

Sep. 2003 Bible Study Notes; Page 1 of 1

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Israel And The Church

I first began to understand and appreciate how important it was to rightly divide the word of God when Herb Roush pointed out the difference in Israel and the Church.

This helped me to understand much of the New Testament Scriptures in a completely different way because previously I had only seen the Church in the Gospels and The Epistles. But now I saw that Israel was the subject in discussion most of the time.

The way that Herb separated the Church from Israel cleared up many statements by Jesus and the Disciples but some of the difference which he taught did not exist.

I thank God for Billy Graham for showing me salvation and I thank God for Herb Roush because he showed me the difference in my salvation and that of Israel.

This made me check out most everything I knew because I had not seen the context of Israel within the verses relating to the Church. I began to study behind those who did see the difference in the Church and Israel and discovered that they differed in the way they divided that which related to Israel from that which related to the Church.

I found that I could agree with some teachers on some points but not on others. I could see the basis of their doctrine but their conclusions did not result in sound doctrine that the Bible would support.

I could see that it was essential to Rightly Divide the Word according to who it related to but why we differ so much in our conclusions on what the Bible teaches continued to trouble me. I believe the problem is how we divide the Old Testament from the New Testament, not how we separate the nation Israel from the Church although they are very closely related.

The difference in the Moses church and the Christian Church is the same as the difference in that which is seen, earthly, physical, and temporal...from that which is unseen, heavenly, spiritual, and eternal. Both churches have a covenant with God but the First Church was called out of Egypt and promised a Land while the Second Church was called out of Adam and promised eternal Life.

The First Covenant was with The Nation and the Second Covenant was with the Church. But the Nation is heir to both Covenants. This is the crux of the matter

because when the Jewish Heirs of the Old Covenant became heirs of the New Covenant they did not then know how the new differed from the old. Neither did they know that they were no longer in the Nation Covenant under Moses but are now new creatures (not Jews, but Christian) in the New Covenant in Christ.

Circumcision made the Nation obligated to the First Covenant and the ordinances of Moses, therefore as long as there were only Jews in the Church they continued to keep the Ordinance of their circumcision into the First Covenant. This posed no problem until the uncircumcised became Heirs of the New Covenant. Now it must be determined if only Jews can inherit the Second Covenant. For twenty years only the Heirs of the old had inherited the new, but now the Holy Ghost brings in those who were never in the old and denies them access to the old with the Jewish believers.

This puts a difference between Jew and Gentile because the Jewish Christians worshipped in Jerusalem under the Ordinances of the Old Covenant while the Gentile Christians were kept free from such Law.

Jewish Christians were to learn later from the Epistles to the Romans that Jews are no longer in the First Covenant wherein they were held by Circumcision, but through death are free to be married to Christ in the Second Covenant with the Gentiles. They also learned by Revelation from the Epistle to the Hebrews that worship in Jerusalem would soon cease with the destruction of the Temple and Jews would then worship as did the Gentiles.

This historical first century context of the transition from the Old Testament to the New Testament for the circumcision gives us the proper foundation for rightly dividing the Word between Israel and the Church. The issue is not what belongs to Israel or what belongs to the Church, but rather what belongs to the Old Testament and what belongs to the New Testament.

This is very important because only the Jewish Christian was in transition from the Mosaic Covenant to the Christian Covenant. They began at Pentecost completely Kosher in all things within the old Covenant but 40 years later were completely left desolate of all things related to circumcision and the Old Covenant.

It is easier to see what belongs to the old and the new than it is to determine what belongs to Israel and The Church because during this transition period the Church continued to live and worship according to all the statues of Israel under the First Covenant. They never asked what parts belong to the old or the new because they understood the Church to be subject to all of the old until the door was opened to the Gentiles, and now only the Jewish part of the Church is under Moses.

The truth is that no part of the Church is subject to Moses whether circumcised or not circumcised. There is to be absolutely no distinctions made between those in the Church as to obligation of the Old Covenant because they are new creatures in a New Covenant. It was the old man that was circumcised and under the Old Covenant of the flesh children of Abraham. The new man is circumcised in the heart wherein is the New Covenant with the spiritual children of Abraham.

The Church began with everyone being subject to Moses and the law, then in the transition the question arose as to who is subject to what. When the New Testament Epistles are complete they reveal that no one is subject to the Law of Moses rather that all in Christ are subject to the Law of Christ.

