

12-21-24 Message to Roeh Israel Abilene - *VaYishev* (and [Yacov]settled)
Torah Portion: Gen 37:1 – 40:23
Haftarah: Amos 2:6 – 3:8
Suggested Acheron K'tuvim: 2 Tim 3:14-17

Under the Law Part 23 – New Covenant Part 1 – Marcion.

Central question: Do you understand the progression of entering into the various levels of a covenant relationship with G-d?

Today we are in parasha *VaYishev*, which means “and settled.” It takes its name from the third word of the passage in English, and the first word in the original Hebrew.

Gen 37:1-3

37 Now Jacob lived in the land where his father had sojourned, in the land of Canaan. 2 These are the records of the generations of Jacob.

Joseph, when seventeen years of age, was pasturing the flock with his brothers while he was still a youth, along with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives. And

Joseph brought back a bad report about them to their father. 3
 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he
 was the son of his old age; and he made him a varicolored
 tunic.

וַיָּשָׁב וַיַּעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ מִגְוָרֵי אָבִיו בְּאֶרֶץ
 37:1 And dwelt Jacob in the land wherein was a stranger, in the land of his father
 3427 3290 776 4033 9999 1 776
 כְּנָעַן:
 Canaan.
 3667

אֵלֶּה הַדּוֹרוֹת אֲשֶׁר יָעֻקֵּב יוֹסֵף בֶּן־שִׁבְעֵה עָשָׂר
 2 These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being old, seventeen
 428 9999 8435 3290 3130 9999 1121 7651 6240
 שָׁנָה הָיָה רֹעֶה אֶת־אֶחָיו בְּצֹאן וְהוּא וְנֵער אֶת־
 years was feeding with his brethren; the flock and the lad was
 8141 1961 7462 854 251 6629 1931 5288 9999 854
 בְּנֵי בִלְהָה וְאֶת־בְּנֵי זִלְפָּה נְשֵׁי אָבִיו וַיָּבֵא
 and with Bilhah, the sons of his father's wives: Zilpah, and brought
 1121 1090 854 1121 2153 802 1 935
 יוֹסֵף אֶת־דְּבָרָם רָעָה אֶל־אָבִיהֶם:
 Joseph their report. evil unto his father
 3130 853 1681 7451 413 1

וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל אָהָב אֶת־יוֹסֵף מִכָּל־בָּנָיו כִּי־
 3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because
 3478 157 853 3130 3605 1121 3588 9999
 בֶּן־זָקְנִים הָיָה לוֹ וַעֲשָׂה לוֹ כְּתֹנֶת פָּסִים:
 the son of he old age: he his and he made him a coat of many
 1121 2208 1931 3807a 6213 3807a 3801 9999 6446

We are in the sub-series dealing with covenants, and today we begin dealing with the “New Covenant.” But before I do that, please allow me to briefly talk about something in this passage that has resulted in much discussion among our people – the “coat of many colors.”

The Hebrew word translated as “colors” is *passim*. This is the plural of the Hebrew word *pas*.

[OT:6446](#) **פַּס** *pac* (pas); from [OT:6461](#); properly, the palm (of the hand) or sole (of the foot) [compare [OT:6447](#)]; by implication (plural) a long and sleeved tunic (perhaps simply a wide one; from the original sense of the root, i.e. of many breadths):

[OT:6447](#) **פַּס** *pac* (Aramaic) (pas); from a root corresponding to [OT:6461](#); the palm (of the hand, as being spread out):

The Hebrew interpretation is uncertain today, but it could mean a long-sleeved coat which came all the way to the palm of the hands. This would make it distinctive from a shorter-sleeved coat which reputedly was typically worn by shepherds of that time. Or it could mean the coat had colorful (or distinctive) stripes on it as broad as one’s hand. Or it could mean that it was a coat of very fine fabric, far fancier than the typical coat’s construction of that time.

