

# The Ten Commandments - Part 12: New Covenant, Letter vs. Spirit, Finger & Hand of God, Image of God (4/30/2023)

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.cornerfringe.com/media/dmg3ffh/the-ten-commandments-part-12>

**\*Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliterate, English word. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.**

For the last couple of weeks, we've been looking at certain passages from the New Testament that unfortunately are being utilized by some to promote the idea that the law of God, the Ten Commandments should have absolutely no relationship to that of a believer in Jesus; that it is the antithesis to the faith; and by bringing yourself under the instruction, may I say conviction, of the Ten Commandments, you are actually bringing yourself into bondage. So, we've learned a lot over the last couple of weeks.

This week, we are bringing one more passage to the table that fits in that arena, in that genre. I don't know how many times I've had to deal with this particular passage which is found in 2 Corinthians 3, on various levels.

There are some people that are simply questioning this passage because they really don't understand what Paul is trying to communicate. It sounds very confusing. While I have dealt with other people that have utilized this passage to say, "Daniel, here is proof. The Ten Commandments are not something for the Christian today." And though it may sound radical to you, I'm telling you that this progressive Christianity is gaining momentum. It is growing and this is something that has to be dealt with.

As I've mentioned before, I kid you not, the Ten Commandments message is the message of John the Baptist and the message of the Spirit of Elijah that is to come before Christ comes back. This needs to happen now, so we will dig into this. And I have good news. Next week, the plan is to start covering some of the commandments. We are going to get back to the actual Ten Commandments. We will start plowing through and get some work done.

That being said, I want to say one more thing before we dig into this. This is one of those messages where you need to be on your toes because I'm going to throw a lot at you, kind of abruptly and very quickly. There are a lot of little tidbits, if you will, different bits of information that all relate to the Ten Commandments. Information that I believe is absolutely necessary. We need to have a certain perspective, scripturally speaking, to fully appreciate the Ten Commandments. So, we will throw some of this in today and hopefully you will appreciate it all. And hopefully, it comes together.

Beginning with 2 Corinthians 3:4, the Apostle Paul says – <sup>4</sup> **And we have such trust through Christ/Mashiach toward God.** <sup>5</sup> **Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God.** This is an important statement by Paul. Although, this is not my point of reading this verse, the Apostle Paul is laying some important groundwork as a shepherd, as one who wants to lead by example of not making any boast in his own flesh, not having any trust in his flesh whatsoever. Paul knows he's completely deficient without the Lord. It is the Lord alone who makes him sufficient. This teaching is important because if you read Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, the church at Corinth had a problem with boasting. So, you can see what Paul is doing. He's very crafty in making sure to lay down the groundwork so they understand that all boasting is in God alone.

Now, to get to the point, 2 Corinthians 3:6 – <sup>6</sup> **who also made us** – Paul and Timothy who wrote the 2<sup>nd</sup> epistle; Paul and Sosthenes wrote the 1<sup>st</sup> epistle – **sufficient as ministers of the new covenant** (*emphasis added*), – I want to spend a few moments talking about this. I previously covered this subject in depth in the book of Hebrews series where I went all the way to the basement and to the top floor. We will not do that today, but I'll stop for a moment and talk about this briefly because this is the premise of the whole discourse we're discussing today. It's about the New Covenant.

There are some, through misguided teachers and erroneous teachings which are abundantly available on the internet, that try to convince believers that today, we as believers, the body of Yeshua, are not under a New Covenant; that the New Covenant will not be experienced until the age to come. This is a teaching that is being purported today and many are picking up on it. It's shocking that this could even be a thing, but it is.

Let me say that you can't be **ministers of the new covenant**, if the New Covenant doesn't exist. It is absolutely implemented right now. Think of our recent celebration of Passover. One of the passages you most likely covered was Luke 22:20 – Yeshua holds up the cup of redemption (*Gullah, הלל*) and says – <sup>20</sup> **This cup is the new covenant in** – what? – **My blood, which is shed for you.** – **“In My blood”** signifies that His death would literally implement a New Covenant, a radical and I mean radical paradigm shift for Israel.

The writer of Hebrews seems to agree: Hebrews 9:15 – <sup>15</sup> **And for this reason He** – Yeshua – **is the mediator** – not “will be”. Yeshua “is” the mediator – **of the new covenant, by means of death** (*emphasis added*). So, with his death there was a radical paradigm shift. Think about how radical it was. Over 1400 years, Israel was under a particular system. It was the only system they knew and all of a sudden, poof – this man comes and claims to be the Son of God, the Mashiach ben David and changes everything in an incredible way; at least in regard to the aspects of the Old Covenant versus the New Covenant. It's absolutely radical!

