The law of the letter vs the law of the spirit. The mark/seal of God vs the Beast. Part 2.

*"He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—**not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life**." -2. Corinthians 4:6*

The Sign of Jonah

*"Then some of the scribes and **Pharisees** said to Him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." Jesus replied, **"A wicked and adulterous generation demands a sign,** but none will be given it except **the sign of the prophet Jonah.** For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the **heart of the earth**…."* -Matthew 12:39-40

*"For we live **by faith, not by sight."** -***2 Corinthians 5:7**

From immaturity to maturity in Christ (From spiritual darkness to Light)
"For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.
-1. Corinthians 13

*" until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and **become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ**. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. "* -Ephesians 4:13-14 ***"****Therefore let us **move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity**"*
-Hebrews 6:1

"The Greater Glory of the New Covenant
Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, transitory though it was, will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? If the ministry that brought condemnation was glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! **For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison *with the surpassing glory. And if what was transitory came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!***
Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away. ***But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read****. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their*

hearts. ***But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*** *And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are* ***being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. -***2. Corinthians: 3

What is of uttermost importance, according to Christ; external or internal purification?

"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Matthew 6:33

Internal, inward purification, is of highest importance and priority to God, external purification is secondary.

Christ's clear words to the religious leaders (the Pharisees and the scribes) in His day:
" Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected ***the weightier matters of the law****: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence****. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also****. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.* ***Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness."***
- Matthew 23: 23-28.

In the same chapter. *"****Jesus mourns over Jerusalem***
O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! ***Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.*** *For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."*-Matt 23: 36-38 " ***"****And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for* ***it was founded upon a rock****. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man,* ***which built his house upon the sand****: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." -Matthew 7*: 25-27

They built their house on sand (grains of sand are very small, and I would think they represent **the smaller things, of lesser importance: in the outward, in the letter**). Not on the **Rock** (**the greater things, of great importance, the inner, the Spiritual**. Especially when you read everything here in chapter 23 in its context. **The book of Hebrews teach us that we should not reject the sanctuary, but we should reject an old (covenant) understanding of it.** From the **old covenant** (which is a very limited and literal understanding) to the **new covenant**: a more

spiritual and deeper understanding. From **that which was a shadow of how it actually is,** to discern it in a fuller, more complete, deeper and spiritual meaning. This is the reason for most figures (types). Notice that all the stories we read, especially in the old testament did in fact happen. But we must be careful not to end up sticking to the shadows, as they function also as symbols for a greater significance today, as more light has been revealed. From literal to increased spiritual understanding. From darkness to light. See Ephesians 3. We receive grace from God by His Holy Spirit in order to give us power, to be able to discern His ways and teachings. To interpret things in a spiritual way, and not just by the letter (the obvious). Spiritual things are spiritually discerned.

A good example is from literal to spiritual circumcision. (Romans 2: 28-29). Though we must be careful to not spiritualize away everything. Then we too would have to reject the ten commandments, including the Sabbath, that we are told to remember. However, there is also a more complete and deeper understanding of the law and the Sabbath.

The Law (Two different laws)

– legalism, to be under the old law, covenant and order. Literal law on tables of stone.
- "Set free from the law = to be under the new law, covenant and order. The law of Christ, of the spirit, of faith.

“Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. He has made us competent as ***ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.*** *Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, transitory though it was,* ***will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious?****»* -2. Cor 3: 5-8

It is the law in the letter that is the problem and characterizes the old covenant. Not the law itself. That is; a very literal understanding with an over-focus on everything external, the ritual, the superficial. Yet it is the law of the Spirit, the law of God written on our inner man, our hearts, which is the main goal of sanctification.

The new covenant represents that which is deeper, the more complete, the inner qualities, the heavenly. **God has granted us a promise that He we will fulfill this work in us if we make Him our Lord in our lives and accept His word and teachings. And surrender to Him daily.**

"And I am quite sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will complete it until the time of Jesus Christ"
- Philippians 1:6.

God's law is the law of love, Divine: *"Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself."* -

Matt. 22: 37-39.

We receive God's law, which He writes on our hearts (our inner soul), which is the heavenly law of love, gradually in the sanctification. This happens through grace which is undeserved power from the Spirit of God, through faith in Jesus Christ and what He represents (His kingdom, His way, His law) to be filled to a greater degree with the law of God, built on His character and His spirit, purified from the law of self and the world, which is the law of death." *"For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death."* -Romans 8:2, If we say we serve Him, then as a natural consequence we would want to receive His law and spirit, and abhor more and more the spirit and law of this world and its characteristics. (see 1 Corinthians 2.and 3.)

We must not look at God's law as something negative, but as something very positive. It is about either being filled to an increasing degree with the first 'law and spirit of this world, or the law and spirit of God; (the law and spirit of heaven.

The Sanctification process is the very relationship we have to Christ, as master and Lord of our lives, minds and heart. It is He who mold us after His divine pattern to be transformed into His image. To think, understand and act more and more in harmony with the law and government of heaven.

The law of the letter vs The law of the heart, in Spirit.
-He who keeps the law that comes by grace, undeserved power of God by His spirit: written on their heart. Their actions come as a natural result from their transformed character traits, their heart, being equipped by the power of God who's law and character and government represents divine love. With noble, pure, honest and selfless motives.

"*Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but* ***if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised. So then, if those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised?*** *The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker.*

"A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person's praise is not from other people, but from God." -Romans 2:28-29

The Mark of the beast;
A SPIRITUAL HEART/MIND, that still posses to a significant degree the spirit and character of the world = earthly, worldly, fleshly, outer, the apparent. Sticking to the shadows and figures rather than comprehending the present light. The Israel and the literal Jews of Old had more of an excuse, because they lived under the old pact: the formal age. But we who live under the New covenant and order, the spiritual, deeper and fuller/more complete age, have less and less of an excuse the more time progress. We live in an age of much

available light, not under the age of darkness.

This was part 2. Now you hopefully have a more comprehensive understanding. Make sure not to miss the next part in this series, part 3, here.