

Entrust Eschatology The Divine Restoration of Israel – Part 1 The Covenants 2/1/24

I. Introduction

A. The Question of Israel's Future

Zechariah 8:3-4 "Thus says the LORD, 'I will return to Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts *will be called* the Holy Mountain.' ⁴ Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Old men and old women will again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each man with his staff in his hand because of age.'"

Zechariah 8:22-23 So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD.' ²³ "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." ' "

Isaiah 45:14 Thus says the LORD, "The products of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush and the Sabeans, men of stature, will come over to you and will be yours; they will walk behind you, they will come over in chains and will bow down to you; they will make supplication to you: 'Surely, God is with you, and there is none else, no other God.' "

Isaiah 60:10-14 "Foreigners will build up your walls, and their kings will minister to you; for in My wrath I struck you, and in My favor I have had compassion on you. ¹¹ Your gates will be open continually; they will not be closed day or night, so that *men* may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession. ¹² For the nation and the kingdom which will not serve you will perish, and the nations will be utterly ruined. ¹³ The glory of Lebanon will come to you, the juniper, the box tree and the cypress together, to beautify the place of My sanctuary; and I shall make the place of My feet glorious. ¹⁴ The sons of those who afflicted you will come bowing to you, and all those who despised you will bow themselves at the soles of your feet; and they will call you the city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel."

- BIG QUESTION: Does the Bible predict an eschatological restoration of the nation of Israel at the end of the present age?

B. The Challenge of Supersessionism

Supersessionism is the view that the NT church is the new and/or true Israel that has forever superseded the OT nation of Israel as the people of God and therefore has inherited her covenant promises.¹

- Herman Ridderbos: “The church...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.”
- Bruce Waltke: “National Israel and its law have been permanently replaced by the church and the New Covenant.... The Jewish nation no longer has a place as the special people of God; that place has been taken by the Christian community which fulfills God’s purpose for Israel.”
- Lorraine Boettner: “It may seem harsh to say that ‘God is through with the Jews.’ But the fact of the matter is that He is through with them as a unified national group.”

C. The Issue of Sound Hermeneutics

- Lorraine Boettner: “It is generally agreed that if the prophecies are taken literally, that they do foretell a restoration of the nation of Israel in the land of Palestine with the Jews having a prominent place in that kingdom and ruling over the other nations.”

KEY QUESTION: Should OT prophecies be “taken literally”?

II. The Foundation of the Biblical Covenants

The future of Israel in the redemptive plan of God is built upon the foundation of the various covenants that Yahweh made with the nation in the Old Testament.

¹ See Michael J. Vlach, “Various Forms of Replacement Theology,” MSJ 20/1 [Spring 2009]: 57-69).

A. The Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 12, 15, 17)

Genesis 12:1-3 Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father’s house, to the land which I will show you; ² and I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; ³ and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”

1. The Promises of the Abrahamic Covenant

a. The Blessing of Abraham

- “I will bless you” (Gen 12:2)
- “I will make your name great” (Gen 12:2)
- “I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse” (Gen 12:3)

b. The Making of the Nation Israel

- “I will make you a great nation” (Gen 12:2)
- “I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth” (Gen 13:16)
- “Look toward the heavens, and count the stars....so shall your descendants be” (Gen 15:5)
- “I will make you exceedingly fruitful” (Gen 17:6a)
- “Your descendants shall also be like the dust of the earth” (Gen 28:14a)

c. The Promise of the Land for Israel

- “To your descendants I will give this land” (Gen 12:7)
- “All the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever” (Gen 13:15)

- “I am the Lord who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it” (Gen 15:7)
- “To your descendants I have given this land” (Gen 15:18)
- “I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession” (Gen 17:8)
- “To your descendants I will give this land” (Gen 24:7)
- “The land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants” (Gen 28:13)

d. The Establishment of a Relationship with Israel

- “And I will be their God” (Gen 17:8c)

e. The Blessing of the Nations through Israel

- “In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Gen 12:3)
- “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be “ (Gen 22:18)
- “In you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed” (Gen 28:14)

[[The entire world was cursed in Adam. All the families of the earth will be blessed through Abraham.]]

2. The Nature of the Abrahamic Covenant

- Foundational
- Irrevocable (Gen 15:9-17)
- Everlasting (Gen 13:15; 17:7, 13, 19; 1 Chron 16:16-17; Ps 105:9-10)

Genesis 13:14-15 The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, “Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; ¹⁵ for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever.

