



# SPECIAL EDITION

## A defense of the expectation of the body of Christ, Part 2:

### NEW TRUTH

**WARNING:** As was the case last week, the following is a critique of an article written by our brother Clyde Pilkington. For those over-sensitive saints who can't handle conflict, or who just want everyone to "get along," or who would jettison their faith simply because people disagree, then please do not read the following article. I have respected your weakness and warned you. For those wanting truth at any cost, the following is worthy of your careful consideration, for this is a topic of utmost importance. If it weren't, I would not have spent the time critiquing Clyde's article and mailing this special edition in the middle of the week. Thank you. —Martin Zender



Confusion and doubt once again seep into the saint's hearts in the wake of a Clyde Pilkington article titled, "The Body of Christ; It's Beginning and Maturity." It is not Clyde's intention to produce this undesirable result, but the result nevertheless ensues when sensational yet unfounded statements rock readers back upon their heels, making them doubt everything they thought they knew about Paul, his writings, and his ministry.

I will soon highlight the sensational, unfounded statement from the aforementioned article, published in the Bible Student's Notebook, Issue #490. The statement I will highlight and comment upon is the backbone of Clyde's entire position. If this statement crumbles in light of Scriptural truth, then so does the position. What is the position? The position is that Paul's letters themselves must be cut, and that we must distinguish between those things Paul wrote before prison and after prison. Why would we be asked to do this? Aren't Paul's letters one revelation to the body of Christ? Aren't they a progressive revelation of his special evangel of grace? We are being asked to do this because of one statement in Acts 28:28, uttered by Paul in a Roman prison. Here is that statement:

Let it be known to you, then, that to the nations was dispatched this salvation of God, and they will hear.

#### LEAVE ACTS 28 TO ISRAEL

What does this have to do with anything? By rejecting Paul, Israel—by extension—rejected God. Israel will have a three-fold witness against them at the judgment: 1) they rejected their Messiah, 2) they rejected the testimony of the holy spirit at Pentecost and, 3) they rejected Paul. All of this will eventually help Israel because the proof will be undeniable and they will have no excuse but to admit their lack. They won't be able to say that they never heard. This will perfectly prepare them for salvation. This is one of the main purposes of the book of Acts, to record the rejection of Israel for their ultimate benefit. This will happen for some at the inauguration of the thousand-year kingdom, for others at the Great White Throne judgment. Acts is not, primarily, a record of Paul's ministry. It is a record of Israel rejecting God a second and third (and final) time. When the complement of the nations

has entered and God has completed the body of Christ (Romans 11:25), He will resume with Israel to bring a faithful remnant into the prophesied kingdom when the complement of the nations has come in (Romans 11:26).

Is Acts 28:28 important then? Yes. For Israel. From this point on the kingdom stops being offered to them, Paul no longer presents Jesus as the Messiah to them, the Pentecostal signs and powers stop, and the complete fall of the partition between Jew and Gentile is formally announced. Does this, then, mark a radical change in Paul's ministry? It does not. Paul has been teaching his special evangel throughout his career. This is not recorded in the book of Acts, but rather in Paul's thirteen letters. The assumption that there is now a dramatic change in Paul's ministry is just that, an assumption. If it is found to be untrue then it is not only an assumption but a false teaching. Paul does reveal new things in the prison epistles, yes, but he has been revealing new things throughout his career, secrets that he had already been teaching for years, not only among the ecclesias, personally, but in his letters to them. In 1 Corinthians 2:7, a very early letter, Paul writes—

We are speaking God's wisdom in a secret, wisdom which has been concealed, which God designates before—before the eons, for our glory.

In this same early letter Paul writes—

Thus let a man be reckoning with us—as deputies of Christ, and administrators of God's secrets (1 Corinthians 4:1).

The teaching that Paul taught nothing new until after Acts 28:28 is false. It is not only false, it is dangerous. It is dangerous because it belittles the importance of Paul's early letters and the secrets he clearly revealed there. Secondly, this teaching encourages the saints to “leave behind” Paul's “immature” revelations and to seek truth that is “relevant for today,” truth that supposedly only appears in Paul's last seven letters.

As I have already shown but will show again, Paul had already been heralding his special gospel to the nations throughout his career, beginning in his earliest letters. In addition, many of the things Paul wrote from prison (in Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians), had been disclosed before. Any new truth was based upon the earlier truth, and was thus merely an expansion of it. The prison epistles, therefore, were not a new species

of truth. Our brother Clyde Pilkington, however, claims that they were. This is a dangerous position, as I have said, because it forces us to manipulate and mangle important teachings from Paul's pre-prison writings in order to make them agree with the gospel of the Circumcision and the ministry of the twelve. This is more mangling than I would wish upon any soul.

