

THE NEW COVENANT – PART 2

INTRO

- The Davidic Covenant promised that One in the line of David would come and rule over God’s people (Israel), sitting on David’s throne to rule and reign in an everlasting kingdom
- But in order for this to happen, Israel would need a heart change since it wouldn’t make sense for the greater David to come and rule over the land of Israel but govern a people who were still unregenerate and rebellious
- Therefore, regeneration and forgiveness of sins would need to be part of God’s relationship with Israel
- Thus, the NC constitutes God’s promise to redeem Israel by transforming them from the inside
- This covenant, then, develops the “blessing” aspect of the original AC
- The NC includes material blessings for Israel, but those material blessings are dependent on the salvation of the nation first
- Key Passages: Deuteronomy 30:1-9; Jeremiah 31:31-34; 32:36-44; Ezekiel 11:16-20; 16:60-63; 34:25-30; 36:24-38; 37:21-28

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW COVENANT

It is New

- It is not a renewed old covenant

Jeremiah 31:31-32 ~ “The time is coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. 32 It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD.

- The whole point of these verses is to show that the NC is not a complement to or a restatement of the Old Covenant with Moses
- This covenant would be “new” in the sense that it would differ from and supersede the covenant established in the days of Moses
- The difference would not lie in the basic demand of the covenant itself but in the people’s capacity to obey it
- Under the Old Covenant, God required His people’s loyalty and obedience but they rebelled against His authority and disobeyed His commands
- However, with the NC, the Lord would forgive their former sins....He would again demand their devotion, but this time He would place within them the desire and ability to remain loyal to Him
- They would be given the capacity to follow Him because their hearts would be transformed
- The Lord’s demands would be, as it were, written on their hearts, rather than on stone tablets

It is Unconditional and Irrevocable

- It is based on the “I will” promises of God; no conditions are placed on Israel

Jeremiah 31:31-34 ~ “The time is coming,” declares the LORD, “when **I will** make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. 32 It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD. 33 “This is the covenant **I will** make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “**I will** put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. **I will** be their God, and they will be my people. 34 No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the

LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For **I will** forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

Ezekiel 16:60-62 ~ Nevertheless, **I will** remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and **I will** establish an everlasting covenant with you. 61 Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed when you receive your sisters, both your older and your younger; and **I will** give them to you as daughters, but not because of your covenant. 62 Thus **I will** establish My covenant with you, and you shall know that I am the LORD(cf. the numerous "I wills" in Ezek 34:11-31; 36:22-32; 37:14, 26-28)

- The NC is directed from God to His people with no corresponding obligation expressed on the part of the people which demonstrates that the great work of salvation is entirely dependent on God

It is Eternal

- It is an everlasting covenant

Jeremiah 31:35-37 ~ 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, Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; The LORD of hosts is His name: 36 "If this fixed order departs From before Me," declares the LORD, "Then the offspring of Israel also will cease From being a nation before Me forever." 37 Thus says the LORD, "If the heavens above can be measured And the foundations of the earth searched out below, Then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel For all that they have done," declares the LORD.

Jeremiah 32:40 ~ I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me.

Ezekiel 37:26 ~ I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant. I will establish them and increase their numbers, and I will put my sanctuary among them forever.

It is Connected to the Abrahamic Covenant

- The importance of the New Covenant is that it amplifies the blessing aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant, especially in relationship to salvation

Ezekiel 16:60-62 ~ Nevertheless, I will remember My covenant (Abrahamic Covenant) with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant (New Covenant) with you.

Ezekiel 36:24-38 ~ "For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. 25 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. 26 Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. 28 You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers (Abrahamic Covenant); so you will be My people, and I will be your God.

