

## Former Things and Present Things

We fail to understand the relationship of things old to things new when we study the Bible.

We find references to an Old Testament and New Testament to a first Covenant and a second Covenant; to a First Adam and a Second Adam.

Jesus spoke of things old and things new and spoke of making all things new.

If Jesus had not come there would be no New Testament nor all of the new things which are attributed to Him.

In the movie *It's a Wonderful Life* the Angel showed George Bailey what things would be like without the life and works of George Bailey. There are those alive today because George Bailey saved them and there are those who own their earthly habitat and are no longer under tribute and debt.

We don't need an Angel to tell us what things would be like if Jesus had never been born. There would be no New Testament, or Second Testament, nor would there be a Second Adam, or Last Adam.

There would be no Resurrection, no Kingdom of Christ, no Church, no Family of God, or Body of Christ. There would be no Christians for there would be no Christ. There would be nothing new of all the things which Jesus said that He would make new. It was obvious what life would have been like in Baileytown without George and, likewise, what life would be like on earth today without Christ.

There are those today with Divine Life who would not be alive in God had Jesus not saved them. There are those who possess an Eternal Habitat bought and paid for by Jesus.

God's promise to Abram would still be a promise. God's promise of a Messiah would still be a promise.

It is obvious there would be no New Covenant, or Church, or Christian, etc. had Jesus never been born. It is also true that there would have been no Historical Jesus with His suffering and death.

There is great disagreement on the issues of what Jesus intended to do and what He did and what He accomplished in His life and death. Therefore, what did

He make new and how does the new relate to the old and what is the purpose of it all? This has divided Christians since the beginning.

We Christians cannot agree upon what Jesus (intended) hoped to do, nor what He actually accomplished, or what resulted from all that He did.

May I offer insight on these matters to help clarify the problems in misunderstanding and disagreement.

Christ exists today both as the Historical Jesus who died two thousand years ago as well as the Risen Jesus who reigns from Heaven over His Kingdom.

The Historical Jesus or the Prophet Jesus in flesh actually and literally accomplished something which made possible His existence in Heaven to reign.

If you view His death as preventing Him from achieving the intended goal given Him by God, then the cross cannot possibly be of God because God would not ordain and support something that was an obstacle to His purposes.

Was the cross something put into his path by sin and rejection that prevented His original objective? Or, was the Cross on the mind of God since Adam and on the shoulder of Jesus since birth? Was the cross put on the path of the Messiah from the beginning by God, or put on His path at the end by others?

Your answer will determine how you perceive the death of Jesus and what is accomplished by it. This in turn will determine how you perceive the Kingdom of Christ and (The Church) Christianity because that is what resulted from His death. The foundation of Christianity is in the death of Jesus the Christ. Death was assigned to another Adam ever since it entered the human race in the Garden. This death was tasted by Jesus, the Second Adam, when He died on the Cross. It was swallowed up by Immortality resulting in Resurrection and Christianity.

If the death of Jesus prevented something, it was not something assigned to another Adam to accomplish. Neither did it prevent Jesus from fulfilling His Messianic anointing.

Since Jesus was the Messiah this makes Him more than a Prophet, more than a Priest, and more than a King. He was also a Savior, but much more than any other Savior. This gives a large variety of things to be accomplished by one person. It also indicates that everything that is to be accomplished will be; much more and better than anything former or previous.

This variety of things on the agenda for which Jesus is commissioned causes misunderstanding and makes matters complex.

According to Moses, God would one day visit His people as He did in the days of Moses. So when Jesus identified himself as Moses, God was visiting His people again as in the days of old. But what does it mean to visit? Will He commune and fellowship, or will He take up residence and stay? There is plenty of room for speculation on the visitation issue.

According to the Prophets, God would one day reunite the divided Kingdom of David into one Kingdom under the seed of David and it would never fail again. But what does it mean to reunite, to restore, to rebuilt, to establish, etc.? There is plenty of room for speculation on the restoration issue.

