

When we read our Bibles over a long period of time we might find things that do not appear to click, gel, or fit. There will be things we can't fully understand but we are not to be discouraged but study or show ourselves diligent with the Word of God on a continuing basis;.

Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. [2Ti 2:10](#)

Study earnestly to present yourself approved to God, a workman that does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. [2Ti 2:15](#)

Paul endured to obtain salvation with eternal glory; he endured to obtain something more than just living with Christ. Studying constantly to resolve apparent contradictions is part of our endurance. God's Word rightly divided is, and has the answer to every difficult passage we might find within it.

Most Christians believe that we are New Covenant Christians. But that created some issues for me and perhaps for you as well. This lesson we begin a series devoted to the question, "Are we New Covenant Christians today?"

Regarding the New Covenant we turn to the significant passage of Jeremiah; [Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will cut a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I cut with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which covenant of Mine they broke, although I was a husband to them, says Jehovah; but this shall be the covenant that I will cut with the house of Israel: After those days, says Jehovah, I will put My Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall no more teach each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says Jehovah. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more. \[Jer 31:31-34\]\(#\)](#)

There is no doubt that when we read "for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more" we are inclined to believe this is about us today. It is true that we have forgiveness of sins, but does forgiveness alone justify the view that we are the people Jeremiah is speaking about?

When we study God's Word there are rules we must apply and a set of questions which help us understand God's Word. These are; WHO, WHEN, WHERE, WHAT and WHY. When we answer these questions from the context before us, it will be evident that there are other people whose iniquities are forgiven and their sins remembered no more.

Before we begin to answer these very helpful questions and consider other facts relating to the New Covenant, we should firmly establish the context. As you can see, we have extracted just 4 verses from a prophetic chapter which contains 40 verses and which follows on from the previous chapter as follows;

[At that time, says Jehovah, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people. \[Jer 31:1\]\(#\)](#)

The opening phrase "at that time" links the previous chapter and provides information as to WHEN. By listing the things that happen "at that time", we will begin to determine WHO are those to be forgiven under the terms of the New Covenant and precisely WHEN that forgiveness is enjoyed.

For an understanding of the New Covenant, we should at least read Jeremiah chapter 30 and chapter 31 to start. Any conclusion drawn on just four verses while all the other features mentioned in the context are ignored would be hasty and inconclusive. By reading Jeremiah 30 through to chapter 34 I found these very interesting statements;

So speaks Jehovah, the God of Israel, saying, Write all the Words that I have spoken to you in a book. For, lo, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will bring again the captivity of My people Israel and Judah, says Jehovah. And I will cause them to return to the land that I gave their fathers, and they shall possess it. [Jer 30:2-3](#)

Behold, I will bring it health and healing, and I will heal them and will show them the riches of peace and truth. And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first. And 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, and by which they have transgressed against Me. And it shall be to Me a name of joy, a praise and an honor before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do to them. And they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the riches that I bring to it. So says Jehovah: Again there shall be heard in this place, which you say *is* a waste without man and without beast, *even* in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate without man, and without inhabitant, and without beast; the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of those who shall say, Praise Jehovah of Hosts, for Jehovah *is* good, for His mercy *endures* forever; and the voice of those who shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of Jehovah. For I will cause the captivity of the land to return, as at the first, says Jehovah. [Jer 33:6-11](#)

And please see, Jer.30:18, 31:23, 32:37, 32:44, 33:26, Deut.30:1-6, Ps.53:6, Joel 3:1 & Amos 9:14.

Maybe you can find some other plain statements by the Lord in the four chapters which will answer all the questions for you. Remember, we must all make the Scriptures our own.

When we read in the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31 "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more", we feel strongly that the New Covenant must be about us because the Lord paid the price for our sin and sins on the cross. But we will eventually find other Scriptures, not tied to any covenants, which also speak of forgiveness and righteousness.

Before we look at those Scriptures, let us remind ourselves of the context of Jeremiah and the New Covenant. There we saw quite clearly that the forgiveness of sins under the New Covenant was specifically for Israel, both kingdoms, and was very specifically set in the day when the Lord re-gathers them from among the Gentile nations.