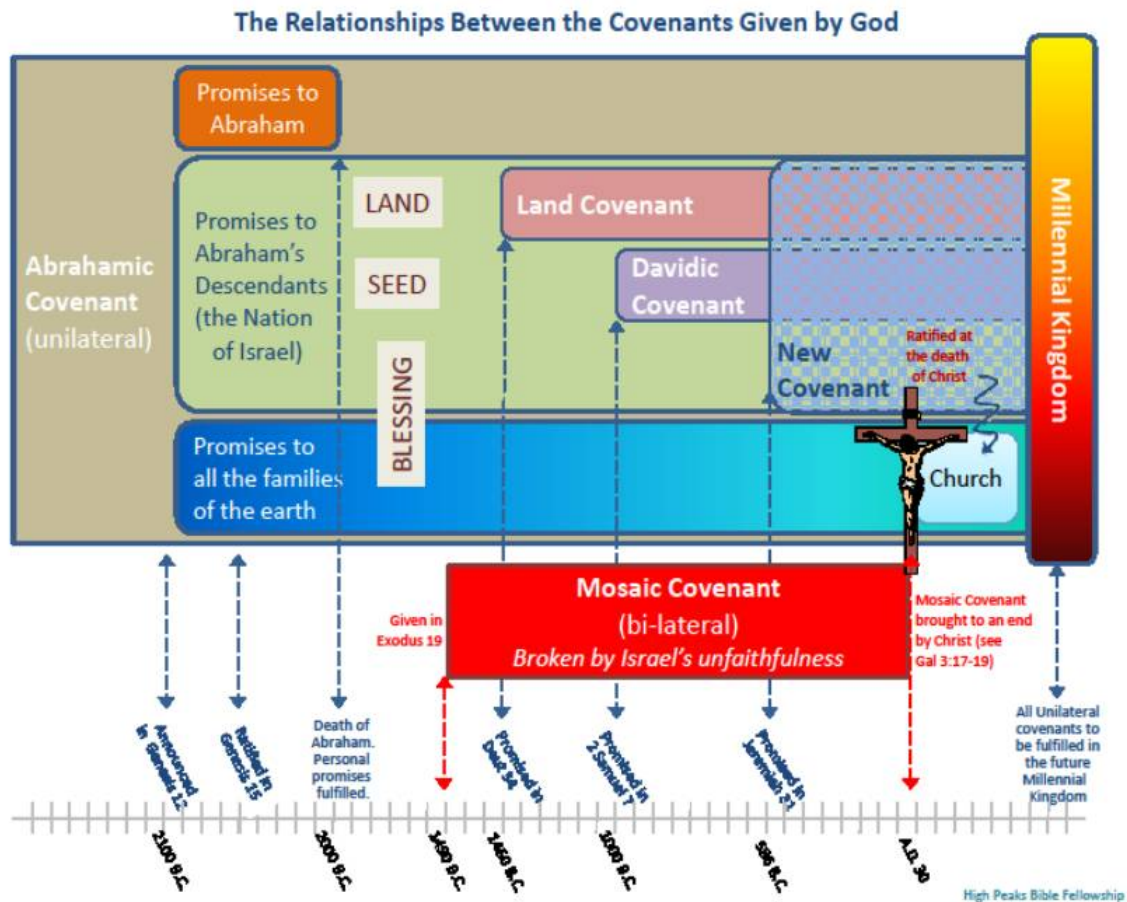


It is Connected to the Davidic Covenant

- The New Covenant is connected to the Davidic Covenant in that the Messiah is the source and basis for salvation going to both believing Jews and Gentiles

Ezekiel 34:23-27 ~ Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant **David**, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd. 24 And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant **David** will be prince among them; I the LORD have spoken. 25 I will make a covenant of peace with them and eliminate harmful beasts from the land so that they may live securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. 26 I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing. And I will cause showers to come down in their season; they will be showers of blessing. 27 Also the tree of the field will yield its fruit and the earth will yield its increase, and they will be secure on their land. Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bars of their yoke and have delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them.

Ezekiel 37:21 ~ Say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; 22 and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and **one king will be king for all of them**; and they will no longer be two nations and no longer be divided into two kingdoms. 23 They will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people, and I will be their God. 24 My servant **David will be king over them**, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes and observe them. 25 They will live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons and their sons' sons, forever; and **David My servant** will be their prince forever. 26 I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in their midst forever. 27 My dwelling place also will be with them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people. 28 And the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forever."



