

The Unilateral Covenant

(Sermon Notes)

By Warren Zehrung

4/8/2017

Unilateral Covenant has to do with an action taking place by **one** – it is an agreement made by – and consisting of **one side** only. When someone takes an action – all alone – without help from anyone else it is a **unilateral** deed on his part.

The Night to be Much Observed has always been a favorite gathering of mine. I can remember in the 1970's when we had the choice of going to a restaurant with a bunch of people, or having the 'Night' in the privacy of our home with a few people over. When there were 25 or more people at a restaurant, the most you could fellowship with was three or four brethren next to you and possibly with those across the table from you. But, in a home setting you could easily interface with a lot more people. I liked that better.

Passover and the **Night to be Much Observed** have deep spiritual meaning for us. We always began the evening with a very gracious prayer – thanking God for the meaning of the evening – establishing the ambiance for the evening. The conversations began with how God in His mercy had begun to deliver His people from bondage – way back with the Exodus. We compared those days with how we are being delivered and saved today by the grace of God. Since it was the **beginning** of a Holy Day we usually had a nice meal with the emphasis on the 'Unleavened' nature of the meal.

Think about this: At the moment that the Night to be Much Observed began Jesus' dead body was laid in the tomb. The One who was to be the Savior of mankind was **dead** – lying on a slab of stone for three days and three nights. Brethren, that **moment** when Jesus was placed in His grave – that **moment** was a **pivotal** point in the Plan of God for all mankind.

Luke 22:14 And when the **hour was come**, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him.

There is an **exact** month – day – hour – to observe Passover!

Matthew 27:57 When the evening [NTBMO] was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple:

Matthew 27:58 He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.

Matthew 27:59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

Matthew 27:60 And **laid it in his own new tomb**, which he had hewn out in the rock:

That moment when Jesus was placed in His grave is the essential **key** to our understanding of God's intervention to bring salvation to mankind. **Remember** that picture – because it is the Night to be Much **Remembered**. Let's look at this moment as John records it:

John 19:38 And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but **secretly** for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

Joseph of Arimathaea – a man of some wealth – a disciple of Jesus – was from out of town – but he had decided that he wanted to be buried there – east of Jerusalem – in a beautiful garden near Golgotha – why?

In order to meet the returning Messiah! There is an entire cemetery just outside the eastern gate of Jerusalem for those who await the return of Jesus Christ.

John 19:39 And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.

John 19:40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

John 19:41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulcher, wherein was never man yet laid.

John 19:42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day [The **Night to be Much Remembered** was just beginning]; for the sepulcher was near at hand.

What does that mean, "The Jews' preparation day was near at hand?"

Yes! The moment had arrived! It was the Night to be Much Observed at the very beginning of the First Day of Unleavened Bread... And Jesus was laid in the new sepulcher.

Luke 23:50 And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counselor; and he was a good man, and a just:

Luke 23:51 (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the Kingdom of God.

Luke 23:52 This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.

Luke 23:53 And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulcher that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

Luke 23:54 And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath [1st Day of UB] drew on.

Luke 23:55 And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulcher, and how **His body was laid**.

Passover is a **Feast** and Holy Convocation, but the Night to be Much Observed is all of that – and a **Holy Day** as well.

Have you ever noticed how many of the Church of God Calendars are constructed with a list of the Feast days – and Passover is usually first – some have the first day of the Sacred Year... And behind Passover you find one or two asterisks? And you look up what the asterisks means and it says "Observed the Previous evening."

What is missing on most of the Church of God Calendars **is that same notation** – with the asterisks – with regard to the other Holy Days - -especially on the First Day of Unleavened Bread. The observance of the First Day of Unleavened Bread begins the previous evening with the Night to be Much Observed. That is definitely an integral part of the proper observance of the First Day of Unleavened Bread.

The Night to be Much Observed is the **beginning** of the first Holy Day of the Sacred Calendar year.