Here is the recurring phrase in those chapters 30-34 of Jeremiah which are the near context of the New Covenant;

So speaks Jehovah, the God of Israel, saying, Write all the Words that I have spoken to you in a book. For, lo, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will bring again the captivity of My people Israel and Judah, says Jehovah. And I will cause them to return to the land that I gave their fathers, and they shall possess it. Jer 30:2-3

The New Covenant is linked with the day when the entire nation of Israel will be gathered back into their Promised Land. Here is a list speaking of the reversal of Israel's captivity; Ps.14:7, 68:18, 85:1, Jer. 29:14, 30:3, 10. 18, 31:23, 32:44, 33:7, 26, Ez.37:12-24, 39:25-29, Amos 9:14 and Zeph.3:20.

Moses had already spoken of the days the Lord would re-gather them in Deut.30:1-6 and when Solomon dedicated the Temple, he also refers to the repentance of the scattered Israelites and in that context, this is what he said; **But truly will God in deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, Heavens and heaven of the heavens cannot contain You! How much less this house which I have built? 2Ch 6:18**

Will God dwell with men on earth? Yes indeed. Returning to Jeremiah, we find these words;

Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will raise to David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and act wisely, and shall do judgment and justice in the earth.

In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely. And this is His name by which He shall be called, JEHOVAH, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Therefore, behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that they shall no more say, Jehovah lives, who brought the sons of Israel up out of the land of Egypt;

but, Jehovah lives, who brought up and led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries where I have driven them. And they shall dwell in their own land. Jer 23:5-8

The Lord of glory, the Son of David, will indeed dwell with men on the earth, reigning on His throne, in His Temple on Zion. When the Lord re-gathers Israel and dwells among men, then the New Covenant will be in operation and He forgives Israel for His own sake. This is the constant theme of prophesy. See also Ps.47:2-9, Zech.6:12-13, and 14:9.

We need to notice another very important thing in Jeremiah 23. The prophet says "they shall no more say Jehovah lives who brought the sons of Israel out of the Land of Egypt but who brought....the seed of the house of Israel out

of...all countries... I had driven them". Why is it important to notice this? Because when the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, then the Old Covenant was made; Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will cut a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I cut with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; Jer 31:31-32

Just as the Old Covenant was made when Jehovah gathered Israel out from Egypt, so the New Covenant will be made with the same people, when their same Jehovah brings them back to their own promised land from among all the Gentile nations. Has this happened yet? The answer is a definite no and if the turning of Israel's captivity hasn't happened yet, then the New Covenant is not in operation either.

Notice also in Jer.23:5-8 that a King shall reign in righteousness, and his name is JEHOVAH-tsidkenu, the Lord our righteousness. The "our" here is not you and me today in this context, but the house of Israel. When will the nation of Israel enjoy forgiveness and righteousness from Jehovah? In the day He re-gathers them and the New Covenant is in force, then their iniquities are forgiven and their sins are no more remembered.

Here are other references to righteousness and Israel's King, redeemer and husband, Jer.33:14-17, Is.54 (:15-17). Look at these wonderful words in Is.45 regarding the nation of Israel. Notice in the day Israel is saved every knee shall bow to Him, their High Priest King;

Truly You *are* a God who hides Yourself, O God of Israel, the Savior.

But Israel shall be saved in Jehovah *with* an everlasting salvation. Turn to Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I *am* God, and there *is* no other. I have sworn by Myself, the word has gone out of My mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, that to Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. He says, Only in Jehovah do I have righteousness and strength; even to Him he comes. In Jehovah shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory. Isa 45:15,17, 22-25

Only in Israel's Jehovah does Israel have righteousness and strength. Only in Jehovah will Israel be made righteous and glory. Isaiah had already spoken clearly of these things;

But now so says Jehovah who created you, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel; Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called *you* by your name; you *are* Mine.

