

Chapter 1 : Home - Covenant Classical School

*Becoming Christ's Children of the Covenant [Douglas T. Bentley] on calendriredelascience.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. If you have ever wished for a book that could answer the really tough questions posed by many in modern-day Christianity.*

Home What was the Ark of the Covenant, and was it real? The Ark of the Covenant was definitely real and was a part of the tabernacle, being placed in the Holy of Holies behind the curtain. I will include articles below from three Bible Dictionaries that will give you some information. It will be basically the same information, but each might add something more to help you. Your best source for concise information is in Bible Encyclopedias and Dictionaries. Some people believe the Ark is existence today, though hidden. From the New Bible Dictionary: The whole was covered with gold and was carried on poles inserted in rings at the four lower corners. The ark served i as receptacle for the two tablets of the Decalogue Ex. Thus it served as the symbol of the divine presence guiding his people. The ark was made at Sinai by Bezalel to the pattern given to Moses Ex. It was used as a depository for the written law Dt. From Gilgal the ark was moved to Bethel Jdg. Because its presence caused 7 months of plagues, the Philistines returned it to Kiriath-jearim, where it remained for 20 years 1 Sa. David installed the ark in a tent at Jerusalem 2 Sa. It was placed in the Temple with great ceremony in the reign of Solomon 1 Ki. It was presumably lost during the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in bc. There was no ark in the second Temple Josephus, BJ 5. Gold-overlaid wooden receptacles or portable shrines are known from the ancient Near East in pre-Mosaic times. The ark is unique, however, as the repository of the covenant-tablets, i. Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. This was a chest made of acacia wood, about four feet long, two and a half feet wide, and two and a half feet high. It was overlaid with gold inside and out Ex At each end of the mercy seat was a cherubim made of hammered gold. It is called the ark Ex This various terminology for the ark may reflect a difference in date and authorship of the various sources, but this is not necessarily so. The ark seems to have served various functions during its history. It was built by Moses Deut According to Num In these passages the ark serves as a symbol of the presence of God. The ark is spoken of as the throne of God I Sam 4: The idea of the ark as a war palladium is a very common one in the OT. The ark was very prominent in the story of the capture of Jericho Josh 6â€”7 , and in the struggle with the Philistines when the ark was captured I Sam 4: Even in defeat God did not abandon His throne on the ark but wrought havoc among the Philistine captors. One other function of the ark was to serve as the container of the tablets of the law or covenant. When the ark was returned from the Philistines, it came to Beth-shemesh q. Although the ark was now in Israel, it was probably, in effect, still under the control of the Philistines. For full description, see Tabernacle. The history of the Ark is in accordance with its intensely moral character. At its presence the waters of the Jordan separated; only when it was carried to the farther shore did the waters resume their usual course Joshua 3: The Ark was carried about Jericho at the time of its downfall Joshua 6: Very naturally, the neighboring nations, ignorant of spiritual worship, looked upon the Ark as the god of Israel 1 Samuel 4: The Ark remained at Shiloh until the time of Eli, when it was carried along with the army, in the hope that it would secure victory for the Israelites against the Philistines. The latter were not only victorious but also captured the Ark 1 Samuel 4: It was taken to Kiriath-jearim 1 Samuel 7: Its removal to Jerusalem was delayed three months by the death of Uzzah while carelessly handling it. Meanwhile it rested in the house of Obed-edom, from which it was taken, with greatest rejoicing, to Mt. Zion 2 Samuel 6: When the Temple was completed, the Ark was deposited in the sanctuary 1 Kings 8: In 2 Chronicles When the Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians the Ark was probably removed or destroyed 2 Esdras Sacred chests were in use among other peoples of antiquity, and served as receptacles for the idol, or the symbol of the idol, and for sacred relics. Morris, The Genesis Flood ; J. Dillow, The Waters Above Ark of the Covenant: Morgenstern, Hebrew Union College Annual 17 Cross, Biblical Archaeologist 10 Nielsen, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 7 Payne, Theology of the Older Testament ; M.

Chapter 2 : Members of the Covenant - Wikipedia

The title of my message is the scriptural phrase "children of the covenant." 1 In introducing this topic I will reflect on recent events as a colleague of President Howard W. Hunter and as a father and upon earlier experiences as a doctor of medicine.