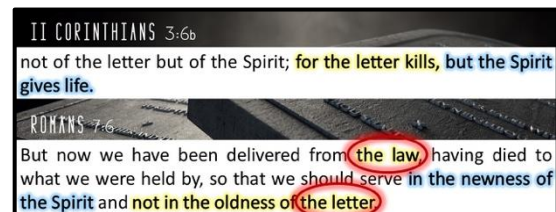


Continuing with 2 Corinthians 3:6, Paul says – <sup>6</sup> **who made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit** – The term for “letter” in the Greek is *grámma* (γράμμα). It's inflected in the genitive. It's *grammatos* (γράμματος). What does that mean? Writing. That's all it means. It's very simple. So, “not of the writing” or as Paul says, **“not of the letter but of the Spirit.”** He just told us that he and Timothy are ministers of the New Covenant and then proceeds to tell us, that is the ministry of the Spirit.

You need to pay attention to Paul's terminology. He has a specific nomenclature that he likes to use. You will see an example of how important this is. If you ever read a particular passage from the Apostle Paul that you are interested in, don't just read the passage; read it in its broader context; read the whole chapter; read the whole epistle; and when you're done, read the rest of his epistles. I say this because he has a particular way of teaching. He has this nomenclature by which he will say one thing about something in this epistle or even in the same passage, then he will use a different term to describe that very same thing.

It's like what we just saw when Paul was talking about being a minister of the New Covenant, but then he says that we are a minister of the Spirit. So, "the New Covenant" is equated to the terminology "of the Spirit." This is important. And "the letter", "the writing" would be the Old Covenant in Paul's mind.

Paul shows the stark contrast between these two as we continue, 2 Corinthians 3:6 – **6 for the letter kills** – meaning the writing kills, – **but the Spirit gives life** (*emphasis added*). Now, let's read the passage in Romans 7:6 with new eyes – **6 but now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve – what? – in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter** (*emphasis added*).



Literally, identical statements. Paul talks about the "oldness of the letter" and says "the letter kills", but then he says the "Spirit gives life" and talks about the "newness of the Spirit". He is literally teaching the exact same thing in these two different epistles.

Here's what I want to draw your attention to and this is why it's important to understand Paul's nomenclature. How does Paul view "the letter"? We really need to zero in on this. He uses the term "the law" synonymously with "the letter". They are one and the same in his mind. So, when we are saying "the letter kills", what are we saying? He is saying "the law kills".

Let me take this further. When Paul is talking about the law in Romans 7, what is he thinking? Where is he going? Read the next verse, Romans 7:7 – <sup>7</sup> I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet." When Paul is thinking about the law, he is thinking about the Ten Commandments.

In 2 Corinthians 3:6, replacing "the letter" with "the Ten Commandments", the verse would read, "for the Ten Commandments kill, but the Spirit gives life.

This is a reality. Only looking at what we're looking at right now, this is what Paul is saying. If you didn't know anything else and there were no other scriptures, you could see how someone could come to this determination: "Oh, my goodness, run as fast as you can, run far from the law, it's out to kill you." This is what's being promoted today.

But what does Paul mean? What is his intent? Let's jump to the next verse which will prove my point of what I just explained. 2 Corinthians 3:7 – <sup>7</sup> **But if the ministry of death**, – which is the letter – **written and engraved on stones**, (*emphasis added*) – There is no debate about what Paul is thinking of when he says that "the letter kills". He is talking about the Ten Commandments which is a "ministry of death". You want to talk about a radical statement. This is why pastors have literally said, "Why would

Christians want to post the Ten Commandments in government buildings when it's a ministry of death? Why would you want to do that?"

Let me ask you a question. First, keep in mind that in Romans 7:12, Paul calls the law, "holy" and the commandment, "holy and just and good." Then in verse 14, he says that the law is even spiritual. Is Paul saying that these principles that we're supposed to live by are death? No. Listen to me carefully, because this is where the confusion comes in.

He is saying that the final destination of implementing these commandments is what brought death. In other words, when they were put on stone tablets versus what? The tablets of our heart. Make the distinction of where Paul is going and what he is communicating. He is talking about the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant; the ministry of death and the ministry of the Spirit of life that comes through faith in Yeshua. It is all about: Where's the final destination of this being written? It's supposed to be on the superior place, our hearts.

Let's go to the Torah, as we need some perspective as to how the law was originally implemented. By digging into this, you want to talk about a world of understanding, a world of beauty blossoming forth; this is going to be valuable.