In these Laodicean times too many of God's people are letting down by not observing the Holy Days beginning on the previous evenings. Many brethren skip the opening night of the Feast of Tabernacles – like it is some kind of undue burden!

The apostle John refers to the Holy Days as **High Days**:

John 19:31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation [for the First Day of Unleavened Bread], that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an **High Day**,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

Of course the world gets all mixed up because they don't recognize the High Sabbaths... And they think that Jesus died the day before a weekly Sabbath – and that's where their belief of a Friday crucifixion comes from.

The word 'convocation' – in Holy Convocation – means God's **appointed time**. God has a set time for doing things. 'Convocation' comes from the Hebrew *miqrá'* [Pronounced mik–raw] which can also be translated as 'a rehearsal.' That is interesting in that the Holy Days are a rehearsal of the seven steps in God's Plan for our spiritual salvation and membership in His Family.

And it is also interesting that the yearly Holy Days begin with the Night to Be Much Observed. What is so special about this particular night? The Night to be Much Observed has a deep spiritual meaning

for us. This Feast marks the beginning of “Unleavened,” and all that entails. (Except for the small piece of unleavened bread representing Christ’s body in the Passover service.)

The Holy Convocation and observance of the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins with the Night to be Much Remembered – even the exact selfsame day – a night on which so many important events have taken place in the history of God’s people.

It was determined by God that Jesus would die and be buried at this exact time before Adam was on the earth.

Revelation 13:8 ... the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

It is not only a night to be “remembered,” or “observed,” as much as it is a night in which we find a “**replication**” of God’s intervention over and over.

A better translation would be “The Night Much Replicated.”

When the sun sets and the Night to be Much Observed begins is when we begin to **observe the Feast** of the First day of Unleavened Bread... picturing coming out of Egypt/sin – putting sin out of our lives – and picturing Christ coming **into** our lives to deliver us – the true Unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth.

Exodus 12:39 And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual.

Exodus 12:40 Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years.

Exodus 12:41 And it came to pass at the end of the **four hundred and thirty** years, even the [**exact**] **selfsame day** it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.

Exodus 12:42 It is a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations.

Exodus 12:51 And it came to pass the [**exact**] **selfsame day**, that the LORD did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies.

The question is, “The exact selfsame day, **as what?**”

What took place on that same exact evening four hundred and thirty years before? That 430 years harkens back to the time of Abraham’s vision of Genesis 15.

Then jump ahead exactly four hundred and thirty years after this Covenant Sacrifice was witnessed by Abram to the Children of Israel departing Egypt on the **exact same night**. It is a most important night to observe as a Holy Convocation.

A Holy Day is a day that is set apart to focus on the things of God. While Passover commemorates the sacrifice of the Lamb of God—the death of Jesus Christ, the Night to be Much Observed commemorates not only Israel’s exodus from Egypt, but much more.

One thing the Church brethren have come to understand is the precise timing of Biblical events as they are performed by God. He is working His Plan in a meticulous way in order to show His people – who believe – what He is doing and what it means.

We are given an incredible number of markers like – “when the hour was come,” “the setting of the sun,” when it “was dark,” the “third hour,” “the same day,” “on the morrow,” and “**the selfsame day**” – repeated over and over for emphasis, so that we are able to understand the timing of these important events and keep them in order.

A better translation would be “The Night Much **Replicated**,” because **so many** pivotal events took place on this very evening.

We will go into some of these on this following list as time permits. Here are numbered a few of the occurrences on this exact same day – the First day of Unleavened Bread. A day which is much **replicated** in the Scriptures.

1. The Unilateral Sacrificial Covenant of Abraham in Genesis 15.

2. The Beginning of the Exodus out of Egypt by millions of Israelites.

Exodus 12:17 And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this exact **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 **forever**. Notice how God says to **observe this day** – so we do keep The Night to be Much Observed.

