Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Why Every Calvinist Should Be a Premillennialist, Part 3
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
Code: 90-336

We are in the middle of a study of eschatology, focusing on Israel. We are at the beginning of the bigger study of eschatology, but kind of in the middle of studying the role that Israel plays in eschatology. If you wonder what eschatology is, that is a long word, it basically means the study of last things, from the Greek word *eschaton*which means last things. What does the Bible say about the end of the world? What does the Bible say about the end of history? What has God planned for the end?

And what I've been saying to you is that it matters greatly to God how redemptive history ends because the whole purpose of it is bound up in how it ends. The reason there is a created universe, the reason there is humanity, the reason there is a purpose unfolding in redeeming sinners, they're all focused in one direction and that is toward the great consummation, the great end in which God will be glorified. God is moving everything sovereignly to His own purposed, glorious end. And what is wonderful for us is that He has revealed so much about it in the Bible. There is so much that we can know about the end.

The book of Revelation, as we mentioned this morning, tells us the most. That's why we wanted you to pick up a free copy of the book, Because The Time is Near, so that you would have your own copy, it would help you to understand the wonderful truths of the end laid out in the book of Revelation. And we're going to go through those elements of the end that are revealed in Scripture as the weeks go by.

But Scripture is very clear about one thing. Foundational to any accurate understanding of the end is an accurate understanding of the future of Israel. This is the cornerstone of biblical eschatology. What I've been saying is pretty simple. If you get Israel right, you're going to get eschatology right. If you don't get Israel right, you will never get eschatology right. It is impossible to fully understand biblical teaching about the end times apart from understanding the future of Israel, the future of ethnic Jews in God's plan. And if you don't get Israel right, then your eschatology is confused and you cannot be blessed and you cannot give God appropriate glory and you cannot have a full hope for what lies ahead so that His glory is diminished, your joy and blessing are diminished as well. Getting Israel right means understanding what God has promised to do with Israel for Israel in the future. That all goes back to the Old Testament where God made irrevokable, unconditional, unilateral promises and covenants to Israel to be fulfilled in the future. And within those covenants, He

promised that the nation would one day be saved, a generation of ethnic Jews would be saved, that they would inherit their originally promised land which God pledged to Abraham, that they would become a blessing to the whole world, that they would enjoy a Kingdom over which God's anointed King, the Messiah, would rule from Jerusalem with justice and righteousness and peace for a thousand years, that He would rule the whole world from Jerusalem, Israel being given a special place of blessing. This must come to pass because God has chosen Israel for this purpose in the end. It is then a matter of election. Israel is God's elect. The Bible calls Christ, "My Elect." The Bible calls the church, "God's Elect." And the Bible calls Israel, "My Elect." And thus it is strange, very strange, that it is the very historic theology of sovereign election whose advocates have denied this to Israel.

In the theological world where people believe in the doctrine of election more strongly than anywhere else, they are more prone to deny Israel's election than anywhere else. In fact, they have come up with the idea that the church, God's new and present elect, receives all the promises once given to Israel, all those promises and covenants having been cancelled to Israel because of Israel's apostasy, Israel's unbelief, and Israel's rejection of Christ, they then being permanently set aside, all the promises come to the church.

Where did this come from? And I want to answer that a little bit tonight because you are very careful in how you consider the things I teach you and I know the question will come up because it's already come up, how could they ever arise at such an idea? Where did it come from? There is no verse in the Bible anywhere that says the promises of God to Israel have been cancelled and the church is the new Israel. You can't find that in the Bible. The question then is, where did it come from?

Well it started historically with a man named Augustine in the fifth century. And because he is such a formidable and shaping theologian who really was the main influence in the lives of people like John Calvin and Martin Luther and John Owen and many other formidable students of Scripture, it has the power of these great names behind it. The idea then, which really began in a formal sense with Augustine, flowed down through these great Reformers and found honor among those who rightly honor the Reformers and so it has long survived.

However, reformed theology, as such, is hard pressed to prove the point. And, in fact, Reformed exegesis, that is the discipline of interpreting the Scripture, works very hard, I think, to manipulate the Scripture to avoid the obvious. They have come up with a view called amillennialism which says there is no Kingdom for Israel, and for that matter there is no earthly Kingdom period. It denies then certainly a future earthly Kingdom for a generation of ethnic Jews in which Christ reigns on earth and fulfills all the Old Covenant promises. Rather it is called replacement theology. The church replaces Israel and the blessings are spiritual. The Kingdom then becomes only a spiritual Kingdom and a heavenly Kingdom and not an earthly one at all. In order to make this work, as I said, they have to

work really hard at moving their theological points around and they have to do some very manipulative exegesis to avoid what is clearly in the Bible. Scripture then has to be removed from its normal sense and placed in a category of interpretation so that it doesn't mean what it appears to mean, as basic as Israel doesn't mean Israel.