Clyde makes the remarkable claim that everything Paul taught and wrote during the thirty year period between his calling and his imprisonment was based on the Hebrew Scriptures and Israelite truth. (I will quote the pertinent passage from Clyde's article momentarily.) Even though Paul called himself an “administrator of God's secrets” as

**“This position forces us to manipulate and mangle important teachings from Paul's pre-prison writings.”**

early as 1 Corinthians 4:1, and even though Paul wrote, as early as Galatians 1:11-12, that, “I am making known to you, brethren, as to the evangel which is being brought by me, that it is not in accord with man; for neither did I accept it from a man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ,” we are told by Clyde that we ought to leave these writings behind (relatively speaking) because not only do they belong to immaturity, but they belong to another people: Israel. Paul's early letters are no longer relevant for today—according to the article I'm refuting (I will quote the pertinent passage later.) Why continue to embrace Israel truth (Romans; 1 and 2 Corinthians; Galatians; 1 and 2 Thessalonians—Israelite truth according to Clyde) when *our* truths finally show up on the pages of Scripture at the tail end of Paul's ministry?

This is what causes the confusion and doubt within the body of Christ—the idea that not all of Paul's letters are for us today; they may be to us, but they're not for us. Were this true, believers would be rightly alarmed and duly confused. *You mean we've been wrong to trust Paul to give us a consistent evangel from the beginning? How could Paul have tricked us for thirty years into believing Israel truth, while having the nerve to call his teaching, as early as his letter to the Romans, 'my evangel'?* (Romans 16:25). Indeed. Some people have written and told me they have been ready to throw up their hands and give up their faith. Such is the treachery of this teaching. This teaching has shaken

believers' confidence that Paul *always* wrote concerning the evangel of the Uncircumcision. Is this now untrue? Have we been believing a lie? We already cut Paul's letters to sever them from the gospel of the Circumcision. Must we now cut Paul's letters from themselves? Will we next be told that individual letters themselves must be cut—chapter by chapter? Where does the parsing stop?

The good news I bring you today is that Paul's letters *are* a whole; Paul *did* always write to the body of Christ from the beginning and, from the beginning, heralded *his* specific evangel, not Israel's. Paul's evangel has *always* been the evangel of the Uncircumcision, and not the gospel given to Peter. We have the earliest example of it, I believe, in Acts 13:39, when Paul mentions justification apart from the law of Moses. That's a lot sooner than Acts 28. It's sixteen years sooner, to be exact. Paul's letters are to be divided and distinguished from other Scripture, yes, but not from themselves.

Do you see why I write? Do you see why I feel I *must* write? This is important. I am trying to clear up this confusion and this fog of doubt that has unfortunately settled upon some because of misrepresented Scripture. This is not about personalities or about friendships, but about truth. If I am wrong, I will admit it. What do I care? There is a part of me that would love to say, "I'm wrong" because of the great respect that engenders. The ability to say, "I'm wrong," only makes people love you more, and God knows I love to be loved. But I will need something more than sensational statements based on misinterpreted Scripture to push me the other way. In the meantime, I guess I will simply have to go on being "the prick" that some people think I am. If "prick" is the new name for "a defender of the truth of the evangel no matter what the cost," then I guess I'll just have to assume that mantle.

#### "AFTER ITS OWN KIND"

Evolutionists try to tell us that new species are developed through "natural selection," and that therefore a dog can become a cat (or a fish a lizard) if it adapts long enough to new conditions. While it is true that a special trait can be produced in dogs by breeding them with other dogs and eventually developing a new breed of dog, no one has ever selectively bred dogs and produced a cat. Species simply do not cross. God made everything "according to its own kind" (Genesis 1:25). Yet we are being asked to believe by Clyde Pilkington and others who hold to what is termed the "Acts 28 Position" that rather than Paul's special evangel of grace going "from glory to glory" within

the entire range of all 13 of his letters (and therefore remaining the same *species* of message throughout), Paul suddenly "crosses species" at the magical Acts 28:28 line and becomes a different creature, heralding a different evangel than he ever heralded before. According to this theory, Paul spent the first thirty years of his commission to the nations—and his first six letters—re-hashing Israel truth founded upon the Old Testament. Why would

**"Paul's letters are to be  
divided and distinguished  
from other Scripture, yes,  
but not from themselves."**

he do this when Israel already has their own gospel, and their own messenger, Peter? We are not told. At the magical Acts 28:28 line, however, we are told that the "dog" turns into a "cat," and Paul suddenly embarks upon his special evangel to the nations *for only the last three years of his life*.

Folks, Acts 28:28 is simply not that big of a deal to the body of Christ. Simply because something ends for Israel does not mean everything becomes new for Paul and the body of Christ. For the body of Christ, Acts 28:28 is a false line. This false line breeds treacherous teaching because it wrests Paul's letters from themselves, turning his gospel to a different species thirty years into his career.

#### THE REAL "MAGIC LINE"

Do you want to know where the real "magic line" is? It's so simple, so public, and so evident that you already know what it is—and you are right. It's Acts, chapter 9, when Saul is called by Christ on the road to Damascus. This was the beginning of the body of Christ, and Saul of Tarsus was its first member. This was the beginning of the gospel of the Uncircumcision, and Paul was its first herald. It begins here, on this day. It does not wait thirty years to begin and then barely "squeak out" in the last three years of Paul's life. It goes from glory to glory, starting on Day 1.