3. The entering of the Promised Land after 40 wandering in the desert.

The Night to be Much Observed represents “**New Beginnings**.”

Joshua 5:10 And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho.

Joshua 5:11 And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the **morrow after the Passover**, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the exact **selfsame** day.

4. The burial of Jesus after the Crucifixion on the exact selfsame day.

5. **Speculation** but Abel may have been slain on Passover afternoon – after offering the perfect lamb – the first righteous man – his blood crying out from the grave giving testimony to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

6. We, brethren, gained our victory over sin on the exact selfsame day – it marks our point of salvation – our victory over bondage and over death as Jesus was laid in the tomb just as The Night to be Much Observed began.

To show Abraham that His promise was sure – God made a **Unilateral Sacrificial Covenant** with Abraham.

I want to set the stage by looking at a **Covenant Sacrifice** in the Bible.

Understanding the Covenant Sacrifice will greatly aid our understanding of Passover and Unleavened Bread.

The sacrifice that I will be speaking about today is **NOT** the typical sacrifice we are so used to hearing about where those in the Old Testament brought animal sacrifices to the temple.

Definition: A *covenant* is an agreement between two people, entities, or parties.

A covenant, like a contract, is a **binding** [that is the general meaning of Covenant] agreement between the two parties, which creates obligations that each must perform.

Examples: Two people can enter a contract or covenant, or God can enter a covenant, as with the nation of Israel. “If you will obey my Commandments... then...” That is a bilateral covenant or agreement.

A covenant, like a contract, is an agreement between the two parties, which creates obligations that each must perform.

Example: Let’s consider for a moment a covenant in which both contracting parties are men.

One man says, “I’ll sell you my cow for \$100 dollars.” When the buyer and seller **both agree** on the deal it becomes a contract or covenant.

They can say it, shake hands on it, or formalize it in writing or even sign it before witnesses.

A contract is an **exchange of promises** that bind the parties to each other - to perform their part. One party brings the cow; the other brings the \$100 dollars.

Paul wrote about a simple contract between two men – saying that neither man could *alter* the terms of the contract after the agreement was struck.

Galatians 3:15 Though *it be* but a man's covenant, yet *if it be* confirmed, no man disannuls it, or adds thereto.

What is a **Covenant Sacrifice**?

A Covenant Sacrifice has some basic elements:

- ...An oath or solemn promise to do something
- ...The parties to the covenant
- ...And a dead animal, which has had its blood poured out.

An animal, or animals were slain by shedding their blood – then they were cut into two halves from top to bottom and laid on the ground.

When a contract was made in those days -- the word we will be using is “Covenant,” - the covenant was validated or made binding, when the contracting parties **walked between the pieces** of a slain animal.

It was a way of saying, “**I’m putting my life on the line to keep this covenant.**”

And going through such a dreadful and grisly ritual – no one could later say they didn’t remember entering into the covenant.

To “**ratify**” a covenant means to approve of, agree with, confirm, put in force, sanction, validate or establish the covenant.

The Covenant Sacrifice required that the principal persons entering the Covenanting agreement must **pass between the parts of the slain sacrifice** – implying, that whoever broke the covenant, would be subject to the *same death*.

“May the One who breaks the covenant be cut in two as the calf is divided.” Soncino, Jeremiah page 234

Soncino says that the purpose of these animals, represented here, was to enter into a covenant (same as an oath) which could not be annulled.

It was well understood that the **Life was in the blood**. (Leviticus 17:11)

Those entering the **Covenant Sacrifice** were saying, in effect, “If I fail to keep covenant, then let my blood be poured out like this slain sacrifice.” – “If I break the covenant I am willing to be cut in two pieces.”

To this day, people still speak of “**cutting a contract**” – from this common practice of cutting the **covenant sacrifice** in half.

The animal to be sacrificed was cut in two so that the contracting parties might pass between the pieces; therefore **cutting** the covenant and passing between the two pieces signified making the covenant.

