Psalms 19:7-9 consists of testimony (**witness**), statute (**appointed mandate**), commandment (**ordinance**), fear (**instructive moral reverence**), and judgment (**righteous decree**). " In keeping of them **(the listed aspects)** [there is] great reward" (Psalm 19:11).

II.312 God's Target For Man Existed From the Beginning

"Wherefore, as by one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12).

II.312.1 If Sin Existed, Law Existed.

We know that God's law has existed from the beginning because sin has existed since the beginning. If all men (from Adam on) have sinned, then God has set a target by law from the beginning. Divine law continued from Adam and Eve (Romans 5:13). This would include God's law of unity in marriages that Jesus referred to.

II. 312.2 The Law of Moses Was An Addition To Law

The Law of Moses **was (1) added** because of transgressions in order to **(2) tutor** for the coming of the Seed (Jesus) and the faith in His gospel. "*Wherefore then [serveth] the Law [of Moses]? It **was added** because of transgressions, **till the seed** should come to whom the promise was made"* (Galatians 3:19). "Added" is *prostithemi*^{G4369}; i.e., "to place additionally, i.e. lay beside, annex, repeat" (*Mickelson*). It was added to what?

The Law of Moses was added because of **transgressions** (*parabasis*^{G3847}, "violations"). Violations of what? The apostle explains that before the Law of Moses there was sin in the world. "*For until the law [i.e., the Law of Moses]*

*sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is **no law***" (Romans 5:13). In order for there to be sin **there had to be law** (compare 1 John 3:4).

This means that we should be able, if God has revealed it to us, to find God's law existing before Moses. And we do. First, there is the existence of faith that generates grace from God. Second, there are righteous and unrighteous acts from men. There is a standard to which the people had become "corrupt, violent, bad, and evil."

II.32 FAITH WAS FROM THE BEGINNING

PROOF OF AN UNCHANGING GOD

God has left a target for one's life from the beginning of Creation; it is called "law." To miss the target is to "sin."

JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD. GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE SENT HIS SON TO DIE FOR IT. Some would have us to believe that God has changed from uncaring or downright hostility toward man and that in Jesus He changes by caring for man. The fact that God has always given man a target for living shows that God has cared all along. Our God is unchanging.

II.321 If Faith Exists, Law Exists

The Law of Faith is contrasted in the book of Romans with the Law of Works (identified as the Old Covenant's "**Law and Prophets**," Romans 3:21). "*Where [is] boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of **works**? Nay: but **by the law of faith***" (Romans 3:27). Faith consists of law. "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17).

II.322 Faith Is an Unchanging Target

"But without faith [it is] impossible to please [him]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6).

Faith is used in at least two different senses. One is to trust in something and the other is the something (object) of that trust.

An object. It is true that "**the Faith**", a label for the NT doctrine, was to be revealed when the Seed came (Galatians 3:24, 25). The apostle Paul calls it

"**that** faith" in verse 25. But the term is **not limited** to the *system of beliefs* of the New Testament as one can readily perceive in our text (Hebrews 11:6).

Conviction. Among the English dictionaries it is apparent that a favorite definition of the word "faith" is a "firm belief in something **for which there is no proof:** complete trust." This, however, **is not** the Bible "faith". Mickelson's *Enhanced Strong's Dictionaries* says that the Greek word for "faith", **pistis**, means "*conviction.*" In Hebrews 11:1, the first verse of our text, "faith" is defined as "*the substance of things hoped for, **the evidence of things not seen.***" Bible *faith* is a **knowing** faith backed by **evidence**.

The inspired writer continues to verse 6 and states an authoritative assertion. No man or woman can please God without **conviction** in God existing and rewarding him [**for obeying Him**]. According to this chapter, such faith has been an ongoing requirement of mankind.



II.323 Faith Required Before The Flood

Noah. " *By faith Noah, **being warned of God** of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, **prepared** an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith*" (Hebrews 11:7). Faith exists.

Abel. " *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God **testifying of his gifts:** and by it he being dead yet speaketh*" (Hebrews 11:4). Faith exists.