In one of Paul's earliest letters, he writes to the Galatians in 2:7-8, "I have been entrusted with the evangel of the Uncircumcision, according as Peter of the Circumcision." When did this happen? At his calling. In

this same letter, Paul writes in chapter 1, “Now, when it delights God, Who severs me from my mother’s womb and calls me through His grace, to unveil His Son in me that I may be evangelizing Him among the nations, I did not immediately submit it to flesh and blood” (15-16). The “mother’s womb” here referred to is Judaism. God separated Paul from Judaism on the day He revealed His grace to him, which was on the road to Damascus. Here is your line, folks: the Damascus road. Find the spot on that road where Saul was blinded, and there’s your spot; there’s your line. All other lines—if we can even find them—are soft, not hard. They are a development of the same species, not a new breed. Whoever would draw a hard line anywhere but Acts chapter nine, draws a false line. With the false line of Acts 28:28 drawn hard into the sand, the confusion, the misleading, and the mangling of vital, early Pauline truth begins.

**“Find the spot on that road where Saul was blinded, and there’s your spot; there’s your line. All other lines are false.”**

The reason why Paul did not submit his gospel to flesh and blood after his calling, or go up to Jerusalem to confer with the apostles, was that Paul’s message, from the beginning, drew nothing *from* the apostles. He didn’t get it from them. Since Paul wasn’t taught his evangel, then those of repute in Jerusalem couldn’t judge it. Since Paul was not taught his evangel (Galatians 1:12—“For neither did I accept it from a man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ”), it is evident that this evangel was *not* Old Testament, Israel truth, for Paul had been taught that his entire life.

Friends, Paul message was a “cat” from the beginning of his ministry. The “cat”—Paul’s gospel—grows and develops as it matures; special traits are added to it within the species; but it does not at any time—especially not at the tail end of Paul’s life—become a different animal. The cat does not suddenly become a mongoose.

#### THE FALSE STATEMENT

In light of all these things, I found Clyde Pilkington’s statement in Volume #490 of the Bible Student’s note-

book, “The Body of Christ; It’s Beginning and Maturity” to be notable in all the wrong ways. This is the sensational yet unfounded statement I spoke of in my second paragraph. Here it is, from page 4323:

According to Romans 15:4-13, the early ministry and epistles of Paul were founded on the Old Testament and Israel.

Let’s ignore for a moment the “according to Romans 15:4-13” part of this statement because, as I will show, Romans 15:4-13 in no way backs up the statement itself. Let us, for now, focus on the statement itself. If the statement itself is shown to be false, then the reference, by necessity, has been manipulated. Here is the stand-alone statement:

The early ministry and epistles of Paul were founded on the Old Testament and Israel.

We must first determine what Clyde has determined to be the early epistles of Paul. This we discover on the first page of the article:

Of [Paul’s] 13 epistles, 6 of them (the number of imperfection) were foundational epistles written in the infancy/adolescence stage of the Body of Christ. The last 7 were the perfection epistles (7 being the number of perfection). These final 7 were written to the Body of Christ in its maturity.

Here are Paul’s six letters, then, which Clyde deems “imperfection”:

- ▶ Romans
- ▶ 1 Corinthians
- ▶ 2 Corinthians
- ▶ 1 Thessalonians
- ▶ 2 Thessalonians
- ▶ Galatians

Many of the believers Paul wrote to in his early letters may have been “imperfect,” that is, immature, but to imply that the letters themselves are immature, or that the truth within them is immature, is a mistake. Back to the sensational statement:

**“The early ministry and epistles of Paul were founded on the Old Testament and Israel.”**

We conclude, then, that Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and Galatians, as well as Paul's entire "early ministry" were—according to Clyde—"founded on the Old Testament and Israel." If we can find one instance where this is not the case, then the statement crumbles and the position is compromised. What if we can find 25 instances?

#### THE EVIDENCE

**1 Corinthians 2:6-7**—"Yet wisdom are we speaking among the mature, yet a wisdom not of this eon, neither of the chief men of this eon, who are being discarded, but we are speaking God's wisdom in a secret, wisdom which has been concealed, which God designates before—before the eons, for our glory." Paul is speaking wisdom never revealed before, to the mature. CONCLUSION: Paul's early ministry is *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**1 Corinthians 4:1**—"Thus let a man be reckoning with us—as deputies of Christ, and administrators of God's secrets." Paul was an administrator of God's secrets (things never before revealed) to the Corinthians. CONCLUSION: Paul's early ministry is *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**1 Corinthians 1:17**—"For Christ does not commission me to be baptizing, but to be bringing the evangel, not in wisdom of word, lest the cross of Christ may be made void." Paul contrasts baptism with the bringing of *his* evangel; baptism belonged to Israel, but not to Paul's evangel. Paul teaches "the cross of Christ," a truth never taught in Israel. Even in Acts the cross of Christ is bad news to the Jews and something to be repented of. Any time Paul mentions "the cross of Christ" (ten times, half of them in the "imperfection" epistles), he is teaching something unheard-of to Israel, and unfounded upon the Old Testament. CONCLUSION: The heralding of the cross of Christ for salvation is *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**1 Corinthians 12:13**—"For in one spirit also we all are baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and all are made to imbibe one spirit." Far from being immature truth, this is nothing less than the erasure of national distinction and the announcement of a new entity: the body of Christ. Where else will you find this truth except in Paul's epistles? CON-