Exodus 31:18, this is what we read – <sup>18</sup> **And when He** – meaning God – **had made an end of speaking with him** – Moshe/Moses – **on Mount Sinai**, – we're at Mount Sinai, this is the big deal – **He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony**, (*šānê luḥōt̄ hā'êduṭ*, אֲשֶׁר תִּהְיֶה לְתַעֲדוּתָהּ) **tablets of stone** – Please notice that *šānê* means two. It's not one, it's two. He gave him two tablets of the testimony.

Knowing God's infinite power, He could have written all these commandments on one tablet. He could have fit them on one, since with God, all things are possible. I suspect it would be much easier to carry one tablet rather than two. Why did He put them on two tablets? There is a reason. There is a story that we're supposed to pick up on. You know what the backstory is to this, if you've ever read the Bible, all the way from the Torah into Revelation.

What you know is that God establishes all things on the testimony of two or three. In Deuteronomy 19:15, it literally says that if you bring a charge against anyone for any sin or iniquity, it must be done on the testimony of at least two.

Now, look at this name: the Testimony (*luḥōt̄ hā'êduṭ*, תִּהְיֶה לְתַעֲדוּתָהּ). These are two witnesses. What do witnesses do? They testify. When you're in a court of law, you bring forth witnesses and they give testimony. I kid you not, these two witnesses, what we call the two stone tablets, will testify at the end of the age in judgment. They will come forward and will bear witness against all the sinners, against all those who rejected the holiness and the righteousness of God and chose to walk according to the dictates of their own heart and not walk in the holiness of the Lord Yeshua. These witnesses will rise up and they will testify and judgment will follow.

This is an important perspective that we need to have. And just within the name we learn a lot about the words. Move the stone tablets aside for a second, and just look at the words. It's "the Testimony".



I can take this a step further. We looked at this picture last week of the ark of the covenant (*'ārōwn bərit*, אֲרוֹן הַבְּרִית). Think about that name for a second. Where does it even get that? Look at Deuteronomy 9:9 – **the tablets of the covenant** (*luḥōt habbārîṭ*, לוחות הברית) (*emphasis added*). The focal point of everything in the temple has a name. The cabinet (*'ārōwn*, אֲרוֹן) of the covenant, meaning the cabinet bears the name of the witnesses that live inside. There are two witnesses that

live within. It is the words of God's covenant. It's a very important perspective to have in understanding these words that are on the stone tablets.

Let me take it a step further. In Exodus 34:28 – **And He wrote on the tablets** – what? – **the words of the covenant** (*dib-rê hab-bā-rîṭ*, הַבְּרִית דְּבַרֵּי), the Ten Commandments (*Aseret ha-D'varîm*, עֲשֶׂרֶת הַדְּבָרִים) (*emphasis added*). So, what is my point? My point is that God is putting down every spotlight He has available because even the name of the one artifact that is in the Holy of Holies is turning you toward the contents within it. It's telling you to focus in on the two witnesses that reside within the cabinet.

Let me take it a step further. In Numbers 1:53 – **but the Levites shall camp around** – what? – **the tabernacle of the Testimony** (*lā-miṣ-kan hā-'ē-dut*, הַעֲדוּת לְמִשְׁכָּן) (*emphasis added*). Think about that for a second. The tabernacle is literally called after what? The name of the testimony; those words of the covenant; those witnesses that testify. The entire tabernacle, the temple of God, is named after that.

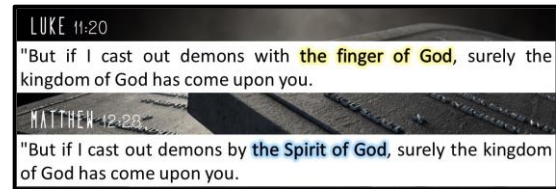
I kid you not, the Lord is putting every spotlight on these two witnesses, on what they have to say. That's not an exaggeration. Quite literally in every way, God is showing us these two witnesses and what we see is these words are central to the faith.

Let's go back to Exodus 31:18 – **And when he had made an end of speaking with Moses on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone**, – this is where we crescendo – **written with the finger of God** (*emphasis added*). It's absolutely fascinating to me that this detail is recorded. I want to be very clear, God intentionally recorded this. He preserved it for a reason. There is a story behind this that we are called to understand. This was the process of applying these sacred and holy words onto the stone. It happened through the finger of God.

Do you know “the finger of God” (*'eṣba' Elōhîm*, אֶצְבַּע אֱלֹהִים) is only found three times in the Old Testament? It's all in the Torah. You find it in Exodus 31 and then in Deuteronomy 9, but it's just a reiteration of Exodus 31. There is only one other time you find it and it's not even by Israel or Moses. It was actually by the Egyptians, who when they were up against the power of God that they couldn't replicate, they said to Pharaoh, – **This is the finger of God** (*'eṣba' Elōhîm*, אֶצְבַּע אֱלֹהִים) (Exodus 8:19). It's only found three times in the Torah and guess what? You never find it again throughout the entire Tanakh. That's mind-blowing.