Rabbi Salomon ben Isaac (1040-1105) was a French Rabbi who wrote commentaries on Talmud and the Tanach. He is honored as a leading scholar of the Middle Ages. He is best known today by the acronym of his title and name – Rashi. In his commentary on this passage, Genesis Rabbah 84:8, he wrote:

פסים is a term for raiment of fine wool (Shabbat 10b). Similar is (Ester 1:6) כרפס “Fine linen and blue”. The same garment כתנת הפסים is mentioned (2 Samuel 13:18) in the story of Amnon and Tamar and we may therefore gather that it was made of very fine material. There is a Midrashic statement that in the word פסים we may find an allusion to all his misfortunes: he was sold to Potiphar (פּוֹטִיפָר), to the merchants (סוֹחְרִים), to the Ishmaelites (יִשְׁמַעְאֵלִים), and to the Midianites (מִדְיָנִים)

Another commentator, Rabbi David Kimhi (1160-1235) is known by the acronym Radak, was a noted Hebrew linguist, who wrote extensively about the Hebrew language, its etymology and structure. His writings have been used as textbooks since. He wrote in his commentary on this passage:

ועשה לו כתונת פסים, the word פס is related to the same word in Daniel 5,5 פס ידא, palm of a hand. The cloth was made of differently coloured surfaces similar to garments made of soft wool which are made in a number of differently coloured stripes or sections. The garment looked very impressive, arousing the hatred of the brothers in addition to the fact that they hated him for spreading tales about them to their father. Our sages in Shabbat 10 seize upon this detail to teach us that a father must ever be careful not to arouse inter-fraternal jealousies, seeing that the fortunes of the Jewish people have been so negatively affected on account of five silver coins worth of angora wool which Yaakov spent more on Joseph's attire than he did on the garments worn by his other sons. The enslavement of the Jewish people in Egypt was brought about as a direct consequence of this jealousy.

I show you all this to make the point that the coat made for Joseph was distinctive, and certainly of a far higher quality and appearance than the coats belonging to his brothers. What precisely was the difference? I don't know. But the difference may – or may not – have had anything to do with colors at all. The English translators made a translational choice, and it is not illegitimate. But that doesn't make it also correct.

Now, with that done, let's resume our study on covenants. We have discussed the transition between being an unbeliever (a "gentile" and in Hebrew a *nachar*), and the entry level of covenant relationship – that of the Noahic covenant. This is the doorway of justification which grants the person who enters a portion in the kingdom to come (if that person will only not turn back).

Then, at the proper time, G-d opened more doors to a deeper relationship with Him through the Avramic and Abrahamic covenants. In this relationship level, one must exercise greater faith and must combine it with action on that faith to obey what G-d says must be done. Abraham is the "Father of the faithful" because he followed G-d's instructions, even when they didn't seem logical, and when they were extremely difficult.

At a later time, G-d opened another door of covenant relationship – the Mosaic covenant. At this time G-d gave us the Torah, which provided for all those who were joined to Israel an instruction manual for relating to Him, and for relating to others.

The instructions of Torah are useful, but not mandatory for those who are at the Noahic – Avramic covenant levels. But for those who are of the "People of G-d" (which includes those Jews who have seized the faith of

the forefathers, together with those whom are fully “grafted in” to the Jewish olive tree of Romans 11:11-24), the Torah is obligatory.

The benefits of this level include the ability to live in the land of Israel, and an opportunity (in the kingdom age) to be selected from those gathered from the nations to be priests and Levites, as seen in Isaiah 66:18-24. As of this date, G-d has yet to open the doors to those covenant levels. But Scripture is quite clear that they will one day be opened.

Again, in the “fullness of time” G-d established a renewing of the covenant, this time by sending a part of Himself (lacking all the “omnis” of the fullness of G-d) to live and walk among us – to show us how to properly walk-out the precepts of Torah. This was Messiah Yeshua.

He then offered Himself as the final atonement sacrifice, placing His own blood upon the heavenly altar as that sacrificial act. This was sufficient to pay for the sins of all humanity back to the beginning with Adam and Eve, and even forward in time to the last person who will be born onto this earth before G-d brings this age to an end. Hebrews 9:11-15.