So to say it simply, to hold the view of amillennialists, called replacement theology, that the church replaces Israel in the promises of God, Israel as God's Elect is no longer God's Elect, cancelled out, to come up with this idea that there therefore is no real earthly Kingdom to fulfill those promises and that they are fulfilled in the spiritual life of the church both now and in heaven, you have to deny the nature of divine sovereign election. You have to basically say that when God called Israel His Elect, and when God gave them unconditional, unilateral, irrevokable promises, He didn't keep them, or He doesn't keep them, so that election doesn't mean permanent election, it might be temporary as in the case of Israel.

I don't know anybody who believes in the doctrine of election who thinks its temporary with the elect angels, or temporary with the elect Son or temporary with the elect church, so this has to be a category invented to accommodate replacement theology. The second thing that has to happen is, you cannot interpret Scripture in the normal meaning, the normal sense in which it is written both in the Old Testament and the New Testament because clearly in both testaments promises are made to Israel. Therefore Israel doesn't mean Israel, a thousand years doesn't mean a thousand years, reigning in Jerusalem doesn't mean reigning in Jerusalem, it means something else...something not apparent in any normal interpretation of the language. So you can see there are some extremes here in trying to make this work theologically when you have to reinvent the doctrine of election which is so sacred to us and when you have to change the normal meaning of the language.

Now, I want to having said that, say this, that throughout history there have been some in Reformed circles of great note who didn't buy this. I am particularly, as you probably known, drawn more to Scottish Reformed theology than I am to Dutch Reformed theology. And one of my favorite Scots in the area of theology is Horatius Bonar. He's a nineteenth century preacher, Scottish preacher and theological writer. In 1847 he wrote prophetic landmarks and he took a position very different from his Reformed friends, very different. He was always a strong advocate of the doctrines of sovereign grace. He was always a strong advocate of the doctrine of election. He affirmed as well that election was forever and therefore affirmed the primacy of the destiny of the Jews in the scheme of eschatology. So he was going against the grain of his day and his compatriots. This is what Bonar wrote in 1847: "The prophecies concerning Israel are the key to all the rest. True principles of interpretation in regard to them will aid us in disentangling and illustrating all prophecy. False principles as to them...that is Israel...will most thoroughly perplex and overcloud the whole Word of God," end quote. And that's right back to what I said and when I said it I hadn't yet found Bonar's comment. He says you can't get eschatology right if you don't get Israel right.

He further wrote of his conviction as to biblical clarity on this matter. And his language is so magnificent that it needs to be thoughtfully repeated. So let me read to you what Bonar wrote in 1847. "I am one of those who believe in Israel's restoration and conversion, who receive it as a future certainty, that all Israel shall be gathered and that all Israel shall be saved. As I believe in Israel's present degradation, so do I believe in Israel's coming glory and preeminence. I believe that God's purpose regarding our world can only be understood by understanding God's purpose as to Israel." Now remember, this is a time long before they had ever been gathered back into their land.

He went on to say, "I believe that all human calculations as to the earth's future, whether political or scientific, or philosophical, or religious, must be failures if not taking for their data or basis God's great purpose regarding the latter day standing of Israel. I believe that it is not possible to enter God's mind regarding the destiny of man without taking as our key or our guide His mind regarding that ancient nation, that nation whose history so far from being ended or nearly ended is only about to begin." He went on to say this, "He only to whom the future belongs can reveal it. He only can announce the principles on which that future is to be developed. And if He set Israel as the great nation of the future and Jerusalem as the great metropolis of earth, who are we that without philosophy of science we should set aside the divine arrangements and substitute for them a theory of man? Human guesses concerning the future are the most uncertain of all uncertainties and human hopes built upon these guesses are sure to turn out the most disappointing if not the most disastrous of all failures. I believe that the sons of Abraham are to re-inherit Palestine and that the forfeited fertility will yet return to that land, that the wilderness and the solitary places shall be glad for them, and the desert will rejoice and blossom as the rose. I believe that meanwhile Israel shall not only be wanderers, but that everywhere only a remnant, a small remnant shall be saved. And that it is for the gathering in of this remnant that our missionaries go forth. I believe that these times of ours are the times of the Gentiles and that Jerusalem and Israel shall be trodden down of the Gentiles till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. I believe that the completion of what the Apostle calls the fullness of the Gentiles will be the signal for the judgments which are to usher in the crisis of earth's history and the salvation of Israel and the long-expected Kingdom."