Enoch. *"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God"* (Hebrews 11:5). Enoch **walked** with God (Genesis 5:23,24) and he did it *"by faith."* Faith exists.

1. Noah "became" the heir of righteousness which is by faith. Noah **was told what to do.** Law. He did it. He did it by faith in God's command. In order for faith to exist, law must exist.

2. Abel was righteous because he offered his sacrifice by faith. Was he not **told** then what sacrifice to offer? God **testified** (law's witness) by accepting his gifts. If he was told and he responded, then there was law. Abel did not sin. Now contrast this with his brother's two actions.

3. Enoch **was told** that he pleased God and God testifies to him (Hebrews 11:5). He did it by faith. Was he (like Noah) **told** what to do? Consequently, his reward was great: he did not see death (compare with Psalm 19:11). In order for faith to exist, law must exist.

How is faith acquired? **Today** we are told it comes by hearing (**instructed**; attending to) the Word of God (Romans 10:17). The account of Noah demonstrates that it came to him by hearing the Word of God. So in order for faith to exist, law must exist.

Can we not then conclude from faith before the flood that there was law? Those that failed to please God, sinned, since "sin" is missing the target and transgressing God's law.

II.324 Faith Was After The Flood and After Sinai

The "faith" chapter in Hebrews continues with a list beginning with Abraham, *"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed"* (11:8). Abraham and immediate descendants preceded the Law of Moses.

The following are listed as having approval by their faith: Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses and Israel under Moses. After the Law of Moses was given, those that receive approval do so by their faith: Israel and Rahab at Jericho, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, Samuel, and David. *"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect"* (11:39,40).

Just as Noah was justified by faith (Hebrews 11:7) because he did what God told him to, so then did these others, Abraham at the head of the list, obeyed God by faith. Noah was instructed to build an ark; Abraham was instructed to leave Ur and go to an appointed place; and others were told something else to do. They all had **one thing in common**: "pleasing faith." Followers of Jesus likewise are to contend earnestly for [our instructions in] "*the Faith*" (Jude 3; same words in the Greek in Ephesians 2:8-11) that **saves us** by grace ("pleasing God").

Although the instructions for persons, nations, or all mankind may differ through time and place, the one unchanging thing is faith. Our unchanging God demands the unchanging law of faith as a common denominator for it all. "*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*" (Romans 10:17).

II.4 UNWRITTEN LAW CONTINUES FROM CREATION

II.41 PROOF OF AN UNCHANGING GOD

Moses pointed out to Israel that the **Horeb Law** (*Ten Commandments*, Deuteronomy 4:13) had been made exclusively with rescued Israel. "*The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb [Sinai]. Not with our fathers did the LORD make this covenant, but with us, who are all of us here alive today*" (Deuteronomy 5:2-3).



Jonah. Now Jesus said that the book of Jonah was a true account. He verified that Jonah preached "repentance" at Nineveh, Assyria; that Jonah was swallowed by a

prepared fish; and that Nineveh repented. This is very interesting because (1) Nineveh **was not** Jewish, (2) they **were not** under the Law of Moses, (3) and yet **they were** sinners in need of repentance. **If** they were sinners, what law were they transgressing? Some say that they were still under "the patriarchal dispensation" since the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 4:13; 5:1-4) were exclusively for Israel.^x See **II.311 SIN IS FALLING SHORT OF OUR TARGET.**

Any law under what is called "the patriarchal dispensation" is admittedly unwritten. The apostle Paul explains to what law the Gentiles (non-Jewish nations) were accountable.

II.42 CONCURRENT WITH THE WRITTEN LAW

"The^{xi} Law" refers to the written Law of Moses ("oracles", Romans 3:1,2). The Gentiles had an equivalent unwritten law manifested in them. *"For when the Gentiles, which have not **The Law, do by nature* the things contained in The** [written] **Law, these, having not The** [written] **Law, are a law** unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law **written in their hearts**, their conscience also bearing witness, and [their] thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)"* In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel" (Romans 2:14-16, KJV).