THE PROVISIONS OF THE NEW COVENANT

Spiritual Blessings

A New Heart

- This new heart provides for the salvation of Israel and results in the national regeneration of Israel
- The point is not that the Old Covenant saints did not have regeneration, but that it was possible to be in the Old Covenant and not be regenerated
- Thus, to be in the NC is to be saved which was not necessarily true of the Old Covenant

Jeremiah 24:7 ~ I will give them a heart to know Me, for I am the LORD; and they will be My people, and I will be their God, for they will return to Me with their whole heart.

Jeremiah 31:33 ~ But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "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.

Jeremiah 32:39 ~ and I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me always, for their own good and for the good of their children after them.

Ezekiel 11:19 ~ And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, 20 that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God.

Ezekiel 36:26 ~ Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

Permanent Forgiveness of Sins

- While there was forgiveness of sins under the OC (cf. Exodus 34:6-7; Psalm 32:1, 5; 51:7), the provision of forgiveness under the NC is for more than simply a continuity of the forgiveness provided under the OC

Jeremiah 31:34 ~ "No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

Jeremiah 33:8 ~ I will cleanse them from all their iniquity by which they have sinned against Me, and I will pardon all their iniquities by which they have sinned against Me and by which they have transgressed against Me.

Jeremiah 50:20 ~ 'In those days and at that time,' declares the LORD, 'search will be made for the iniquity of Israel, but there will be none; and for the sins of Judah, but they will not be found; for I will pardon those whom I leave as a remnant.'

Ezekiel 36:25 ~ For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. 25 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.

- The forgiveness that came through animal sacrifices was temporary (Hebrews 10:1-4) but what is promised in the NC is a permanent forgiveness of sins
- "While the old covenant brought a certain degree of fellowship with God, the need for mediators and the extremely limited access to his presence in the most holy place revealed that this fellowship fell far short of that promised in the new covenant. The intimacy of this new fellowship rests on this new kind of forgiveness that would finally remove the obstacle of sin completely and thus forever."¹

¹ Robert Saucy, *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism*, 116.

The Permanent Indwelling of the Holy Spirit in All Believers

- The Holy Spirit is the energizer of the complete NC program

Isaiah 44:3 ~ For I will pour out water on the thirsty land And streams on the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring And My blessing on your descendants;

Isaiah 59:21 ~ As for Me, this is My covenant with them,” says the LORD: “My Spirit which is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring’s offspring,” says the LORD, “from now and forever.”

Jeremiah 31:33 ~ “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

Ezekiel 37:14 ~ I will put My Spirit within you and you will come to life, and I will place you on your own land. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken and done it,” declares the LORD.

Ezekiel 39:29 ~ “I will not hide My face from them any longer, for I will have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,” declares the Lord GOD.

Joel 2:28-29 ~ It will come about after this That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions. 29 Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

- “[The NC] guarantees the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which will make it possible for the people to be empowered to obey the Lord with an attitude free of stubbornness and rebellion...The presence of the Holy Spirit will enable people to have an experiential, full knowledge of the Lord (Jer. 31:34).”²

The Law Inside of a Believer

- Instead of the law on tablets of stone that was before them, God promised to put his law in their minds and write it on their hearts

Jeremiah 24:7 ~ I will give them a heart to know Me, for I am the LORD; and they will be My people, and I will be their God, for they will return to Me with their whole heart.

Jeremiah 31:33-34 ~ “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. 34 No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

Jeremiah 32:40 ~ I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; and I will put the fear of Me in their hearts so that they will not turn away from Me.

- “By declaring that God would give a ‘new heart,’ writing his laws on it, the new covenant therefore looks to a time when the law of God would be a part of the mind and will of the people ‘so that they obey God , not because they are supposed to, but because they want to...’”³
- Thus, the interior law and the indwelling Holy Spirit are closely associated in that the Spirit internalizes the NC so that the people of God are motivated to do God’s will as opposed to the OC which stood over the people of Israel like a judge, demanding obedience but providing no enablement
- The NC comes with “batteries included” because it includes the empowerment to obey

² Paul Benware, *Understanding End Times Prophecy*, 69.

