

THE TWO GOSPELS

A STUDY OF THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN
THE GOSPEL OF THE CIRCUMCISION
AND THE GOSPEL OF THE UNCIRCUMCISION

THE GOSPEL
OF THE
CIRCUMCISION

ISRAEL

THE GOSPEL
OF THE
UNCIRCUMCISION

THE NATIONS

ROBERTA OWEN

THE TWO GOSPELS

A Study in Rightly Dividing
God's Administrations

by

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Preface

This work examines the distinction between the "gospel of the circumcision" and the "gospel of the uncircumcision" as presented in Scripture, specifically regarding the ministries of Peter and Paul. It is not written to provoke controversy or argue for its own sake; rather, the goal is to follow the wording of Scripture carefully and allow its inherent distinctions to remain intact.

In many discussions, the gospel is treated as a uniform message running unchanged through the Bible, an assumption so common it often goes unexamined. This leads to a blending of passages addressed to Israel with those addressed to the nations, where kingdom promises are read into the Body of Christ and instructions from one administration are applied to another without scriptural warrant. However, a closer reading reveals a different picture. Paul explicitly speaks of the gospel of the uncircumcision being entrusted to him, just as the gospel of the circumcision was entrusted to Peter. This is no casual statement; it places two messages side by side, connecting them with two distinct apostleships, audiences, and operations of God.

Taking this distinction seriously fundamentally alters how one reads the Bible. This study proceeds from that observation while clarifying what it is *not* attempting to do. It is not an argument against the importance of Israel, nor a denial of their promises, calling, or future kingdom. Furthermore, it does not seek to diminish Peter or the twelve apostles. Instead, it moves away from the assumption that every message must be merged, examining instead whether Scripture presents separate administrations, each with its own audience, expectation, and purpose.

Because of this approach, some conclusions may feel unfamiliar. The claim that the Body of Christ is not the same as Israel, and that Paul's gospel is distinct from Peter's, challenges much of modern Christian teaching. Rather than softening this tension, this work allows it to stand as the text presents it. The structure follows this progression: beginning with the distinction in Galatians 2:7, examining the message to the circumcision, and then considering the message given to Paul for the uncircumcision. From there, it explores Israel's place, the calling of the Body of Christ, and the doctrinal confusion that inevitably results when these distinctions are blended.

The ultimate aim is not to impose a system onto the text, but to draw one out from it. This requires the reader to approach the material with a willingness to reconsider familiar assumptions, weighing each conclusion against the text itself. If this work succeeds, it will not provide a new tradition to follow, but a clearer way of reading what is already written. More importantly, it will shift the primary question from "Why do these passages seem to contradict each other?" to "What if Scripture is making a distinction I was never taught to see?"

Chapter 1: Why the Bible Feels Contradictory

Introduction

For many, the Bible is both compelling and confusing. On one page, it speaks with clarity and authority; on the next, it seems to say something entirely different. Some passages emphasize faith alone, while others insist on works. Some offer total assurance, while others warn of falling away. Some speak of freedom from the Law, while others command strict obedience to it. The result is not clarity, but a persistent tension that, for many readers, never fully resolves.

The Tension Everyone Feels

These are not merely minor differences in wording; they appear to present different expectations, requirements, and outcomes. Consider the following contrasts:

“...a man to be justified by faith apart from works of law.” (Rom 3:28)

“...faith, if it should not have works: it is dead by itself.” (James 2:17)

Consider also the difference in how sin and forgiveness are handled:

“Happy the man to whom the Lord by no means should be reckoning sin!” (Rom 4:8)

“If we should be avowing our sins, He is faithful and just that He may be pardoning us our sins...” (1 Jn 1:9)

And finally, the relationship to the Law:

“...you are not under law, but under grace.” (Rom 6:14)

“...if you are wanting to be entering into life, keep the precepts.” (Mat 19:17)

What are we supposed to do with these statements? If we take the text seriously, we cannot simply ignore the fact that these instructions seem to point in opposite directions.

Common Explanations—And Why They Fall Short

Several explanations are commonly offered to resolve these tensions. Some suggest it is all the same message with different points of emphasis, or that faith naturally produces works, meaning both writers are saying the same thing. Others attempt to categorize the differences as “justification versus sanctification.”