* *"For when the Gentiles, who do not have **The Law, instinctively** do what **The Law demands**" (HCSB, ISV, OEBus versions^{xii}). "Instinctively" or "by nature" refers back to God's target at beginning of the context in chapter one: *"**Because that which may be known of God is manifest in [to] them; for God hath shewed [it] unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, [even] his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse**"* (Romans 1:19,20).*

James D. Bales in *The Scope of the Covenants* which deals with his variation of the "adultery only theory" asserts that Thomas "Warren and I are in agreement on: (1) The fact that Romans 1:18-2:15 teaches that man can know certain things concerning God's existence, conscience, and moral law even apart from God's revelation of Himself through inspired prophets. (2) We agree that these things can be known today in the same way they were known by Gentiles prior to the cross."^{xiii}

Creation teaches a natural sense of right and wrong: "*When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained...*" (Psalm 8:3). If the philosophers could argue for their reasoning from nature, could not the common man clearly see it as well? In Socrates' love for wisdom he concluded there to be unity and beneficence of deity^{xiv} in contrast to the society's multiple gods. But when he was condemned in court for corrupting the youth with such reasoning, he asked a friend to sacrifice to an idol for him. "*Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man*" (Romans 1:22, 23a).

Later philosophers perceived and used the beneficence apparent in nature to formulate their own particular theories.^{xv} John Stuart Mill argued for a single standard of beneficence that allows man to decide objectively what is right and wrong, the basic foundation of morals. David Hume argues that natural benevolence accounts for the origin of morality. Immanuel Kant finds a vital place for beneficence in the moral life. Peter Singer even contends that persons in affluent nations are morally obligated to prevent something bad or evil from happening to others less fortunate in the world.^{xvi}

Plato is certainly not a writer of the Bible; however, he is an esteemed Greek philosopher who just happened to recognize an "unwritten law" in society. Plato^{xvii} distinguishes law "into written and unwritten: the written law is that which was used in commonwealths; and that, "which was according to custom or nature", was called unwritten, such as not to go to market naked, nor to be clothed with women's clothes; which things were not forbidden by any [written] law, but these were not done because forbidden by the unwritten law."

In Romans 7:7-13 the apostle said that The Law of Moses was good in that it defined sin suggested by nature for what it was. "*Wherefore the law [is] holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.*" The problem with common interpretations of religion, the feeling is that if we didn't have the Bible, we would not be sinners. The apostle counters that view: his point is that the Bible exposes corrupting nature as not only to be sin, but exceeding sinful; sin is contrary to the pure and holy nature of God and the written law makes it perceived without question as "sin."^{xviii}

It is not legislation of written law against murder that makes murder wrong. It was wrong for Cain to kill his brother with or without written law. It is wrong to lie and to break one's word in a covenant, with or without written law. It is not a written law that makes it wrong. Is not Paul saying that it is the wrong that brings the punishment upon us. The written law is good for it exposes sin, but **it is the sin that brings death.**

Again, the apostle points out the co-existence of the law of nature even in his day with the Kingdom's law. To the saints in Rome, "*To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win Jews; to those under THE LAW, like one under THE LAW, — though I myself am not under THE LAW, — to win those under THE LAW,*" [of Moses, gw: "*you call yourself a Jew, and rest in the law*" (Romans 2:17a)]. "*(I, Paul, became) to those who are without that law, like one without the law [*anomos*^{G459}; Mickelson's dictionary: "2. not subject to Jewish law; 3. a Gentile"] — (I, Paul) not being without God's law but within Christ's law — to win those without the law" (1 Corinthians 9:19-21, HCSB).*

Why would Paul, while being careful to be faithful to Christ, behave as a servant to all men; i.e., those under the Law of Moses and those not under it? His answer: "To win both Jew and Gentile." So then all men are subject to obeying the gospel for salvation from either the sins committed under Moses or under the law of nature (Romans 1:16; 2:12-16; Acts 17:30,31). Philosophy cannot save a sinner; the Law of Moses cannot save a Jew either.

God made man and woman in His image. The apparent design of creation makes a person accountable to his Creator. Paul said to the Gentiles that they must seek God "*if haply they might feel after Him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being... God commandeth all men every where to repent*" (Acts 17:27,28a, 30). Although they were not Jews and amenable to that Law, nevertheless, they are condemned for sins against law: their conscience condemning them (Romans 1:20; 2:14-16). Paul commanded the pagan Athenians to repent. Jesus sent the apostles into all the world preaching repentance (Luke 24:47). Repentance for what? The world was not under Moses and the Prophets.