Rather, it is one of the most prominent, most important doctrines of Holy Scripture, if not that grand reality which is the very heart of the whole biblical revelation. This is how Reformed theologians have always viewed the truth of the covenant. He quotes the 17th century Reformed theologian, J. The doctrine of the covenant is of the greatest significance both for dogmatics and for the practice of the Christian life. The Reformed church and theology has understood this, more than the Roman Catholic and Lutheran churches and theologies. III, Kampen, , p. And in his work on the place of children in the covenant, Herman Hoeksema has written: Scripture itself points out the centrality of the covenant. The goal of that history is Jesus the Christ Luke 1: Jesus appears as Mediator of the new covenant Heb. The work of Christ, therefore, is the establishment, realization, and perfection of the new covenant Heb. For this reason, the Bible itself has the names that it does: I readily acknowledge at the outset that the covenant doctrine that I present here is that which has been developed by the Protestant Reformed Churches and that is confessed by the PRC. It is important that the reader know this. In some Reformed circles there is ignorance of, and confusion about, the truth of the covenant. This is one of the reasons why members can defect to Baptist churches whether "Calvinistic" or free willist makes no difference , which deny the covenant in one of its essential elements, namely, the inclusion of children in the covenant. In view of the importance of the doctrine of the covenant both in Scripture and in the Reformed tradition, this is intolerable. The PRC have a definite conception of the covenant. We know what we believe about the covenant. If anyone is ignorant or confused, we ask that he give us a hearing. Besides, there is difference, even sharp difference, among Reformed churches regarding the understanding of the biblical and creedal teaching on the covenant. In view of the importance of the covenant, these differences are not insignificant. Because the truth of the covenant lies at the center of all the teachings of Scripture, error in the doctrine of the covenant will certainly affect other biblical teachings as well, specifically the doctrine of sovereign grace, or "the five points of Calvinism. I must also make clear that my emphasis falls on the place of children in the covenant and on the conversion of the covenant children. This is the area in which some of the sharpest disagreement surfaces. Not only is this the area in which the Reformed part company with all Baptists, but it is also the arena of division within the Reformed community. Because my emphasis is the place of children in the covenant, I will be very brief in setting forth what the covenant itself is, according to the revelation of the covenant in Scripture. Yet the nature of the covenant must be pointed out, both because this is basic to a consideration of the place of children in the covenant and because there is widespread ignorance, confusion, and error among Reformed people as to what the covenant essentially is. What is that covenant that was established with Abraham and his seed; that has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ; that now is made with believers and their children; and that will be perfected with the church gathered out of all nations from the beginning to the end of the world at the coming of our Lord? The covenant is the relationship of friendship between the triune God and His chosen people in Jesus Christ. That the covenant must be conceived by us as a relationship, as a bond of communion, between God and His people is proved from the following biblical teachings. First, when God establishes His covenant with father Abraham in Genesis It is the relationship the special, close, loving relationship between them. This description of the covenant is repeated, again and again, in the Old Testament Covenant when the covenant is made or confirmed with Israel. It appears in the significant prophecy of the new covenant in Jeremiah If a person had any doubt whether the covenant is a relationship, these biblical analogies should settle the matter. The Bible requires us to think of the covenant as a marriage and as a father-child relationship. Marriage and the parent-child connection are relationships of love and communion. They are simply special forms of friendship. And the covenant is the real marriage and the real Parent-child relationship. In Revelation 21 the vision of the new world and of the perfected church is immediately explained by a great voice that says, "Behold, the

tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them. The reference is to that building at the center of Israel in the Old Testament Covenant: That holy building was the place where God lived with Israel and Israel lived with God in sweet communion. Heaven will be the real, and gigantic, tabernacle inasmuch as the bliss of heaven will be the life of the covenant: John immediately applies to this tabernacle-life in the coming world the words that we have seen to be descriptive of the nature of the covenant: In this light the church must view the greatest, and central, wonder of salvation, namely, the incarnation of the eternal Son of God. The meaning of it, John gives in John 1: The covenant is not a contract consisting of the mutual obligation-- of God and the believer. Although earthly marriage includes the mutual duties of husband and wife, these duties do not define the marriage. Marriage is not the duties, but the one-flesh union. The covenant is not a treaty much less a treaty modeled after the profane Canaanite treaties, any more than the relation between a believing father and his children is a treaty. Nor is the covenant a promise, although God establishes the covenant with His people by promise. The marriage is the life together of the two. This understanding of the covenant makes clear what the true covenant members ought to expect from God and what we are required to give to God. In the covenant, God calls us to give Him our love, our friendship, and our exclusive, wholehearted service: Think of the devoted help that the husband desires from his wife and of the honor that parents look for from their children. Since the friendship of God is enjoyed only through His Word, the covenant people will be marked by reverence for Scripture, for the preaching of the gospel, and for sound teaching. Since we express our friendship in prayer and in obedience to the law, the covenant people will be characterized by prayer and obedience. At their very heart, Christian experience and Christian life are friendship with God in Jesus Christ. This is the Reformed answer to the view of the Christian life as a "personal relationship with God. And this determines the lives of Reformed Christians with each other: Marriage is friendship; family life is friendship; life in the congregation is friendship. Two vital truths about the covenant must be noted before we go on to the matter of the place of children in the covenant. Deliberately, we frame our subject as we do: He alone does all this. He does this without the help of Abraham, of Israel, or of the church. Again and again, God says, "I will establish My covenant. Never does God say, "Let you and Me make our covenant. The covenant is a covenant of grace. Never is this more clearly evident than in the incarnation of the Son of God. In sheer mercy and awesome power, God did the impossible thing: He established the new covenant. We had nothing to do with it, except that our dreadful guilt, total depravity, and utter helplessness and misery made the incarnation and death of the Son of God necessary for the establishing of the covenant. To err here is no minor matter, for all of salvation flows from the covenant. If the covenant depends upon man, so also does salvation depend upon man. A doctrine of the covenant that denies the graciousness of the covenant necessarily undermines also the "five points of Calvinism. The life of God is family friendship. Granted, if you mean that there are depths here that surpass our understanding. Nevertheless, this is revealed. The life of God is covenant life -- life of the nature of Father-Son. And this life, God "lets us in on," in Christ, so that the relationship between us and God is Father-son or Father-daughter. How are we to pray? The covenant of God with us is all-embracing and all-dominating: The entire life of the believer -- body and soul, physical and spiritual, temporal and eternal, God-ward and man-ward -- is taken up into this covenant and is controlled, arranged, and structured by the covenant. As a believer, my whole life is covenant life. God is my God, not alone on the Sabbath, but also through the week; not alone in my worship, but also in my work; not alone in my devotions, but also in my marriage and family; not alone as regards my church life, but also as regards my behavior to the State, to my employer, and to my neighbor. The friendship of God lays claim to everything, controls all, and shows itself everywhere. On the one hand, he now possesses joy, contentment, and hope. On the other hand, he walks in holiness. This all-embracing character of the covenant is implied in the biblical figures of marriage and of the parent-child relationship. The whole life of the young woman is affected by marriage and is claimed by her husband. The relationship in which my three year old daughter stands to her mother and me controls her entire life. She behaves as she does, she speaks as she does, she thinks as she does, she is who she is, because she is our daughter. The relationship with her parents molds her a thought that makes God-fearing parents tremble, and should. One important aspect of lives that are embraced by the covenant is the family of believers. For the children of believers are included in the covenant. The Inclusion of the Children of Believers in the Covenant