At first, these explanations seem reasonable, but under closer examination, they begin to strain. The differences are not merely about emphasis; they are about structure. One passage says not by works; another says works are required. One says sin is not reckoned; another says confession is required for forgiveness. Merging these into a single system often leads to complicated qualifications and exceptions that make the framework feel forced rather than clear.

The Result: Confusion or Compromise

When these tensions are not resolved, readers generally move in one of two directions. Many succumb to **confusion**, quietly accepting that they do not fully understand and living with the sense that parts of Scripture simply don't fit together.

Others resort to **compromise**. They attempt to harmonize everything into a single system by softening clear biblical statements. This often results in the blending of law and grace or the improper manipulation of unconditional and conditional promises. By forcing this artificial agreement, the distinct force and intended meaning of each individual passage are ultimately weakened.

A Different Possibility

What if the issue is not that Scripture is unclear, but that we are reading different instructions as if they were addressed to the same audience under the same conditions? What if passages that seem to conflict are actually part of different frameworks within God's plan?

This perspective explains why some passages require works while others reject them, why certain texts emphasize the law while others deny its authority, and why some focus on earthly promises while others offer a different hope entirely. Instead of forcing everything into one system, it suggests something simpler: it's possible that we are dealing with more than one gospel being presented in Scripture.

Moving Forward

This idea may feel unfamiliar at first, but if we continue to assume that all passages must fit into a single framework, we are left with tensions that never resolve. If Scripture itself presents distinct messages to different audiences, then the contradictions may not be contradictions at all; they may simply be misapplied truths.

Preparing for the Next Step

If these tensions are real, we must ask if they are flaws in the text or indicators of a deeper structure. The next step is to test the assumption that the Bible presents only one unified gospel, exploring whether Scripture itself identifies more than one message.

Chapter 2: The Bible Does Not Present One Unified Gospel

Introduction

If the tensions explored in the previous chapter are real, and they are, we are left with an unavoidable question: Is the Bible truly presenting one single, unified gospel message from beginning to end, or are we simply assuming that it does? For many readers, the idea of "one gospel" is a given that is rarely questioned. However, even widely accepted assumptions must be tested against the text itself, and when we do, something surprising begins to emerge.

A Statement Most Readers Overlook

In Paul's letter to the Galatians, there is a passage that is both direct and often underexamined: *"But, on the contrary, perceiving that I have been entrusted with the evangel of the Uncircumcision, according as Peter of the Circumcision"* (Gal 2:7-8). This is not a vague or poetic statement; it is precise. Paul does not claim that he and Peter preached the same gospel through different methods or emphases but rather states that two distinct evangel messages were entrusted: one specifically for the uncircumcision and another for the circumcision. The language here is deliberate.

What Does "Circumcision" and "Uncircumcision" Mean?

In Scripture, these are not abstract spiritual categories but concrete, identifiable groups. The **Circumcision** refers to Israel, the Jewish people under covenant, law, and promise. The **Uncircumcision** refers to the nations, or Gentiles, who remained outside those covenants. This distinction runs throughout Scripture and is never treated lightly. Therefore, when Paul says Peter was entrusted with one evangel and he with another, he is not describing stylistic differences; he is describing distinct commissions tied to distinct audiences.

Two Entrustments, Not One Mission

The passage continues by noting that He who operated in Peter for the apostleship of the Circumcision operated in Paul also for the nations. The emphasis here is on different apostleships, different audiences, and different spheres of operation, even though the same God is behind both. This does not represent a division in purpose, but rather a distinction in administration.

Why This Matters More Than It Seems

At first glance, one might assume that Peter simply went to the Jews while Paul went to the Gentiles without any difference in their message. However, that assumption fails to resolve

the problem because the differences are not just about the audience; they concern requirements, expectations, and outcomes. If both apostles were preaching the exact same message, these fundamental differences should not exist. Galatians 2 suggests that Scripture itself accounts for these variances.

The Meaning of “Evangel”

The word translated as “gospel” in many English Bibles comes from the Greek word *euaggelion*, meaning good news. In the CLNT, this is consistently rendered as “evangel.” This consistency is vital because when Scripture speaks of the “evangel of the circumcision” and the “evangel of the uncircumcision,” it is not describing one message for two audiences, but two distinct evangels entrusted within God’s plan. Both are “good news,” yet they are not identical in content, scope, or expectation.

A Pattern Begins to Form

Once this distinction is recognized, other passages begin to align more clearly, and statements that once appeared contradictory fall into place. Commands tied to law and works align with Israel’s program, while statements of grace apart from law align with Paul’s message. Similarly, earthly kingdom promises remain connected to Israel while celestial language appears in Paul’s writings. What once felt like conflict begins to look like a deliberate structure.

