

charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws" are not to be understood as legislation but as authoritative instruction from Yahweh who has entered into a covenant relationship with Abraham. Without a doubt, there is a legal aspect to that covenant, but like marriage, it is far more: it is a personal relationship.<sup>16</sup>

In Exod 24:12 Yahweh summons Moses to the summit saying "and I will give you the tablets of stone and the law and the commandment which I have written in order to instruct them." This passage has some ambiguities. What is the relation of *tôrâ* and *miswâ* to tablets of stone? Are they in apposition? What is their content? From Exod 31:18 it is clear that the tablets are "two tablets of the testimony" (*ha'edût*). Kline correctly points out that *'edût* is "related to Akkadian *ade* which is used as a general appellation for the contents of suzerainty treaties."<sup>17</sup> This is extremely significant, for the point of comparison is not with such legal codes as those of Hammurapi and Lipit Itshtar, *et al.*, though there are similarities, but with the suzerainty treaties.<sup>18</sup> As to the syntactical relation between the three nouns, Delitzsch on the one hand understands the *waw* in the sense of accompaniment as in Gen 3:24 to mean "with the law and commandments"<sup>19</sup> suggesting that the tablets contained only the decalogue.<sup>20</sup> whereas the "law and commandments" might refer to the additional instruction. Lange seems to agree: "But besides this there are added a new, grand task: the construction of the tabernacle."<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, Calvin suggests that "this must not be understood of any new instructions, but of the authentic writing of the Law: For, after having spoken of the two tablets, He immediately mentions in apposition, the Law and Commandment, by way of explanation ... a celestial and infallible document of his covenant."<sup>22</sup> Gesenius, Kautzsch, Cowley also consider it a *waw explicativum*.<sup>23</sup> Whichever view is taken, the question persists: what is the extent of its content? Does it refer to something spoken before but written later, and if so, was there more added during Moses' forty-day stay on the mount? There is cogency to the suggestion that only Exod 20:2-17 was included in the two tablets, since they were to be deposited in the ark which was only 45 inches long and 27 inches wide at most.<sup>24</sup> This would include most of the essential elements of a covenant, including the preamble, historical prologue, general stipulations, and the sanctions of blessings and curses. In this connection it is instructive to see a further reference to these tablets in Exod 34:27, 28. Moses is told to write "These words" (*haddebarîm*) "for in accordance with the tenor of these words I have made a covenant."<sup>25</sup> Then he wrote on the tablets "the words of the covenant, the Ten Words."<sup>26</sup> Two observations are in order. First, it must be significant that *dabar* is used for the stipulations, rather than *miswâ* or *tôrâ*. We suggest that the emphasis is a "word" of instruction to the people recently redeemed, and that this instruction is itself a word of God's grace which has already been exhibited by the establishment of a sovereign covenant relation. Hence, we would note in the second place, that "the Ten Words" are not to be understood only for the ten stipulations but as *pars pro toto*, i.e., for the whole covenant. This also is the usage in Deut 5:5, 22 which brackets the recital of the Sinai covenant.

However, is it possible to give a broader interpretation to the extent of