The children of believers are included in the covenant as children, that is, already at conception and birth. They receive forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus, the Holy Spirit of sanctification, and church membership -- as children. They are called to love, fear, and obey God -- as children.

Chapter 3 : The Children Of The Covenant

The Children of the Covenant The BYU community is composed of children of the covenant. In order to know who these people are, one must know something about the covenant.

What is the New Covenant? The New Covenant or New Testament is the promise that God makes with humanity that He will forgive sin and restore fellowship with those whose hearts are turned toward Him. Jesus Christ is the mediator of the New Covenant, and His death on the cross is the basis of the promise Luke 1:1-4. Because the wages of sin is death Romans 6:23, Moses predicts that Israel would fail in keeping the Old Covenant verses 22-28, but he then sees a time of restoration. The prophet Jeremiah also predicted the New Covenant. Jesus Christ came to fulfill the Law of Moses Matthew 5:17-19. The Old Covenant was written in stone, but the New Covenant is written on our hearts. Entering the New Covenant is made possible only by faith in Christ, who shed His blood to take away the sins of the world John 1:1-14. The New Covenant is also mentioned in Ezekiel 36:26-27. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. The Mosaic Law could provide none of these things see Romans 3:20-21. The New Covenant was originally given to Israel and includes a promise of fruitfulness, blessing, and a peaceful existence in the Promised Land. I will call for the grain and make it plentiful and will not bring famine upon you. I will increase the fruit of the trees and the crops of the field, so that you will no longer suffer disgrace among the nations because of famine. After the resurrection of Christ, Gentiles were brought into the blessing of the New Covenant, too Acts 10:44-45. Ephesians 2:12-13. The fulfillment of the New Covenant will be seen in two places: We are no longer under the Law but under grace Romans 6:14-15. Under the New Covenant, we are given the opportunity to receive salvation as a free gift Ephesians 2:8-9. Through the life-giving Holy Spirit who lives in all believers Romans 8:1-4.

Chapter 4 : New Covenant - Wikipedia

The children of believers are included in the covenant as children, that is, already at conception and birth. They receive forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus, the Holy Spirit of sanctification, and church membership -- as children.

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us Gal. Cursed be anyone who dishonors his father or his mother. Cursed be anyone who misleads a blind man on the road. Cursed be anyone who perverts the justice due to the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. Cursed be anyone who lies with any kind of animal. Cursed be anyone who lies with his sister, whether the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother. Cursed be anyone who lies with his mother-in-law. Cursed be anyone who strikes down his neighbor in secret. Cursed be anyone who takes a bribe to shed innocent blood. There is a prototype of this in Genesis 9: But there is one penalty in that Exodus list which God himself would enforce: You shall not mistreat any widow or fatherless child. He did not give a civil penalty for that breach of the law: He himself would bring the punishment on the evildoers. So God himself intervenes. That, dear readers, was just a prelude. The main point of this post is yet to come. All the penalty for our failure to obey the ten commandments. All our sins of commission and our sins of omission. All the gross, crass, vile, bloated, wicked, unspeakable sins of human beings. Christ became a curse for us. Dare I express it this way? My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? God the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, willingly bore the curse of the law, for us. God the Father put the curse of the law on His only begotten Son, so that whosoever believes in Him should not perish under the curse of the law. And there were clearly more than two parties to that covenant – the Father, the Son, we sinners, and the Promised Spirit who would convict us of sin, reveal Christ to us and lead us into all truth. Now of course, God is one God – but three persons. So this covenant, this New Covenant of redemption from sin, was a covenant where there were at least three parties, if I may put it that way. One party being the Father, one party being the Son, the third party being us. So, if you are with me thus far, we are talking about a covenant where there are three parties to the covenant. And that makes it very different from a covenant of marriage, does it not? The covenant of redemption in which Christ became a curse for us was a unique covenant:

Chapter 5 : Adoption in Christ: Sonship in Galatians

THE PRESBYTERIAN DOCTRINE OF CHILDREN IN THE COVENANT P&R reprint of a book by Lewis Bevans Schenck A REVIEW WORTH READING by Rev. Steven Smallman The title seems a little sleepy, but this is one of the most helpful books I have read.