CLUSION: Paul's early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**1 Corinthians 12:27**—"Now you are the body of Christ, and members of a part." Neither the phrase "the body of Christ" nor the entity to which the phrase refers can be found in any Old Testament writing, nor in any New Testament writing of the Circumcision. The phrase and the entity exist only in Paul's writings, including his early writings. CONCLUSION: Paul's early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**1 Corinthians 15:49**—"And according as we wear the image of the soiled, we should be wearing the image also of the Celestial." Israel is never told in any prophecy or in any New Testament writing of the Circumcision that they will wear the image of the celestial. This was a secret revealed by Paul in the "imperfection" book of 1 Corinthians. As far as "imperfection" goes, I will agree with Clyde that the believers were imperfect in that most were not mature. But, again, to imply that the *letters* were immature, or contained no mature truth, or were founded upon the Old Testament and Israel, is false. CONCLUSION: Paul's early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**1 Corinthians 15:51**—"Lo! a secret to you am I telling! We all, indeed, shall not be put to repose, yet we all shall be changed." This truth, related to the last, was a secret, and it is called a secret. That it was a secret means that it was never revealed before. To inhabit a celestial body, living believers would require a dramatic change of their bodies to suit them to a celestial sphere. This truth appears nowhere else except in Paul's letter to the Corinthians. Israel's calling was, from beginning to end, terrestrial in direction. CONCLUSION: Paul's early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**1 Corinthians 15:22**—"For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified." This is nothing less than an announcement of the salvation of all humanity, based on descent from Adam and the corresponding work of Christ. How can this be construed by anyone as an "immature" and an "imperfect" statement within an "immature" and "imperfect" letter? No writer save Paul unveils such a truth, and here it is in this early letter of 1 Corinthians. CONCLUSION: Paul's early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**1 Corinthians 15:25-26—“For He must be reigning until He should be placing all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy is being abolished: death.”**

Where else in any Scripture is the abdication of the reign of Jesus Christ ever even hinted at? Where in any Scripture, New or Old Testament, is the eventual abolition of death so plainly announced, or announced at all? This section of 1 Corinthians contains the farthest-reaching scope in all of Scripture, leading us to a time unspoken of by any prophet or apostle, namely, the consummation of the eons (1 Corinthians 15:24), at which time God will be all in all (1 Corinthians 15:28). CONCLUSION: Paul’s early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**2 Corinthians 5:16-17—“So that we, from now on, are acquainted with no one according to flesh. Yet even if we have known Christ according to flesh, nevertheless now we know Him so no longer. So that, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: the primitive passed by. Lo! there has come new!”** The gospel of the Circumcision is *based* upon an acquaintance with the flesh. Israel looked forward to being born again, but this truth of a new creation, based on an erasure of national distinction, was not only unknown to them, but fatal to their calling. 2 Corinthians is an early letter. CONCLUSION: Paul’s early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**2 Corinthians 5:19—“God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them, and placing in us the word of the conciliation.”** Not even Peter at Pentecost had the remotest clue that Jesus Christ was conciliating the world to Himself on the cross. To Peter and the rest of Israel, Jesus Christ was the Messiah of Israel. His death—specifically His death on the cross—was something to be repented of, not heralded, and certainly not the means of conciliating the world apart from Israel’s mediation. CONCLUSION: Paul’s early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**2 Corinthians 5:1-2—“For we are aware that, if our terrestrial tabernacle house should be demolished, we have a building of God, a house not made by hands, eonian, in the heavens. For in this also we are groaning, longing to be dressed in our habitation which is out of heaven.”** This truth, related to the truths of 1

Corinthians, speaks again of a celestial “building,” or body, that awaits us in the heavens. Israel knows nothing of this, as their call was always terrestrial, and their bodies will resemble the body of the resurrected Christ, suited to earth. CONCLUSION: Paul’s early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**1 Thessalonians 1:10—“You turn back to God from idols ... to be waiting for His Son out of the heavens, Whom He rouses from among the dead, Jesus, our Rescuer out of the coming indignation.”**

