

Doctrine of Forever

1. Prior to the Fall it appears it was possible for man to live for ever.
 - *Genesis 3:22 And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:*

2. In the covenant made with Abraham, God promised him a piece of land for ever.
 - *Genesis 13:15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.*
 - *Exodus 32:13 [Lord], Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever.*

3. Judah told Jacob he was willing to accept responsibly for Benjamin and bear blame for ever if something went wrong.
 - *Genesis 43:9 I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever:*
 - *Genesis 44:32 For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever.*

4. The special and unique national name for God is Yehovah meaning (the) self-Existent or Eternal.
 - *Exodus 3:15 And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.*

5. The weekly Sabbath was to be kept for ever.
 - *Exodus 12:14 And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.*
 - *Exodus 31:16 Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. 17 It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.*

6. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was to be observed for ever.

- *Exodus 12:17 And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever.*

7. The night of the Passover was to be remembered forever.

- *Exodus 12:23 For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you. 24 And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever.*

8. In a particular conflict with the Egyptians Moses told the Israelites they would be victorious in battle and would see the Egyptians no more, for ever.

- *Exodus 14:13 And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.*

9. The Lord God shall live and reign for ever and ever.

- *Exodus 15:18 The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.*

10. The Lord wanted to confirm the authority of Moses for ever.

- *Exodus 19:9 And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord.*

11. Servants who were indentured to their masters were to serve them forever.

- *Exodus 21:6 Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever.*

12. From the above passages it is evident that the term “for ever” is used in a limited sense as well as an expansive one.

- The Sabbath was to last “for ever” or until the establishing of worship on the Lord’s Day. *Revelation 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet. Acts 20:7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. 1 Corinthians 16:2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.*

- The Law was to last “for ever” or until the coming of Christ. *Romans 10:4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*
- Moses promised victory in battle and that the Israelites would see no more the Egyptians “for ever” meaning until their next battle with these traditional enemies. *Exodus 14:13 And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.*
- The Feast of Unleavened Bread was to be observed “for ever” or until the fulfillment of the Law in Christ after which special holy days were not binding. *Galatians 4:9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? 10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. 11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain.*
- The Jews were to enjoy the land for ever provided – and that is an important word and concept – provided they kept covenant with God.

Special Note.

It must always be kept in mind that the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof (Psalm 24:1). The land of Israel in particular is singled out as belonging to God for with this piece of land God would enter into a covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their descendants, provided they obeyed the Lord, and honored Him, they could enjoy the land for ever. *Leviticus 25:23 The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.*

However, if the nation of Israel did not obey the Lord then their covenant rights and blessings would be forfeited and given to others. Time after time God judged His people in the old economy, removed them from the land and gave it to another. He did this in 721 BC and in 586 BC. The final expression of divine judicial judgment came in AD 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed and the Jews were dispersed throughout the nations. Jesus predicted this would happen in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. During His earthly ministry Jesus announced what His Father was going to do. *Matthew 21:43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.*

For two thousand years history testifies that the kingdom of God, and thus the gospel, was taken from the Hebrew people and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. Which nation is it to whom the kingdom of God was given? The biblical answer is the church. *1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:*