For I *am* Jehovah your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior;

I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Do not keep back; bring My sons from far and My daughters from the ends of the earth;

I, I *am* Jehovah; and *there is* none to save besides Me.

I *am* Jehovah, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.

I, I *am* He who blots out your sins for My own sake, and will not remember your sins. Isa 43:1, 3, 6, 11, 15, 25

Isaiah like Jeremiah, looks to the day when Israel are re-gathered and in that day salvation and righteousness for the nation of Israel will be found in Jehovah. In the days of the New Covenant it shall be said;

At that time, says Jehovah, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people. Jer 31:1

When we go back and look at the prophecies regarding the New Covenant we find that it and "the forgiveness of sins" is found in very specific contexts. The New Covenant and the forgiveness it brought was linked with the Lord bringing scattered Israel back into their promised land and ruling among them.

We cannot separate anything from its context. The New Covenant cannot be separated from the turning of the captivity of the houses of Israel and Judah as shown here, Deut.30:1-6, Ps.14:7, 68:18, 85:1, Jer.30:2-3, Jer. 29:14, 30:3, 10. 18, 31:23, 32:44, 33:7, 26, Ez.37:12-24, 39:25-29, Amos 9:14 and Zeph.3:20.

The Old Covenant was made after Israel had been delivered from Gentile bondage. The shed blood at Passover in Egypt certainly provided the basis for the Old Covenant but that covenant was not made until after Israel were gathered to God. And the New will be under the same conditions. Jeremiah links for us the Old Covenant with deliverance from bondage;

Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will cut a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I cut with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which covenant of Mine they broke, although I was a husband to them, says Jehovah; [Jer 31:31-32](#)

Turning the captivity means to release or deliver Israel from the bondage of other nations. It means to restore them in their Land as that nation belonging to God. In those coming days of restoration, the Lord will dwell among them in the earth, not as a flame in the clouds on the mercy seat in the Tabernacle, (Lev.16:2) but as the glorious High Priest King;

Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will raise to David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and act wisely, and shall do judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely. And this *is* His name by which He shall be called, JEHOVAH, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that they shall no more say, Jehovah lives, who brought the sons of Israel up out of the land of Egypt; but, Jehovah lives, who brought up and led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries where I have driven them. And they shall dwell in their own land. [Jer 23:5-8](#)

On the night before our Lord was crucified, He observed the Passover meal with His disciples;

And He said to them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer. For I say to you, I will not any more eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God. [Luk. 22:15-16](#)

But that was not our Lord's only desire, for during that Passover meal the Lord looked forward to the days when it would be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God; And He took the cup and gave thanks and said, Take this and divide *it* among yourselves. For I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come. [Luk 22:17-18](#)

For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on, until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom. [Mat 26:28-29](#), [Mar 14:24-25](#).

We cannot claim the New Covenant came in when the Lord shared the bread and cup with His disciples because that was the time of His suffering, not His glory. The Lord's glorious reign on the earth begins when He comes the second time.

The Lord certainly shed His blood on that cross on which shed blood the New Covenant is established, but the circumstances of His suffering were not the glorious ones in which the New Covenant is brought forth. The Lord's death, burial and resurrection were the redemptive foundations on which the New Covenant rests but it did not begin to operate the day the Lord of glory died.

Just as the Lord looked forward to enjoying the wine in the Kingdom of God, so the disciples, with their minds opened by their Messiah, Lk.24:45, asked a very important question in Acts 1:6;

[Then, indeed, these coming together, they asked Him, saying, Lord, do You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? Act 1:6](#)

The Kingdom of God had not come in when the Lord shed His blood, nor during Acts and so the New Covenant had likewise not been initialized. Hebrews, which was written many years after the Gospel times, looked forward to the New Covenant;

[For finding fault with them, He said to them, "Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, and I will make an end on the house of Israel and on the house of Judah; a new covenant shall be, Heb 8:8 In that He says, A new covenant, He has made the first one old. Now that which decays and becomes old is ready to vanish away. Heb 8:13](#)

The New Covenant was not in place before the close of the Gospel accounts, that is obvious because the Lord's crucifixion was one of the last things recorded. Then reading Hebrews we see the Old Covenant was ready to vanish away, but had not yet vanished away. Thus the New Covenant was not introduced since it cannot co-exist with the Old. Just as the Old Covenant was brought in when the Lord came with a trumpet, Ex.19, so the New will be brought in when He comes the second time to Israel at the last trumpet.