³ Saucy, *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism*, 116-117.

A Consummation of Israel's Relationship with God

- The transforming work of the NC by the indwelling Spirit would bring about a new relationship between God and His people
- This goal had already been part of the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenants, but the sinfulness of the people had prohibited its full realization
- The promises of final forgiveness, the transformation of the heart issuing in holiness, and the indwelling of the Spirit would bring the new relationship to reality in the NC

Jeremiah 24:7 ~ I will give them a heart to know Me, for I am the LORD; and they will be My people, and I will be their God, for they will return to Me with their whole heart.

Jeremiah 31:33 ~ But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "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.

Jeremiah 32:38 ~ They shall be My people, and I will be their God;

Ezekiel 36:28 ~ You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God.

- The relationship promised is nothing less than a direct personal fellowship of God with humankind through His Spirit – spirit to spirit and heart to heart

Physical Blessings

- Although the primary emphasis in the NC is on the spiritual blessings, a host of physical blessings for Israel will accompany it
- Jeremiah describes the following physical blessings:
 - The gathering of the people to the land (31:8-11; 32:15, 37, 41)
 - Rebuilding of the cities (30:18 31:38-40)
 - Cultivation and productivity of the land (31:5, 12-14)
 - Increase in herds and flocks (33:12-13)
 - Population explosion (30:20; 31:17)
 - Expressions of joy (31:4, 7, 13; 33:11)
 - State of blessing, rest, and peace (31:23-25, 27-28; 32:42-44; 33:6)
- Ezekiel 36 describes the following physical blessings:
 - Israel will be gathered from the nations and placed in their own land (vs. 24)
 - Israel will live in the land God gave to Israel's forefathers (vs. 28a)
 - Israel will experience agricultural prosperity along with no more famine (vs. 29-30)
 - Israel will see its cities inhabited (vs. 33b)
 - Israel's land will be cultivated (vs. 34)
 - Israel will see an increase in population (vs. 37-38)
- Some think that these material blessings were realized upon Israel's return from exile, but such is not the case
- The reason for this is because the spiritual takes precedence over the material...and since the spiritual changes haven't happened in Israel, they have not yet enjoyed the material blessings
- "This context and that of similar accounts of God's restoration of Israel to her land, along with the historical perspective, make it clear that the return mentioned in this passage [Ezekiel 36] does not refer to the return to Canaan under Zerubbabel but to a final and complete restoration under the Messiah in the end times. The details of Israel's reestablishment on her land...simply did not occur in the returns under Zerubbabel, Ezra, or Nehemiah."⁴

⁴ Ralph H. Alexander, *Ezekiel* in Expositor's Bible Commentary, 922.

- “This covenant, then, has to do with the regeneration, forgiveness, and justification of Israel, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit with His subsequent ministries, Israel’s regathering and restoration to the place of blessing, all founded on the blood of Christ.”⁵

THE FULFILLMENT OF THE NEW COVENANT

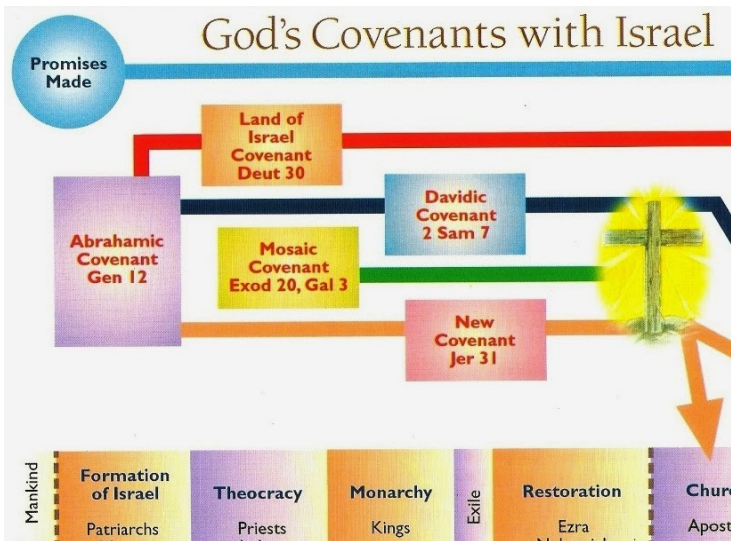
Views on the Fulfillment of the New Covenant