Third Century[edit] Asceticism in Egypt and Syria seemed to have more differences in doctrine and practice than what they shared together. The late third century shows two distinct groups pursuing celibacy, poverty and homelessness all for the sake of freeing their lives from the troubles of this world. However, the major dividing principle between the two groups was their leader in the movement. Egyptians saw their figurehead as Anthony the Great , the founding father of Egyptian monasticism and cultivator of what dominant Egyptian monasticism had come to stand for by that time. Syrian monks on the other hand, based their purpose and practice on apostolic precedent; and more accurately, the life and teachings of Christ and his disciples. While this may seem presumptuous, it truly created a fundamental difference in the goals and direction of Syrian monks that sent them on a path toward meaningful interaction with the world that surrounded them. Up until the late third century, both groups of Christians felt the pressures of their surrounding social and political world. The Egyptians, like the Persians, were marginalized and persecuted for their faith, but only until an emperor by the name of Constantine arrived on the scene. His conversion and Christian presence on the throne in Rome was felt dramatically throughout the Roman Empire. They needed a higher call to discipleship, and certainly before the fourth century, there was the creation of the Egyptian monk. Conversely, Syriac Christianity never found itself in the mainstream of acceptability in its surrounding society. So what real difference did Christ as head of the monastic movement in Persia create? Unlike Egyptian monks who felt the need to escape the pressures of Roman rule in order to form Christ-like lives in an isolated desert, the marginalized Syriac ascetics remained enmeshed in the church and lost culture that surrounded them. These monks of Persia did not view their ascetic lifestyle as radically unobtainable for the average Christian filling the pews on Sundays, as opposed to many of the Egyptian monks of their day who saw their newly converted brothers and sisters as nominal at best , and they remained a prominent part of the local congregations in their town or village. Instead of an unimaginable leap of faith separated by monastic discipline and judgment, Syriac ascetics encouraged a faith-building understanding of discipleship that viewed the Christian faith as a journey; one in which we all find ourselves. Because of this, the monks of Persia felt a sense of duty to come alongside those they could mentor and guide to the next step in their faith, hoping to see those on earlier steps to grow as well. The overwhelming presence of Western monasticism was not totally foreign to the minds of Syrian Christians seeking the paths for ascetic life. Theodoret gives historians a beautiful rendition of the early individualistic tendencies in the monks of Syria in his book about their history. Wrapped in goatskins or straw mats, they avoided all forms of artificial clothing or shelter and only ate what they were given or they found already growing on the ground. Needless to say, this was an extreme form of an individualistic faith that led many well-intentioned monks to the tops of pillars for forty years and others to wearing their heads raw from beating it against the ground. The regions of the Sasanian Empire stretched far and wide, creating great distances between Christian groups that were developing and expressing themselves in radically different ways. For example, in contrast to the staunch individualistic faith seen in the rural wildernesses around them, Christians in the Persian urban areas were more intent on creating a community of believers by creating and transforming it through Christian discipleship. During this time however, historical records of the church in Syria indicate that a major shift took place, and it began to initiate the Roman concepts of church into their practice. It was at this moment that a crucial split could have taken place. There was opportunity for these two groups to separate, both willing to follow God with all of their hearts, but both understanding what it means to follow Jesus as radically different and conflicting. However, through reconciliation and the grace of God, they merged and adopted a syncretism of belief; understanding their spiritual growth as steps. From the beginning of the fourth century, the Sons and Daughters of the Covenant saw their mission as deeply interwoven with the congregational church. They surrounded this practice with layers of strict doctrine that did not allow them to

be out after dark or for the benat to live with a man, lest they fall into temptation. They even had a judicial law that sent a dysfunctional covenanter to a secluded monastery, and renaming them bart qeiama denoting their failure to live up to the life-covenant to which they were called. Functionally in the congregation, these qeiama were students and servants of the clergy. This meant that there were certain rules against a Son or Daughter from becoming a hireling or staff for a farmer, or any other vocation – they were to be completely devoted to the works and ministries of the church. Charities for lepers in their village, shelters for the poor and destitute, as well as other institutions of Christian love kept the hands and feet of the qeiama busy as they met the needs of a hurting world. While there was much good in the services of the Sons and Daughters of the Covenant, there had yet to develop in Syriac asceticism an institutional framework for spiritual development that would progress a Christian in his journey with God and man. Enter the Liber Graduum. The audiences of the Liber Graduum, as well as those associated with other important works not developed here such as Letters to Virgins , built a world for themselves that supported such reliance upon each other and corporate understanding that to truly understand Syriac Christianity in Late Antiquity we must examine their texts. Michael Kmosko was the first to translate and comment on the Liber Graduum in , categorizing it with its contemporary Messalian heresy that was striking the Persian Church at its time of writing. A later commenter Daniel Caner described the Liber Graduum as a threat in the eyes of the common Christian public of its day, inciting rebellion against the institutional Church found all over the Roman Empire. Finally however, David Lane does a concise and well-balanced overview of the Liber Graduum. To some Jesus would ask only that they believe in Him, and they would be healed; to others Jesus demanded nothing short of their total renunciation of property and family before they could follow in His footsteps. To Lane, the Liber Graduum builds for its community a tension between these commands, bridging them into a sort of staircase; ascending in the levels of the Christian life. Six Profiles[edit] The anonymous author of the Liber Graduum points out six profiles of the Christian life, and claims that each Christian must evaluate where they are, and where others are around them, and work as a community to struggle up the staircase towards holiness. But what did these steps look like? How did they function in the midst of community? By looking closely at these Christian-life profiles and descriptions, we begin to see the values and needs of the Syriac Christians emerge. The Upright are called to fulfill the minor commandments in Scripture and the Perfect are to follow the major commands. The Perfect however, having given up all their possessions, and worldly relationships, even family and wife in some instances , were not only striving to be followers, they were seen as angels on Earth. These profiles are not necessarily a job description for those on the step, but a caricature of what the author is looking for and what he sees Jesus calling them to. The next two groups he quickly sketches are the Sick and the Children. The Children, simply put, are infants in the faith. They are new to the experience of following Jesus and therefore little is expected of their spiritual dedication. In fact, the most significant command for the Children is that, in their fledgling commitment to Christ, they must stay away from negative influences such as pagan friends, etc. The Sick harm, judge, and condemn their neighbors, instead of forgiving them as an Upright or a Perfect one would do. While there is little difference between the Upright and the Perfect, and the Disciples of Faith and the Disciples of Love respectively, the author sees a clear distinction. Instead of leaving Christians alone in their spiritual walks toward righteous living, these six silhouettes of faith in the Syriac Church enabled Christians to dream of where their journey of faith might be calling them next. Just as with any black and white text that is designed to facilitate the lifestyles of a colorful and changing community, so the brothers and sisters living under the guidance of the Liber Graduum became increasingly confused and conflicted as to how they were to live with each other on different steps. Pastoral reactions to conflict and spite fill much of the pages of the Liber Graduum, working over a period of what could be years to smooth out the finer lines of relationship between those on differing steps. There was internal conflict which was mostly frustration toward the Perfect. Everyone had something against them, the poor thought the Perfect as wealthy and comfortable, the starving thought all the Perfect did was recline and eat the best foods. Beyond this concern, certain familial and religious conflict within the community began its downward spiral into oblivion. The author warns his audience, passionately reminding them of the persecution Jesus foretold on those who followed His ways. Liber Graduum[edit] The fact that the author of the Liber Graduum sees his church as collapsing morally and