But the finger of God re-emerges in the New Testament. It makes another debut in a miraculous and marvelous way. Let's go to Luke 11, here's the backdrop. Yeshua healed a demoniac, a man that was demon possessed. Obviously, He heals him because of the love and the compassion and the power that He possesses. The problem is that some looked on and said that the way Yeshua healed him was through the power of demons. They were clearly very perverse men.

Yeshua responds: Luke 11:19 – <sup>19</sup> **And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul,** – and this character is literally the ruler of demons – **by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore, they will be your judges.** <sup>20</sup> **But if I cast out demons with the finger of God surely the kingdom of God has come upon you** (*emphasis added*). Absolute power! I mean pure holy power set this man free, that no one else could set free, but now this was done with the finger of God.



The point I want to make is this: in the New Testament we are given a massive revelation of what this finger is. We discover this by reading the exact same story that is told in Luke, by going to the book of Matthew. I will read you the exact same phrase with one little alteration that Matthew covers. Check this out. Matthew 12:28 – <sup>28</sup> **But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God surely the kingdom of God has come upon you** (*emphasis added*).

This is a massive revelation! Do you understand that when God's finger etched into those stone tablets those holy words what actually happened? That happened through the Spirit of God. Think about how marvelous this really is. The Spirit of God etched in God's heart, His character, His nature, His truth, and His holiness into stone tablets and today the very same Spirit etches the very same information upon our own hearts. That's incredible!

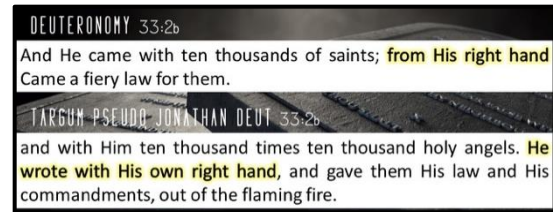
The prophet says this in Ezekiel 11:19 – <sup>19</sup> **Then I will give them one heart, and I will put – what? – a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart** – a direct reference to the stone tablets. We're going from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant and this is what's being described – **out of their flesh, and I will give them a heart of flesh,** – a tender heart, a humble heart who desires to walk with the Lord, who desires to do those things and to heed His counsel – <sup>20</sup> **that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them;** – and the payoff as I've mentioned before – **and they shall be My people, and I will be their God** (*emphasis added*).

The beauty of the New Covenant: instead of the Spirit moving upon stone tablets, now under the New Covenant the Spirit of God moves upon humanity, specifically those who call upon the name of Yeshua.

I'm going to make a point by continuing in Ezekiel 11:21 – <sup>21</sup> **"But as for those whose hearts follow the desire for their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their deeds on their own heads," says the Lord GOD.** It's interesting because it was just talking about the beauty and the blessing of the New Covenant that's going to be poured out: that we will be given hearts of flesh, tender and humble hearts; and the Spirit is going to write His commandments and we will walk in them; we will want to do them; and we'll fulfill the law as Paul talks about in Galatians 5. But then it literally follows up with a warning **for those whose hearts follow the desire of their detestable things.**

We will not get into the depth of it today, but this shows that the New Covenant does not override free will. Do you understand that this is important? Don't think because you born an anointing at one time, you have a free ride, no matter what you do, because if you start to follow the detestable things of your fleshly heart rather than the heart of God, know this: God will recompense your deeds on your own head. This, of course, is said in the context of the New Covenant. Obviously, scripture does not subscribe to this "once saved, always saved" notion.

Let me take this a whole step further. In regard to this application of the law at Mount Sinai, we are given more information that to me is just mind-blowing. In Deuteronomy 33:2, let's build on what we've covered – <sup>2</sup> **And He came with ten thousands of saints; from His right hand Came a fiery law for them** (*emphasis added*). We're not talking about the finger (*'ešba'*, אֶלְלֵימִים) of God. No! No! No! We are talking about the hand of God.



The Targums are very clear of what is being conveyed. Let me read you the same passage in the Targum – **and with Him ten thousand times ten thousand holy angels. He wrote with His own right hand, and gave them His law and His commandments, out of the flaming fire** (*emphasis added*).

Why is it important that the Torah didn't just record that when this law was implemented, it was done simply with the finger of God and leave it at that? No, it expounds on this and says it's with the right hand of God. Why is that significant? Listen to me carefully. All the times where you see the right hand or the arm of the Lord being spoken of in the Tanakh, they are explicit and direct references to the Mashiach.