The Amillennial Position	The Progressive Dispensational Position	The Revised Dispensational Position	The Older Classic Dispensational Position
The NC is completely fulfilled with the church	Since the NC was given to Israel for the purpose of blessing Gentiles, there is literal fulfillment of the spiritual blessings of the NC to all believing Jews and Gentiles in this present age, while the physical/ national promises await fulfillment with Jesus’ second coming	The NC will be fulfilled with Israel but the spiritual blessings of the covenant are applied to the church today (Fulfilled with Israel; applied to the church)	The NC will be fulfilled in the future with national Israel; the church has no relationship to the NC There are two NC – one with Israel and another for the church

Rationale for The Revised Dispensational Position

- While some of the benefits of the New Covenant (reconciliation with God, forgiveness of sin, indwelling of the Holy Spirit) have been extended to believers today, the covenant awaits *fulfillment* with Israel

⁵ J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come*, 118.



- The OT prophets always spoke of the NC as something yet future in that they looked ahead to the time when the Lord would enter into the NC with Israel and fulfill His promises

Isaiah 55:3 ~ Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, According to the faithful mercies shown to David

Isaiah 59:20-21 ~ “A Redeemer will come to Zion, And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob,” declares the LORD. 21 “As for Me, this is My covenant with them,” says the LORD: “My Spirit which is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring’s offspring,” says the LORD, “from now and forever.”

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Ezekiel 34:11-31; 36:22-29

- But none of the blessings (spiritual or physical) of the NC could take place until Messiah came and made the necessary sacrifice for sin
- “The foundation of the new covenant is the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. But even though the sacrificial death of Christ made all the provisions of the new covenant possible, the new covenant was not fulfilled with Israel in connection with the first coming of Christ.”⁶
- Paul made this clear in Romans 11 when, 25 years after the death of Christ, he acknowledged that Israel was still looking forward to the fulfillment of the NC
- This was because they had rejected Christ and the Gospel (Romans 10)
- Even though a believing remnant had always existed, the nation as a whole had turned away from the Lord
- But Paul anticipates the time when Israel would believe and be grafted back into God’s plans

Romans 11:7 ~ What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened

Romans 11:11-12 ~ I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous. 12 Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be!

Romans 11:15 ~ For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

Romans 11:23-27 ~ And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree? 25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; 26 and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, “THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB.” 27 “THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.”

- Paul looks ahead to the day of salvation for national Israel when “all Israel will be saved” (vs. 26), the day when God’s covenant with Israel is fulfilled and their sins are taken away (vs. 27)

⁶Benware, *Understanding End Times Prophecy*, 70.

- “In the prophets, the future fulfillment of the new covenant (and the other unconditional covenants) is connected with coming of Messiah and His kingdom. It will be in the millennial kingdom that this covenant will finally be fulfilled. Israel, as a nation, will be regenerated, experience the forgiveness of sins, be indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and have a full knowledge of the Lord their God, as well as the material blessings associated with their return back to the land.”⁷
- “The church, then, is a partaker of the spiritual blessings of the new covenant, enjoying regeneration, the forgiveness of sins, and the presence and ministry of the Holy Spirit. The church is primarily Gentile in its makeup – those who have been graciously grafted in by God *until* their number is complete. Multitudes of Gentiles experience the wonderful blessings of the new covenant. But the church is not national Israel, the people with whom God made this covenant. The church does not and cannot fulfill the new covenant. Its fulfillment awaits the arrival of Jesus the Messiah. When He returns at the Second Coming, all the spiritual and material blessings promised Israel will be received.”⁸

⁷ibid., 71.

⁸ ibid., 73.