- Many of the rituals associated with worship in the *Old Testament* assembly were to last as binding statutes “*for ever*” which is understood by progressive revelation to mean until the passing of the Law according to the doctrinal teaching of the *New Testament*.
- ❖ Aaron and his sons were to guide worship services forever. *Exodus 27:21 In the tabernacle of the congregation without the vail, which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the Lord: it shall be a statute for ever unto their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel.*
- ❖ Aaron and his sons were to wear linen clothing forever. *Exodus 28:42 And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach: 43 And they shall be upon Aaron, and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy place; that they bear not iniquity, and die: it shall be a statute for ever unto him and his seed after him.*
- ❖ Aaron and his sons were to enjoy a portion of the wave offering and the Heave Offering from the children of Israel for ever. *Exodus 29:27 And thou shalt sanctify the breast of the wave offering, and the shoulder of the heave offering, which is waved, and which is heaved up, of the ram of the consecration, even of that which is for Aaron, and of that which is for his sons: 28 And it shall be Aaron's and his sons' by a statute for ever from the children of Israel: for it is an heave offering: and it shall be an heave offering from the children of Israel of the sacrifice of their peace offerings, even their heave offering unto the Lord.*
- ❖ Aaron and his sons were to engage in ceremonial cleansing acts as a statute for ever to the nation of Israel. *Exodus 30:21 So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, even to him and to his seed throughout their generations.*
- ❖ The males of the descendants of Aaron were to eat of the Meat Offering as a statute for ever. *Leviticus 6:18 All the males among the children of Aaron shall eat of it. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations concerning the offerings of the Lord made by fire: every one that toucheth them shall be holy.*
- ❖ The sons of Aaron were to be anointed a priest in his stead as a statute for ever. *Leviticus 6:22 And the priest of his sons that is anointed in his stead shall offer it: it is a statute for ever unto the Lord, it shall be wholly burnt.* However, with the coming of Christ the Aaronic priesthood was overshadowed by the Melchisedec priesthood (Heb. 5:6-10).
- ❖ Aaron and his sons were not to drink strong drink when ministering in the Tabernacle lest they die. This was to be a binding practice or statute for ever. *Leviticus 10:9 Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations:*

- ❖ On the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, the nation of Israel was to fast and mourn. This practice was to be a statute for ever. *Leviticus 16:29 And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you:*

Special note.

The words "for ever" are to be understood in a general and indefinite sense, as denoting the duration of the Mosaic economy. This day of annual expiation for the aggregate sins, irreverences, and impurities of all classes in Israel during the previous year, was to be observed as a solemn fast, the only public fast ordained in the Mosaic law; in which 'they were to afflict their souls.' On that day no peace offering was made; for, since it was a day of affliction, the people did not eat with God or rejoice with Him-it was reckoned a Sabbath, kept as a season of "holy convocation," or assembling for religious purposes; and the persons who performed any labor were subject to the penalty of death. It took place on the tenth day - i.e., from the evening of the ninth to the evening of the tenth of the seventh month, Tisri, five days before the Feast of Tabernacles, corresponding to our third of October; and this chapter, together with Leviticus 23; Numbers 29:7-11, as containing special allusion to the observances of the day, were publicly read. The rehearsal of these passages, appointing the solemn ceremonial, was very appropriate, and the details of the successive parts of it-above all, the spectacle of the public departure of the scape-goat under the care of its leader must have produced salutary impressions both of sin and of duty that would not be soon effaced" (Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary).

- ❖ Offering sacrifices to idols was forbidden for ever. *Leviticus 17:7 And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations.*

Special Note.

There are three categories into which the statutes can be placed.

First, there are statutes which are temporal in nature even though they are said to be for ever. The social and ceremonial codices of the Mosaic Law fall into this category.

Second, there are statutes which are more enduring in nature. They transcend one spiritual economy and become binding on another. For example, the moral facets of the law summarized in the Ten Commandments of Exodus 20:1-17 are for ever in that the moral law is binding upon the saints in both the Old Testament era and the New Testament era. But even some of these statutes will prove to be limited in time for at the second coming of Christ some of the codexs will be nullified. People will be changed and relationships will be different. There will be no marriages in the eternal state for example and so the commandment not to covet a neighbor's wife will no longer will be necessary.

Third, there are statutes that provide principles which are for ever in the truest sense. The principles are for time and eternity. These principles are not limited by a change in the construct of humanity as we now know it. An example of this is to have only love for one God and to worship Him according to the regulatory instructions He establishes. The principle derived from *Scripture* is that we must meet God on God's terms.

13. While the statutes and promises of the Law were designed to be a blessing for God's people for ever, they were always conditional. The Lord has always desired a people who would give Him their heart.

- *Deuteronomy 5:29 O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!*
- *Deuteronomy 12:28 Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest that which is good and right in the sight of the Lord thy God.*

14. The conditional nature of the covenant blessings were understood by Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and the Israelites as a whole. It was *because* Abraham obeyed the Lord he and his descendants were given the land. It was *because* the Hebrews followed the Lord they were allowed to conquer the land. Covenant blessings are not unconditional.