There is a good example of this practice in the Book of Jeremiah:

In Jeremiah’s day there arose a predicament in which the common citizens of the land were in virtual bondage and servitude to those domineering public officials and powerful political leaders who controlled the country.

The high prices, taxes, mortgages, rents, fees, obligations and tariffs – essentially made **slaves** of all the people.

God knows that without His financial laws in place, a few men soon end up with all the **wealth**, and the masses of the people end up with all the **debt**.

God told the overbearing Princes of Judah, priests and merchants to promise to “Give my people relief and freedom from that heavy oppression.”

In fact, God had them enter into a **Covenant Sacrifice**.

They did so in the temple – with great fanfare – And King Zedekiah was first to pass between the halved carcasses.

Let’s look at this example of a **Covenanting Sacrifice** in Jeremiah’s day. All the leaders entered into a Covenant Sacrifice – promising to give the people their liberty and freedom.

Jeremiah 34:18 ...The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem had Covenanted to perform [middle of verse :18] the words of the covenant which they had made before Me [God says], when they **cut the calf in twain** [two halves], and **passed between** the parts thereof,

Jeremiah 34:19 The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which **passed between the parts of the calf**;

The princes of Judah Covenanted to give the people their liberty – and they **did** free them – but only for a very short time – then they soon reverted back to their high taxes, mortgages, – followed by foreclosure and debtors jail - again denying the people their liberty.

What happened when they **broke their covenant with God** by treating the people harshly?

Jeremiah 34:18 And I will give the men that **have transgressed** my covenant,

God **required their blood of them**. They had covenanted to spill their blood if they broke their promise – they broke the covenant and God allowed their blood to be spilt.

Jeremiah 34:20 I will even give them [King Zedekiah and the Princes and leaders] into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that **seek their life**: and their **dead bodies** shall be for meat unto the buzzards of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth.

To show Abraham that His promise was sure – God made a **Unilateral Sacrificial Covenant** with Abraham.

God swore to Abraham – but God doesn’t raise His right hand to heaven, or swear on a stack of Bibles. Paul says that God swore on “Himself.” What, exactly, took place when God swore by Himself? How did Jesus Christ swear by Himself?

Answer: Jesus entered the **Unilateral Sacrificial Covenant** and then became the Paschal victim of that sacrifice.

God, Himself, passed between the pieces of the Unilateral Sacrificial Covenant (Genesis 15:9).

That is, He made and entered into the unilateral covenant that only He could bring to pass. Jesus said in effect, “I will give my life to bring this covenant to fruition.” Jesus Christ was in fact promising the sacrifice of His own sinless life.

God and Abraham were close enough friends, that he was made to understand how the complete justification of mankind would require the sacrifice of the life of One greater than all those being justified—which could only be the Creator God?

When Abraham witnessed this phenomenal spectacle – **he believed!!!**

He knew, without any doubt at all, that Jesus would keep His Promise and perform his word! This is why Abraham was willing to sacrifice his own son, Isaac, – because he knew that Isaac would live again!

God promised Abram and his offspring with a **unilateral covenant**, an incontrovertible oath, that he would become a great nation. The unilateral covenant involved **only** Jesus Christ who made the promise. It did not depend on Abraham consenting, because God would bring it about.

The problem in Abram's mind -- being advanced in age -- was that he yet remained childless. Abram asked God for some **reassurance** that he himself would indeed have a son of his own flesh – and not work out His promise some other way.

Genesis 15:1 “After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

Genesis 15:2 And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing **I go childless**, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?

Genesis 15:3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no child: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

”Is that the way you are going to work it out Lord?

Genesis 15:4 And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall **not** be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine **own bowels** shall be thine heir.”

This vision took place during the night portion of the 14th of Abib. [This is the same time that Jesus prayed to the Father in John 17 the night before He died.]