Psalm 105:9-10 *The covenant* which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac. ¹⁰ Then He confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant

B. The Mosaic Covenant

1. The Stipulations of the Mosaic Covenant

a. Exodus 19-23, 25-31

Exodus 19:4-6 You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself. ⁵ 'Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; ⁶ and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel."

Exodus 21:17 He who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death.

Exodus 21:22 If men struggle with each other and strike a woman with child so that she gives birth prematurely, yet there is no injury, he shall surely be fined as the woman's husband may demand of him, and he shall pay as the judges *decide*.

Exodus 21:28 If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall surely be stoned and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall go unpunished.

Exodus 22:18 You shall not allow a sorceress to live.

Exodus 22:22 You shall not afflict any widow or orphan.

Exodus 23:4 If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey wandering away, you shall surely return it to him.

b. Leviticus 1-7, 11-27

Leviticus 4:27-29 Now if anyone of the common people sins unintentionally in doing any of the things which the LORD has commanded not to be done, and becomes guilty, ²⁸ if his sin which he has committed is made known to him, then he shall bring for his

offering a goat, a female without defect, for his sin which he has committed. ²⁹ He shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering and slay the sin offering at the place of the burnt offering.

Leviticus 18:22-24 You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination. ²³ Also you shall not have intercourse with any animal to be defiled with it, nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it; it is a perversion. ²⁴ Do not defile yourselves by any of these things; for by all these the nations which I am casting out before you have become defiled.

c. Numbers 1-10, 15, 18-19, 29-30, 34-36

Numbers 5:6-7 Speak to the sons of Israel, 'When a man or woman commits any of the sins of mankind, acting unfaithfully against the LORD, and that person is guilty, ⁷ then he shall confess his sins which he has committed, and he shall make restitution in full for his wrong and add to it one-fifth of it, and give *it* to him whom he has wronged.

d. Deuteronomy 4-28, 29-30

Deuteronomy 4:2 You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

Deuteronomy 27:26 Cursed is he who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'

Deuteronomy 28:1-2 Now it shall be, if you diligently obey the LORD your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. ² All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the LORD your God

Deuteronomy 28:47-48 Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things; ⁴⁸ therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in the lack of all things; and He will put an iron yoke on your neck until He has destroyed you.

2. The Nature of the Mosaic Covenant

➤ Dependent/Conditional

“The Mosaic covenant offered a specific generation of Abraham’s descendants the opportunity of experiencing very specific aspects of that blessing (see Deut. 28) in the definite present, the here and now. But that blessing was dependent on Israel’s obedience to the law of the covenant. Disobedience to the law would not only remove the experience of blessing, but would bring God’s curse upon them-- the radical contrary of a blessed life (see the curses listed in Deut. 28)” (Darrell Bock & Craig Blaising, p. 143)

➤ Legislative

- Primarily contains laws rather than promises
- Different from the Abrahamic covenant of promise

➤ Administrative

- The purpose of the Mosaic Covenant was to serve as the means by which the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant would be administered to the people of Israel.
- If Israel obeyed the Mosaic Law, she would experience Abrahamic blessing (Lev 26:1-13; Deut 28:1-14), but if Israel disobeyed the Law, she would experience curses (Lev 26:14-46; Deut 28:15-68).
- Regarding the land, if Israel was not faithful to keep the Mosaic Covenant, she would be dispersed from the land (Lev 26:32-33; Deut 28:63-64), but if she was faithful to the Mosaic Covenant, her days in the land would be blessed and prolonged (Lev 26:5- 6; Deut 28:8).
- In this way, God’s promise that the nation would possess the land was certain and eternal (the Abrahamic Covenant), but the occupation of the land and enjoyment of the blessings by any given generation of Jews was conditioned upon obedience to the Law (the Mosaic Covenant).

- Put another way, adherence to the Mosaic Covenant would enable a given generation of Israel to experience the blessings promised in the Abrahamic Covenant. However, unfaithfulness to the Mosaic Covenant would postpone the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises until a later time and generation.
- However, the Mosaic Covenant would not be permanent. In the latter prophets (e.g. Isaiah and Ezekiel), we begin to hear that this covenant will be replaced by another covenant that will guarantee the fulfillment of the blessings promised by the Abrahamic covenant.