Slowly but surely the Scriptural evidence mounts that the New Covenant was not brought in anywhere during the New Testament times. We are not forgiven under the terms of the New Covenant but with the redemption and forgiveness according to God's purpose before the foundation of the world, see Eph.1:3-7.

We have already examined the pattern. The Old Covenant was not made with Israel at Passover in Egypt but at Pentecost. There at Mt Sinai, the Lord had gathered His people to Himself and descended gloriously to the earth with a trumpet, in clouds, with angels, earthquakes, fire and judgment. There, when the Lord was with Israel on the earth, the Old was made, see Exodus 19. It was made when the Lord delivered Israel and descended to the earth in triumph, not in humility and suffering.

Thus the writer of Hebrews was still looking to the days when the New Covenant would come because the Old was still in operation but was ready to vanish away as it is written;

For finding fault with them, He said to them, "Behold, days are coming, says *the Lord*, and I will make an end on the house of Israel and on the house of Judah; a new covenant shall be, Heb 8:8 (Jer.31:31-34).

In that He says, A new *covenant*, He has made the first one old. Now that which decays and becomes old *is* ready to vanish away. Heb 8:13

The Old Covenant decays and becomes old as per verse 13, and the original word for decay is found in chapter 1:11 where the old creation is also seen as decaying or waxing old.

And, "You, Lord, have laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the works of Your hands. They shall perish, but You will remain. And *they* shall all become old as a garment, and as a covering You shall fold them up, and *they* shall be changed. Heb 1:10-12

We know the heavens will roll up like a scroll when the Lord returns gloriously to the earth see Is.34:(4), 51:6-8, 11, 2Pet.3:1-13 and Rev.6:13-14. The Isaiah passages are well worth reading. There the Lord avenges the fighting against Zion which is preserved and where the redeemed will return with singing. These are prophetic passages about the Lord on the earth in glory and when He returns, Zion is saved and the old creation and the Old Covenant are removed. Both the New Covenant and the New heavens and earth come in after the Lord returns. This threefold link of the Lord delivering Israel and Mount Zion and the New Covenant is not lost when Paul wrote Romans;

And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this *is* My covenant with them, when I have taken away their sins." Rom 11:26-27

We have already seen that Hebrews joins the removal of the "old" creation and the Old Covenant and the bringing in of the New creation with the New Covenant. Hebrews, like the Romans passage above, also links Zion with the New Covenant as we read in chapter 12;

For you have not come to the mountain that might be touched and that burned with fire, nor to blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words (which *voice* they who heard begged that a word should not be spoken to them any more, for they could not endure the thing commanded, "And if so much as a beast

should touch the mountain, it shall be stoned or thrust through with a dart," and so fearful was the sight *that* Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake). But you have come to Mount Zion and to *the* city of *the* living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the *general* assembly and church of the first-born who are written in Heaven, and to God *the* judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of* Abel. Heb 12:18-24

Here we have two mountains and two Covenants, Mt Sinai and Mount Zion. The Lord is the mediator of the New Covenant on Mount Zion as Moses was the mediator of the Old on Mt Sinai. These two deliverers and mediators are compared in Hebs.3 but one thing is for certain, the Lord is not mediating the New Covenant from Mt Zion today. When Hebrews was written, the readers were waiting for the Lord from heaven who was expected in a very little while, 10:37, and in this regard they had come to Mt. Zion and would be among those who came with singing where sorrow and mourning would flee away.

Is the New Covenant in operation today? Has the Lord saved all Israel? Is the Lord on Mount Zion having subdued Israel's enemies? Is this essential part of the New Covenant present fact?