When Abram asked for a sign from the Lord that he would indeed inherit the land and children, the Lord had him prepare a very special **Unilateral Covenant Sacrifice** on Passover Day.

God promises Abram, who is childless at the time, progeny as numerous as the stars in the heavens. God also told Abram that the covenant He was making with him was to be an everlasting covenant.

Pick up on the timing here – we now move into the evening of Abib 14th – then it becomes **real dark**. It was a beautiful, chilly, star-bright night when Jesus led Abram to the crest of a small hill.

Genesis 15:5 And the Lord brought Abram forth a broad [high field], and said, Look now toward heaven, and **count the stars**, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, **So shall thy seed** [children] be.

This is the great promise – Abraham does not have even one child yet – and God tells him that his children will be uncountable. Christ is the “Seed” that will bring **Spiritual Salvation** to the multitudinous children of Abraham.

Abraham understood that Christ would work out the **salvation** of the entire world through him.

Perhaps we cannot see the spiritual aspect of Genesis 15:5 – but just so we do not miss the implication here – that is why Paul spells it out for us as we saw in Galatians 3:29, these children are not all Abraham's Physical children – but also those who become **Spiritual children – through Christ**.

Abraham believed God!!! (Romans 4:20)

Genesis 15:6 And he [Abraham] believed in the LORD; and He counted it to him for righteousness.

We are told that God knew **for sure** that Abraham believed the Lord when he did not withhold his son Isaac – Chapter 22.

What happened in the meantime to convince Abraham of God's faithfulness? **Why did Abraham believe God?** Abraham asks for confirmation of God's promise:

Genesis 15:8 And he said, Lord GOD, **whereby shall I know** that I shall inherit it?

What is the sign – what is the miracle?

Genesis 15:9 And the Lord said unto Abram, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a female goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.

Please understand that this is not like most of the Old Testament sacrifices. This was for a **Unilateral Covenant Sacrifice** – it was for an oath by God Himself:

Genesis 15:10 And he [Abram] took unto him all these, and **divided** them down the middle, and laid each piece opposite the other:

The daylight portion of Abib 14 – that corresponds to the time when Jesus was slain. Abraham does this during the daylight portion of Passover – it is okay to work on Passover Day. This happened about 3 pm on Passover day.

Genesis 15:11 And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

That is still daylight – when the buzzards are flying. These buzzards are symbolic of the demons who are rejoicing because Jesus is dying. These demons compassed Jesus on the cross – believing that they had the victory as Jesus endured the shame of the cross. We understand that Satan was only able to “bruise Christ’s heel” while Jesus will “crush Satan’s head.”

David prophesied of this **demonic torment** and **vexation** that Jesus endured.

Psalms 22:12, :16, Genesis 15:11

Jesus is praying while on the cross:

Psalms 22:11 Be not far from me [Father]; for trouble is near; for there is none to help.

Psalms 22:12 Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.

Psalms 22:13 They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion.

These verses refer to the combined assault of the demonic realm against Jesus Christ.

Psalms 22:14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

Psalms 22:15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaves to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

Psalms 22:16 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

Then as this Passover Day comes to an end, we come to the Night to be Much Observed [before it is called that].

It is the night portion of the First Day of Unleavened Bread.

As the 15th of Abib began, Abram fell into deep coma-like trance as the Lord prophesied to him of things to befall his children.

Genesis 15:12 And when the sun was going down, a **deep sleep** fell upon Abram; and, lo, **an horror of great darkness fell upon him.**

Abram’s **deep sleep** corresponds to, and symbolizes **Jesus** death and **burial** in the tomb as the NTBMO begins and the First Day of Leavened Bread arrives at sunset.

Genesis 15:13 And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

Genesis 15:14 And also that nation [Egypt], whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

This happened on the Night to Be Much Observed / Remembered, just as it was prophesied on the Night to Be much Remembered.

Exodus 12:35 And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they required of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: [much physical wealth]

Genesis 15:15 And thou [Abram] shalt go to thy fathers **in peace**; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

In peace = Abraham will be in the first and better resurrection.