Genesis 26:2 And the Lord appeared unto him [Isaac], and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: 3 Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; 4 And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

Joshua 14:9 And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the Lord my God.

Special Note.

Those people calling themselves Jews today who occupy the historic land of Palestine have gone to Israel, not according to gospel terms which is repentance and faith in the Messiah even Jesus Christ the Righteous One but as any other group of people who need a place to live and will fight to maintain territorial boundaries. Those who believe the Jews are back in the land according to biblical prophecy will find no support in the New Testament for this position.

It has been taught the *Bible* speaks of a time when people will go to Jerusalem without walls and modern Israel is a city without walls.

- *Ezekiel 38:11 And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates,*
- *Zechariah 2:4 And said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein:*

People became excited when Israel was officially recognized as a nation in 1948 as fulfillment of prophecy. Ah, but wait. The truth of the matter is that Israel does have walls. Tourists are taken to the various walls Israel has built to keep the Palestinians in check. These walls are protective borders with armed guards to protect the check points. Herein is a reminder that the *Bible* cannot be interpreted in light of a daily newspaper.

15. God is sovereign and reserves for Himself the right to suspend, alter, or interpret His statutes as He sees fit. One example of this is found in the prohibition against the Moabites coming into the congregation of the Lord, ever. And yet we read of Ruth the Moabites who not only came into the congregation of the Lord but went on to become the great grandmother of David and numbered in the genealogy of Christ. Such is the great grace of our great God.

- *Deuteronomy 23:3 An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever:*
- *Matthew 1:1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. 2 Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren; 3 And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram; 4 And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon; 5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; 6 And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias.*

16. There are some promises in the Old Testament that can only be understood by progressive revelation given in the New Testament. The promises made to David fall into this category. God promised David someone to rule on his throne for ever.

- *2 Samuel 7:16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.*

In the resurrected glorified and ascended Christ is this promise fulfilled.

- *Acts 2:25 For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: 26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: 27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. 29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day. 30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; 31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. 32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. 33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. 34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, 35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool. 36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.*
- *Philippians 2:9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

17. To encourage the heart of the believer God has promised many things that will last for ever.

- The mercy of the Lord shall endure for ever. *Psalms 103:17 But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children.*
- The Lord God Himself shall endure for ever. *Psalms 9:7 But the Lord shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment.*
- The kingdom of God, His power and glory shall endure for ever. *Matthew 6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. Luke 1:33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*
- Faith in Christ brings life for ever. *John 6:51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. John 6:58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.*
- Christ Himself shall live for ever. *John 8:35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.*

- The Holy Spirit will abide in the believer for ever. *John 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.*
- God the Father and God the Son are blessed for ever.
 - ❖ *Romans 1:25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.*
 - ❖ *Romans 9:5 Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.*
 - ❖ *Romans 11:36 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.*
 - ❖ *Romans 16:27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.*
- Divine righteousness shall remain for ever. *2 Corinthians 9:9 (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.*
- The Melchisedec priestly ministry of Christ shall last for ever.
 - ❖ *Hebrews 5:6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*
 - ❖ *Hebrews 6:20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*
 - ❖ *Hebrews 7:17 For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*
 - ❖ *Hebrews 7:21 (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:)*
 - ❖ *Hebrews 10:12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;*
- Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be perfected for ever according to the Doctrine of Positional Truth.
 - ❖ *Hebrews 10:14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*
 - ❖ *Hebrews 13:21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

- Christ will never change. *Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*
- The Word of God will live and abide for ever.
 - ❖ *1 Peter 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*
 - ❖ *1 Peter 1:25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*
- The punishment of eternity is for ever.
 - ❖ *2 Peter 2:17 These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.*
 - ❖ *Jude 13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.*
 - ❖ *Revelation 14:11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.*
- The person who does the will of God shall abide for ever. *1 John 2:17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*
- The truth shall abide for ever. *2 John 2 For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.*
- Christians shall live and reign with Christ for ever. *Revelation 22:5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.*