Not Two Gods—But Two Programs

This framework does not suggest two different Gods or two unrelated plans; rather, it reveals one God working out a unified purpose through different audiences, expectations, and revelations at different times. While failing to recognize this leads to confusion, recognizing it brings immediate clarity.

A Necessary Shift in Reading

If this distinction is real, it requires a shift in how we read Scripture. Instead of asking how a passage fits into a preconceived system, we begin asking who is being addressed and which evangel the passage belongs to. This single shift resolves many tensions without forcing the text into an artificial agreement.

Moving Forward

Recognizing the distinction between the “evangel of the circumcision” and the “evangel of the uncircumcision” allows us to stop forcing the text into an artificial agreement. Instead of

asking how a passage fits a preconceived system, we begin asking who is being addressed and which message the passage belongs to.

Preparing for the Next Step

Now that we have established a framework of two distinct entrustments, we must define the first. We turn now to the specific audience, message, requirements, and hope of Israel's gospel.

Chapter 3: The Gospel of the Circumcision (Israel's Gospel)

Introduction

With the distinction introduced in the previous chapter, we now turn to define the first of the two evangels: the **evangel of the circumcision**. If this evangel is real and was entrusted specifically to Peter and the apostles, it must be identifiable within Scripture. It should possess a clear audience, a defined message, specific expectations, and a distinct hope.

As we shall see, it does.

The Audience: The Circumcision (Israel)

The evangel of the circumcision is directed to Israel. This is not merely implied; it is stated plainly. During His earthly ministry, Jesus defined His mission with a limiting statement:

“I was not commissioned except for the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” (Mat 15:24)

This does not describe a global mission to all nations, but a focused commission to a specific people. This aligns with Paul's later statement regarding the nature of Jesus' ministry:

“...Christ has become the Servant of the Circumcision, for the sake of the truth of God, to confirm the patriarchal promises.” (Rom 15:8)

Jesus' role during His earthly walk was not to introduce a new, universal message at that time. He came to confirm the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to address Israel as a nation, and to prepare them for what had been foretold.

The Message: The Kingdom and the Messiah

The core of this evangel is often called the **evangel of the kingdom**. It centers on the arrival of Israel's Messiah, the nearness of the kingdom, and a call for the nation to respond. This response includes repentance, the belief that Jesus is the Christ, and alignment with God's requirements for Israel. John the Baptist began this proclamation:

“Repent! for near is the kingdom of the heavens.” (Mat 3:2)

Jesus continued it:

“Repent! for near is the kingdom of the heavens.” (Mat 4:17)

The apostles then carried it forward. This was not a message about escaping earth or "going to heaven" in a modern sense; it was about the establishment of God's rule on earth, in fulfillment of the promises made to Israel.

The Requirements: Faith, Repentance, and Response

Within this evangel, belief is essential, but it is not presented in isolation. The required response includes repentance, baptism, obedience, and the producing of fruit. Peter's message in Acts reflects this framework clearly:

"Repent and be baptized each of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the pardon of your sins..." (Acts 2:38)

This is not framed as "believe only, apart from everything else." It is a responsive, participatory message tied to Israel's covenant context. While faith is present, it operates within a structure that includes specific actions.

The Hope: An Earthly Kingdom

The hope attached to this evangel is not abstract or purely spiritual; it is concrete and terrestrial. It includes the restoration of Israel, the fulfillment of covenant promises, and a kingdom established on earth. This expectation is visible throughout the ministry of Jesus and the apostles. Even after the resurrection, the disciples' primary concern remained the same:

"Lord, art Thou at this time restoring the kingdom to Israel?" (Act 1:6)

They were not corrected for the nature of their hope but were only told that the timing was not theirs to know. The expectation of an earthly kingdom remained valid.

A Clarification About "The Four Gospels"

At this point, a common assumption needs to be addressed. Most readers are taught that the Bible contains four "Gospels": Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. However, this designation does not come from Scripture itself. These books are not labeled as separate "gospels" within the text; that terminology was applied later as a way of grouping them.

What Scripture presents is not four different gospels, but four accounts of the same message. Each of these records documents the earthly ministry of Jesus, His presentation as Israel's Messiah, and the proclamation of the kingdom. As already established, Jesus' commission was to the house of Israel (Mat 15:24), which places all four accounts within the same framework: the **evangel of the circumcision**.