We see the Church begin at Pentecost with all the Church under the Law of Moses, then twenty years into the transition with part of the Church under the Law, then twenty years later with none of the Church under the Law.

It was the Israelite that made this transition that we observe in the historical account of the Book of Acts and see explained in the Epistles.

All sacrifices ceased in seventy A.D. when the Temple was destroyed by the Romans. This would seem to mean that all the Hebrews are without a sacrifice. But the Epistle to the Christian Hebrew reveals a Sacrifice made by Jesus forty years before that is the only Sacrifice in the New Covenant and therefore perpetually atoning the Christian apart from the Temple in Jerusalem.

In the transition there was more dissension and misunderstanding concerning the Christian obligation to the Word of God spoken in times past to the Jewish fathers but now the Word of God spoken from Heaven through the Son explains the obligation to the Word of God written on the heart in the New Covenant.

Israel is a nation in a Kingdom with the word written on tablets of stone. The Church is a family and the Kingdom is in them and the Word is written upon the heart.

It is very easy to separate the Church from Israel when you keep in mind that Israel was a Kingdom on earth while the Church is a Kingdom in the heart.

Jesus made this difference obvious when He said that His Kingdom was in them (Luke 17:21) and could not be observed like the Kingdom that they were in.

A Kingdom of this world would be a threat to any other Kingdom of this world (John 18:36) but since Jesus' Kingdom is spiritual it would be within the heart. Therefore the Christian would remain in the Kingdoms of this world wherein he abode.

The spiritual nature of the Kingdom of Heaven within was a mystery which Jesus sought to reveal by

laying alongside the mystery the things of this world in parables so that they would understand the things of His Spiritual Kingdom. The Church of Israel was in the Kingdom of God but now the Kingdom of God is within the Church of Christ.

Israel was in the Kingdom of David but now the Kingdom of David is in Israel. In the Old Covenant Israel had been in the Kingdom now in the New Covenant the Kingdom would be in Israel. This sounds like a paradox until you consider that Israel was an Earthly Kingdom in Earthly places with Earthly blessings while the Church is a Spiritual Kingdom in Heavenly places with Spiritual Blessings.

The Church being Spiritual while Israel had been Earthly is a relationship between the two that will produce many mysteries for the Church in the First Century.

Moses had instructed Israel about being in the Kingdom now Jesus instructs the Church about the Kingdom being in them. Joshua had conquered and removed other Kingdoms in order to establish the Kingdom of God now Jesus will bring in His Kingdom without removing the Romans from the land.

How can this be? None of the Disciples were able to understand this mystery, one of them asked (John 14:22) how was it that the Kingdom could come to them without being manifested to the world? The answer is simple when you understand the Kingdom to be Spiritual - therefore not observable like the Kingdom of Israel had been to the world.

The difference between Israel and the Church in every aspect is simply the difference between the Earthly and the Heavenly, the Seen and the Unseen, the Temporal and the Eternal, the Inner Man and the Outer Man.

The inheritance of Israel was land while the inheritance of the Church is life. Israel ate manna from Heaven and died, the Church consists of those who eat Jesus (John 6:53) and live forever. Israel drank water from the rock and thirsted again while the Church drinks of the Water of Eternal Life. Israel had a Covenant with God concerning the things of this earthly life while the Church has a Covenant with God concerning the things of Eternal Life.

When Israel went to war and subdued Kingdoms they used the carnal weapons of this world, but the Church does not war in this world (Ephesians 6:12) of flesh and blood with a sword. All the weapons of the Church are Spiritual because the conflict is Spiritual. This is why the Church did not take part in the war with the Romans to help Israel regain their land. It is also why the Church should not have accepted the Kingdom given by the Roman Emperor in the fourth century which he had obtained with a bloody sword.

The Church was sent to bless the world, not conquer it, to serve the world, not have the world serve the Church. It was to minister just as Christ had done and not to be ministered unto. It was a leaven of good in a world of evil.

The Church was to be salt and light to the Kingdoms of this world. They were to be good citizens and pay tribute and be submissive to the rulers of this world. The Church had something to give the world, something Spiritual out of their own inheritance of Spiritual things. They were sent to bless the world not to conquer it.