This is the first letter Paul ever wrote. When was Israel ever promised deliverance out of the coming indignation? Even the most faithful of them will be sealed to go *through* the coming indignation (Revelation 7:4), or martyred *during* the coming indignation (Revelation 6:9-11). CONCLUSION: Paul’s early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**1 Thessalonians 4:15-17—“For this we are saying to you by the word of the Lord, that we, the living, who are surviving to the presence of the Lord, should by no means outstrip those who are put to repose, for the Lord Himself will be descending from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of the Chief Messenger, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall be rising first. Thereupon we, the living who are surviving, shall at the same time be snatched away together with them in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And thus shall we always be together with the Lord.”** Nowhere in the Old Testament or in the New Testament Circumcision writings are living Israelites promised to rise and meet the Lord in the air. We are told in articles by both Stephen Hill and Clyde Pilkington that 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 is Israel’s expectation. Stephen Hill, writing in a recent edition of Bible Student’s Notebook, goes so far as to insist, “1 Thessalonians 4 remains the future expectation of believers of Israel.” Is that so? It *remains* the future expectation of believers of Israel? Then where were they ever promised such a thing? I have consistently asked for a verse backing up this bold assertion, but none have arrived. Stephen offers no proof in his article; he simply states it as though him saying it makes it true. I do understand the lack of evidence: there is no evidence. Daniel 12:2, on the other hand, graphically describes the future expectation of Israel believers: “From those sleeping in the soil of the ground many shall awake, these to eonian life and these to reproach for eonian re-

pulsion.” Israelites wake up. That’s it. There’s your verse. Resurrected Israelites have no need to meet the Lord in their air: they will rule and reign in a kingdom on the earth. CONCLUSION: Paul’s early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**Galatians 1:11-12**—“**For I am making known to you, brethren, as to the evangel which is being brought by me, that it is not in accord with man. For neither did I accept it from a man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ.**” If I had to choose only one passage to disprove Clyde Pilkington’s assertion that “The early ministry and epistles of Paul were founded on the Old Testament and Israel,” this would be it. Here in Paul’s early ministry, he is “making known the evangel” being brought by him. Where did this evangel come from? From the Old Testament and Israel, as Clyde asserts? This is impossible, for Paul had been taught the Old Testament and was raised in the teachings of Israel. Concerning *this* evangel that Paul was then making known early in his ministry, “neither did I accept it from a man, *nor was I taught it*, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ.” This is consistent with every other verse I have thus far offered proving that, out of the gate, Paul taught his evangel of the Uncircumcision, thereby unveiling many new things never before heard or known. CONCLUSION: Paul’s early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**Galatians 2:7-8**—“**I have been entrusted with the evangel of the Uncircumcision, according as Peter of the Circumcision.**” Paul did not learn of the evangel of the Uncircumcision through Peter, nor any other man. In all his Israelite training, he was never taught it. Instead, he received in through a special revelation of Jesus Christ in glory—not the Jesus of humiliation who walked the shores of Galilee. CONCLUSION: Paul’s early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**Galatians 2:16**—“**Having perceived that a man is not being justified by works of law, except alone through the faith of Christ Jesus, we also believe in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by the faith of Christ and not by works of law, seeing that by works of law shall no flesh at all be justified.**” This part of the evangel was hinted at in the example of Abraham, who

was justified by believing God before the coming of law. But at the coming of law, the very thought of justification went out the window. No New Testament writer of the Circumcision ever related justification to Jesus Christ. Rather, Israel was offered a pardon for their sins. To Israel, Jesus Christ is always related to pardon from sins. CONCLUSION: Paul’s early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**Galatians 3:27-28**—“**For whoever are baptized into Christ, put on Christ, in Whom there is no Jew nor yet Greek, there is no slave nor yet free, there is no male and female, for you all are one in Christ Jesus.**” The doctrine of “neither Jew nor Greek” is the death knell of the Israelite message, which is why this truth was unknown to Israel. In relation to Christ and the Circumcision evangel, Peter never taught it, and couldn’t. His promise in the resurrection is to sit on one of twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:28). CONCLUSION: Paul’s early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**Romans 3:24**—“**Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus.**” Again, the *concept* of justification by faith began with Abraham, but only Paul relates it to faith in Christ Jesus for eonian life and deliverance out of the coming indignation. CONCLUSION: Paul’s early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**Romans 5:10-11**—“**For if, being enemies, we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son, much rather, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His life. Yet not only so, but we are glorying also in God, through our Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom we now obtained the conciliation.**” The very concept of peace with God, that is, conciliation, is unknown both to the Old Testament and to Israel. It is Jesus Christ, Paul says, “through Whom we *now* obtained the conciliation.” Not only are *we* conciliated to God through the death of His Son, but also the whole world. This we discovered through another early letter written during the early ministry of Paul, 2 Corinthians 5:19. The best Israel could ever hope for under law was pardon. Even the best Abraham could hope for *before* law was justification by faith. This conciliation to God is “in accord with the revelation of a secret hushed in times eonian, yet manifested now.” When was “now?” In the book of Romans, during the early ministry of Paul. The