And they shall no more teach each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says Jehovah. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more. Jer 31:34

If the Lord has not victoriously come out of Zion having avenged Israel and if all Israel do not know Him from the least of them to the greatest, then there is no New Covenant in operation today. If Israel has not been re-gathered, and come with rejoicing unto Zion then there is no New Covenant in operation today.

During the Acts period Paul wrote to the Corinthians that he was a minister of the New Covenant as found in this context here;

Do we begin again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, like some, epistles of commendation to you, or *letters* of commendation from you? You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men, *it* having been made plain that you are the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, not having been written with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not on tablets of stone, but in fleshly tablets of *the* heart. And we have such trust through Christ toward God, not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency *is* of God; who also has made us able ministers of the new covenant; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit makes alive. 2Co 3:1-6

This is not a plain statement that the Old had concluded or the New was now in operation, rather the Apostle was comparing the Old and New Covenants in the matter of commendation. Paul and his friends did not need any testimonial written with ink as a means of introduction as some were doing for self commendation. The Corinthians were the apostle's commendation and these credentials were written in the hearts by the Spirit. This work of the Spirit was a ministration of the New Covenant which as we know, will be the Law written on Israel's heart when it comes in;

but this *shall be* the covenant that I will cut with the house of Israel: After those days, says Jehovah, I will put My Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Jer 31:33

Had the nation of Israel the Law written in their hearts when Paul wrote to the Corinthians? The answer is a very clear, No! This context does not allow the conclusion that the New Covenant was in operation. Indeed, reading further down in the chapter we find these words regarding the nation of Israel;

For if the ministry of condemnation *is* glorious, much more does the ministry of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. For if that which has been done away *was* glorious, much more that which remains *is* glorious. Then since we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech. And we are not like Moses, *who* put a veil over his face so that the sons of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of the thing being done away. (But their thoughts were blinded; for until the present the same veil remains on the reading of the old covenant, not taken away.) But this veil has been done away in Christ. But until this day, when Moses is read, the veil is on their heart. But whenever it turns to *the* Lord, the veil shall be taken away. And the Lord *is* that Spirit; and where the Spirit of *the* Lord *is*, there *is* liberty. But we all, with *our* face having been unveiled, having beheld the glory of the Lord as in a mirror, are being changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord Spirit. 2Co 3:9-18

The unrepentant Israelites were reading their own Scriptures every Sabbath day but which Scriptures were veiled to them in their hearts. Just as their ancient fathers could not see the object or end of the Old Covenant, so they were still misunderstanding their own Scriptures. The veil on Moses is seen in the veil on Israel's hearts and the ministry of the New Covenant is seen in liberty. The word "blinded" in verse 14 appears again in Romans 11:7;

What then? Israel has not obtained that which it seeks, but the election obtained it, and the rest were hardened even as it is written, "God gave to them a spirit of slumber, eyes not seeing, and ears not hearing" until this day. Rom 11:7-9

In Romans 11 Paul writes that only when the Lord as the Deliverer comes out of Zion will Israel's national sins be taken away at the bringing in of the New Covenant as it is written;

And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is My covenant with them, when I have taken away their sins." Rom 11:26-27

By comparing Romans and 2Cor.3, the taking away of their sins was synchronous with the removing of the veil on their hearts and the insertion of the Law in their hearts. Paul writes in 2Cor.3:14 that the veil was done away in Christ and The Lord will be the means whereby this veil would be done away for the nation of Israel at His second coming. This was the HOPE embedded in this passage. Paul looked forward to the glory of the Spirit's ministration in the Kingdom of God. This future ministration was reflected in the hearts of those Corinthians who were Paul's letter of commendation.