Why did he believe that? Because that's exactly what the Bible says. I love the comment of Barry Horner who has written a new book called Future Israel, it won't be out until July. It is the end of the argument, it's that good. I got a pre-publication copy, 450 pages. I couldn't put it down, I read right through it in two days. And I thought, "This guy's been reading my mind." And then I got a letter from him saying, "I heard your message that you gave at the Shepherds Conference, on this subject and I find myself tripping over my 'amens.'"

But in this amazing book, researched better than anything I've ever seen on the subject, scholarly and yet warm-hearted and readable, Horner comments on some of these men who were going against

the grain of amillennialism, like Bonar. In fact, he comments on Bonar's writing and says, "How refreshingly different is the attitude here from that of Augustine and Calvin. Undergirding this teaching is not the eschatological blending of national Israel into mere shadowy insignificance and obscurity, but rather the acknowledgment that while grace has blessed the Gentiles in a grand manner, so too will the same grace of God according to the same sovereign purpose ultimately bless the Jewish people in a most climactic and triumphant sense," end quote.

Another writer, William VanGemerin(?), writing in the West Minister Theological Journal, 1983, said, "Israel is the hermeneutical crux in the interpretation of prophecy." I love it when it comes out of Westminster Theological Seminary, which, of course, is a seed bed of amillennial thinking, but there are men and there always have been who take the Word at its face value. The key to eschatology then is Judeo centrism, if you want to coin a phrase. The key to eschatology is Judeo centrism which alone provides the cohesive base to integrate the various features of biblical prophecy. Still for centuries, right up until now, and I want to talk to you a little bit about this, there is a strong...let's use Barry Horner's term "Anti-Judaism." There is a strong anti-Judaism, not Semitism...not anti-Semitism as though it were a racial thing, but anti-Judaism as though it is a religious thing. There is a strong anti-Judaism in Reformed Theology saying Israel had lost its election, lost the right to all its covenants and promises.

For example, George Murray writing in Millennial Studies says, "To be sure the nation was sovereignly chosen by God, but God no longer deals with them as a chosen nation." I don't want to put words in their mouths so there are their own words. They were chosen, they aren't chosen anymore. They were elect, they're not elect anymore. Some contemporary anti-Judaism replacement theology, Anglicans, are so derogatory as to be anti-Israel and pro-Palestinian. In fact, some of them, according to Horner, would be delighted if the Arabs pushed Israel right into the Mediterranean Sea. This comes very clear in the book Future Israelwhich Horner writes is, quote, "Dedicated to the elucidation of the pre-mil perspective, especially as it focuses on national Israel that has been ignored, belittled, and distorted in Calvinistic Reformed and Sovereign Grace circles," end quote. Pretty direct, but true.

Horner goes on to say, "The wrong perception of Israel and the Jews by so-called Christians has produced consequences of horrific proportions during the history of the church. Such a shameful legacy perpetrated during the illustrious Reformation and onwards remains undiminished, largely unconfessed and still prevalent in substantial degrees up to the present within a Calvinistic Reformed and Sovereign Grace environment," end quote. What he is saying is that while we're being told we ought to apologize as a nation for the early attitude in America manifest in slavery toward African/American people, we ought to start apologizing to the Jews for the way the American church has treated them with its replacement theology.

Based on chapter 12 of Genesis, if a Christian's eschatology produces indifference toward the children of Abraham, or detachment from the children of Abraham, or antagonism toward the children of Abraham, you're in trouble because the Abrahamic Covenant says you bless them and God will bless you, you curse them and God will curse you. The issue then is...does Israel have a future as a nation? Scripture says it does. Many in the Reformed tradition deny that. Typical of this are the words say of a Dutch Calvinist, Herman Riterbosse(?) in his book, Paul: An Outline of His Theology., I quote him, "The church then as the people of the New Covenant has taken the place of Israel and national Israel is nothing other than the empty shell from which the pearl has been removed and which has lost its function in the history of redemption." It's over for them as a nation.

