



SECOND CORINTHIANS

The Comfort of God FOR and THROUGH His People



Part I5— Excursus C: “The Church & the Covenants of Promise — II February 2024

Introduction: Foundations for Biblical Interpretation

1. Scripture is to be interpreted consistently according to its _____ or _____ sense (*Grammatical-Historical Hermeneutic*).
“...[the grammatical-historical hermeneutic] is the way God wants His people to understand His Word...[it] is how God made human language to work and that is the way to understand the Scriptures.” —Michael Vlach, *Dispensational Hermeneutics*
2. God’s _____ is the unifying theme of Scripture.
“...the ultimate purpose of history has to be large enough to incorporate all of God’s programs...the glory of God through the demonstration that He alone is the sovereign God is the only purpose capable of doing this.” —Renald Showers, *There Really is a Difference*
3. The nation of Israel and the Church are _____ peoples of God within His plans and purposes.
“Dispensationalism believes there is a distinction between Israel and the church. Distinction does not mean no relationship. The Church is related to Israel’s covenants and promises...And the believing remnant of Israel in the present age is part of the church...But the church is not Israel and Israel is not the church. Dispensationalism, therefore, rejects replacement theology...in which the church is viewed as replacing or fulfilling Israel in a way that spiritualizes Israel and/or makes national Israel nonsignificant in God’s plans.” —Michael Vlach, *Disp. Hermeneutics*

Main Point: Israel and the Church are distinct peoples of God and yet we each _____ in the salvation found in Christ and so our relationship is one of both continuity and discontinuity.

The Church as a Mystery

- _____ about the church was not made known in Israel’s Scriptures.
Eph. 3:4-5—⁴ When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.
- Believers in the Church Age (Jew and Gentile) are fellow heirs and members of the same _____ in Christ.
Eph. 3:6—This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Key Point: Although the OT anticipated the salvation of the gentiles, the Church Age is a mystery in which the gospel of this salvation through Messiah is proclaimed throughout the earth by both _____ and _____.

The Church & the Covenants - Key Passages

Luke 22:19-20—¹⁹ And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁰ And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.”

⇒ The promises of salvation associated with the New Covenant are enacted through the _____ and _____ of Messiah, the Lord Jesus.

“...since Jesus used the word *the* in the expression...and since prior to Jesus’ statement God promised only one New Covenant...it seems evident that Jesus was referring to that New Covenant...Jesus made his statement to Jewish men. The only New Covenant of which they were aware was the one which God had promised in Jeremiah 31. Since Jesus did not tell them to think otherwise, they understood Him to be referring to that specific New Covenant.”
—Renald Showers, *There Really is a Difference*

Gal. 3:13-14—¹³ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO IS HANGED ON A TREE”—¹⁴ so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

⇒ Paul sees a direct relationship between God’s promise to _____ all nations in the Abrahamic Covenant and the promises of salvation associated with the New Covenant.

“[the reception of the Holy Spirit (see 3:2,5;4:6) and the gift of righteousness 93:21-22)]...are in fact new covenant blessings, but Paul presents them as blessings of the Abrahamic covenant. Again, this shows that the new covenant is the form in which the Abrahamic covenant will be fulfilled. It is also important to note that Paul...sees the Abrahamic blessings mediated in stages which are tied to the history of Christ...With the future national blessing tied to the return of Christ, there are in the present time certain blessings being given to Jews and Gentiles equally.”
—Craig Blaising & Darrell Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism*

Eph. 2:12—¹² remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

⇒ Apart from Christ, the gentiles had no hope in the world because they had no _____ relationship to the God of salvation.

Eph. 2:13, 17-19—¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ...¹⁷And he came and preached PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR OFF AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR. ¹⁸For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God

⇒ Although the gentiles were previously strangers to the covenants of promise and therefore cut off from their benefits and blessings (relationship with God, salvation, etc.), they have now, in Messiah and by His blood, become _____ of them in the Church along with believing Jews.

- * Paul sees a partial fulfillment of Isa. 57:19 in the present age because Messiah has come and proclaimed “peace” to Jew and Gentile since they have both been reconciled to God through work as the Servant of the LORD.

Rom. 11:11-15—¹¹So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather, through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. ¹²Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean! ¹³Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry ¹⁴in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them. ¹⁵For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?

⇒ Paul can rightly state that Israel can be provoked to ‘_____’ because the blessings of salvation which were rightly promised to them throughout the OT in the form of the unconditional covenants have come to the Gentiles in Christ.

- * These blessings of salvation must be understood within the wider context of the book of Romans in which Paul grounds the gospel message in the promises of the OT (Rom. 1:1-6; 4:13-25; 9:24-26; 15:8-13). These promises are rooted in the Davidic, Abrahamic, and, by way of implication, New, covenants.

Heb. 13:20-21—²⁰Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, ²¹equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

⇒ The writer to the Hebrews concludes his letter with a benediction that pulls together the great promises of God in _____, specifically referring to the New Covenant (which he has dealt with extensively in 7:22-8:13; 9:11-22) using one of its Old Testament designations.

“This is the New Covenant that was discussed in Hebrews 8, a covenant based on sacrifice that was discussed in Hebrews 10. Because this New Covenant was part of God’s eternal plan of salvation, and because it guarantees everlasting life, it is called the “everlasting covenant.”

—Warren Wiersbe

Key Point: The NT repeatedly affirms the _____ of the Church to the covenants of promise, the New Covenant in particular, in order to emphasize that the salvation we experience in Christ is the salvation promised in the OT.

“Because Jesus Christ is the One for whom the whole creation was made (Col. 1:16-17), it is absolutely fitting that the New covenant in His blood, whether enacted in the present with the Church (1 Cor. 11:23-26), or in the future fulfillment of Jeremiah 31:31-34 upon Israel, be the basis upon which God’s other covenants are satisfied. The New covenant, as it were, takes the other unilateral covenants into itself and prepares sinners to receive their benefits in accordance with the oaths taken by God—whether the recipients are Israel, the Church, or the Nations.”

—Paul Henebury, *The Words of the Covenant*

Concluding Thoughts

- Our _____ with Israel should be a tremendous encouragement to us!

We have come to share in the promised Messianic salvation that the OT anticipated (1 Pet. 1:10-12)

We are the spiritual offspring of Abraham by faith (Rom. 4:16)

We are shepherded by Messiah, the promised Davidic King (1 Pet. 5:4)

- Our _____ with Israel should be a tremendous encouragement to us!

We have spiritual union with Messiah (Eph. 1:3; 2:6)

We are under _____ and not _____ (Rom. 6:12-16; 7:10-12)

We will be delivered from the wrath to come (Rev. 3:10-11)

We will share in Christ’s reign during the Millennium (Rev. 2:26-27; 20:4) *and throughout all eternity* (2 Tim. 2:12)