spiritually is a key to understanding the reason and purpose behind the book. He mourns the former days when the community was more dedicated to the principles outlined in earlier sermons. This understanding helped them feel above the need for prayer or compassion, with influences coming possibly from the current Messalian heresy that held similar views. The value of an integrated spiritual community was obvious to the author of the Liber Graduum. His dream to house the deepest ascetics and newborns in the faith under the same congregational roof was a powerful one. As a pastor of the community, he could never come alongside every single member and nudge them towards righteousness in God; just as with all things in Syriac Christianity of that time, it had to be a communal effort. This was a beautiful dream, and a fascinating reality. Cherishing spiritually integrated communities is something that does not change through the ages. Now, possibly more than ever, we are challenged to build authentic relationships with other believers, teaching and equipping them to take the next step in their faith. This faith of course does not leave us in the closets where we learned it, but emboldens us to walk out onto the streets, being the same powerfully Christian presence that we see in the Sons and Daughters of the Covenant and Liber Graduum communities so many years before us. Syriac Ascetics made a powerful impact in the world because they lived their life in integrated communities, and understood the Christian life as a journey of steps toward godliness. Throughout this paper, we have considered the specific differences of the Egyptian and Syriac models of asceticism, highlighting the positive influences an integrated community that is missionally minded can have on the lost world around them. Turning then to the Sons and Daughters of the Covenant, we saw a relationally driven lifestyle which was connected to the overall church body and yet held with dignity the covenants of monastic faith these Christians felt called to. The community under the Liber Graduum shows us how process and growth can happen in an intentional and structured way. We are on a journey towards becoming again the perfect imago dei image of God. Christ became just like us so that we could become more like his Father. Realizing that this task is a lifelong journey that bleeds over mysteriously into the afterlife is something that all Christians are challenged to consider. While this is true, we have certainly been called to follow everyday closer to Jesus, our Master. Living as a participant with Jesus on the journey back home is a powerful testimony to a lost world searching for direction. *It Takes a Church to Raise a Christian*. Bernard McGinn, *Christian Spirituality: Origins to the Twelfth Century*. *The Book of Steps: The Syriac Liber Graduum*. Translated and introduction by Robert A. Kitchen and Martien F. University of California, *A History of the Monks of Syria*.

Chapter 6 : Children of the Covenant - Russell M. Nelson

Philippians In Philippians & 13, Paul exhorts the believers to "continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose."

Christianity[edit] The key New Testament chapter for the Christian concept of the New Covenant is Hebrews 8 , a portion of which is quoted below: But now Jesus has obtained a superior ministry, since the covenant that he mediates is also better and is enacted on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second. For he finds fault with them when he says: For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Some passages speak of a "covenant of peace", [10] others use other constructions; some simply say "covenant", but the context may imply that the New Covenant is at issue; and some claim metaphorical descriptions, for example that " Mount Zion " is really a metaphor for the New Covenant. The King James Version sometimes uses "testament," for "covenant," with the words "new covenant" together only occurring in Hebrews 8: Six forms of the text have been identified; for example, the Western text-type such as Codex Bezae omit verses 19bâ€” The New Covenant also breaks the generational curse of the original sin on all children of Adam if they believe in Jesus Christ , after people are judged for their own sins, which is expected to happen with the second arrival of Jesus Christ. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: Also based much on what Paul wrote, a dispensationalist Christian view of the nature of Israel is that it is primarily a spiritual nation composed of Jews who claim Jesus as their Messiah , as well as Gentile believers who through the New Covenant have been grafted into the promises made to Israelites. This spiritual Israel is based on the faith of the patriarch Abraham before he was circumcised [19] who was ministered by the Melchizedek priesthood , which is understood to be a type for the Christian faith of believing Jesus to be Christ and Lord in the order of Melchizedek. The Apostle Paul says that it is not "the children of the flesh" who are the children of God , but "the children of the promise". For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: These differences can be so serious that they form a principal reason for division i. Christian denominations exist because of their answer to this question. The first major split is between those who believe that only believers are members of the New Covenant, and reflecting the idea of the Jewish covenants as national or community covenants those who believe that believers and their children [20] are members of the New Covenant. These differences give rise to different views on whether children may be baptised: Secondly, there are differences among paedobaptists as to the nature of the membership of children in the covenant. Knowledge of God[edit] Another difference is between those who believe the New Covenant has already substantially arrived Preterists , and that this knowledge of God that the member of the New Covenant has is primarily salvific knowledge; and those that believe that the New Covenant has not yet substantially arrived, but will in the Second Coming , and that this knowledge is more complete knowledge, meaning a member of the New Covenant no longer has to be taught anything at all regarding the Christian life not just that they lack need for exhortation regarding salvific reconciliation with God. This division does not just break down along Jewish v. Christian lines as the previous difference did.