Israel had to cast out the heathen with a bloody sword before they could even possess their inheritance (Psalms 80:8) while the Church is planted within the world without displacing any Kingdom.

When the Church began it did not add to the Kingdoms of this world neither did it take away, but Israel destroyed seven Nations, leaving seven Kingdoms less. Spiritual occupation does not require displacement like carnal occupation because another Angel can be added to the head of a pin without taking one off.

The Spiritual nature of the Church and Christ's Kingdom continued to make a mystery out of the relationship between Israel and the Church.

The Covenant which God cut with the Nation in the Wilderness (Exodus 24) was designed to allow God and man to walk together and live together in the land with God as a husband provider and the Nation as a wife seeking the things of her husband. We see the Nation fail in this marriage by omitting the weighty matter of Love.

The Nation began in open adultery with local deities and was severely punished. God sent servants to many generations asking for loyalty. The Nation did cease to serve other Gods but was not faithful in the stewardship of the land and their worship of God.

When judgment was pronounced by Habakkuk and Jeremiah, the Nation no longer served other Gods, but were very zealous in their service to God.

Why this doom upon a wife in subjection to her husband? There are no other lovers in her life. Why this calamity upon a nation zealous to walk with their God? Why would the wrath of God fall upon His chosen people when they are not in adultery? (2 Chronicles 36:16.)

Jeremiah explained how this could be. While the Nation claimed fidelity and meticulously kept the law yet her heart was far from God. Her adultery was in her heart, not in activity with other deities. She is not in actual adultery and murder yet she is guilty of both.

The Nation could not see this sin because they looked upon the outward actual activity to determine

righteousness from unrighteousness. They professed a righteousness which they possessed in compliance with Moses law but lacked the love required in that same law.

This blindness to their sin made it impossible to confess it and turn from it, therefore when the city was destroyed by the Babylonians they could only give a false cause for this judgment (Lamentations 2:14.)

The Nation went into bondage for seventy years and returned to the land where they sought to rule again for five centuries. This produced a mentality among the leaders that strict obedience to the letter of God's Law was absolutely necessary to avoid God's judgment. Therefore, the law had to be well defined in every jot and tittle in order to be kept.

To determine if a person was righteous or unrighteous his deeds had to be evaluated by these letters established by their religious leaders. Such righteousness then would be according to the law and fulfilling its requirements in order to prevent the judgment of God upon the Nation again.

This was the religious environment in Judah when Jesus came to establish His Kingdom. The leaders were afraid to break one letter of the law lest they incur the wrath of God upon the nation again.

With their focus upon the gnats of the Law, they failed to see their carnal sin of breaking the Spirit of the law. They determined whether religious activity was righteous or unrighteous by measuring it with these gnats which they had put into Moses law.

John the Baptist was calling for righteousness in God's sight or else the nation would perish but the leaders were righteous in their sight because they looked upon the ritual of the law and not the spirit.

It is impossible to get repentance from the righteous because they are doing that which is right, therefore John's message was received only by those who were unrighteous by doing wrong. When a call goes out for repentance it can only be heard by those who confess that they are unrighteous, therefore the leaders of the nation could not repent because they looked to Moses for justification and needed no repentance.

This deception about righteousness would assure that any call for righteousness would be rejected and would result in stoning or death to those making the call.

This explains why the nation rejected Jesus. The nation rejected His call for the righteous to confess that they are hypocrites, destitute of any righteousness in the sight of God. The nation had rejected the prophets God sent and now were rejecting the Son. They would be the last generation of Jews to reject God when they rejected the Church and the Holy Ghost because God would not call again.

The nation had rejected all the prophets sent by the Father and rejected the Son, but the Church with the Holy Ghost would give the final call and make the final offer of forgiveness to the nation.

How can one accept forgiveness unless he can see that he needs it? This blindness of the nation to the true righteousness of God caused their destruction and desolation. This spiritual blindness is the subject of most of Jesus teachings and the cause of the nation stumbling over the stone which crushed them.

The word was written on stone to instruct the nation unto righteousness, and when the word was made flesh it became a rock of offense because of blindness, but when the word is written upon the heart the veil of blindness is taken away (II Cor. 3:16).

When we study the Bible we can clearly see that there are two covenants and two Kingdoms and two Churches. But, we can find only one God and one Hope and one faith for both Israel and The Church.

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