Paul wrote that they saw the Lord's glory as a reflection, like in a mirror and he had already used this figure back in 1Cor.13:

Charity never fails. But if *there are* prophecies, they will be abolished; if tongues, they shall cease; if knowledge, it will be abolished. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when the perfect thing comes, then that which is in part will be caused to cease. When I was an infant, I spoke as an infant, I thought as an infant, I reasoned as an infant. But when I became a man, I did away with the things of an infant. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall fully know even as I also am fully known. And now faith, hope, charity, these three remain; but the greatest of these is charity. 1Co 13:8-13

When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, they saw in a mirror dimly the Lord's glory but then, when He comes back at Trumpets (1Cor.15), face to face. The glory of the Lord which was but like a reflection when Paul wrote, would give way to greater glory when the Lord came back and the New Covenant was in operation. The supernatural gifts, another working of the Spirit, were a foretaste, a reflection if you like, of those things to come. Just as the Spirit wrote the letter of commendation in the heart, so in the future the Spirit would write the Law in Israel's heart. Paul looks onto the time when knowledge would not be partial and knowledge was one of the assurances of the New Covenant;

And they shall no more teach each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says Jehovah. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more. Jer 31:34

All Israel from the top to the bottom did not know the Lord when Paul wrote Corinthians and Romans (cp Roms.10:1-4). A veil was on Israel's hearts, further proof the New Covenant was not in operation during the Gospels and Acts. If it wasn't in operation then, it certainly is not in operation today in this dispensation of the grace of God. We are not and have never been New Covenant Christians.

May the Lord continue to show us the truth of the New Covenant as it relates to Israel and the redemptive purposes for the earth.

The gospels and Acts period were a continuation of the Old Testament purposes which began in Eden and were developed through the life of Abraham and his descendants. What was lost on the earth will be restored on the earth in the Land of Israel and in this restoration the New Covenant finds its place.

We have seen New Testament references to the New Covenant and all these writings can be placed by context, inside the Acts period. The Acts period which ran for 35-40 years, was the end of the ages and during that time Israel remained as God's people. Here are the words of God confirming this fact, written about Acts 20;

[But to Israel He says, "All day long I have stretched forth My hands to a disobeying and gainsaying people." I say then, Did not God put away His people? Let it not be said! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God did not thrust out His people whom He foreknew. Rom 10:21-11:2](#)

Acts is not a history or beginning of the early church, it is a continuation of Israel's Old Testament salvation which includes the New Covenant. During the Acts period, when the ends of the ages were upon those believers, the return of the Lord at Trumpets was expected and that is when the New Covenant would have and will be activated for all Israel.

Israel, Covenants (including the New) and Trumpets belong together, they must not be separated or transferred. The Lord is emphatic;

[For I myself was wishing to be accursed from Christ for my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites; to whom belong the covenants, .. Rom 9:3-4](#)
See also Lev.23 and Ex.19.

In Paul's writings during Acts we will read of the Feast of Trumpets and The New Covenant after the Lord's return. Not all these features appear together but they are there. The Lord's return at Trumpets and the New Covenant were the hope Paul held back in the Acts period. See Acts 26:6-7, Roms.11:25-28, 1Cor.15:51-55, 1Thess.4:13-18, Hebs.8:7-13, 10:14-25, 12:18-24 and 1Cor.13:8-13.

When we claim to be New Covenant Christians as the church which is His Body, then we have taken something which does not belong to us. Here is a passage from the great New Covenant prophesy of Jeremiah where the Lord made an oath concerning Israel. Please note the New Covenant is clearly brought in after the Lord has saved His people Israel, after the Lord has gathered Israel, not before;

[For so says Jehovah, Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations. Cry out, give praise and say, O Jehovah, save Your people, the remnant of Israel. Jer 31:7](#)

[Hear the Word of Jehovah, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands afar off. And say, He who scattered Israel will gather him and keep him, as a shepherd keeps his flock. Jer 31:10](#)

[but this shall be the covenant that I will cut with the house of Israel: After those days, says Jehovah, I will put My Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Jer 31:33](#)

[So says Jehovah, who gives the sun for a light by day and the laws of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, who divides the sea when its waves roar; Jehovah of Hosts is His name; if those ordinances depart from Me, says Jehovah, the seed of Israel also](#)

[shall cease from being a nation before Me forever. Jer 31:35-36](#)

See also Ez.34:24-26 and Ez.37:24-28 and Roms.9:25-27 again.