While each writer emphasizes different aspects, Matthew highlights the fulfillment of prophecy, Mark emphasizes authority, Luke provides historical narrative, and John focuses on identity, the message remains consistent: Israel's Messiah has come, the kingdom is near, and the call is to respond.

Continuation Through the Apostles

This evangel does not end with Jesus' earthly ministry. It continues through Peter, the Twelve, and the early chapters of Acts. Their message remains perfectly aligned with what Jesus began. They address Israel, call for repentance, and anticipate the coming kingdom. There is continuity here, not a shift in administration.

Summary of the Circumcision Evangel

We can now define this framework clearly:

- **Audience:** Israel (the circumcision)
- **Message:** The Messiah has come; the kingdom is near
- **Response:** Repent, believe, be baptized, produce fruit
- **Hope:** The earthly kingdom and fulfillment of promises

Moving Forward

The evangel of the circumcision is a structured, consistent program focused on the literal fulfillment of God's promises to the house of Israel. It provides a clear path for the nation to respond to their Messiah in anticipation of an earthly kingdom.

Preparing for the Next Step

With the circumcision evangel defined, the contrast becomes necessary. To understand the full scope of God's word, we must now examine the distinct characteristics of the second message: the evangel of the uncircumcision.

Chapter 4: The Gospel of the Uncircumcision (Paul's Gospel)

Introduction

With the evangel of the circumcision now defined, we turn to the second evangel referenced in Scripture: the **evangel of the uncircumcision**. If this evangel is truly distinct, as stated in Galatians, it must be examined on its own terms. It should possess its own audience, message, expectations, and hope.

As we will see, it does.

The Audience: The Nations (and a New Body)

Paul's commission is stated with absolute clarity: "...*that we, indeed, are to be for the nations, yet they for the Circumcision*" (Gal 2:9). While the evangel of the uncircumcision is directed toward the nations (Gentiles) and any who believe regardless of background, something entirely new appears here that is not present in Israel's program. Paul describes a **joint body**, a unity where previous distinctions are removed:

"...in Whom there is no Jew nor yet Greek..." (Gal 3:28)

This is not simply Israel expanded; it is a new entity altogether: the Body of Christ.

No Advantage in the Body—Despite Israel's Preeminence Elsewhere

An important clarification must be made: throughout Scripture, Israel holds a position of clear distinction. Paul acknowledges this, asking, "*What, then, is the prerogative of the Jew? ...Much in every manner*" (Rom 3:1–2). Within the framework of the earthly kingdom, that distinction remains; Israel is the recipient of the covenants and the promises. This is not erased; it is affirmed.

However, within the evangel of the uncircumcision, a different reality occurs. When Paul states there is "neither Jew nor Greek," he is not making a general statement about the world, but a specific statement about the **Body of Christ**. Within this new entity, national distinctions grant no advantage. Heritage does not provide standing, and identity in the flesh is not the basis of anything.

Paul illustrates this by listing his own credentials, circumcised the eighth day, of the race of Israel, a Hebrew of Hebrews, and a Pharisee (Phil 3:5). Yet he immediately follows this by saying:

"But things which were gain to me, these I have deemed a forfeit because of Christ." (Phil 3:7)

This is not a rejection of his identity as an Israelite, but a recognition that within this specific administration, those distinctions carry no value. The Body of Christ is not an extension of Israel; it is a distinct creation where all stand on the same ground, not by lineage or covenant, but by grace alone.

The Message: Christ Crucified and Risen

Paul defines the core of his evangel directly:

“...that Christ died for our sins... and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day...” (1 Cor 15:3–4)

The center of this message is not the nearness of an earthly kingdom or national restoration, but the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Paul reinforces this exclusive focus, stating, *“for I decide not to perceive anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified”* (1 Cor 2:2). This is the foundation upon which everything else is built.

The Requirement: Faith Apart from Works

Here, the contrast with the circumcision evangel becomes unmistakable. Paul states:

“For in grace, through faith, are you saved,... not of works...” (Eph 2:8–9)

And again:

“Yet to him who is not working, yet is believing... his faith is reckoned for righteousness.” (Rom 4:5)

This is direct and unqualified. It is not by works, law, performance, or ritual. Faith stands alone. This is not faith combined with action; it is faith apart from works of any kind.