Now you have to ignore the clear words of Zechariah 12 to 14, Ezekiel 36 to 39, Romans 9 to 11, particularly. And you also have to do damage to your own understanding of sovereign grace because you are saying that Israel failed to believe, Israel failed to embrace Christ, and so Israel on its own failed to do what it was supposed to do. By saying that, you would have to also say that Israel would have guaranteed its own place in the future purposes of God if on its own it had done what was right. The problem is, nobody can believe except by the sovereign grace of God. Israel has failed but that has not altered God's plan because the generation that is elect has not yet come. To believe that the church somehow has earned the promises given to Israel because we pulled it off on our own and Israel didn't, that kind of thinking is foreign to our thinking of sovereign grace. Do we fail to grasp that we as a church exist only by divine sovereign grace and that we are no more able to believe than the Jews were able on their own to believe? Do we think that somehow we've inherited the promise because we were able to do what they were not able to do? The truth of the matter is, we were enabled to do what they were not enabled to do because that generation has not yet come. And if Romans 9 through 11, and we'll get to that, teaches anything, it teaches that salvation is by sovereign grace and election alone for the church now and many Jews that are brought into the church and for Israel in the future. To make a human contingency or human achievement the factor in prophetic fulfillment is not true to the doctrine of sovereign grace.

So you're asking the question...How in the world did this idea get such momentum? Well, as I said, it was Augustine, North African church father came up with this idea, established this idea that the church was the new Israel. Thirteenth century, the church establishes Replacement as canonical law. It becomes the official dogma of the church.

Let me give you a little bit of the history written by Robert Wistrick(?). "Augustine even likened the Jewish people to Cain, the first criminal recorded in biblical history who had murdered his own brother and merited death but instead had been condemned to wander unhappily ever after." Augustine saw the Jewish people like Cain, alive but dispossessed, a perpetual wanderer. "The Jews," Augustine said, "might deserve to be eradicated for their crime, rejecting Christ, but Augustine preferred that

they would be preserved as wandering witnesses until the end time." Witnesses to what happens when you reject the truth. Augustine did suggest, however, that they would turn to Christ at the last judgment. The canonical legislation of the church in the thirteenth century fully institutionalized the reprobate status of the Jew and the doctrine which the church called *Servitus Judae Oram*(???), the perpetual servitude of the Jews. The Jews then had to be subordinate to Christians. They could exercise no position of authority and Christian society had to be originally protected from contamination through living, eating, or engaging in any sexual relationship with a Jew. That was church law.

The Lateran Council, thirteenth century, the year 1215, codified this to segregate the Jews. And in the thirteenth century, the Lateran Council segregated the Jews by requiring them to wear distinguishing dress. In Germanic lands they wore a conical hat and what they called a Jew-badge, usually a yellow disc sewn into their clothing whose color symbolized Judas betraying Christ for gold coins. That's what was done to them in Latin countries. The effects of the badge required to be worn and the conical hat were to make the Jews more visible and vulnerable to attack which reduced their ability to travel. And so they formed ghettos, twelve hundreds. The German Reformation a few hundred years later under Luther's guidance led to a very unfavorable direction for the Jews, seeded hatred sewn deep, Luther did nothing to remove it. It eventually found its full flower in the Third Reich with Hitler. And the German Protestants showed themselves amazingly receptive to Nazi anti-Semitism, it was so ingrained for so many centuries. You can go back to the Council of Nicaea in 325, a council which was debating the nature of Christ, came up with the right understanding of the nature of Christ. But in the documents of the Council of Nicaea, Jews are called "that odious people."

This attitude stuck and it stuck throughout the Middle Ages. They were mostly resented, hated and often killed. In the fourteenth century, Jewish books were burned. At the end of the thirteenth century they were expelled from England by Edward I and allowed to come back 350 years later under Cromwell. In 1144 in Norwich, England, the Jews were charged with killing their babies to drain the blood to use in the Matsos, the unleavened bread of Passover. Of course in the sixteenth century, the time of the Reformation pervasive anti-Jewish attitudes pervaded in Europe. Hikel(?) Overman writing in a book, The Roots of Anti-Semitismsays, "Hatred of the Jews was not an invention of the sixteenth century, it was an inherited assumption." And sad to say, the Reformation didn't change it. Sixteen forty-eight, the Ukranian Jews were butchered and it is a strange and sad thing to say that in the last sermon that Luther preached before he died, he called for all Jews to be driven out of Germany. He was fighting on another front, never really got around to dealing with that issue which was so ingrained in the culture. This...this led to this Amillennial Replacement Theology and it became so ingrained. Interesting further study that Barry Horner points out, the CRC, which is the Christian Reformed Church, Dutch Reformed Calvinism, squelched all pre-millennialism. And interestingly enough, they...they would not tolerate anybody believing in a future kingdom for Israel. Anybody who did was placed under investigation. You could find that in their own history. They

actually went so far as to forbid preaching or discussing premillennialism.