conciliation was an utter secret, clearly stated in the context to be so. CONCLUSION: Paul's early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**Romans 5:18-19**—"Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just award for all mankind for life's justifying. For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just." Never was such a truth uttered before Paul. No Scripture writer uttered it after him. It is Paul's exclusive revelation that all humanity will one day be justified through the obedience of Christ. Before the law, humanity was on probation, then destroyed by a flood. After the law, none but Israelites had an expectation of God. Though the justification of all humanity through Christ is not *called* a secret, it is one of the most sublime secrets revealed by Paul. CONCLUSION: Paul's early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**Romans 6:3-4**—"Or are you ignorant that whoever are baptized into Christ Jesus, are baptized into His death? We, then, were entombed together with Him through baptism into death, that, even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus we also should be walking in newness of life." This is a new baptism into the death of Christ. Never was such a baptism known either in the Old Testament, or by any New Testament Circumcision writer. John's baptism was by water, and identified Israel with John's message of the coming Messiah. The baptism by fire Jesus spoke of was a prophesy of trial to come upon Israel. The baptism of the holy spirit in Acts empowered the disciples. Here in Romans, we are looking at an identification with Christ in his death, entombment and resurrection as the ultimate anti-type of all baptisms, unforeseen by any prophet. CONCLUSION: Paul's early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**Romans 6:6**—"Our old humanity was crucified together with Him." This secret is related to the new creation truth of 2 Corinthians 5:16-17, and the "neither Jew nor Greek" truth of Galatians 3:27-28. Only Paul speaks of a new humanity. Only Paul gives the answer to Adam: a completely new creation. This new creation comes by an identification with Christ in His death. I dare you to find anything like this anywhere

else in Scripture besides Paul's letters—and his early letters at that. CONCLUSION: Paul's early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**Romans 11:25**—"For I am not willing for you to be ignorant of this secret, brethren, lest you may be passing for prudent among yourselves, that callousness, in part, on Israel has come, until the complement of the nations may be entering." Here, Paul *calls* his revelation a secret, meaning that no trace of it will be found anywhere else in Scripture—guaranteed. Before the penning of this verse, no one knew the duration of Israel's blindness. Once God finishes calling out a people from the nations for a new organization call the body of Christ, He will resume with Israel and save them (Romans 11:26). CONCLUSION: Paul's early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.

**Romans 12:5**—"Thus we, who are many, are one body in Christ, yet individually members of one another." This truth, related to 1 Corinthians 12:27, speaks of a new spiritual organism made up of both Jews and Greeks, namely, the body of Christ. No other Bible writer knew of it. CONCLUSION: Paul's early letters are *not* founded upon the Old Testament and Israel.



This is by no means an exhaustive list.

**"The early ministry and epistles of Paul were founded on the Old Testament and Israel."**

I only needed one verse to disprove this statement; I produced 25. What is your verdict?

ROMANS 15:4-13

**"According to Romans 15:4-13, the early ministry and epistles of Paul were founded on the Old Testament and Israel."**

This was Clyde's original statement. Based on the preceding 25 proofs, there is no way possible that Romans 15:4-13 can be saying that the early ministry and epistles of Paul were founded on the Old Testament and Israel. So let's now look at this verse in detail. Here is Romans 15:4-13, from the *Concordant Literal New Testament*:

For whatever was written before, was written for this teaching of ours, that through the endurance and



the consolation of the Scriptures we may have expectation. Now may the God of endurance and consolation grant you to be mutually disposed to one another, according to Christ Jesus, that, with one accord, with one mouth, you may be glorifying the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore be taking one another to yourselves according as Christ also took you to Himself, for the glory of God. For I am saying that Christ has become the Servant of the Circumcision, for the sake of the truth of God, to confirm the patriarchal promises. Yet the nations are to glorify God for His mercy, according as it is written, "Therefore I shall be acclaiming Thee among the nations," "And to Thy name shall I be playing music." And again he is saying, "Be merry, ye nations, with His people!" And again he is saying, "Praise the Lord, all the nations," And "let all the peoples laud Him." And again Isaiah is saying, there will be "the root of Jesse, And He Who is rising to be Chief of the nations: On Him will the nations rely." Now may the God of expectation be filling you with all joy and peace in believing, for you to be super-abounding in expectation, in the power of holy spirit.

In this passage, Paul quotes the Hebrew Scriptures six times. Five times the word "nations" is mentioned; once, "the peoples." Why do you think Paul is doing this? He tell us himself in the text: "... that through the endurance and the consolation of the Scriptures we may have expectation." Paul later wrote to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, "All scripture is inspired by God, and is beneficial for teaching, for exposure, for correction, for discipline in righteousness, that the man of God may be equipped, fitted out for every good act." Paul is using these ancient, inspired writings ("through the endurance of the Scriptures") to assure the nations that God has always promised to remember and bless them ("through the consolation of the Scriptures, we may have expectation"). God did not say exactly *how* He would remember and bless the nations because, as we have seen, these were secrets kept for Paul. The immediate consolation here, for the Romans, would be that evidence existed in Israel's writings that God would remember the nations and give them something to expect and be happy about.