According to the Prophets, God would one day cut a New Covenant with the House of Israel, but not according to the Mosaic Covenant, or written like that Covenant on stone by God. It would be written upon the heart by (God Himself); the Spirit of God known also as the Holy Ghost. But what does all of this mean? Will this New Covenant replace the Old? Or extend the Old? Will only Jews be Heirs as in the old?

Will God visit one Nation dwelling in a Temple of stone at Jerusalem as in the day of old? Or, will God visit the earth and take out a people to be living stones, a Habitat for God in a new Jerusalem?

### Passed Away or Passed Into

Does seed pass away or become fruit? Seed and fruit cannot coexist because where there is fruit the seed is now in the fruit. Only one may be current. They cannot be concurrent.

This relationship appears to be found in the relationship of the Old Testament and the New Testament. The old Mosaic Kingdom, the New Christian Kingdom, things old and things new, light and darkness, death and life, a natural body of flesh and a Spiritual Eternal body...because one is the seed the other the fruit.

If Jesus fulfilled the old by bringing in the new, then a relationship of seed and fruit does exist. If the old was postponed, then it does not exist because it might later be concurrent with the new. Seed must die before fruit can arrive.

Consider the teaching of Jesus in this matter. He spoke of God's vineyard which was planted in the land by Joshua from a vine brought out of Egypt. God dressed, pruned, built towers etc. But Israel, His vineyard, only produced sour grapes.

God sent messengers to Israel seeking fruit from His vineyard, but they mocked them. Then He sent His Son and they killed Him. What will God do now? Will He continue to visit this vineyard seeking fruit? Will He continue to dig and dung this vine, or will He cut it down and plant another? Jesus identified Himself as God's vine which would produce new wine for new (wine skins) containers. God prepared new containers for the new wine on the same day that the new wine flowed from the new vine.

Jesus was a seed from a branch in the old vine that was planted in the death of the human race to bring forth fruit where there is no death. Therefore, all the fruit of this new vine abides forever. (John 12:24).

Did God postpone His digging and dunging while He planted another vine? If so then we may expect another visit by God to this old vine seeking fruit.

A Messiah was supposed to come and restore the fallen Nation. But does this mean going back to the original state from which it fell, or to a better eternal state?

Was Jesus in the process of fulfilling the work of the Messiah when interrupted by opposition? Or, did He complete and finish fulfilling all that the Messiah was ordained to accomplish?

These questions must be answered before you can know how these covenants relate to each other, what Jesus accomplished, and what the Christian Religion is all about. What are we to expect? Are we to look for another?

If Jesus's work was interrupted, then what is left for Him to finish? If He did complete His work we can say all the promises are fulfilled. We can't have it both ways.

It seems that Jesus knew and accepted what He was supposed to do and fulfilled it on schedule in spite of unbelief and rejection.

Isaiah said that the Messiah would be planted (61:3). When did God plant His Messiah? What fruit did He want? What did God expect His Messiah to accomplish? What did the people expect their Messiah to accomplish? What do you suppose He accomplished?

Herein lies the basis for misunderstandings and disagreements that arose from the life of Christ and exists to this day, in more division than ever.

Some believe that Jesus was interrupted, therefore will return and continue. Some believe that Jesus instituted a new and better Religion for all people than

what Moses gave to Israel. Some believe that Jesus instituted Christianity for both Jew and Gentiles until He returns to keep the Jewish promise to the circumcision.

Many different views have derived over the centuries giving rise to many creeds and many different hopes for His coming again.

Just what did Jesus accomplish? It certainly was not what was expected of Him as the Messiah. Then was it all God expected of Him and all the Prophets had foretold?

We see the Scriptures of the Messiah being fulfilled, starting at His birth, continuing down to Egypt, back to Nazareth, and on until His death. He began His public ministry by reading a Messianic text in the Synagogue and commenting that it was now being fulfilled. He ended His life on the Cross exactly according to Scripture and testified to having finished what He was born to do.

We do not find any interruption, or unfulfilled work, for the Messiah to do. All is finished. The victory was won and the fat lady can now sing. The King can now reign.

The Kingdom promised by the Prophets, the Kingdom announced by John, The Kingdom defined by Jesus, are all one and the same. Three days later Jesus breaths this Spiritual Kingdom within the heart, just as He had said He would. He later brings in Paul to testify of this same Kingdom and to show from the Scripture that it is indeed a promised kingdom - not just to the nation - but to the nation first.