I've said before that I need to do a study on this and I still haven't done it. You could spend months studying this, it's overwhelming. When you start combing through the Torah and the rest of the Psalms and the writings, every time you see "the right hand of God" and the prophets talking about it, it's a messianic imagery, explicitly. We will look at a few examples so that you can appreciate this.

Isaiah 48:13 – <sup>13</sup> **Indeed My hand has laid the foundation of the earth, and My right hand has stretched out the heavens; when I call to them, they stand up together** (*emphasis added*). Now, think about something for a second. Now that we have 20/20 hindsight, what do we know? We know that **all things were created through Yeshua** (Colossians 1:16). There's no debate on this. Psalms 33 even talks about how It's by the Word of the Lord that the heavens and the earth were created. Then in John 1 it says – <sup>1</sup> **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ...** <sup>3</sup> **All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.** Yeshua is that Word. He literally is the right hand that is being spoken of. It's not a coincidence that he sits at the right hand of the Father.

Let me build on this. Isaiah 51:5 – <sup>5</sup> **My righteousness is near, – and Paul calls Yeshua the righteousness of God – My salvation – Go to Hebrews- my Yeshua – has gone forth, and My arms will judge the peoples; the coastlands will wait upon Me, and on My arm they will trust** (*emphasis added*). It makes me think about the passages a couple chapters earlier in Isaiah where it says that whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame. We trust on the arm (*ūzarōwā'*, זרְאָרְוֹ) of the Lord.

Isaiah 53:1 – <sup>1</sup> **Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?** He's talking about Yeshua.

Isaiah 52:10 – <sup>10</sup> **The Lord has made bare His holy arm In the eyes of all the nations; – In other words, He revealed His Son. And the nations were told by the prophets that the nations would follow Him, a Jewish Messiah. – and all the ends of the earth shall – what? – see the salvation – Yeshua – of our God** (*emphasis added*).

One more example: Psalm 98:1 – <sup>1</sup> **Oh, sing to the LORD a new song! For He has done marvelous things; His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him the victory.** How did the Father gain victory over what the adversary did to all humanity in condemning them to death? It was only through His holy arm. It was only through His right hand, meaning Yeshua. We are told in Hebrews 2 that He conquered the one who had the power of death through death. That's how Yeshua did it.

Let's return to where we started, Deuteronomy 33. Targum Pseudo Jonathan Deuteronomy 33:2 – **and with Him ten thousand times ten thousand holy angels. He wrote with His own right hand, and gave them His law and His commandments, out of the flaming fire** (*emphasis added*). We are told that with his own right hand He gave them His commandments, the Ten Commandments. Now, put this together. It was the Word. It was the Son of God working through the Holy Spirit, the hand working through the finger. I understand that the fingers are attached to the hand. But do you understand how scripture specifically identifies the hand explicitly as a Messianic reference and the finger is, no question, the move of the Spirit?

Now, let's return to what we read in Luke 11:20 – <sup>20</sup> **But if I – Yeshua the hand – cast out demons with the finger of God** – Yeshua working through the Holy Spirit (*emphasis added*). Now, that blows your mind to realize that we need to appreciate what actually happened at Mount Sinai. How were these Holy Words inscribed? It was by the Son through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Understand that the process hasn't changed, the destination has. The process of the Son working through the power of the Holy Spirit to etch in those beautiful words is the same process that is happening under the New Covenant, except it's being written in our heart. Distinction has to be made.

2 Corinthians 3:7 – <sup>7</sup> **But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses/Moshe because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away.** You can read this on your own, but in Exodus 33, Moses came down from the mountain and didn't realize that the glory of God had rested upon his face. Literally, the glory of God. He didn't realize his face was shining bright, so much so, as he came down the mountain and the Israelites saw him, they fled from him. They were terrified. So, what did Moses have to do? Moses dropped a veil. He put a veil over that glory.

2 Corinthians 3:8 – <sup>8</sup> **how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious?** (*emphasis added*). Again, Moses came down with what? Stone. Moses came down with stone with his face shining brightly, stone tablets in hand. And Paul is drawing a contrast: **how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious?** because the fact that the Spirit of God is now working directly with the tablets of our heart; yes, that is superior in every way.

But how does this happen? Let me reiterate this point. Yeshua says in John 7:38 – <sup>38</sup> **He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.** <sup>39</sup> **But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive.** (*emphasis added*). There is no other way to receive the inscribing of those Holy Words to be a part and a child of the New Covenant and to connect with the Holy Spirit, by bypassing Yeshua. It cannot happen. It will not happen. He is the key. He is the hand that moves the finger. You have to be in relationship with Yeshua. He's the focal point of it all. Amen.