Chapter 7 : Chapter 5: Gentiles Must Become Israelites

7 And now, because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the a children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are b changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are c born of him and have become his d sons and his daughters.

Chapter 5 Gentiles Must Become Israelites If a person wishes to know just what Gospel of Christ belongs to mature Christians today, no chapter is more important to understand than the one we now enter. Certain terms have to be met. That message of Peter was fundamentally different from the teaching Christ gave to the Israelites while He was in the flesh. Peter stated that believing on Christ and in His mission of dying for humans in their place would gain a salvation for everyone. Yes, it was now for everyone who would repent of their sins and believe on the name and authority of Jesus Christ to forgive sins. Christ would then give salvation to those believers. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God has made that same Jesus, whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ. In this early period, there was no thought by the apostles that Gentiles would be included in the salvation that now became available in Christ. But all should take it seriously for the statement is absolutely true. In the first 33 years of teaching the Gospel of Christ Jesus about His death and resurrection now being able to bring people to salvation, that salvation in Christ was ONLY given to people who were of the House of Israel. Jews within the Roman and Parthian Empires who lived at the time were certainly of the tribe of Judah who were a part of the House of Israel. Note what the clear word of God states: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they broke, although I was an husband unto them, says the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, says the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. There is not one mention in this New Covenant relationship about participation of Gentiles who were not Israelites. And what did this lack of mention concerning Gentiles mean to the apostle Paul? He made it clear that salvation in Christ could only be given to the children of Israel and no other nation. Note what Paul said in Ephesians chapter 2: Simply put, Gentiles could not be saved. However, there came to be hope, and indeed, even a victory for the Gentiles. A legal was was found that could get Gentiles saved along with the Israelites. This was by grafting Gentiles into the stock of Israel so that they no longer would be reckoned as Gentiles. This was the manner in which Gentiles could be called the children of Abraham and the Israel of God, and be accepted for salvation like the other Israelites. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: Thus, these Gentile converts were no longer reckoned as Gentiles. This was how the Gentiles could become partakers of all promises and covenants that pertained to the Israelites. This grafting into the stock of Israel made them able to be heirs of the New Covenant relationship that God was making only with Israel. Should they be circumcised as were ordinary Israelites? Should they keep the days, times, seasons, and years that all Jews observed and rejoiced in? This included circumcision, Sabbath, and holyday keeping, the clean food laws, etc. This matter had to be worked out and we find much argument about it in the Books of Acts and Galatians along with Second Corinthians chapters 11 and 12. This was the dilemma. Before we look at this problem in detail, let us note a fact that many Christians are not aware of and this includes some Christian theologians. Only products from the land of Israel could be tithed. At times the word can mean the earth Genesis 1: At other times it is used in regard to a specific land or country Exodus 3: Many times the term, as used in Leviticus Even for the Jews, tithing was limited only to the Land of Israel and adjacent areas. George Foot Moore, in his work Judaism one of the recognized authorities on Jewish religion in the time of Christ had the following to say about the laws of tithing in Leviticus chapter 27: Egypt was finally accepted as a tithable land. In the earlier time of Joseph, however, Egypt did not pay tithe as shown by the one-fifth produce that was paid to Pharaoh and the four-fifths that went to the people. The lands east of Jordan came to be acknowledged as tithable: Ammon, Moab, and Syria "at least the parts of those lands that David conquered and where many Jews came to live. Other Gentile lands, on the other hand, such as areas