Put yourselves back in the place of the Romans, some of whom knew the history of Israel. What precedent is there that anyone besides Israel would ever be blessed? Well, here it is. This is very helpful to Paul, for now Paul has six passages relating to God and the nations. This

evidence in the Word of God would help Paul's readers to think he's not so crazy after all. Again, there are no specifics here concerning those secrets that Paul would reveal. This is merely a broad promise that the nations would have reason to celebrate: 1) "I shall be acclaiming Thee among the nations," 2) "Be merry, ye nations," 3) "Praise the Lord, all the nations," 4) "Let all the peoples laud Him," and 5) "on Him will the nations rely."

Let's return to the opening statement of this passage, Romans 15:4— "For whatever was written before, was written *for* this teaching of ours." Please make note: Those things that were written before in the Scriptures were not *about* the teaching of Paul, but were written *for* the teaching of Paul. God put these passages in His Word so that Paul could use them to prove to the nations that God always promised to remember them. Paul's teaching is absent from these passages.

Now you see the subtle manipulation of this verse. To use this verse to say that the early ministry and epistles of Paul are *founded* on the Old Testament and Israel—as though nothing new came from Paul's pen until after Acts 28:28—is not only misleading, but mistaken. We have already seen how mistaken it is. This is a manipulation of a verse to suit an agenda, namely, the Acts 28:28 agenda. That this verse is called into play in the interest of "proving" that Paul taught nothing new before his prison epistles serves only to expose the desperation of the position and show how little evidence actually exists for it.

**“God did not say exactly how He would remember and bless the nations; these secrets were kept for Paul.”**

What a difference between "for" and "founded on." All of Scripture was *for* Paul (2 Timothy 3:16), but the teachings in his Paul's epistles were *founded on* a revelation of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:12). He himself testified that, concerning his evangel, he was not taught it (Galatians 1:12). This eliminates the Old Testament and Israel as the source of his message. In the book of Hebrews, examples from Israel's history of the heroes of faith are *for* those Israelites who will find themselves enduring the day of Indignation, but none of what those latter Jews will experience will be *founded on* anything Israel has previously experienced. It is the characteristic

of endurance itself that is pressed in Hebrews, not the details of that endurance. Likewise in Romans chapter 15, it is the characteristic of expectation itself that is pressed upon the Roman believers, not the details of anyone's particular evangel, especially not Paul's.

## RELEVANT TRUTH

On page 4323 of his article, Clyde writes:

Dispensational truth relevant for our day was revealed by Paul after Acts 28 and is recorded in his latter epistles.

This statement is more startling than the first. Another way this can be stated is: Only dispensational truth revealed by Paul in 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Philemon, Titus, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians (dispensational truth revealed *after* Acts 28), is relevant for our day. Dispensational truth, therefore, from Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and Galatians (written *before* Acts 28), are *not* relevant for our day. This statement shocks me. I try to see how I could be reading it wrong, but there it sits on the page. I have read it in context half a dozen times, and still cannot make it say anything than what it's saying. I have known Clyde for six years, and it is hard for me to believe that he wrote this.

To discover which truths are not relevant for our day, then, we must go back and read the 25 gems of truth Paul revealed prior to his prison epistles, among which are 1) justification by faith, 2) the salvation of all, 3) the abolition of death, 4) the conciliation of the individual believer, 5) the conciliation of the world 6) the baptism into Christ's death, 7) the new humanity, 8) the eradication of fleshly distinctions 9) the snatching away of the body of Christ 10) the *existence* of the body of Christ, 11) the transformation of our bodies, 12) the necessity of a celestial body 13), and our rescue from the coming indignation. These truths are *not* relevant for today?

Excuse me, but something is seriously flawed and fatally wrong with the Acts 28:28 position.

## NEW AND OLD

Paul does reveal new secrets in the prison epistles, but no more than he reveals elsewhere. Not only did Paul write new things in his pre-prison epistles, but not everything Paul wrote in his prison epistles was new. In Philippians 1:5, Paul speaks to the Philippian believers

about "your contribution to the evangel from the first day until now." The "first day" of this contribution occurred ten years before Paul's imprisonment, when he ministered personally among the Philippians and they ministered monetarily to him. What evangel does Paul speak of, to which the Philippians contributed? The Circumcision evangel? Of course not. Paul is writing to the Philippians from prison about the fellowship established in their midst during the Acts period (Acts 16:12, 20:6), at which time he was supposedly—according to the Acts 28 position—still teaching Old Testament, Israelite truth. He wasn't. Besides, it was during this general time that he wrote some of his early epistles which, as we have seen, were freighted with new revelation.

In Colossians chapter 1:4-7 (another prison epistle), Paul writes of ...