C. The Davidic Covenant

2 Samuel 7:12-16 “When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, ¹⁵ but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took *it* away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶ Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.” ’ ’ ’

1. The Nature of the Davidic Covenant

- Dependent
 - The Davidic Covenant is dependent on the Abrahamic Covenant
 - More specifically, it consists of an expansion of the promises Yahweh made to Abraham and his descendants
- Irrevocable: “will never fail” (Ps 89:28; cf. v. 33)
- Everlasting: “eternal” (2 Sam 7:13, 16; 23:5; Ps 89:4, 28, 36-37; 110:4)

2. The Promises of the Davidic Covenant

a. The Exaltation of David's Name

- "I will make you a great name" (2 Sam 7:9)
- "I will make you a name like the name of the great ones who are in the earth" (1 Chron 17:8)

b. The Giving of Israel's Land

- "I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may live in their own place" (2 Sam 7:10)
- "I will appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may dwell in their own place" (1 Chron 17:9)

c. The Protection from Israel's Enemies

- "I will...plant them, that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly" (2 Sam 7:10)
- "I will give you rest from all your enemies" (2 Sam 7:11)
- "I will subdue all your enemies" (1 Chron 17:10)

d. The Preservation of David's Line

- "The Lord will make a house for you" (2 Sam 7:11)
- "I will establish your seed forever" (Ps 89:4)

"God's promise to raise up a descendant is unconditional. But a continuous, uninterrupted reign is not. That is conditioned upon the faithfulness of the Davidic kings. God's intention to bless descendants of Abraham is firm, but whether or not He will give certain blessings to a particular generation of those descendants at a specific time in history was conditioned by the terms of the Mosaic covenant" (Block & Blaising, p. 164).

- "I will establish his descendants forever" (Ps 89:29)

e. The Enthronement of David's Descendant

- "I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom" (2 Sam 7:12, cf. 1 Chron 17:11).

f. The Establishment of Messiah's Kingdom

- "I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever" (2 Sam 7:13).
- "Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever (2 Sam" 7:16a)
- "I will establish...his throne as the days of heaven" (Ps 89:29)
- "His throne [shall endure] as the sun before Me; it shall be established forever like the moon, and the witness in the sky is faithful" (Ps 89:36b-37)

D. The New Covenant (Jer 31; Ezek 36)

1. The Promises of the New Covenant

In the New Covenant with Israel, Yahweh made both physical/geographical and spiritual promises to the nation.

PHYSICAL/GEOGRAPHICAL PROMISES

a. The Return to the Land

- "I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands, and bring you into your own land" (Ezek 36:24)
- "You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers" (Ezek 36:28a)

b. The Renewal of the Land

- “I will call for the grain and multiply it, and I will not bring a famine on you” (Ezek 36:29)
- “I will multiply the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field, that you may not receive again the disgrace of famine” (Ezek 36:30; cf. Ezek 34:25-27)
- “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’” (Ezek 36:34- 35a)

c. The Rebuilding of the Cities

- “I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places will be rebuilt” (Ezek 36:33)
- “They will say, ‘...The waste, desolate, and ruined cities are fortified and inhabited’” Then the nations that are left round about you will know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruined places” (Ezek 36:35-36a)

d. The Increase of the Population

- “I will increase their men like a flock. Like the flock for sacrifices...so will the waste cities be filled with the flocks of men” (Ezek 36:37b-38a)

SPIRITUAL PROMISES

e. The Gift of Repentance/Conversion

- “Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good, and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and your abominations” (Ezek 36:31).

f. The Forgiveness of Sin

- “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” (Ezek 36:25)
- “I will save you from all your uncleanness” (Ezek 36:29)
- “that day I that cleanse you from all your iniquities” (Ezek 36:33)
- “I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more” (Jer 31:34c)

g. The Gift of Regeneration

- “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” (Ezek 36:26; cf. Deut 30:6; Ezek 11:17-21)

h. The Gift of the Holy Spirit

- “I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances” (Ezek 36:27)

i. The Internalization of the Law

- “I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it” (Jer 31:33b)

j. The Consummation of the Relationship

- “You will be My people and I will be your God” (Ezek 36:28b)
- “I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (Jer 31:33c)
- “They shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them” (Jer 31:34a)

2. The Nature of the New Covenant

- New

- Irrevocable

“That is, it is directed from God to his people with no corresponding obligation expressed on the people’s part toward God” (Ware, p. 74).

- Everlasting (Isa 55:3; Jer 32:40; 50:5; Ezek 16:60; 37:26; Heb 13:20)

- Administrative

Whereas the Old Covenant administered promises through law, New Covenant does so through the Holy Spirit.

- The Mosaic Covenant administered blessings thru the law.

- The New Covenant administers blessings thru the Spirit.

- The Old Covenant failed, but the New will succeed.

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.