Wystricks(??)says in his book, Anti-Semitism, The Longest Hatred, "The Augustinian theology reinforced the notion of the Jews as a wandering, homeless, rejected and accursed people who were incurably cardinal, blind to spiritual meaning, perfidious, faithless, and apostate, their crime being one of cosmic proportions merited permanent exile and subordination to Christianity." One writer, W.J. Greer writing in the most...in the momentous event, said, "The power of Augustine is best seen in the fact that he removed the ghost of premillennialism so effectively that for centuries the subject was practically ignored."

Now this actually continues to be an issue today. In our modern world, our tolerant world, a world that embraces everybody and everything, there is still this subjective sort of impositional pre-suppositional anti-Judaism, if not anti-Semitism, not necessarily racist but this anti-Judaism mentality. Melanie Philips, a Jewish columnist for The London Daily Mail, wrote a really amazing article about the Anglican Church hostility toward Israel. This is some of which she said, "The church's hostility has nothing to do with Israel's behavior toward the Palestinians." And she wrote this after she went to a conference of the Anglicans discussing Israel and the Palestinians, the current situation. This is what she wrote, "The church's hostility has nothing to do with Israel's behavior toward the Palestinians, this was merely an excuse. The real reason for the growing antipathy was the ancient hatred of Jews rooted deep in Christian theology and now widespread once again, a doctrine," she wrote, "going back to the early church fathers, suppressed after the Holocaust, has been revised under the influence of the Middle Eastern conflict. This doctrine is called...this is a Jewish writer...Replacement Theology. In essence it says that the Jews have been replaced by the Christians in God's favor and so all God's promises to the Jews, including the land of Israel, have been inherited by Christianity." That is Replacement theology.

You can go to websites like Christian Zionism.org, and other websites and find many Anglican leaders that are pro-Palestinian, think Israel has absolutely no right to the land. Christian anti-Judaism is strong in the U.K., very strong, much to the delight of the two million Muslims that now live there. It's interesting to find the quote/unquote Anglican church taking their view of Israel. One writer, Colin Chapman, an Anglican who wrote Whose Promised Land?, question mark, says, "Israel is responsible for Hamas and Islamic Jihad." He is supported, by the way, by such notable scholars as N.T. Wright who says, "Israel doesn't mean an ethnic people, but it means a worldwide family." To support his own view, Chapman says, "The Old Testament is not the inerrant Word of God, it is simply a very ethno-centric interpretation of Israelitish history."

Well all of that, and that's probably more than you wanted to hear, but the things I say here go far and wide. Do you understand that? It's time for Bible-believing Reformed Sovereign Grace Christians who affirm scriptural inerrancy and legitimate interpretation to drop this tragic error and get Israel in

the right place or we're never going to understand God's unfolding purpose, to say nothing of having some bad attitude toward these people...absolutely unacceptable. That is not to say that the Israel of today in the land of Israel is God's people. The race is chosen, a future generation will be saved, but present-day Israel lives in apostasy and unbelief and the rejection of Jesus Christ and can claim no protection from God now. God will preserve them as a race. God is not obligated to protect them currently as a people. They are under divine judgment, as are all people who reject Christ. But they do have a future.

Now that being said, I have very little time left. But we need to look at the Bible for a moment. I said I wanted to go through some questions to answer this dilemma. Is the Old Testament amillennial? Were the Jews of Jesus' day amillennial? Was Jesus amillennial? Were the Apostles who wrote the New Testament and those associates of the Apostles amillennial? Were the early church fathers amillennial? We're going to answer those questions and then give you some very important conclusions.

First question...Is the Old Testament amillennial? We started, didn't we, last time with the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 12 and following chapters and we said that obviously God promised Abraham a seed, a nation, a land, blessing and through them blessing to the world. Specifically, a nation...a nation that would grow like the sands of the sea and the stars of the heaven, a nation that would have a land and possess the land and be blessed and be a blessing to the world, and through that nation a seed, not just seeds, but a seed, as the Apostle Paul describes it in Galatians, meaning a ruler, a Messiah which assumes a Kingdom. It's all in the Abrahamic Covenant, we saw that last time.