II.43 LAW EXISTS IF JUDGMENT FOR UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

UNRIGHTEOUSNESS WAS FROM THE BEGINNING

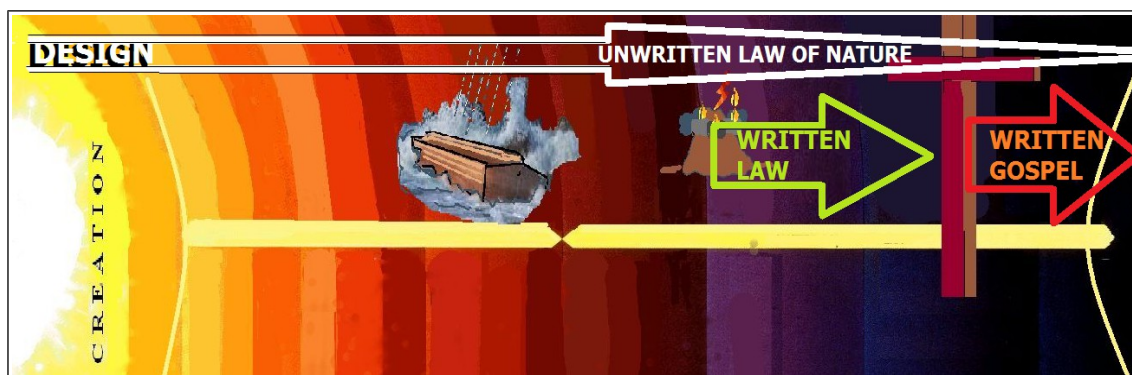
"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Romans 1:18). The apostle in Romans explains that there existed law from the beginning because God's wrath was against man's rebellion through **ungodliness** (*asebeia*^{G763}: "irreverence for God") and **unrighteousness** (*adikia*^{G93}: "man's injustice and wrongfulness"). This description demands law. The following list describes sins of mankind before and **following the Great Flood**; they are violations against God's design *phusikos*^{G5446} in creation (1:20-27; 2:14,15).

1. They refuse to serve and worship the true God. Creation **obligates** man to acknowledge God (Romans 1:20). Instead, man turns and honors his own imaginations.
2. They violate God's natural (*phusis*^{G5449}) design by dishonoring their bodies (Romans 1:24, 26). Their error (Greek, *plane*^{G4106}; *Mickelson's Enhanced Strong's*: "a straying or wandering from the straight path") received due penalty. A straight path indicates the target of natural law.
3. "*Being filled with all unrighteousness (adikia*^{G93}, *: '(legal) injustice; quality; act; wrongfulness [of character, life or act]')." This "filling" is followed by a list of four sins: "*fornication (porneia*^{G4202}, *: "prostitution [including adultery, incest, and porn]; unwedded stimulation of sexual desire; idolatry"), *wickedness (poneria*^{G4189}, *: "depravity; malice; plots"), *covetousness (pleonexia*^{G4124}, *: "avarice, fraudulency, extortion"), *maliciousness (kakia*^{G2549}, *: "badness; depravity; malignity; trouble"). *definitions from *Mickelson's Enhanced Strong's Greek and Hebrew Dictionaries*.
4. "*Full of envy (phthonos*^{G5355}, *: "ill-will, i.e. jealousy)" is followed by "*murder; debate (eris*^{G2054}, *: "a quarrel, wrangling"), *deceit (dolos*^{G1388}, *: "a trick, wile"), *malignity (kakoetheia*^{G2550}, *: "bad character; mischievousness"), *whisperers (psithuristes*^{G5588}, *: "a secret slanderer"), *backbiters (katalalos*^{G2637}, *: "talkative against, i.e. a slanderer"), *haters of God, (theostuges*^{G2319}, *: "hateful to God, i.e. impious"), *despiteful (hubristes*^{G5297}, *: "an insulter, i.e. maltreater"), *proud (huperephanos*^{G5244}, *: "appearing above others; haughty"), *boasters, (alazon*^{G213}, *: "a boaster or braggart"), *inventors of evil things (epheuretes*^{G2182}, *: "a discoverer, i.e. contriver"), *disobedient to parents (apeithes*^{G545}, *: "unpersuadable, i.e. contumacious"), *without understanding (asunetos*^{G801}, *: "unintelligent,