It is for this reason that the High Priest will never again need to offer the atonement sacrifices found referenced in Leviticus 16:8-18; and 23:26-32. But the other sacrifices as spoken of in Scripture for purification,

restoration, thanksgiving, etc. will still be offered. Those will be acceptable on the altar in the Millennial Temple. Isaiah 56:7.

Now I am dealing with what most believers call the “New Covenant.” A proper treatment will require a number of lessons. I will begin this one with a reminder of the difference between a “testament” and a “covenant.”

A “testament” is a pledge, reflected in a legal document, which sets out the intentions of the testator for disposition of his property at the time of his death. It is not effective until the death of the testator, and its provisions can be changed at the whim of the testator up to the time of his death.

A “covenant” is a binding agreement, normally in ancient societies also involving a ceremony, in which one person commits to a certain course of action, or level of fidelity or attachment to another person. The ceremony attending the creation of a covenant often involved a demonstration of a severe consequence (such as being torn to pieces) which the covenantor committed to endure should he ever break his covenant. A covenant is not conditional, nor is it revocable. It cannot be modified in any way during the life of the covenantor. Only upon the death of the covenantor is the covenant commitment released.

The normative church has so often interchanged these terms, that they now have lost much of their meaning, and that which remains is now quite fuzzy. I will endeavor in this teaching to clear-up a bit of fuzziness.

Today, many Pastors are careful to make a stark distinction between the “Old Testament” and the “New Testament.” They do that as part of their theology, which is rooted in the idea that G-d changed His mind on whether the Torah was applicable to His people any longer, and G-d came up with a “better idea” on how He could “save people.”

A popular internet site which purports to give good answers to theological questions,¹ has declared:

The New Covenant is the promise that God 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 22:20). The New Covenant was predicted while the Old Covenant was still in effect—the prophets Moses, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel all allude to the New Covenant.

. . .

We are no longer under the Law but under grace (Romans 6:14–15). The Old Covenant has served its purpose, and it has

¹ <https://www.gotquestions.org/new-covenant.html>

been replaced by “a better covenant” (Hebrews 7:22). “In fact the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, since the new covenant is established on better promises” (Hebrews 8:6).

Many of the statements in this article above are true, but the way they are assembled and presented does not represent *the truth*. As I continue in this series, you will be able to dissect these statements and show how they lead to a theologically inaccurate conclusion.

But allow me to do so for you for the first statement, “The New Covenant is the promise that God will forgive sin and restore fellowship with those whose hearts are turned toward Him.”

This statement presumes that G-d did not offer this pathway of reconciliation to Him until the Cross. That is not at all true. Let’s consult Scripture for the truth.

Lev 4:1-4

4 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'If a person sins unintentionally in any of

the things which the Lord has commanded not to be done, and commits any of them, 3 if the anointed priest sins so as to bring guilt on the people, then let him offer to the Lord a bull without defect as a sin offering for the sin he has committed.

Num 5:5-8

5 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 6 "Speak to the sons of Israel, 'When a man or woman commits any of the sins of mankind, acting unfaithfully against the Lord, and that person is guilty, 7 then he shall confess his sins which he has committed, and he shall make restitution in full for his wrong, and add to it one-fifth of it, and give it to him whom he has wronged.

Deut 11:13-17

13 "And it shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the Lord your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul, 14 that He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early and late rain, that you may gather in your grain and your new wine and your oil. 15 And He will give

grass in your fields for your cattle, and you shall eat and be satisfied. 16 Beware, lest your hearts be deceived and you turn away and serve other gods and worship them. 17 Or the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and He will shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain and the ground will not yield its fruit; and you will perish quickly from the good land which the Lord is giving you.

There are many other passages which illustrate just how G-d's pathway back to reconciliation with Him was accomplished during the time of Moses and forward. Each of those passages states, or strongly suggests, that the Torah's precepts are central to the process. This pathway did not change when Yeshua hung on the cross. Forgiveness comes through the shedding of blood, both before and after.² First was the blood of bulls and goats. Next was the blood of the Lamb of G-d.