2 Corinthians 3:9 – <sup>9</sup> **For if the ministry of condemnation had glory** (*emphasis added*) – Now remember, he just called it a “ministry of death”. Again, Paul is using multiple terms. He helps us draw an understanding of “a ministry of death”, when he says that this Old Covenant, the law written on stone tablets was a “ministry of condemnation”. **There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Messiah Yeshua.** (Romans 8:1)

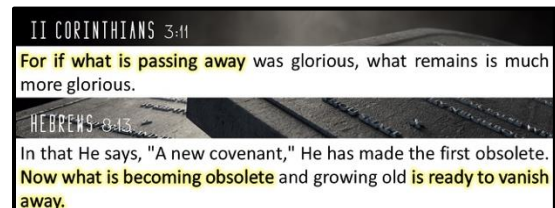
This is the beauty for all those who humble themselves, who call upon Yeshua's name and seek forgiveness of sins: they enter into a New Covenant. They are forgiven and God sends His Holy Spirit. Yeshua sends that Spirit and that Spirit does something that Paul picks up on: the person is not condemned anymore, but walks in the freedom of Yeshua. They do not walk according to the flesh, but they walk according to the Spirit which is above the law.

Returning to 2 Corinthians 3:9 – <sup>9</sup> **For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory.** (*emphasis added*). Again, “ministry of condemnation”, now the “ministry of righteousness”, which is the ministry of the Spirit, which is the New Covenant. You need to put all this together because these terms are important. The Ten Commandments are not eviscerated. We learn from scripture: **all Your commandments are righteousness.** (Psalm 119:172). It's interesting as now those commandments are placed upon our heart and we walk in them.

2 Corinthians 3:10 – <sup>10</sup> **For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels.** This is one of the most radical statements made in this entire chapter, which is pretty much filled with radical statements. Again, in the historical context, understand what Israel had was glorious in regard to the Old Covenant; the physical temple with an operating and functioning Aaronic priesthood, the animals being killed and their blood being applied to the altar and the blood on Yom Kippur being brought into the Holy of Holies. All of these things were amazing. There was a glory to that and this is the system they functioned on for over 1400 years.

Now, Paul is coming on the scene with a radical statement saying that system, that glory is nothing compared to what we are under now. I mean, just think it through. How does killing a goat, a lamb, or a bull, animals which are lower than humanity, for the sins of Israel compare to the Father sending his only begotten Son manifested in the flesh, and for Him to give His own life and to spill His own blood? There's no comparison. I challenge you try to find one of these animals that had ever resurrected. What animal was killed and sacrificed for the atonement of the sins of Israel, that ever resurrected? But Yeshua was resurrected. There's no comparison at all and this is what Paul is getting at.

2 Corinthians 3:11 – <sup>11</sup> **For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious** (*emphasis added*). This is one of those passages that I've dealt with so much over the last couple of years. Some people say, “Well Daniel, this is how we know we're not under a New Covenant. We're still under the Old Covenant because Paul makes sure to say that it is passing away. It hasn't passed away yet.” They're reading into it as though Paul is referring to the end of the age.



The writer of Hebrews says something very similar: Hebrews 8:13 – <sup>13</sup> **In that He says, “A new covenant”, He has** – you need to read this carefully – **made the first obsolete.** – There is no debate, the writer of Hebrews understood that we are under a New Covenant. He understood, now that we are under a New Covenant, the old one is obsolete and all those things that go with that. Instead of the methodology of

inscribing the law on stone tablets, now we know we can have it inscribed on our heart. But then he says this, which mirrors what Paul is saying, – **Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away** (*emphasis added*). That it hadn't vanished yet.

Let me point out something that's extremely significant. Both of these epistles were written shortly before (Hebrews was written just a couple years before) the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. when everything changed. It's amazing, because after that there was no more Aaronic priesthood, no more physical temple, and no more temple sacrifices.

In the Tractate Yoma, I can show you that some of the sages recorded something “crazy” about the temple from 30 A.D. to 70 A.D., the 40-year period prior to the destruction of Jerusalem. The rabbis say that during that period, the sacrifices were not accepted. The miracles that happened on Yom Kippur, didn't happen anymore. The scarlet thread didn't turn white. The lot for the Lord did not come up in the right hand. These were realities. They knew something was off.

Well, that was happening during the apostles' days. They understood very clearly what Yeshua came to do and they understood very clearly what was going on. There was a paradigm shift and it was vanishing away. And in 70 A.D., it was completed. From that time forward, they were dispersed throughout the world and the gospel spread like crazy. Again, we could talk for hours about the logistics. I understand there are other arguments that are made, but I'm not covering them today because I've already covered a lot of that in the teachings on the book of Hebrews.

