

SOME FURTHER NEW COVENANT ISSUES TO ADDRESS

A RETURN TO ROMANS 11:27

“For this is my covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins.”

Verses 26 and 27 are quoting Isaiah 59:20-21. Going on from these verses is Isaiah 60, which is the Kingdom rising of the people of Israel under the reign of the Redeemer. I always find it chilling to see how there were small revelations prefiguring this in Christ’s first coming. Isaiah 60:1-6 has not happened, yet can we not see the visit of the wise men in Matthew 2 in this? Yet their visit is not the end, but only a minute picture of the kings coming to the brightness of the rising of the Christ of God over the whole earth.

Go now to Isaiah 1:18:

“Come now, let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

As the redeemed of the Lord now, we read these as referring to us now, the people who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, because we have had our sins removed. But Isaiah 1 from its beginning is about the LORD dealing with the sins of Israel corporately²². It then moves into chapter 2 where the mountain of the LORD’s house will rise, in Zion.

There are three specific passages in Ezekiel regarding this covenant unto them, when He will take away their sins:

- Ezekiel 11:14-21. There is a beginning of the fulfillment of this in the early chapters of Acts. Verse 17 — *“I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered”*. Now read Acts 2:5–11. Notice also verse 19 — *“And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you.”* What happened with that group? Look at Acts 4:32: *“And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul”*.
- Ezekiel 16:59–63. Verse 63 — *“When I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done”*. That is an accomplished propitiation. That is the work of the suffering servant of Isaiah 53. See verses 10-11.
- Ezekiel 36:16-38. Verse 25 — *“Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean...”*; Verse 29 — *“I will also save you from all your uncleannesses...”*; verse 33 — *“In the day that I have cleansed you from all your iniquities”*

Of course, we also have to go to Jeremiah 31:31–34. Verse 34 — *“for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”*

²² See also Psalm 103. In this Psalm, the forgiveness of the individual, and the corporate is in view. The LORD forgives the iniquities of the soul, verses 1-4. David then continues to the corporate sins when he declares in verse 12, *“As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.”* That context is corporately Israel. David speaks of the mercy of the LORD as the way that He can forgive sins. We know by revelation of Jesus Christ that the blood of Jesus Christ, the New Covenant blood, that forgiveness of sins was and is and ever will be possible,

The taking away of the sins of Israel, the national, ethnic (meaning the same thing, really) people is bound up in the New Covenant, the one of which Jesus Christ is the mediator. This is still future. It was future when Paul wrote Romans 11, and has not yet happened. Faith believes that it still will happen.

GENTILE CHRISTIANS PARTAKERS OF THE NEW COVENANT

In Romans 11, as we discussed, Gentiles are grafted in by faith to the promises of God. These are specifically the promises in Christ, *THE NEW COVENANT*.

Isaiah 49:6–8 — *"And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, **and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;**"*

In verse 8, Jesus Christ is the covenant. See also Isaiah 42:6. Notice how this verse opens: *"In an acceptable time have I heard thee..."* Where do we find this quoted again?

2 Corinthians 6:2 — *"(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: **behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.**)"*

The day of salvation is a "dispensational day". While there is a personal aspect to this, that today is the best time and the right time for the sinner to be saved, as in right now today when you are hearing the gospel preached to you, this is speaking of the present day in God's dealings with men. A day of wrath is coming, Revelation 6:17, but now is the day of salvation. **DON'T WASTE THIS DAY!**

We discussed Gentiles getting to partake of the blessings of the New Covenant before the Covenant people get to partake of it because they put it from them. The book of Acts also chronicles this happening. We see it with the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem in the early chapters. We see it even more during Paul's ministry outside of Israel. See Acts 13:46-49, 14:1-5, 17:1-5, 18:6, and 28:28. The unbelieving Jews did not want it. The Gentiles, along with the remnant according to the election of grace (Romans 11:5), partake of it now.

THEOLOGICAL SYSTEMS SHOULD NOT GUIDE OUR THINKING

Aversions to theological systems should also not guide our thinking, or our interpretation of Scripture. I addressed fear of "replacement theology" in the previous lesson. We also tend to have a fear of Calvinism. Both of these are unhealthy doctrinal systems, but fear of them should not be our guide.

I know of a pastor who is a very good Bible teacher and theologian. He is a pastor of a Baptist church who has become a very strong dispensational proponent. Because of this, he is very averse to replacement theology. Aversion to replacement theology drives many to see the New Covenant being to Israel only. This needs to be checked against scripture. This particular pastor has gone this way so much so that he has made much of Ephesians to be about Jews and has turned much of Paul's epistles to be

addressed to Jews in a way that not even E.W. Bullinger²³ would do. He is also very averse to Calvinism, which is understandable. But Calvinism and aversion to it should not guide our understanding of Scripture. The Bible itself should be our guide.

GENTILE INCLUSION IN THE NEW COVENANT, CONTINUED

It is in Ephesians chapter 2 that we as Gentiles are said to have been “strangers to the covenants of promise.” This is a true statement. (Of course it is true, it is the word of God)

It is also in the same chapter that we read “*Now therefore **ye are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints²⁴, and of the household of God***” (Ephesians 2:19).

In Christ’s ministry among Israel, He absolutely said that He was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, Matthew 15:24. He said this to a Gentile woman, who responded in verse 27 that even “*the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table*”, to which the Lord commended her for her faith and made her daughter whole. The crumbs gathered of God’s blessing to Israel under its promised Messiah were always more than enough to bless the nations, as we see pictured in the feeding of the 5000 and of the 4000.

But we as fellowcitizens are not merely eating of the crumbs. We are raised up with Christ and seated in heaven, Ephesians 2:6. We are fellowcitizens, fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel., Ephesians 3:6. That this is not prophetic is true. It is the mystery which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed.

Recall how the New Covenant as promised began to be happening as we saw in early Acts. See how an interruption in prophecy has taken place, and we learn what God is doing during that interruption in Paul’s epistles. Paul is the one apostle that is an able minister of the new testament (covenant). He and the writer to the Hebrews (but I repeat myself)²⁵ are the New Testament writers that speak of the New Covenant.

Argument against Gentile inclusion in the New Covenant, as far as I can see, is argument with Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles.

²³ E.W. Bullinger was a clergyman in the Church of England in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He ended up taking a dispensational position that the Church, the Body of Christ did not begin until after Acts 28, and so only Paul’s prison epistles are to the Church of the present dispensation.

²⁴ The same pastor previously addressed teaches that when the word saint is used, it is only speaking of Jewish believers in Jesus the Messiah, not Gentile believers in Jesus the Christ, as if there is a difference.

²⁵ A friendly jab at many who I truly love dearly that disagree with me (and the King James Bible) regarding the Pauline authorship of Hebrews.