wicked"), *covenantbreakers* (*asunthetos*^{G802}; *: "not agreed, i.e. treacherous to compacts"), *without natural affection*** (*astorgos*^{G794}; *: "hard-hearted towards kindred"), *implacable* (*aspondos*^{G786}; *: "without libation; truceless"), *unmerciful* (*aneleemon*^{G415}; *: "merciless"). *definitions from *Mickelson's Enhanced Strong's Greek and Hebrew Dictionaries*. ** (Compare to Matthew 19:8).

"Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them" (Romans 1:32). The knowledge of the judgment of God here is **epiginosko**^{G1921} (*Mickelson*: "1. to know upon some mark, i.e. recognize; 2. (by implication) to become fully acquainted with, to acknowledge"). The knowledge of this decree is not through the Mosaic Law since it is mentioned in contrast in Romans 3:1. If we take Romans 1:32 along with 1:20 and Romans 2:14-15, God's truth in nature instructs man's conscience of impending judgment for violating natural order.^{xix}

This should be sufficient to show that God's basic laws from creation have continued throughout all dispensations with or without covenants. God is morally unchangeable; His written Law is consistent with His natural Law. He has been consistent historically in requiring in man, faith, mercy, and justice (Matthew 23:23).



Someone could reasonably ask, "If I'm not Jewish and subject to Moses' Law, and I'm not Christian, and therefore not subject to the Kingdom's Law, then what law would I violate to be called a sinner?"

After Paul's treatise on the status of Jews and Gentiles, he concludes, "for there is no difference; all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). To the Gentile sinners in Athens, Paul commands, "*And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent* Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge

the world in righteousness by [that] man whom he hath ordained; [whereof] he hath given assurance unto all [men], in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:30, 31).

If a person is not a Jew, he is still a sinner because he is or has broken the unwritten law of Creation. Jesus therefore commissioned his inspired emissaries, "*And that **repentance** and remission of sins should be preached in his name **among all nations**, beginning at Jerusalem.*" (Luke 24:47).

II. The Mosaic Covenant follows previous covenants by God to man: the covenant in the Creation, the covenant of the curse, the covenant with Noah's descendants, and the covenant to Abraham and descendants. The covenant to David was added, and culminated in the new covenant through Jesus which is delivered by His Spirit through the apostles. All are consistent from an unchanging God. Moral obligations from the Law of Moses are reconfirmed under the New Testament. Prohibitions from Noah and Moses are reconfirmed. "Shadows" in the Law are not.

TRUE OR FALSE?

- T_F_ 1. A CONTRACT CAN BE BROKEN BY EITHER PARTY; THEREFORE, A COVENANT IS NOT A CONTRACT.
- T_F_ 2. A DEFINITION OF A COVENANT (*diatheke*^{G1242}) IS "A CONTRACT."
- T_F_ 3. MARRIAGE IS A COVENANT THAT CANNOT BE BROKEN BY MAN.
- T_F_ 4. MARRIAGE IS A COVENANT THAT CAN BE BROKEN BY MAN BUT WITH CONSEQUENCES.
- T_F_ 5. JESUS SAID, "DON'T DIVORCE."
- T_F_ 6. JESUS SAID, "NO MAN CAN PUT ASUNDER A MARRIAGE."
- T_F_ 7. JESUS SAID THAT WHAT GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER LET NO MAN SEPARATE.
- T_F_ 8. GOD WOULD NEVER DIVORCE.
- T_F_ 9. GOD DIVORCED HIS WIFE, ISRAEL.
- T_F_ 10. SINCE THE FALL, A WIFE IS EQUAL TO HER HUSBAND IN THE MARRIAGE.
- T_F_ 11. MOSES TOLD THE PEOPLE TO DIVORCE BECAUSE OF ADULTERY.
- T_F_ 12. THE WIFE'S DESIRE SHALL BE TO HER HUSBAND, AND HE SHALL RULE OVER HER.
- T_F_ 13. ACCORDING TO MOSES ADULTERY WAS A CAPITAL CRIME.
- T_F_ 14.. GOD NEVER ADDED TO THE LAW OF MOSES.
- T_F_ 15. JESUS CONDEMNED THE PHARISEES BECAUSE THEIR TEACHING WAS CONTRARY TO THE NEW COVENANT.
- T_F_ 16. GOD ADDED DEUTERONOMY, THE WRITINGS, THE PROPHETS, AND THE COVENANT WITH DAVID TO MOSES.
- T_F_ 17. THE PHARISEES BECAUSE THEY TAUGHT ORAL TRADITIONS THAT WAS CONTRARY TO THE LAW OF MOSES.