Some believe that Jesus accomplished the grace of God for all men to favor them with the forgiveness of sins. But God had been graciously forgiving sins from their beginning. We see this plainly taught throughout the Bible.

This precept is basic to many other misconceptions about what Jesus accomplished. To say that Jesus did something He did not do is deceiving for it may blind one from seeing what Jesus really accomplished. Forgiveness of sins was declared in the Gospel, but much more than forgiveness was taking place when the Gospel was received. There is a power of regeneration in the Gospel (John 1:12) which Paul says will redeem both Jew and Gentile from death in Adam to the same new life in Christ (Romans 1:16).

Jesus did not propitiate God. He did not satisfy God's wrath and vengeance upon sin for the Jew or for the Gentile. He did not replace the Judgment Seat with a Mercy seat as taught by some.

Jesus was an object of confession for both Jew and Gentile. But He was only for the Jew until the Gospel was taken to the Gentiles. To confess the Christ is not the same as the confession of sins. One is confessing that God has kept His promises. The other is confessing certain transgressions. No person outside the Nation of Israel could possibly confess that Jesus, or anyone else for that matter, was the Jewish Messiah. Nor could they confess to any transgressions of the Mosaic Law. They would not be aware of God's promise to His people, nor could they be guilty of the sin of God's people which was spiritual adultery.

God had promised the scattered sheep of His pasture that He would send the Messiah to reconcile them to Himself. He did this in Christ and sent Apostles back into the pasture to seek sheep for the Christian fold. Paul goes out into the highways and hedges proclaiming reconciliation to all who believe whether they are Jew or Gentile.

Forgiveness from God was already extended to both Jew and Gentile before Jesus ever came on the scene. We see this grace, favor, and mercy extended many times to forgive sin and escape God's wrath. We see it with Israel and Ninevah, and even with Sodom before there was a Jew, a Moses, or a Christ. Forgiveness is not the same as reconciling. God forgave Ninevah but there is no reconciling. You cannot reunite what has never been united. *An Airline passenger complained about service but did not identify the Airline only to say that he was no longer united with his luggage.* The Messiah will reconcile to God what was alienated in the Garden. God has His luggage back. God has been reunited with what he lost in the Garden and He will never lose it again.

Forgiveness was always based upon the will of man in repentance not in the work of a Messiah. Therefore one could be forgiven before Christ, or apart from Christ.

To confess Christ in Gospel Days meant believing that Jesus was the Christ fulfilling the promises of a Messiah. To confess sin is always admitting to personal failure (culpability) except when the sin belongs to Adam because that was his failure. All sins do not carry a death wage but the sin of Israel did as stated by Moses in the marriage contract between God and Israel.

The sin of Adam had a wage of both spiritual and physical death which passed upon everyone at birth... from conception in the womb of a corruptible seed. The sin of Israel only had a premature, physical death that was the wage of their spiritual adultery.

Everyone inherits the wages of sin passed on genetically by Adam. But, the remnant had inherited the wage of sin passed on by their fathers.

The sin of Israel is passed on genetically but just to the circumcision. That is, from the circumcision to the children from the fathers. In fact the tribute and bondage of gospel days was the wage of (sin) adultery inherited by the circumcision from which they needed to be saved.

When Jesus came as a Prophet to His people He was an object of confession just as all those before Him sent by God to warn and turn the people from their sin.

The people Jesus came to were living in tribute, paying for their sins and the sins of their Fathers. If they would confess and agree with God according to the word of God's Prophet, then God would forgive just as He had times before in the History of Israel. But God's response to the confession of the Christ would include more than just the forgiveness of sins. It would be to give (to the forgiven) the Kingdom, which he did, and it was a pleasure to God. This left all the Jews who did not confess Christ to face the wrath of God upon the nation in seventy A.D.