No Law, No Requirement, No Completion by the Flesh

Paul goes further by removing the Law as a system entirely, telling believers, *“for you are not under law, but under grace”* (Rom 6:14). He sternly warns those who try to mix the two: *“Undertaking in spirit, are you now being completed in flesh?”* (Gal 3:3). This is a critical point: many suggest we are saved by grace but must then “live by the Law.” Paul rejects this completely. There is no second step of completion by human effort; there is no return to Sinai.

The Result: Justification and a New Creation

The result of this evangel is not a conditional standing, but complete justification. *"Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation..."* (Rom 8:1). Furthermore, the believer is no longer identified with the old humanity. Paul teaches that the old self is crucified and a "new creation" exists. This is not self-improvement; it is total replacement.

The Hope: A Celestial Calling

Unlike the circumcision evangel, the hope here is not earthly. Paul speaks of a heavenly expectation and a transformation of our very nature:

"For our realm is inherent in the heavens,..." (Phil 3:20)

"...we shall be changed..." (1 Cor 15:51)

This hope includes immortality and a new body suited for a different sphere of existence. It is not entry into an earthly kingdom, but participation in something beyond it.

A Revelation Given to Paul Alone

Paul is explicit that he did not learn this message from men or the other apostles:

"...the evangel... is not in accord with man. For neither did I accept it from a man... but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal 1:11–12)

This was a "secret" (or mystery) concealed from previous eons (Col 1:26). It included truths previously hidden: the one Body, the removal of national distinctions, justification apart from law, and a celestial hope. These are not expansions of Israel's program; they are entirely new disclosures.

The Contrast Becomes Clear

When placed side by side, the distinction sharpens. One message includes law and response; the other excludes works entirely. One focuses on Israel and the earth; the other includes the nations and the heavens. One anticipates a kingdom; the other reveals a new creation. These are not minor variations, but structural differences.

Why This Feels Difficult

For many, this distinction feels uncomfortable, not because it is unclear, but because it challenges the assumption that all Scripture applies the same way to all people. However,

when the text is allowed to speak, patterns emerge and a deliberate structure becomes visible. Discomfort is often simply the result of seeing something long overlooked.

Moving Forward

The evangel of the uncircumcision reveals a reality where national distinctions grant no advantage and standing is based on pure grace through faith alone. It introduces a new creation, the Body of Christ, with a calling that is fundamentally different from Israel's earthly hope.

Preparing for the Next Step

Having identified these two distinct evangels, we can now see them as the foundations of two broader frameworks. The next step is to organize these findings into a formal understanding of two divine administrations.

Chapter 5: Two Gospels, Two Administrations

Introduction

Up to this point, we have examined two distinct evangels presented in Scripture: the evangel of the circumcision and the evangel of the uncircumcision. Each possesses its own audience, message, expectations, and hope. Individually, each is clear; the confusion begins only when they are combined. To prevent this, we must recognize and maintain the distinction that Scripture itself presents.

The Two Administrations

A helpful way to understand these distinctions is to recognize that Scripture presents two distinct administrations. By “administration,” we do not mean a human system or a theological label; rather, we are referring to how God actively administers His purpose at different times, to different audiences, with different expectations. When passages are read within their proper administration, they align naturally. When they are combined, tension appears.

Administration 1: The Circumcision (Israel’s Program)

This administration includes everything related to Israel, the Law, the covenants, and the earthly kingdom.

- **Audience:** Israel (the circumcision)
- **Message:** The Messiah has come; the kingdom is near.
- **Response:** Repentance, belief, baptism, and fruit.
- **Framework:** The Law remains relevant.
- **Hope:** An earthly kingdom and national restoration.
- **Associated Figures:** John the Baptist, Jesus (in His earthly ministry), Peter, and the Twelve.
- **Primary Scriptural Sections:** Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, the early chapters of Acts, Hebrews, James, and other kingdom-oriented writings.

Administration 2: The Uncircumcision (The Body of Christ)

This administration includes everything related to the nations, grace apart from law, the Body of Christ, and the celestial calling.

- **Audience:** The nations (and all who believe).
- **Message:** Christ died for our sins, was buried, and was raised (1 Cor 15:3–4).
- **Response:** Faith apart from works.
- **Framework:** Not under law, but under grace.

- **Hope:** Celestial life, transformation, and a heavenly realm.
- **Associated Figure:** Paul.
- **Primary Scriptural Sections:** Romans through Philemon.

