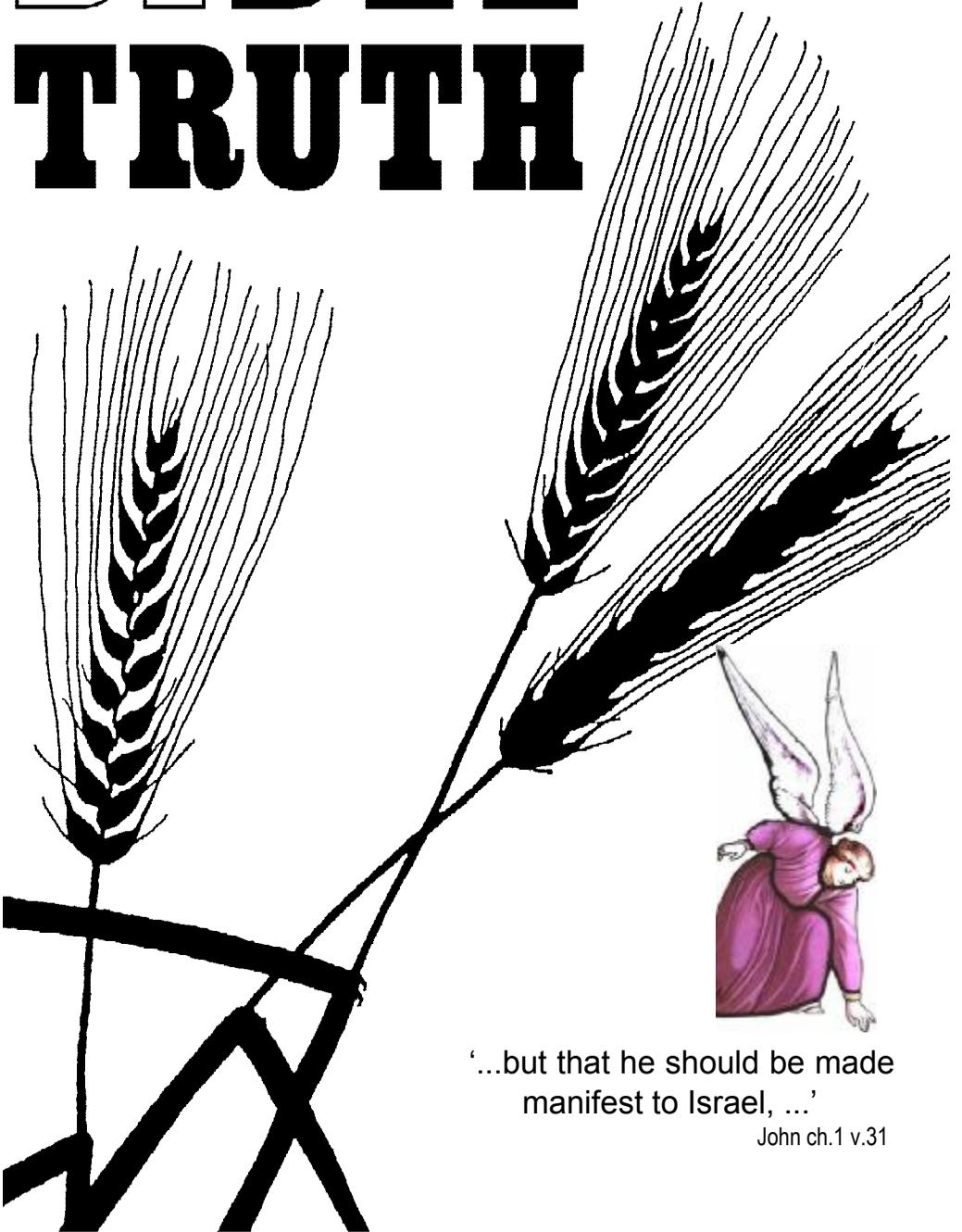


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'...but that he should be made
manifest to Israel, ...'