Those who confessed escaped the wrath of God and those in unbelief died in their sins, just as Jesus said that they would. (John 8:24)

Confessing the Christ or confessing sins never related to the cross in those days, but redemption did because the cross saves from death in Adam. Paul speaks of Faith in Jesus blood, but remember, Faith was not in His Blood until it was discovered that Redemption was in His blood. Jesus spoke of the shedding of His Blood to those keeping the Feast of Passover with Him. They did not have a clue about what He meant.

Jesus was telling them of a new Memorial for the Feast the next year when they would be with Him in His Kingdom. They would be remembering their own deliverance rather than their forefathers centuries before. It was the last time they were to remember their Jewish Heritage that was lost because of sin, and this was to be the last Feast in the Mosaic Kingdom where animal blood had sealed the first Covenant. Animal blood had made all atonement in the old Covenant; now Jesus' Blood would seal a New Covenant and be the Blood of Atonement for the new Christian Kingdom.

In the old kingdom, as Jews in Judaism, they celebrated Passover in the first month and atonement in the tenth month with animal blood as well as many other sacrifices. Now as Christians in the new covenant, there would be only one blood for all sacrifices.

Faith in animal blood is not the same as Faith in Jesus Blood, because shedding and sprinkling accomplish different things in different sacrifices.

Redemption and forgiveness is not the same thing. One may be forgiven and still need redemption. One may need redemption which is totally unrelated to any sin which he personally has committed.

Isaac did not need forgiveness at Mt. Moriah but he did need redemption and rescue. Israel did not need forgiveness in Egypt, but they did need rescue which was accomplished by the death of a Passover Lamb.

This is not to say that those in bondage had no personal sin and failure; rather it was totally irrelevant to their need of redemption.

No national sin existed at that time because they were yet to be a Nation. There was no sin of adultery with God for they were yet to be married to Him. They are not facing the wrath of God, rather the wrath of Pharaoh. They are a people in bondage and servitude and nothing they say or do will change it. They could confess to every sin in their lives and repent to do works of perfect righteousness and still they would need redemption.

Later in their National History they would find themselves living in a bondage which their own National sin of Adultery had produced and that we would see God forgive and restore back to blessing. This was called redemption because it rescued them from the situation that was the result of sin. Some-times they needed saving from their enemies and sometimes they needed saving from the wrath of God, but confession and repentance obtained salvation in either case. No price or ransom was ever paid to accomplish salvation from the enemy or from the wrath of God.

There exists a difference in the salvation offered by God to Israel (or to anyone for that matter) through the Prophets and the salvation offered by God through the Messiah.

This difference is seen by considering the result of faith in the Prophets and the result of faith in the Messiah. There is a difference in the restoration of the Nation back to normal in the case of the Prophets, and the restoration to something better in the case of the Messiah.

Jesus called the nation to repentance just as all the prophets before Him. But would Jesus restore the broken covenant and give back the land like the prophets did? Or, would He make a new covenant and give them life...a better inheritance than land?

Greater Than But Not As

All the Prophets promised to give back what their sin had taken away from the Nation, which meant restoration to a former state. But Jesus spoke of restoration to a future state.

It was the Hope of Israel that the Messiah would restore the Kingdom of David which had divided into two houses and fallen into the Kingdom of the world. This Hope was based on the word of God as spoken by the Prophets concerning a new day, a new covenant, and a restoration of former things by the Messiah.

The question is, will restoration be in something better and different? Or, will it simply restore the old and continue it as before? The people looked for former things as in the days of old. We now know they did not get the former restored; rather, they got something entirely new.

Jesus was more than a Prophet and was doing better things. He established a better Covenant upon better promises with better blood. But what happens to the lesser when the greater comes? Can they abide alongside and together, or must the lesser fade away when the greater comes?

Can a shadow exist when light enters? Does the new replace the old, or do they abide together? How does a latter time relate to a former time? How does a latter estate relate to a former estate? How does a latter rain relate to a former rain? Do former things pass away into the latter or continue with the latter?

We must understand these questions and answer them correctly if we expect to understand the restoration work of the Messiah.

Consider the restoration of Lazarus from the dead back to his former life. A restoration from death to life but the very same life; not a better or greater, or different or eternal life. Lazarus's life was extended. This is identical to prolonged life that God promised His wife in the wilderness. Restoration may be back to the original, or to something entirely new.