Look at the consistency of Jeremiah and Romans. The New Covenant is linked with the Lord's return and gathering Israel;

[And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this *is* My covenant with them, when I have taken away their sins." Indeed as regards the gospel, *they are* enemies for your sakes. But as regards the election, *they are* beloved for the fathers' sakes. Rom 11:26-28](#)

So what happened? Why are we not New Covenant Christians today? The answer is a simple one, the nation of Israel remained up until Acts 28, it was not cast aside at the cross, or Acts 2, 7, 9, or 13, but was eventually placed to one side at Acts 28. When Israel was placed to one side, the hope of the Trumpet and the New Covenant was placed to one side with Israel. Then Paul received from the Lord the present dispensation of the grace of God. Here is Paul's proclamation of this ministry;

[For this cause, I, Paul, am the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you nations, if you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given to me toward you, that by revelation He made known to me the mystery Eph 3:1-3a](#)

[This grace is given to me \(*who am* less than the least of all saints\) to preach the gospel of the unsearchable riches of Christ among the nations, and to bring to light what *is* the fellowship of the mystery which from eternity has been hidden in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ; Eph 3:8-9](#)

[For this reason I desire that you faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. Eph 3:13](#)

After the Acts period closed this present dispensation in which we live was revealed to all saints through Paul. Now we are clear to examine the basis of our forgiveness and salvation which is not ours by the New Covenant promised to Israel but goes back before the foundation of the world, before Israel.

Replacement theology has destroyed a simple understanding of the New Testament. Replacement theology sees the things that belong to Israel and transfers them to "the church".

Claiming to be New Covenant Christians, contrary to Scripture, is transferring a promise made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah and claiming it as our own. We must not transfer God's promises;

At that time, says Jehovah, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people. [Jer 31:1](#)

They shall come with weeping, and with prayers I will lead them. I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way; they shall not stumble in it, for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim *is* My firstborn. [Jer 31:9](#)

Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will cut a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, [Jer 31:31](#)

While Israel remained God's people all the way to Acts 28, forgiveness was in view for the entire nation had the Lord returned at Trumpets and re-gathered her. Those who did believe during the Acts period, both Jews and Gentiles, were to be blessed with faithful Abraham, who believed God and was reckoned righteous.

At Acts 28, the nation of Israel was put to one side for a time, and to Paul alone was revealed the present dispensation of the grace of God in which we live. Here are Paul's statements to this fact;

For this cause, I, Paul, am the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you nations, if you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given to me toward you, that by revelation He made known to me the mystery [Eph 3:1-3a](#)

This grace is given to me (*who am* less than the least of all saints) to preach the gospel of the unsearchable riches of Christ among the nations, and to bring to light what *is* the fellowship of the mystery which from eternity has been hidden in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ; [Eph 3:8-9](#)

For this reason I desire that you faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. [Eph 3:13](#)

In this dispensation, this set of conditions in which we live and believe, there is redemption and forgiveness of sins under completely different terms. Our salvation plan goes back **before the foundation of the world** as we read here; [Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ; according as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him Eph 1:3-4](#)

Please notice that God's choice regarding us today, is not to be re-gathered into the promised Land as Jeremiah says of Israel, but we have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies, the very place our Lord and Head is seated at God's right hand, see [Eph.1:19-23](#).

