

Eschatology Q&A

SEEING THE GLORIOUS HOPE OF THE GOSPEL IN A STUDY OF LAST THINGS

Wrapping up some loose ends in our study

How can Satan be bound now?

Revelation 20:1-3 1 ¶ Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. 2 And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and **Satan, and bound him for a thousand years**, 3 and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, **so that he might not deceive the nations any longer**, until the thousand years were ended.

Amillennialists and some postmillennialists: Satan cannot prevent the spread of the gospel to all nations in the present age.

*Remember that Satan's binding is **highly figurative** language.*

Note that before Christ came the gospel was limited to a single, small nation. After Christ came, the gospel began to spread and has spread all over the world and is still spreading.

Confirming texts

Mark 3:26-27 26 And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. 27 But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house.

Jesus is now plundering Satan's house.

Luke 10:17-19 17 ¶ The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!" 18 And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you.

Jesus connects the advance of the gospel with Satan falling and Christ's exercise of authority over satanic powers.

Is present-day Israel a fulfillment of prophecy?

- The Jewish state/province was largely ended in the first century.
- Remarkably, Jewish identity has remained for centuries.
- A Jewish state in the original location of Israel was constituted in 1948.
- Last week President Trump announced that he would recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and move the US embassy there.

Do these events represent a fulfillment of the land promises to Abraham and his offspring?

The promises to Israel

- a land
- an offspring
- a blessing
- the presence of God
- the righteous rule of David's descendant

In what respect were these promises given to Israel?

- Only those who were directly given the promises?
- All the biological offspring of Abraham?
- Only the faithful biological offspring of Abraham?
- Those who identified themselves with the nation, biological offspring and otherwise?
- Those who were identified as God's chosen people in the world, who were by God's appointment primarily the biological offspring of Abraham?

Galatians 4:22-31

22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman. 23 But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise. 24 Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. 25 Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. 26 But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. 27 For it is written, "Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than those of the one who has a husband." 28 Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. 29 But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now. 30 But what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman." 31 So, brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.

Two Covenants Illustrated in Abraham's Sons

HAGAR/ISHMAEL

children of flesh

Mount Sinai (place of the law)

slavery

ironically fruitless

persecuting

temporary

no inheritance

→ *old covenant/covenant of works*

SARAH/ISAAC

children of promise

Jerusalem above (place of redemption)

freedom

ironically fruitful

persecuted

eternal

glorious inheritance

→ *new covenant/covenant of grace*

Blessings of Abraham Come in Christ

Galatians 3

16 Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, “And to offsprings,” referring to many, but referring to one, “And to your offspring,” who is Christ. 17 This is what I mean: the law, which came 430 years afterward, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to make the promise void. 18 For if the inheritance comes by the law, it no longer comes by promise; but God gave it to Abraham by a promise. 19 ¶ Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary.

24 So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. 25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, 26 for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.

God's design in the promises to Abraham

Hebrews 11

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. 10 For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.

13 These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. 14 For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. 15 If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

Maturing, refining, grafting In

Romans 11

16 If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches. 17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, 18 do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you.