2 Corinthians 3:12 – <sup>12</sup> **Therefore, since we have such hope. we use great boldness of speech–** (*emphasis added*). After 1400 years of Israel being on a particular system, it is radically bold for Paul to say that it's changed. In some circles saying that will get you stoned. Do you want to talk the way that Paul talked? You already know that he was not a popular guy. I mean, you don't need me to tell you that.

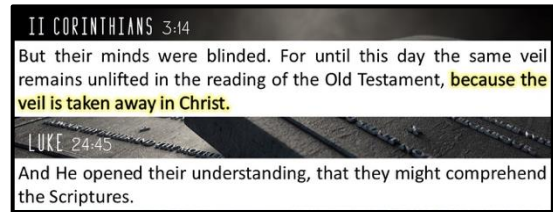
2 Corinthians 3:13-14 – <sup>13</sup> **Unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away.** <sup>14</sup> **But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ** (*emphasis added*). I love this passage because you realize that the revelation of Jesus/Yeshua and the fact that He has called all humanity to come to Him to be redeemed and to serve Him, does not take you further away from the law; it actually brings you closer than you've ever been before. You now gain an understanding. Think about this.

Paul is telling us that the people that do not accept Yeshua are blind in reading the Old Testament. They have no understanding. That blindness can only be removed through the Lord himself. I love reading in Matthew 11:25 how Yeshua lifted his hands and said – <sup>25</sup> **I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes.** His disciples came to Yeshua later and asked: Matthew 13:10-11 – <sup>10</sup> **“Why do You speak to them in parables?”** – Keep in mind that a good chunk of the crowd were pharisees, scribes and priests. – <sup>11</sup> **He – Yeshua – answered and said to them, “Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, – God – but to them it has not been given.”**

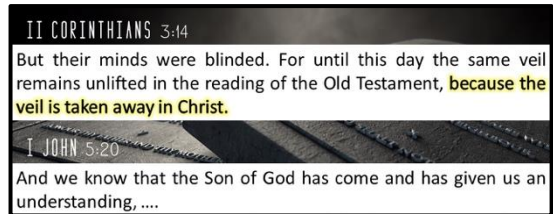
Whoa! Because this is what Paul is getting at. The mysteries of God are embedded in the Tanakh, what many Christians call the Old Testament, and the only way they're unlocked is through faith in Christ. There is no other way. That's why for me, my life's intense. I say intense because I read the Torah and

the Prophets, and Yeshua is everywhere. And the awesomeness of His reality, just literally it's living, it comes off the pages. This is what so many people are missing.

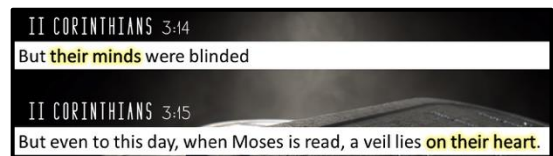
Progressive Christianity has turned this whole thing upside down. We're supposed to go back to the law and have a great understanding. Look at Luke 24:45 – <sup>45</sup> **And He** – Yeshua – **opened their** – meaning His apostles – **understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures**. I don't care how smart you think you are or how intellectual you are, if you do not have Yeshua, you're blind. Period. That's the end of it.



We read in 1 John 5:20 the same thing – <sup>20</sup> **And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding**. There's only one way to get the wisdom and understanding of God, get close to Yeshua.



2 Corinthians 3:15 – <sup>15</sup> **But even to this day when Moses/Moshe is read** – meaning the Torah, the law – **a veil lies on their heart** (*emphasis added*). You see how crafty Paul is? I want to show you how clever and careful he is. What did we just read in verse 14? Paul just said, "their **minds were blinded**" and then in verse 15, he says, "**a veil lies on their heart**". This is the exact same structure that you will find in Jeremiah 31:33 where the Lord prophesied that he would put their law in their minds and write them on their heart. Yet he is exposing the realities of the New Covenant: that you can't be a child in the New Covenant, you will always be blind in mind and have a veil on your heart and nothing will be afforded to you without confessing Yeshua as Lord and Savior.



Paul knows what he's talking about. For Paul, the one to be put on the pedestal and worshipped is Yeshua. You will see that in a second. This is mind-blowing.

2 Corinthians 3:16 – <sup>16</sup> **Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away** (*emphasis added*). When Orthodox Jews or secular Jews come to faith in Yeshua, their heads get ready to explode because the Bible comes to life for them. They understand things they've never understood before. They feel the power and the presence of the living God inside of them and it's a radical transformation. All you need to do is listen to their testimonies. It's radical, but that only happens through the gospel.

A friend of mine contacted me recently and said, "Have you heard about so-and-so saying that the Jewish people regardless of whether or not they believe the gospel, don't have to worry, as they will be saved? This is shocking. What a lie from the pit of hell. The gospel is to the Jew first and then to the Gentile. It's impossible to be a saved apart from Yeshua.