The New Covenant is not about today's saved Gentiles raised and seated in the heavenlies. So under what promise or plan does our Heavenly Father bless us in the heavenlies and present us, holy and without blame? The answer is that

before the foundation of the world, the Father had a purpose for us centered on the Lord as the lamb to bear sin and sins. Peter's hope is not ours but this redemption truth in Christ before the foundation of the world is important; knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from *your* fathers, but with *the* precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; indeed having been foreknown before *the* foundation of *the* world, but revealed in *the* last times for you, 1Pe 1:18-20

Paul writes for us today in our calling that in Christ redemption and forgiveness were provided before the Old Covenant or New Covenant ever came into being or promise. Our redemption and forgiveness are independent of, and go back before the New Covenant;

Therefore you should not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor *of* me His prisoner. But be partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to *the* power of God, who has saved us and called *us* with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the eternal times. But it is now having been manifested by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has made death of no effect, bringing life and immortality to light through the gospel; 2Ti 1:8-10

Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ (according to *the* faith of God's elect, in the acknowledging of *the* truth which is according to godliness on hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before *the* eternal times, but revealed His Word in its own times in a proclamation, with which I was entrusted by *the* command of God our Savior,) Titus 1:1-3

Paul is writing about the Father's salvation plan for us today, a salvation plan revealed after Israel was set aside at Acts 28. Today's salvation plan was before eternal times, before the foundation of the world. Redemption and forgiveness of sins today, is found IN CHRIST alone, not under the terms of the New Covenant given to Israel.

Studying the Bible is not as difficult as could be imagined. Like any other endeavor there are rules to follow and by following those rules we find solutions to what seem to be contradictions. Paul writes about these rules, and in both cases the concept of separating different things is paramount and failure to observe the rules does not result in loss of salvation, but loss of approval from our Lord;

And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in full knowledge and in all perception; that you may distinguish between things that differ, that you may be sincere and without offense until the day of Jesus Christ, [Php 1:9-10](#)

By comparing Scripture with Scripture, we have found that the New Covenant belongs with the nation of Israel just as the Old was given them. This New Covenant was promised in the day the Lord would re-gather all the families of Israel into their Promised Land.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: [Jer 31:31-32](#)

Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. [Jer 31:10](#)

When the Lord shed His blood on that cross, it certainly was the blood of the New Covenant for Israel. While Israel did not turn back to the Lord nationally, and all The New Covenant features did not come into force, those believers up until Acts 28 received grace in the forgiveness of their sins and righteousness reckoned under its terms, see Hebs.9. All that the believers of the Acts period were expecting the return of Christ to the earth which was the hope of Israel, see Acts 26:6-7, 28:20. At the return of the Lord to the earth, all Israel would be saved under the terms of that New covenant;

For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. [Rom 11:25-28](#)

But Israel remained intransigent and even the dispersed Jews at Rome refused to accept the message Paul was presenting to them, Acts 28:23-25, and that nation was put aside for a time and the imminent return of the Lord to the earth was put aside also. At this putting aside of Israel, the New Covenant was put aside as well.

After this setting aside of the earthly redemptive plan, believers were given a new message about a new administration that had previously been hidden in God see Eph.3:1-2, 7-9 & Col.1:25-27. In this new administration which remains in operation today, we have redemption and forgiveness of sins through that same shed blood, Eph.1:7, Col.1:14. However, this redemption and forgiveness goes back before the foundation of the world (Eph.1:4) and is not tied to any Covenant given and promised to Israel;

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, [2Ti 1:1](#)

Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, 2Ti 1:9

In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour; Tit 1:2-3

While we are saved by the same shed blood, the divine basis of that redemption is completely different. Up to Acts 28, the shed blood was that of the New Covenant and redemption in the earthly spheres. After Acts 28 the shed blood brought eternal life promised before the foundation of the world which redemptive purpose is fixed in the above heavenly spheres. The same shed blood and the same cross effected redemption in the earth and in the heavenly places.

The fact that we are not New Covenant Christians today does not pose any threat to our salvation. By recognizing the things differing, we are glorifying God and proclaiming the purposes He has clearly revealed in His Word.

The discovery of these different redemptive purposes of our Heavenly Father was made through those Bible study principles which demand we separate the things differing, Phils.1:9-10 and 2Tim.2:15 else we be ashamed, reprobate, insincere and offensive in the Day of Christ.

Today's salvation plan was before eternal times, before the foundation of the world. Redemption and forgiveness of sins today, is found IN CHRIST alone, not under the terms of the New Covenant given to Israel.