Many authors of the books in the "New Testament" spoke of the "Scriptures", and at that time, this word had a common, well-understood meaning.

The word "scripture" or "scriptures" appears 52 times in the "New Testament." In all those instances *every single time it is used*, it describes

² Hebrews 9:22

or quotes something from Tanach, or it may refer to the entirety of Tanach.

In these references to the “scriptures”, there are numerous quotations from, or references to, the Torah, the prophets, and the Psalms. *Never once is there a single quotation* called “scripture” which is an original statement found in the Gospels, Acts, the Letters of Paul, The letters of John, Jude, or from Hebrews or Revelation.

One of the best examples of the meaning of this reference is found in Paul’s letter to Timothy.

2 Tim 3:14-17

14 You, however, continue in the things **you have learned** and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them; 15 and that **from childhood you have known the sacred writings** which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 **All Scripture** is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 that

the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.³

At the time of the writing of these words, the only “sacred writings” accepted by the Jewish community (in which both Paul and Timothy had grown up), were the Torah and the Prophets.

Much of the confusion in the normative church today regarding the supposed division of Scripture into “Old Testament” and “New Testament,” is a direct result of the heresy of Marcion.

Parts of his heresy persist to today, and form the foundation for some Christian theology. So, it makes sense for us to examine what Marcion said, and how that affects the Body of faith today.

In the year 135 CE, Marcion assembled his own Bible, from the various available scrolls.

He coined the phrase “Old Testament” and included within that designation the Tanach through the gospel of John.

³ “Good work” is a Hebrew idiom – *masim tovim* – which means performing the commandments of Torah with the proper heart.

He included in what he called the “New Testament” a shortened version of Luke which he called the “Gospel of Marcion”. He purged it of what he considered judaizing corruptions. He included an abridged version of ten Pauline letters.

In doing so, Marcion effectively severed this Christian Jesus from his Jewish roots. Yeshua the Jew effectively disappeared. And was replaced by what was essentially a polytheism as G-d Almighty and Yeshua were effectively separated. Even today, in normative Christian churches, it is rare to hear anything spoken about G-d the Father. It seems most of the preaching is about Yeshua. I do not minimize what Yeshua did. But to completely ignore G-d – in favor of Yeshua – is not something He Himself would tolerate. So, let’s see what the historical record says about Marcion.

The Encyclopedia of Religion, Vol 9 pgs 194-195, says this of Marcion:

Marcion: “...in 144 he founded his own church...which spread rapidly throughout the Roman empire and came to rival the catholic church. By the end of the century, there were Marcionite congregations in cities throughout the Roman world...He taught that Christianity has no relation to the Judaism from which it sprang, he rejected the Hebrew

scriptures in their entirety, and he abbreviated the New Testament to conform to his teaching. He believed that the God of Jesus Christ has nothing to do with, and is superior to, the God of the Hebrew scriptures who created the world, and he believed that Jesus came to reveal an utterly new and strange God, who is of pure goodness and mercy and without wrath or judgment...At a time when questions such as the relation of Christianity to Judaism, the place of the Hebrew scriptures (Christian Old Testament) in Christian life and thinking, the proper method for interpreting scripture (especially passages that describe God as capricious, despotic, or vindictive), and indeed the very terms in which the Christian faith would be expressed, were matters of intense dispute, Marcion provided clear and unequivocal answers. He also emphasized a central element in Christianity, the boundless grace of God...Marcion was the first Christian to put together a collection of books (a canon) as a standard for Christian life and teaching. His canon of the New Testament...comprised an edited version of the gospel of Luke...and ten epistles of Paul (not including 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and Titus) with the references to God as judge and passages dealing with punishment or the fulfillment of Jewish prophecy edited out...Marcion wrote one book, Antitheses...It consisted of a

series of contradictory statements setting forth opposition between the creator God of the Old Testament and the good and benevolent God of Jesus, between Jewish law and the Christian gospel. Though designed as a polemical and theological work, it assumed a creedlike status as a confession of faith within the Marcionite congregations and served as a key for interpreting the scriptures...”