John ch.1 v.31

Three Covenants and Israel

By Ray Johnson

The first covenant was made with Abraham, the man of faith and friend of God. After he had left Ur of the Chaldees and then Haran that his father had taken him to, he entered a land he knew nothing about. He did this by obedience to the word of the Lord (Genesis ch.11 v.31 - ch.12 v.4, ch.13 vv 14 -17 & ch.15 vv 5-6). There are more acts of faith but it is necessary to mention just one more found in Genesis.

‘And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.’

Genesis ch.22 v.2

This is where Abraham, at the command of the Lord, had taken his only son Isaac, the one on which all the promises of God rested, and was in the act of slaying his son when the angel of the Lord prevented him and provided a ram instead. The Lord then declared,

‘And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice’.

Genesis ch.22 vv 16-18

All the earlier promises were dependant upon the obedience of Abraham to the Lord's command, but now all were brought under this unconditional promise, sworn by the Lord Himself which could not be altered. This promise was confirmed to Isaac and then to Jacob-Israel and his seed.

The second covenant was made with the whole nation of Israel at Sinai after the Lord had delivered them from slavery in Egypt (termed the iron furnace) and brought them into the wilderness. This covenant was conditional, the Lord had given them His laws which were perfect to produce the standard of life required for all the tribes to live together in peace and security. To all these the nation replied 'All that the Lord hath said that we will do', thereby sealing their part of the agreement.

The Lord was an husband unto Israel and His desire was to bring forth sons and to eventually have a nation of kingly priests. He brought them out of the wilderness and into the promised land and removed the nations who occupied it before them. But the nation quickly fell away into as bad or worse sins than the nations who were in the Promised Land before them. The Lord endured their behaviour for a very long time, telling them it was not for any good things that they were doing but for His great names sake, which rested, to their benefit, on His unbreakable promises to Abraham. They never altered and eventually were cast out of the land and taken into Assyria, the start of 2520 years chastisement. Since that time down to the present day Israel has remained cared for by the unbreakable covenant of the Lord to Abraham. The nation cannot be destroyed in any way, though it will go through periods of chastisement to correct its behaviour.

The third covenant is the new covenant that the Lord has promised to make with Israel and Judah. It is essential to note the new covenant is with His covenant people and also that Jeremiah says, the DAYS come.

'Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah ...'

Jeremiah ch.31 v.31

This covenant is not made in one day as the other two mentioned were, for this covenant is made with Israelites one at a time. Nowhere in history has a new covenant been made with the whole of Israel. Israel was redeemed from the Sinai covenant which was abolished at Calvary and the beginning of the new covenant was made by the Lord Jesus Christ with His disciples in the upper room. This method

has continued down to the present day with all Israelites who will accept the Lord Jesus as their Saviour and Lord. The Lord's purpose in this is exactly the same as before, to bring many sons unto glory and produce a nation of kingly priests.

‘But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.’

Hebrews ch.12 vv 22-24

‘For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.’

Hebrews ch.8 vv 10-12

All the nations of Israel are held secure by the covenant of Abraham, and here the new covenant is being entered into by as many as the Lord our God shall call.

‘...Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: ...’

Romans ch.9 v.27

Without the nation the remnant could not survive, without the remnant the nation would be as Sodom and Gomorrah.

‘Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah. Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.’

Isaiah ch.1 vv 9 -10

It is of this remnant, those who not only have an intellectual knowledge of God's laws, but will from the heart desire them, that the Lord Jesus Christ is building His kingdom. This is the kingdom of God we are all praying for, to come, which will come with the Lord Jesus.

When He returns to rule on earth, He will set up this kingdom at Zion from where He will, on His throne of glory, rule over all the earth. In this he will say,

‘Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel’.

Luke ch.22 vv 28-30

‘..., That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.’

Matthew ch.19 v.28

Whereby under such favourable government they will be brought, through the new covenant, into the kingdom of God, preparing them for the marriage of the Lamb (Revelation ch.21), to the heavenly Jerusalem. The New Covenant is so perfect it will produce a nation the Lord God will be able to tabernacle in, truly a kingdom of God.

In the age that follows, the Millennium, the King of glory will rule and judge all people until all are brought, under the principles of the new covenant, into perfect peace, harmony and obedience to His will and purpose, when every knee bows and every tongue confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord.

‘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 ch.1 v.10