The second great covenant in the Old Testament is the Davidic Covenant. Now I just want to show you that briefly. Turn to 2 Samuel chapter 7...2 Samuel chapter 7. Our intention is not to cover every aspect of this passage, but to draw out those things which are pertinent to answering the question...Is the Old Testament amillennial? The Davidic Covenant, this is a covenant made with David. It really is an expansion and an extension of the Abrahamic Covenant. It's not something disconnected, it's something very, very connected. Second Samuel chapter 7, verse 12, "When your days are complete," God tells David, "you will lie down with your fathers. I'll raise up your descendant after you who will come forth from you and I will establish His Kingdom." Now in verse 13, "He shall build a house for My name, I will establish a throne of His Kingdom forever." So we know He's not talking about Solomon. He's talking about a forever Kingdom. He does speak of Solomon, the one who will be a son and commit iniquity and be corrected, but down in verse 16 He moves again beyond Solomon to the forever King and the forever Kingdom, "Your house, and Your kingdom shall endure before Me forever, Your throne shall be established forever." God is saying to David, "Out of your loins, out of your line is going to come a King with an everlasting Kingdom."

Over in 2 Samuel chapter 23 we come to the last words of David as he comes to the end of his life. And his last words are recorded for us here. And if you'll drop down in to verse 5, this is what David

knew to be true and what he said at the end of his life, "Truly it's not my house, so with God." In other words, to be blessed by the God of Israel, the rock of Israel, the one who rules is not my house so blessed for He has made an everlasting covenant with Me, ordered in all things and...what's the next word?...secured. For all My salvation and all My desire will He not indeed make it happen?" Will He not indeed...a better way to translate...do it? It is an everlasting covenant.

What is promised to David? A house, that is a progeny, a seed, a Kingdom. And again, it sounds...go back to chapter 7...so much like the Abrahamic Covenant. Verse 12, "I will raise up your descendant. I will establish His Kingdom." Verse 13, "I will establish the throne of His Kingdom forever." Verse 16, "Your house, Your Kingdom shall endure before Me forever. Your throne shall be established forever. I will...I will...I will." This extends the Abrahamic Covenant. Yes a Kingdom, yes a King, and the King through the line of David, an eternal Kingdom that will not only bless the people who are the sons of Abraham, but a Kingdom that will bless the world.

Psalm 72, just quickly, Psalm 72 speaks of the reign of the great King who will come and establish His Kingdom and bring peace to the people, and verse 3, the hills in righteousness, and so forth, it goes on to describe this wonderful, glorious Kingdom. This is a Psalm that speaks of an enduring name, verse 17, an increasing name that all the nations will call blessed. Verse 18, "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel who alone works wonders. Blessed be His glorious name forever. May the whole earth be filled with His glory, Amen, Amen." David is celebrating here the wonderful promise of the King. He will rule, according to verse 8, from sea to sea, from river to the ends of the earth, etc. You can read it for yourselves. Psalm 89 is another of these great Psalms of the King that celebrate the covenant that God made with David, and again Psalm 89 has those same magnificent characteristics of the Kingdom. It ends with the same approach, verse 52, "Blessed be the Lord forever, amen and amen." And Psalm 89 is directed right at the covenant God made with David. Look at verse 35, "Once I have sworn by My holiness, I will not lie to David, his descendants shall endure forever and his throne as the Son before Me. It will be established forever like the moon and the witness in the sky is faithful." God is here binding Himself to this great covenant. It is unilateral, I will...I will. It is unconditional, God says I will do it, there are no human contingencies. It is irrevokable, the language of Romans 11, the gifts and callings of God are without repentance, they are irrevokable. It is a grant that can never be taken away. There is no other way to interpret these covenants.

But both the Abrahamic Covenant and the Davidic Covenant depend on one other covenant. Let me show it to you. Jeremiah 31...Jeremiah 31, this is all we will do for tonight. Jeremiah 31, the Abrahamic Covenant expands in to the Davidic Covenant which expands in to the New Covenant which is the only way that the promises of the Abrahamic and Davidic covenant can come to pass. This is the only means of fulfillment and it is the New Covenant. Jeremiah 31 verse 31, also made with Israel, verse 31, "Behold, days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant

with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the hand of Egypt. Not like the Mosaic or Sinaitic Covenant, the Covenant of Law, not like that. "y Covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them, declares the Lord."