The Mercer Dictionary of the Bible, Mills, pgs 547-548 tells us more of the story:

Marcion: “...In his careful study of what at that time was the only authoritative body of scripture for the church-the Jewish scriptures which came to be called the OT-he found what he considered to be an unacceptable representation of God as causing evil and effecting punishment, of using evil men to achieve his purposes, and as binding his people to obey his laws or suffer dire consequences. He felt that the Christian efforts to avoid these conclusions about the God of the Jews were misguided...He formulated, therefore, an official list of Christian scriptures, which consisted of a expurgated version of Luke, and the letters of Paul, with some significant passages omitted. The birth and childhood stories were taken out of

Luke, because they tied Jesus in with the God of the OT. The middle section of GALATIANS was also dropped (Gal 3:16-4:6), because it associated the new covenant community with the OT figure, ABRAHAM. The letter he took to be by Paul were those in our present NT from Romans through 2 Thessalonians, plus Philemon. The PASTORALS were not included...But for Marcion, the rejection of the God of the OT was not for his role as creator, but for having given the Law, and for reported schemes involving wicked agents...Marcion wanted to focus Christian faith and life on the love of God in Jesus as disclosed through a revised Luke and the Letters of Paul...(H)is ideas did force the main body of the church to draw up its own authoritative list of scriptures, and to develop ways of interpreting the OT within a framework of Christian understanding. Christian theology also had taken seriously the concepts of love and mercy, rather than stressing law and ecclesiastical authority.”

Marcion, in Gnostic fashion, rejected the old testament G-d of Law, as quite different from and inferior to the new testament G-d of grace represented by Jesus.

Marcion was finally exposed as a heretic, and kicked out of the Christian church, but he quickly developed a powerful parallel church to the Catholic church, which persisted in this errant theology for many years.

But the division of the Bible which Marcion had set into place, together with some aspects of the two-god theology, persisted. Hence, most Christians have heard the statement to the effect that the “Old Testament G-d is one of Law and judgment, but the New Testament Jesus is the G-d of grace and mercy.”

The Catholic Christian church authorities moved the page bearing the title, “New Testament” back to a position just before the gospels (further distancing Yeshua from His people), but kept that artificial division intact – which we have until today.

So, for 135 years following the cross, there was no such thing as the “Old” or “New” testaments. Those who walked with Yeshua, and who wrote about His life, would have been horrified about any such divisions. For that brief age of history, believers considered the events which are described in the Gospels, and the other more recent writings, as merely a continuation of G-d’s salvation plan which was put in motion in the Garden of Eden. They were correct in their interpretation and understanding of the plan.

After Marcion, the various groupings of the Christian church were motivated to assemble their own canon of scripture. They did not all agree upon that assembly, so we have the Catholic Bible, and the Protestant Bible with different books, today. And neither of those is perfectly consistent with the Tanach, which is used by the Jews. Thus, a significant division had already been solidified in what books of the Bible were considered authoritative by each branch of Christianity. And Satan was smiling in glee.

Likewise, the church, as part and parcel of that process, developed new ways of interpreting the earlier scriptures to fit within the theological framework of their particular branch of Christianity, and their focus on grace and mercy. The normative church largely abandoned the concepts of righteousness, justification and sanctification because of how they applied their theological constructs relating to grace and mercy.

So, as we begin to carefully examine what is “new” about the “New Testament” (as the normative church calls it), we should remember just how the Body of faith got to this theological position.

We will build on this foundation in the next installment in this series.

As we fashion a more correct theology, we will see what Scripture says about the “New Covenant.” We will see what Yeshua and His followers had to say about it, as well. And we will see how contemporary Jews understood that concept, to establish a context for understanding how that theological concept is properly understood.