Genesis 15:16 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

This occurs finally in the time of Joshua.

Jesus makes the **Unilateral Sacrificial Covenant** and then becomes the victim.

Then in the dark of night, the Lord gave Abram the sign he had requested:

Pick up on the **timing** – because this day will become known as the **Night to be Much Observed** and the First Day of Unleavened Bread.

Genesis 15:17 And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and **it was dark**, behold a **smoking furnace**, and a **burning lamp** that passed between those pieces.

Genesis 15:18 In the **same day** the Lord made a **covenant** with Abram.

There was no doubt in Abraham's mind that it was the Lord God who was evidenced by that extraordinary apparition of smoke and fire. Jesus Christ made a very emphatic point of passing through the pieces – the halves – becoming the Unilateral Sacrificial Covenant. It was the strongest promise that could be made. The Lord made a **covenant** with Abram – please pick up on that! Let's go to the New Testament where Paul explains the extreme importance of this sacrificial covenant – and how it was made.

Hebrews 6:13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by Himself,

Hebrews 6:14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

Hebrews 6:15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

Hebrews 6:16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

Hebrews 6:17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

Hebrews 6:18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

Hebrews 6:19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

Hebrews 6:20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

Hebrews 7:1 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

Hebrews 7:2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;

Hebrews 7:3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.

Hebrews 7:4 Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

This event that Abraham witnessed is what Paul meant when he said "because He could swear by no greater, **He swore by Himself**," Jesus is the **first [and only]** party to the covenant.

Galatians 3:17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed [ratified] before of God, **in Christ**, -- the law, which was **four hundred and thirty years** after [later], cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

God's promise to Abraham is still in effect. Paul makes it clear that the Sinai covenant with Moses and Israel that came 430 years *after* the **Unilateral Sacrificial Covenant** of Genesis 15 that Abraham witnessed cannot annul God's oath.

This sacrifice which Abraham prepared – these animals – corresponds to, and **symbolizes Jesus'** body, who is the sacrifice killed on Passover, and the One who makes the covenant:

This was **that** oath by God Himself—This was the **Unilateral Covenant Sacrifice**. The *smoking furnace, and a burning lamp* – that was Jesus Christ – the God of the Old Testament passing between those pieces.

God, Himself, passes between the pieces of the Unilateral Sacrificial Covenant—that is, He makes and enters into the unilateral **covenant** that only He can bring to pass. Jesus said in effect, "I will give my life to bring this covenant to fruition."

Abraham did not pass between the pieces, but the Lord did: This was a *unilateral – one sided* agreement. God promised – he swore to do something.

We need to understand the meaning of the **smoking furnace** and the **burning lamp** of Genesis 15:17. Jesus walked between the pieces of the Unilateral Sacrificial Covenant – that is, He entered into **the covenant oath** that only He can bring to pass.

How did Jesus Christ swear by Himself? Jesus made the Unilateral Sacrificial Covenant and then He became the Paschal victim of that sacrifice. Jesus stood in the **breach** and said, "I will shed my blood and die, as these dead animals at my feet, to pay the price of the broken covenant."

God and Abraham were close enough friends, that he was made to understand that complete justification of man would **require the life** of One greater than everyone being justified—which could only be the Creator?

When Abram witnessed this phenomenal spectacle – he believed!!! He knew, without any doubt at all, that Jesus would keep His Promise and perform his word!

This is why Abraham was willing to sacrifice his own son, Isaac, – because he knew that Isaac would live again and have salvation!

Jesus, in passing between the pieces of the sacrifice, prophesied His own death – in order to bring all men to salvation.

Jesus said in effect, "I will give my life to bring this covenant to fruition." Jesus stood in the breach and said, "I will shed my blood and die, as these dead animals at my feet, to pay the price for salvation."

End: The Unilateral Covenant