1. F, 2. T, 3. F, 4. T- Mal. 2:14; Gen. 21:16, 5. F, 6. F, 7. T- MATT 19:6, 8. F, 9. T, 10. F, 11. F- Deut. 22:22, 12. T- Gen. 3:17, 13. T- Deut. 22:22, 14. F-Prophets, etc. 15. F-against Moses, 16. T, 17. T- Matt. 15:3.

- i <http://www.bible-researcher.com/covenant.html> 8/17/2013
- ii <http://www.presenttruthmag.com/archive/XXVIII/28p1-3.htm> 8/1 7/2013
- iii Bales, James D. *The Scope of the Covenants*. Searcy, Arkansas.
- iv Strong's #1285: AHLB#1043-H (N4) Ancient Hebrew Lexicon of the Bible:
Covenant: A covenant is instituted through a sacrifice of a choice, fatted, animal which is cut into two and the parties of the covenant pass through the pieces. If one party fails to meet the agreements of the covenant then the other may do the same to them. (see Genesis 15:10,17 and Jeremiah 34:18-20) [freq. 284] [KJV: covenant, league, confederacy, confederate] {H1285}
- v [http://www.womenintheancientworld.com/women and the law in ancient israel.htm](http://www.womenintheancientworld.com/women_and_the_law_in_ancient_israel.htm) (acc. 1-22-2014).
Gen 24:3b ... that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:
Gen 24:4 But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.
Gen 24:7 ...he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.
Gen 24:37 And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell:
Gen 24:38 But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son.
Gen 24:40 ...and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house:
Gen 27:46 And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these [are] of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?
Gen 28:1 And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.
Gen 28:6 When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padanaram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan;
Lev 18:18 Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to vex [her], to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her life [time].
Lev 20:14 And if a man take a wife and her mother, it [is] wickedness: they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.
Lev 21:7 They shall not take a wife [that is] a whore, or profane; neither shall they take a woman put away from her husband: for he [is] holy unto his God.
Lev 21:13 And he shall take a wife in her virginity.
Deut. 22:13 13 If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her,
Judg 14:3 Then his father and his mother said unto him, [Is there] never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines? And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well.
- vi http://www.majorreligions.com/god_eight_views_of.php. Accessed 8/4/2014
- vii Defined by Mickelson's Enhanced Strong's.
- viii *chata*^{H12398}
- ix *hamartia*^{G266}
- x What law were Ur, Canaanites, Sodom and Gomorrah, Philistines, Job's friends, and Gentiles under when they sinned?
- xi "The" is a definite article. In Greek a definite article that precedes a noun identifies a particular law; in these cases, *the* Law is understood as *the* Law of Moses.
- xii Holman Christian Standard Bible; The International Standard Version; Open English Bible.
- xiii James D. Bales. *The Scope of the Covenants: With a Review...*, 1982, p. 348.
- xiv http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_did_Socrates_think_about_human_nature Accessed 8/8/2014.
- xv <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/principle-beneficence/> Accessed 8/8/2014
- xvi Ibid.
- xvii John Gill's "Exposition on the Entire Bible": Romans 2:14.
- xviii John Gill on Romans 7:13; *Exposition on the Entire Bible*.
- xix <https://bible.org/seriespage/study-and-exposition-romans-118-32>