Again, 2 Corinthians 3:16 – <sup>16</sup> **Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord** (*emphasis added*). Who is in view here? Now, this is something scholars won't debate. It's not debatable. The person in view is explicitly Yeshua. That's the whole concept.

Even John talks about whoever has the Son, has the Father also. But if you say that I have the Father, but you deny the Son, you have neither the Father nor the Son. There is no debate that who is in view here is Yeshua, who is often referred to as “*kyrios, Κύριος*” in the Greek.

Now, look at this mind-blowing statement:

2 Corinthians 3:17 – <sup>17</sup> **Now the Lord** – Yeshua – **is the Spirit**; (*emphasis added*). This becomes extremely problematic for those who say Yeshua is not God. They have a problem. The problem only mounts when you read John 4:24 – <sup>24</sup> **God** – the term in Greek “*theos, Θεός*” is explicitly talking about the Father – **is Spirit and those who worship Him must worship him in spirit and truth**. Talk about radical. Now Paul says, “**Yeshua is the Spirit.**”

It starts to make sense as you go through the gospel of John and Yeshua says, John 10:30 – <sup>30</sup> **I and My Father are one** (‘*εἴη, ἵνα*’).

In John 14:23, Yeshua is prophesying about sending the Spirit, the hand moving the finger, to you. Then he says that we, meaning my Father and I, will come and make our home with you. How mind-blowing is that! When you have the Spirit of God inside you, you have the presence and the power of the Father with the Son. Yet, we walk around like we're mice, catering to fear and giving in to intimidation, when you have the presence of the power of the Most-High God inside you.

Paul is a radical teacher. He says absolutely absurd things, but things that are true, things that require us to really think. He does it as well in Romans, where he refers to “the Spirit of God” and in the same verse says “the Spirit of Christ” as though they are one and the same. So, there is this amazing incredible relationship that exists.

Continuing, 2 Corinthians 3:17 – <sup>17</sup> **Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord** – Yeshua – **is, there is liberty** (*emphasis added*). As I mentioned before, this goes back to Galatians 5:18, where Paul says – <sup>18</sup> **But if you are led by the Spirit** – you are hearing, listening and doing according to the Spirit – **you are not under the law**. The law can say nothing to you. But it's interesting as he continues, he says – <sup>19</sup> **Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are:** and Paul starts listing many things like adultery, idolatry, murder, and covetousness which he expresses as envy and jealousy. He starts listing aspects of the Ten Commandments as works of the flesh. But if I don't fall into the works of the flesh, the law can say nothing against me.

2 Corinthians 3:18 – <sup>18</sup> **But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord**. In other words, the Spirit of God cultivates righteousness within us. This is what the New Covenant is all about. It's not about running away from the law, running away from the commandments; it's about actually walking in them and doing them.

I want to leave you with this verse, Genesis 1:26 – <sup>26</sup> **Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;** If we are made in the image of God, then literally our design is a reflection of the character and nature of our God. We should be able to find Him in our design, aspects of Him, and aspects of His heart. It is awesome, when you look at how we are made. We are fearfully and wonderfully made. We each have two hands with a total of ten fingers. You can't make this stuff up. We have “two hands” with “ten fingers”, just as Moses brought “two tablets” of the testimony down

with “Ten Commandments.” Literally we are made in the image of God. And we have two feet, not one, but two with ten toes.

This is what I’m saying, “Could God possibly highlight the reality and the importance of these Holy Words that were put in the Holy of Holies, even to the point that when you look at yourself, you see that you are made in the image of God?” Therefore, you are a reflection of His heart, His character, and His nature. That means we need to start keeping the commandments.

A side note – The book of Exodus says that anytime the kohanim (priests) went into the temple or would make an offering at the altar, they had to do something first. They had to wash their hands and their feet. They didn't take a mikveh (baptism); they washed their hands and their feet. There's a deep spiritual connotation that it's not about getting the dirt off your hands; it's about the reality of needing to be cleansed from breaking God's law. That is an amazing thing.

Think about this statement: Psalm 119:35 – <sup>35</sup> **Make me walk** – with my two feet and ten toes – **in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it.** <sup>36</sup> **Incline my heart to Your testimonies,** – specifically the Ten Commandments – **and not to covetousness** (*emphasis added*).

We are to walk. How many passages could we find that are about walking? We are to walk in His law. We are to walk in His way. Everything we are to put our hands to is to abide and fulfill His ten words, His Ten Commandments.

This is awesome stuff that we are digging into. Next week, Lord willing, we will start peeling back more of these commandments.