See here's the dilemma. You have the Abrahamic Covenant with all its promises. You have the Davidic promises with all its promises. And how to do you get to the fulfillment of those? You have then the Mosaic Covenant which only proves that they can't qualify for the blessings of the Abrahamic and the Davidic, because they can't keep the Mosaic. So the Mosaic Covenant only curses them. You've got to come to the New Covenant. And the New Covenant isn't like the Mosaic Covenant. "his is a covenant...verse 33...which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord." And this is the kind of Covenant this is, "I will put My Law within them and on their heart I will write it and I will be their God and they shall be My people." That's the New Covenant. It is that covenant which God promises one day He will change their hearts and write the Law inside of them. And then He will be their God and they shall be His people. And again would you please notice, this is the covenant I will make, I will put My Law on their heart, I will write it, I will be their God. There are the "I wills" again, it is an unconditional, unilateral, sovereign, gracious, irrevokable covenant.

How irrevokable is it? Verse 35, "Thus says the Lord who gives the sun for light by day, and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night," this is reminiscent of the Psalm we just read, "who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar, the Lord of hosts is His name, the Creator God, the upholder of His creation, if this fixed order departs from before Me, declares the Lord, then the offspring of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me forever."

Wow, as far as I can tell, everything is still going the way it's supposed to, right? The sun's doing what it's supposed to do. The stars are doing what they're supposed to do. The moons are doing what they're supposed to do. And therefore God hasn't changed His mind. "Thus says the Lord...verse 37...if the heavens above can be measured...and they can't...and the foundation of the earth searched out below...and it can't...then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done, declares the Lord." There is in one passage the answer to Replacement Theology. God is not going to cast off Israel even for what they have done. And listen to this, the New Covenant was given through Jeremiah at a time when Israel's disobedience was so severe, they were punished by God. They were under divine punishment, under divine judgment at the very time this covenant was given to them. Jeremiah is what kind of prophet? He is a weeping prophet...weeping over Israel's judgment, the captivity. The New Covenant is not a reward for their faithfulness, it is given in spite of their unfaithfulness. God says there will be a day when I will change their hearts sovereignly and I will be their God and they shall be My people. "And they shall not teach again...verse 34...each man his neighbor and each man his brother saying, 'Know the Lord, for they shall all know Me'...the whole nation....from the least of them to the greatest of them,' declares the Lord, 'or I will forgive their

iniquity and their sin I will remember no more.'" There is a word for that..salvation. This is the promise of salvation to Israel. Promise them a seed, promise them land, promise them a Kingdom, promise them a King, but they can't have any of it unless God saves them. And He will...and He will not change His plan anymore than He will allow the fixed order of His creation to be altered. And when that Covenant comes, He'll write His Law on the inside.

We as Gentiles, how do we fit in? Hey, we're going to be in the Kingdom. We are the beneficiaries of all the promises to Abraham. We have been blessed to Abraham, right? Messiah is the Son of Abraham, we by faith are children of Abraham. We will possess all those promises. We'll be there in the Kingdom.

What about the promises to David about a Kingdom and a King? He's our King, too. It's not exclusively Israel's. It is the fulfillment of promises made to them, they are the witnessed people through whom God fulfills His promises, but they embrace the world. The world is blessed as even before that, we are blessed in the tents of Shem because it was Shem who produced Abraham. We'll be there in the Kingdom, we'll receive all the blessings of the glorious reign of Christ on earth whether we've been glorified before, or whether saints enter into the Kingdom who are alive at the time, we'll be there, all who believe. We'll all receive the benefits of the reign of Jesus Christ on His throne. And we all are saved on the terms of the New Covenant which is ratified in the blood of Christ on the cross and by the ratification of that blood He makes the New Covenant valid. And we all enter in to salvation through the New Covenant, and He's written His Law in our hearts as well. We all get in on all of it. We're not denying that. I'm not saying that we are not going to be the recipients of the promises to Abraham, promises to David and promises of the New Covenant given here to Jeremiah, we are all the recipients of those things as well, but not replacing Israel. The New Testament includes the...the New Covenant, I should say, or the New Testament in His blood, the New Covenant includes the elements of the Abrahamic covenant and the Davidic Covenant. If you go back to the early part of Jeremiah 31, even earlier in that chapter, just start reading the chapter, read all the way up to verse 30 and you're going to see some very physical blessings. They're going to come in Jeremiah 31 to all of us, to the wider world. We're either...we're even going to come under the great reign of the great King. We're all going to serve the great King, all the nations of the world are going to come under His sovereign, righteous, glorious rule. You find indications of that back in chapter 30.