... hearing of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints, because of the expectation reserved for you in the heavens, which you hear before in the word of truth of the evangel, which, being present with you, according as in the entire world also, is bearing fruit and growing, according as it is among you also, from the day on which you hear and realized the grace of God in truth, according as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow slave, who is a faithful dispenser of Christ for us.

Which evangel had the Colossians heard before? The evangel that the terrestrial Jesus gave to Peter? No. It was the same evangel Paul was severed for in grace (Galatians 1:15), that he did not learn from a man (Galatians 1:12), but received rather from a revelation of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:12). It was the gospel of the Uncircumcision (Galatians 2:7) that he was then making known (Galatians 1:11) and never quit making known. Only Paul's evangel contained "the expectation reserved for you in the heavens" (Colossians 1:5), to which the Colossians clung. Israel's expectation is always terrestrial.

In Ephesians 1:13 (Ephesians being another prison epistle), Paul speaks of those "hearing the word of truth, the evangel of your salvation." In verse 15 of the same chapter, he comments on "hearing of this faith of yours and the Lord Jesus." What faith is he talking about? Faith in Peter's gospel? Faith in the promises God made to Israel? Faith in the Old Testament? Not at all. The Ephesus believers were saved in accord with Paul's evangel of grace.

Here are Paul's words to the elders in Ephesus in Acts 20:18-24, *before* his imprisonment in Rome:

You are versed in the facts, from the first day on which I stepped into the province of Asia, how I came to be with you all the time, slaving for the Lord with all humility and tears, and the trials which befell me by the plots of the Jews; how under no circumstances did I shrink from informing you of anything which was expedient, and teaching you in public and at your homes, certifying to both Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, lo! I, bound in spirit, am going to Jerusalem, not being aware what I will meet with in it, more than that the holy spirit, city by city, certifies to me, saying that bonds and afflictions are remaining for me. But of nothing have I a word, nor yet am I making my soul precious to myself, till I should be perfecting my career *and the dispensation which I got from the Lord Jesus, to certify the evangel of the grace of God.*

Paul's ministry in Rome would be the *perfecting* of his career and the dispensation of the evangel of the grace of God, not the *beginning* of it. When psychically in the midst of the Ephesians, he had withheld no expedient truth from them. These are the same believers whose faith Paul commends in Ephesians 1:15.

In 1 Timothy 1:1-4, Paul wrote—

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, according to the injunction of God, our Saviour, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our expectation, to Timothy, a genuine child in faith: Grace, mercy, peace, from God, our Father, and Christ Jesus, our Lord. According as I entreat you, *remain with them in Ephesus*, when going into Macedonia, *that you should be charging some not to be teaching differently*, nor yet to be heeding myths and endless genealogies, which are affording exactions rather than *God's administration which is in faith.*

What is "God's administration which is in faith?" It is the administration with which Paul was entrusted (1 Corinthians 9:17), namely, the administration of the grace of God (Ephesians 3:2). Why was Paul concerned that some would teach differently in Ephesus? Because it happened everywhere he went, and everywhere his evangel went. It was the same old Galatian problem, the constant threat that some of the Circumcision would infiltrate the ecclesia and attempt to mix law with grace (Galatians 1:6-7; Galatians 3:1-3). That Paul is concerned, before his imprisonment, with the possibility of a *different* teaching circulating among the Ephesians makes it self-evident that he had left those believers *with* a teaching. Which teaching? Certainly

not the gospel of the Circumcision, or anything in accord with the Old Testament or Israel. Again, it was the teaching in accord with God's administration given to him (1 Corinthians 9:17), namely, the administration of the grace of God (Ephesians 3:2).

## MATURITY

I obviously stand against the hard, cut-and-dried line that there is no new truth in the pre-prison epistles, and that everything in the prison epistles is new. Likewise, I stand against the hard line that says the pre-prison epistles are strictly for the immature whereas the prison epistles are the exclusive property of mature saints. This is simply not the case.

In Philippians—a prison epistle—Paul writes:

Brethren, not as yet am I reckoning myself to have grasped, yet one thing—forgetting, indeed, those things which are behind, yet stretching out to those in front—toward the goal am I pursuing for the prize of God's calling above in Christ Jesus. *Whoever, then, are mature, may be disposed to this, and if in anything you are differently disposed, this also shall God reveal to you* (3:13-15).

Not everyone in the Philippian ecclesia was mature. Paul was allowing for the possibility that some were "differently disposed" to the high calling. As Paul sets forth a disposition for the high calling as a litmus test of maturity, those not disposed to it would have necessarily been immature. Even in Ephesians (4:13), Paul is still straining to present the saints mature in Christ, at the same time admitting that some were still minors (4:14). Thank God that such imperfection among human beings never stopped Paul, in his letters, from disclosing truth from Jesus Christ.

## IN CLOSING

Paul's early ministry and epistles are based on the Old Testament and Israel? Far from it. The first thing in Paul's gospel is the last thing in the four accounts: the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Paul can take it from there, and he does—right out of the gate. —MZ