Bringing near, combining, making peace

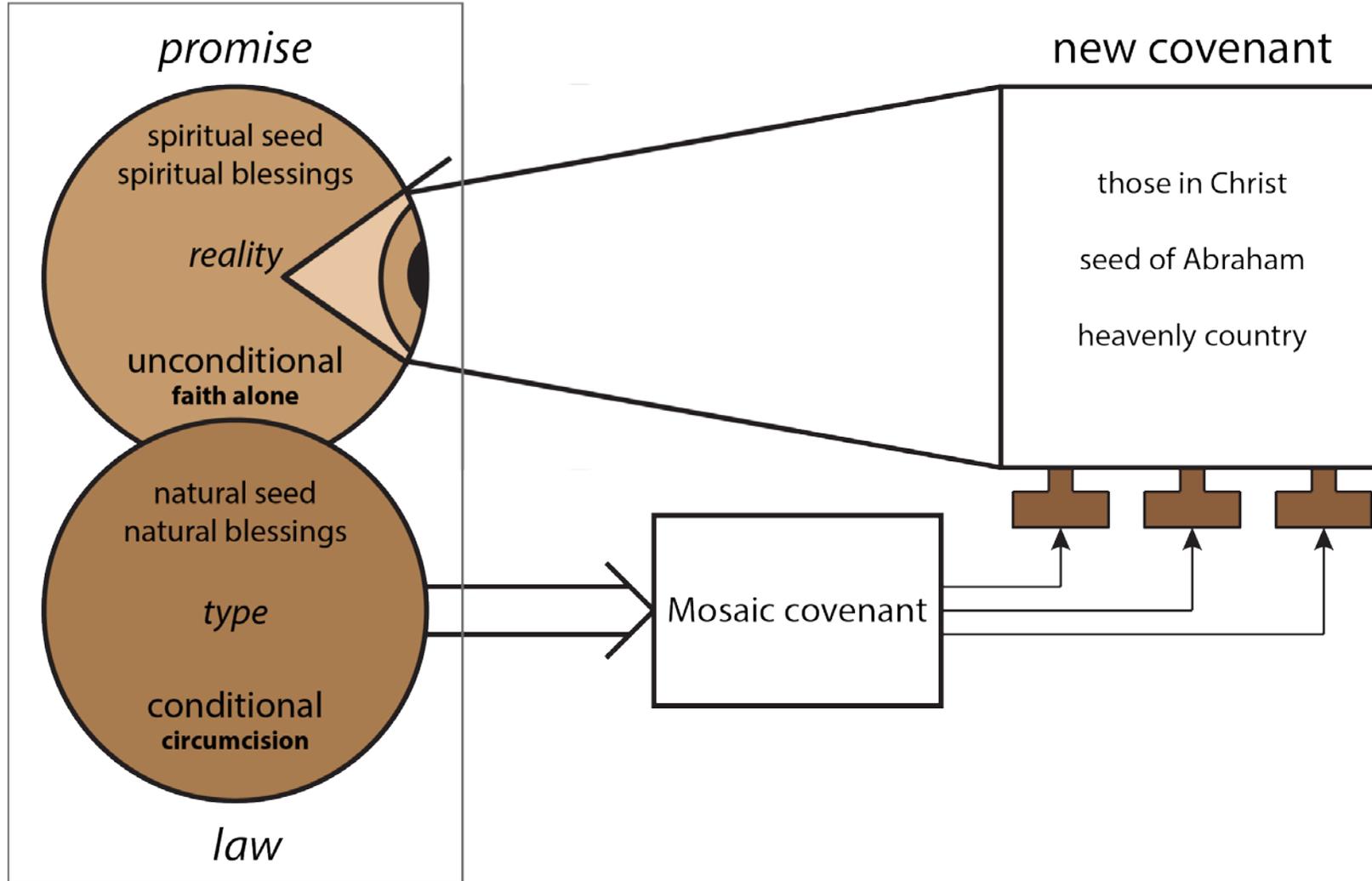
Ephesians 2

12 remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

14 ¶ For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility 15 by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

Abrahamic Covenant

God's covenant with Abraham



Will there be a future mass conversion of Jews?

Romans 11:25-26 25 Lest you be wise in your own conceits, I want you to understand this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”.

Three views:

1. “All Israel” refers metaphorically to all the elect, who will be converted throughout this age.
2. “All Israel” refers to elect Jews who will be converted in this age in the face of partial hardening.
3. “All Israel” refers to the Jews as a whole near the end of the age, most of whom will be converted once the majority of the Gentile elect are converted.

Some observations

- Premillennialists largely adopt #3.
- Amillennialists and postmillennialists may hold to any of the three views.
- All of the saved will be saved through faith in Christ.
- All of the saved will be engrafted into Christ and will be part of the church, his body, his bride, for which he died.
- The conversion of a large number of Jews does not imply a separate future for Israel as a nation.
- Revelation depicts people from every nation gathered around the throne.
- Revelation pictures New Jerusalem as the bride herself, where all of God's people will dwell in the presence of God forever.

Applying the Old Testament

Psalm 122

2 Our feet have been standing within your gates, O Jerusalem! 3 Jerusalem—built as a city that is bound firmly together, 4 to which the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, as was decreed for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the LORD.

6 ¶ Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! “May they be secure who love you! 7 Peace be within your walls and security within your towers!”

- Pray for the place where God has especially set his glory.
- Pray for the establishment of Christ’s righteous rule throughout the earth.
- Pray for the gospel to bring peace to all cities, including Jerusalem.

Summary

- God dealt with Israel as the people of God in the old covenant administration.
 - The people contained a remnant who had the faith of Abraham and truly knew the Lord.
 - The nation served as a type and shadow of the greater realities of the gospel and the blessings of the new covenant.
 - The church is neither a separate parallel people nor the replacement of Israel. It is the maturation, refining, and expansion of God's old covenant people.

Conclusion

Christianity is inescapably future-oriented.

We labor on, knowing that Christ has already won.

Christ continues to gather his elect and to call his people to faithful worship and service.

He calls us to faithfulness before a world that is enslaved and in denial of his sovereign rights.

He will in his own perfectly wise time return to claim his own, defeat the last of his enemies, and abolish death, sin, and suffering.

He will raise his people to reign with him forever in the new heavens and new earth.

Let us live with hope and confidence in Christ!