of Asia Minor, Greece, or Italy were not allowed as lands that could produce tithe. The produce of those lands were considered as being impure and not holy enough to support the Levitical priesthood in its function at the Temple. As Alfred Edersheim records, even the very dust of heathen lands was reckoned as defiled and polluted. In any rate, the strict reading of the law demanded the tithe come only from the land of Israel "which was later interpreted to include those areas east and north of Palestine and Egypt where populations were mainly Jewish. All other areas were proscribed. This fact about tithing may surprise many Christians, but it is revealed in the Law of God. Many preachers and evangelists know this truth, but fail to tell the laity about it simply because they believe the people could not fund their churches if they were privy to these facts. Guided strictly by the statements of biblical law, it is improper even for Jews to pay tithe on products from Italy, Greece, Asia Minor Galatia, or in modern times the United States, Britain, or other Gentile lands. See my book *The Tithing Dilemma*. Also, the keeping of Sabbatical Years every seventh year, when all agricultural lands had to be idle and not be worked, was not applied even by Jews themselves outside the Land of Israel. Paul is certainly referring to Sabbatical Years. Some Law Universally Applied to All Jews While many laws in the Old Testament were not applicable outside of Palestine even for Jews, the law of the Sabbath day itself, the food laws and especially circumcision applied to Jews everywhere! Should they be required to be circumcised as all Israelites? Should they keep the Sabbath and Holy days like other Jews? Should they keep the food laws, as do the Jews? It did not take long to settle the issue, but not without major struggles within the Jewish community of Christians. The four restrictions are found in Acts Although meats offered directly to idols and strangled animals were prohibited, other meats that the Gentiles were accustomed to eating were not proscribed and they could eat from the shambles. Some Christians in Rome began to keep certain days of the Jews no doubt including the Sabbath and holy days along with certain fast days and Paul had to tell the Roman Christians it was not necessary to keep those days, or for that matter, any days Romans Paul was downright upset with the Galatians when they not only retreated into keeping the Law of God meant for minors, such as keeping days, months, and times, but also were starting to keep Sabbatical Years. Why, not even the Jews in Galatia were required to keep those teachings of the Law Galatians 4: These matters were constant problems encountered when Gentile Christians came in contact with Jewish Christians. The Revelation of the Mystery But in 63 C. This Mystery was never revealed publicly before that year "some 33 years after the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. This glorious teaching represents the mature and final teaching of God and Christ to this world. It is something entirely different and glorious! For the present, it is essential that we know the time in history when this new revelation was first given to mankind. All the apostles who received it were surprised at what its teachings actually contained. It denotes a marvelous and gracious Secret that was finally dispensed to mankind by Paul and others in the latter part of their ministries. They were excellent for their intended time periods, but they do NOT represent the ultimate mature teaching of God. These books are companion letters. They speak about identical matters with different emphasis. God had kept it a secret from the knowledge of anyone human or angel even from the foundation of the world "long before the creation of Adam. Paul spoke of it as: It is a teaching that is awesome in scope. Shalom Publications, , pp.

Chapter 8 : What is the New Covenant?

This website was created for those interested in obtaining an in-depth understanding about who The Children of the Covenant are and why it was necessary to conceal their identities. We hope to facilitate your research needs by offering a selection of unbiased suggested texts and videos.

Sister Bateman and I approach the beginning of each school year with excitement as we greet 7, new and 21, returning students. We extend a special welcome to everyone, including more than 6, missionaries who have returned to campus during the last year. The safe arrival of each student is of utmost concern. Labor Day weekend, with many students traveling home and then returning, is of concern. Historically it is a dangerous time, as lives are sometimes lost. We are pleased to report that no accidents resulting in death have been reported as of this morning. At the beginning of each new year, we are excited to meet the freshman and transfer students and feel their energy and enthusiasm. The meeting two weeks ago with parents of new students was a special highlight, as was the freshman commencement that concluded a week of orientation. Conversations with parents of new students revealed a deep appreciation for Brigham Young University and its mission. As the world drifts farther away from well-proven principles, parents are concerned for the moral and spiritual welfare of their young people as they leave home for college life. I was especially impressed by two things: The father then concluded his message with the following statement: I wish to discuss both and then suggest ways in which each member of the community can live up to the opportunities that are here. What is the source of excitement felt by the father? Is BYU making a meaningful contribution to the world? In the next few minutes I wish to address these questions in the hope that our view of the university will be broadened and our commitment deepened. Since the students were not there, let me repeat it for their benefit. The incident took place in , 10 years after the founding of Brigham Young Academy. In those days the school was funded by local donations with little support from Church headquarters, and the college had fallen on hard times. There was not enough money to pay teachers or provide supplies. Zina Young Williams, dean of women and a daughter of Brigham Young, initiated a meeting with President John Taylor in the hope of obtaining Church help. The story unfolds as follows: I have been visited by your father. He came to me in the silence of the night clothed in brightness and with a face beaming with love and confidence told me things of great importance and among others that the school being taught by Brother [Karl G. Deseret Book Company, , pp. The small seedling Zina Young Williams tried to protect has developed into a mature forest. In order to know who these people are, one must know something about the covenant. One enters into this covenant through faith, repentance, and baptism. One continues in the covenant through obedience to gospel principles and by participation in even higher covenants. It generates the power that draws us together and focuses our energy in the discovery of knowledge. The bond that creates the special BYU community is not just the contractual relationship each person has with the university but the covenantal relationship that exists between us and the Lord. Oaks discussed this special relationship in the Annual University Conference fireside two weeks ago see Dallin H. He pointed out that members of the Church have covenanted at baptism and in the temple to live a righteous life and to contribute to the building of the kingdom. The university is part of the kingdom. As such, they have entered into covenants with the Lord through Church ordinances. They have not participated in these ordinances. Are they covenant makers or is their relationship only contractual? It is my view that nonmember faculty, staff, and students may enjoy more than a contractual relationship with the university. I arrived at this conclusion after reflecting on many conversations with nonmember faculty and after reading a letter written by a new member of our faculty who is non-LDS. The letter was written by him to former colleagues explaining why he left his position at their university to join us. With his permission, I share a portion of the letter: He understands that each person is of infinite worth and is prepared to treat them as such. He is committed to working in a covenant environment. His heart and mind indicate that his relationship is more than a contractual one. During the past three years, conversations with other non-LDS faculty at BYU have revealed the same commitment and attitude. Almost all see students in an infinite light. We express appreciation for the contributions you make and want you to know that you would be as