If you want further details on the New Covenant, turn to Ezekiel 36, let me just very quickly have you look at Ezekiel 36 just so you have a little bit of familiarity with it. This rehearses again the same terms, the same realities of the New Covenant. Verse 34, "I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands, bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols...here we go again...I will take you, I will sprinkle, I will cleanse. Moreover, verse 26, I will give you a new heart, put a new Spirit within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh, give you a heart of flesh. I will put

My Spirit within you, cause you to walk in My statutes. You will be careful to observe My ordinances. You'll live in the land that I gave to your forefathers so that you will be My people, I will be your God. Moreover I will save you from all your uncleanness." Magnificent...magnificent language.

Verse 33, "On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited in the waste places to be rebuilt." Now...He says, "Once I've cleansed you, the Kingdom comes and the desolate land will be cultivated, instead of being a desolation in the sight of everyone who passed by, and they will say this desolate land has become like the Garden of Eden, and the waste desolate and ruined cities are fortified and inhabited and the nations that are left round about you will know that I the Lord have rebuilt the ruined places and planted that which was desolate. I the Lord have spoken and will do it. Thus says the Lord God. This also, I will let the house of Israel ask Me to do for them, I will increase their men like a flock, like a flock for sacrifices, like the flock of Jerusalem during her appointed feasts, so will the waste cities be filled with flocks of men and then they will know that I am the Lord." I will...I will...I will...this is all sovereign work on God's part, there's no human contingencies. God will do it. In the language of chapter 37, "He will gather the dry bones of Israel."

Is the Old Testament amillennial? Not hardly. When God gave unilateral unconditional sovereign gracious promises to Israel, they will be fulfilled by an elect people in the future whom God will enable to repent and believe. These promises are guaranteed by divine faithfulness and to be fulfilled like all His salvation work by divine power in divine time. And when God says those promises are irrevokable, they are irrevokable and you cannot without impunity for any seemingly convenient idea or assumption say they are voided.

You say, "What about Israel's apostasy?" Doesn't cancel the promises. As I said, when He gave them the New Covenant, they were under judgment. Furthermore, Jesus reiterates the New Covenant, ratifies the New Covenant in His blood at the very hands of the apostate Jews. The New Covenant is reiterated to Israel through their own Messiah at a time when they were under apostasy and on the brink of judgment which came a few years later in 70 A.D. But Israel will exist through these judgments until the covenants are fulfilled.

I just have to show you one other text so I don't have to go back over this. Zechariah 12, quickly, verse 10...I did an entire study on Zechariah, it's available on tape, I did it many years ago, it's still just a riveting study. Zechariah 12:10, just follow quickly, "I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem...this is more New Covenant language...the spirit of grace and supplication...here it is...I will, I will, and they will look on Me whom they have pierced." Wow. In the future, God is going to pour out on the house of David, on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on Me whom they've pierced. They will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only son. They're going to mourn for the Messiah that they crucified and they're going to weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a firstborn. "In that day there will be great

mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddo, and the land will mourn every family by itself." And it goes to listing all the family. "In the day that they mourn, in the day that they look on the one they pierced, in that day...verse 1 of chapter 13...in that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for impurity." And what is the fountain going to do? "Wash them and cleanse them. And in that day, declares the Lord, here come the I wills...I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, they will no longer be remembered, I will also remove the prophets of the unclean spirit from the land," and so forth and so on.

Verse 8, "It will come about in all the land, declares the Lord, two parts in it will be cut off and perish." Two thirds of the Jews will perish, one third will be left, that will be that final Israel that is saved. "I'll bring the third part through the fire, refine them as silver is refined. Test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, I will answer them. I will say they are My people. They will say the Lord is my God." Finally this is how it ends. And when that happens, verse 9 of 14, "The Lord will be King over all the earth, the Lord will be King over all the earth. In that day the Lord will be the only one," there will only be one religion in the Kingdom, "and His name the only one. All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate and the Tower of Hananel for the king's wine presses. People will live in it, there will be no more curse, Jerusalem will dwell in security." Boy, that's good news, huh? (Amen) A secure Jerusalem.

Verse 16, "Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. It will be that whichever of the families of the earth doesn't go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, there will be no rain on them. And if the family of Egypt doesn't go up or enter, there will be no rain falling on them; it will be the plague with which the Lord smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. This will be the punishment of Egypt, the punishment of all the nations who don't go up to celebrate." This is when the Lord reigns and He's going to call for the restoration of ancient feasts because now they will have new meaning. And the whole world better come and worship. Verse 20, "In that day there will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, 'HOLY TO THE LORD.' And the cooking pots in the Lord's house will be like bowls before the altar." Everything will become sacred, even the bells hanging on the animals.

That's the Kingdom. Clearly the Old Testament sees a Kingdom after a future salvation of Israel.

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