No spiritual regeneration occurred when Lazarus came out of the grave. He died a Jew. He arose a Jew. He died in Adam. He arose in Adam. The same person arose that died; no change had occurred. He died without eternal life. He arose without eternal life.

Jesus the Messiah would bring better manna, better water, a better covenant, a better life, and a better Kingdom with better circumcision and better Jews in a better Resurrection.

In the Resurrection of Christ, Lazarus would receive as a gift from God in Christ a better life than the one Jesus had restored. Lazarus would have something far

better and more enduring from the work of Christ on the Cross than he received that day from Jesus the Prophet when raised from physical death.

The life that Lazarus received from his resurrection was not the same as the life he received from Jesus's resurrection. One life is temporal the other life is Eternal. There is a difference in the life of Lazarus when he was raised by Jesus and the life that he had when raised with Jesus!

The Kingdom that the Disciples received from their Fathers through circumcision is not the same Kingdom they received from Jesus on Resurrection Day, by Faith through Grace.

It was God's good pleasure to give the Disciples this Kingdom as He had given their Fathers a Kingdom before through Moses. This is not an extension of the old, rather a new spiritual, eternal Kingdom that had no precedent and would never pass away.

There are things which can be shaken (Hebrews 12:27) and there are things which cannot be shaken. There are things which will pass away and there are things which are eternal.

Eternity is not the extension of time. Even time is a former thing in Eternity along with all the rest of creation that was made subject to it.

The Messiah has brought in a new day wherein all things are new, where previous and former things have passed away. The Old Covenant has passed away. The Old Kingdom has passed away. The Old Creature has passed away.

In this Eternal state of present things, there are no former things at all. The former only exist in the past in time and none will be restored to exist again in Eternity.

Since there is no time in Eternity, or Eternal things, then nothing of an Eternal nature can possibly pass away. (Revelation 21:4)

My point is to show that passing away, or passing into, is not to pass alongside. Passing from the death inherited from Adam then passing into the Life of Christ is a transaction with a transition to an Eternal State of Life where death is abolished (passed away.)

Nothing old can survive this regenerating transaction to abide in the transition. The old natural man does not live alongside the new Spiritual Child of God.

Things old pass away when replaced by things new. New wine is not put into old wineskins but new wineskins.

A shadow passes away upon the arrival of the substance it pictures. A figure passes away when the true figure arrives. Types pass away when the anti type arrives. Promises pass away when the provision comes. Likewise, the hope that rested on the promise passes away when the promise is kept.

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No such transition exists in the forgiveness of sins. The forgiven person remains in his original state without passing into or passing from anything. If he is a Jew when forgiven, then he is still a Jew after being cleansed of his sin. But when cleansed of Adam's sin, he is no longer a Jew, but a Christian.

### Transaction Versus Transition

A transaction may or may not result in a transition. But transition is the result of two transactions. One from and out...the other to and in.

Release is the only transaction involved in forgiveness, or pardon, and it does not result in a transition. No action takes place upon the person himself. But, when redeemed out of Egypt, there is spatial transition for the nation. When redeemed out of Adam, there is genetic transition for the person.

The former state of a forgiven person is the same as his present state. No transition has taken place.

If the wage for a sin is death, then pardon and forgiveness will prevent a person from transition into death. But if death is inherited, then a person can only pass out of it...not into it.

The action of forgiveness and pardon will prevent a transition. The action of regeneration will produce a transition.

A Christian is a new creature raised from the dead to die no more. Jesus said that those who believed on Him would never die. They have passed from death to life. A transition has occurred. The present is not like the past. The power of regeneration (John 1:12) has birthed him into the Family of the Sons of God.

The former state of a butterfly was a worm. A transaction of metamorphosis exists between the past and the present, resulting in a transition from worm to butterfly.

A transition for both man and God is involved in the place that Jesus prepared for Christians (John 14:3). They will be in God - a very different place from where they now abide in (Adam) death. And, God will be in them - a very different place from where He now abides in Jesus. They will be in God and God will be in them.

If we are to understand, appreciate and live the Christian life we must be aware of these things.