comfortable in the temple with us as you are in the classroom. All of us, members and nonmembers, are affected by the covenantal environment that exists. The infinite and eternal relationship is the engine that empowers us to change lives intellectually and spiritually. Hinckley described the unique features of BYU in his devotional one year ago. With regard to the faculty, he stated that they feel as much at home in the house of the Lord as they feel in the classrooms of this university. When all is said and done, it is not this elaborate campus that really counts. It is the faculty who teach you, who lead you, who encourage you, who help you find your way as you go forward with your studies. His concern was with you, the student body. The purpose of the university is to help you become useful in the kingdom of God. He is concerned with you as a whole person. That is why Brigham Young wanted the students to experience every subject taught under the influence of the Spirit. BYU is a significant part of the Provo-Orem community. We must be good citizens. Civic leaders in both communities are working closely with BYU to solve the housing, parking, and traffic problems that beset all of us. There is a cooperative spirit, and solutions will be forthcoming. There is another survey in which BYU students participate that highlights some other characteristics. The survey is a nationally normed, stratified, random sample of 25, students with 1, BYU participants. The survey has been administered over the years, with the last survey taken in March. Some interesting comparisons between BYU students and their counterparts are the following: The questionnaire also revealed that BYU students are above average in gaining a broad general education, in acquiring knowledge and skills for work, and in developing their own values and ethical standards. The data are highly complimentary of this student body. It is clear that our students are more mature and more committed as they devote additional time and energy to both study and work. He had spent the morning lecturing and visiting with students and faculty. He then came to my office for a brief exchange. Some of these feelings and insights were shared with the faculty and staff three weeks ago. There is one impression that was not shared. BYU Studies,], p. At first I resisted the notion. None of us believes that we have reached our potentialâ€”either as scholars or as Saints. No wonder the father of the young freshman daughter felt the excitement and sensed the importance of this university. The Challenge I close with a challenge for all of us to be true to the promises we have madeâ€”both to the university and to the Lord. May each of us recommit on our sacred honor to the journey of a Zion university. This is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Bateman was the president of Brigham Young University when this devotional address was given on 8 September

Chapter 9 : THE COVENANT OF GOD AND THE CHILDREN OF BELIEVERS

Grace Covenant Church places a strong emphasis on relationships and growing in community together, believing that sharing the burdens and joys of life with one another helps us become more like Christ.

Hunter and as a father and upon earlier experiences as a doctor of medicine. These past weeks have been challenging for Sister Nelson and me. Not only have we bid farewell to our beloved President Hunter, but thirty-three days earlier, we suffered the demise of our precious daughter Emily. A mother of five young children, Emily had just celebrated her thirty-seventh birthday when called to the other side. She welcomed his invitation for all adult members of the Church to hold a temple recommend. She and her husband, Bradley Wittwer, regarded their regular time in the temple as a sacred privilege. Instead, they chose to endure with loving faith. If I had the power of resurrection, I would have been tempted to bring them back. Though one of the ordained Apostles, each of whom is entrusted with all the keys of the kingdom of God, I do not hold keys of the Resurrection. They had made and honored sacred covenants with the Lord, and they knew that his covenants to them will be kept with equal fidelity. Today it is possible to immunize individuals against conditions that once were disabling—even deadly. One medical method by which acquired immunity is conferred is inoculation. The term inoculate is fascinating. It comes from two Latin roots: An affliction like polio can cripple or destroy the body. An affliction like sin can cripple or destroy the spirit. The ravages of polio can now be prevented by immunization, but the ravages of sin require other means of prevention. Doctors cannot immunize against iniquity. Spiritual protection comes only from the Lord 5 and in his own way. Jesus chooses not to inoculate, but to indoctrinate. Identification and Indoctrination In so teaching, Jesus often established his own identity, 6 then the identity of his followers. I quote his words to the people of ancient America. And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. It contained several promises: I quote from a prophecy given nearly years B. To the Prophet Joseph Smith the Lord declared: We have received, as did they of old, the holy priesthood and the everlasting gospel. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are our ancestors. We are of Israel. We have the right to receive the gospel, blessings of the priesthood, and eternal life. Nations of the earth will be blessed by our efforts and by the labors of our posterity. The literal seed of Abraham and those who are gathered into his family by adoption receive these promised blessings—predicated upon acceptance of the Lord and obedience to his commandments. Elijah the prophet came to plant a knowledge of these promises made to the fathers. And to ensure that we do not forget him, children of the covenant receive his doctrine and claim it by covenant. When we partake of the sacrament, we renew those covenants. We may receive covenants of the priesthood 21 and the crowning blessings of the endowment, the doctrine, and the covenants unique to the holy temple. They are born in the covenant. Here, children of the covenant become a strain of sin-resistant souls. Often demeaning nicknames are added to—or even substituted for—given names. Unfortunately, terms of derision obscure the true identity of children of the covenant. In contrast, God employs names that unify and sanctify. When we embrace the gospel and are baptized, we are born again and take upon ourselves the sacred name of Jesus Christ. He is the Father of our new life. We become joint heirs to promises given by the Lord to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their posterity. But what about peculiar? But the term peculiar as used in the scriptures is quite different. We become better people. Children of the covenant will be blessed—here and hereafter—I testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.