Side-by-Side Comparison

This is not an artificial division; it is a reflection of the distinctions already visible in the text.

Category	Circumcision (Israel)	Uncircumcision (Body of Christ)
Audience	Israel	The Nations
Legal Status	Law involved	Grace apart from law
Requirement	Faith with response	Faith apart from works
Primary Hope	Earthly kingdom	Celestial calling
Central Theme	Messiah as King	Christ crucified and risen
Identity	National promises	New creation
Key Apostles	Peter and the Twelve	Paul

Why Mixing Administrations Creates Confusion

When these administrations are combined, significant contradictions appear. For example, one finds "faith apart from works" (Rom 3–4) set against "faith requiring works" (James 2). We see the statement "not under law" (Rom 6:14) clashing with the command to "keep the precepts" (Matt 19:17). We find the assurance of "no condemnation" (Rom 8:1) at odds with warnings tied to endurance and behavior found in kingdom passages. These are not minor differences; they reflect different administrations. When kept in their proper places, they align; when merged, they conflict.

Not Separation—But Clarity

This distinction is not about dividing Scripture incorrectly or ignoring parts of the Bible. Rather, it is about:

- Reading each passage as it was given.
- Recognizing the specific audience and context.
- Allowing Scripture to maintain its own structure.

All Scripture remains true, inspired, and valuable; however, not all Scripture is directed to the same audience or operating under the same administration.

A Key Question to Ask

From this point forward, one question becomes essential: **“Which administration does this belong to?”** Before applying a passage, we must ask who is being addressed, what message is being presented, and what expectation is in view. This single step resolves many of the tensions that previously seemed unavoidable.

The Simplicity of Right Division

Once this distinction is understood, the Bible becomes clearer, not more complicated. Instead of forcing agreement, differences are expected, context becomes meaningful, and structure replaces confusion. What once felt contradictory now reads as coherent and intentional.

Moving Forward

By viewing the Bible through the lens of two administrations, contradictions disappear. What once felt like conflict between law and grace or faith and works becomes a clear reflection of God’s intentional design for different audiences at different times.

Preparing for the Next Step

With these administrations clearly distinguished, a significant question remains: why is the second administration absent from the earthly ministry of Jesus? We turn now to the specific purpose and limited scope of Jesus' mission on earth.

Chapter 6: Why Two Evangelists?

Introduction

At this point, the distinction between the evangel of the circumcision and the evangel of the uncircumcision should be becoming clear. Each possesses its own audience, message, expectations, and hope. Yet an important question still remains: Why would God establish two distinct evangelists at all?

For many readers, the existence of two evangelists feels unnecessary or even divisive. If God is one, why would His dealings appear different? Why would one message focus on Israel and the earth while another focuses on the nations and the heavens? The answer is found in the scope of God's purpose itself. Scripture reveals not merely two messages, but two spheres of administration within one unified plan.

God's Purpose Is Larger Than Earth Alone

Most discussions of salvation focus almost entirely on humanity and the terrestrial realm. However, Scripture repeatedly points to a purpose that extends beyond the earth into the celestial. Paul writes:

"...to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth..." (Eph 1:10)

This statement is foundational. God's purpose is not limited to the earth, nor is it limited to Israel or the nations alone. His intention is to bring all things under the headship of Christ, both celestial and terrestrial. This explains why one administration centers on earthly promises while another centers on a celestial calling. The distinction exists because the purpose itself includes two realms.

Israel's Role: Blessing the Earth

From the beginning, Israel's calling was connected to the earth and the nations upon it. God told Abraham:

"...in you all the families of the ground will be blessed." (Gen 12:3)

Israel was never chosen merely for privilege; they were chosen for purpose. That purpose included becoming a channel of blessing and righteous government upon the earth. At Sinai, God declared:

"...you shall become Mine, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." (Exo 19:6)

This language is governmental. Priests stand between God and others. Israel was intended to function as a priestly nation through whom the other nations of the earth would come to know God. The prophets repeatedly reinforce this expectation, and even the kingdom

proclaimed by Jesus follows this same structure. The kingdom concerns the restoration of Israel, the fulfillment of covenant promises, and righteous rule upon the earth. The evangel of the circumcision fits perfectly within this framework: its purpose is earthly.

The Body of Christ: A Celestial Calling

Paul's evangel introduces something entirely different. Rather than focusing on national restoration or earthly rule, Paul reveals a joint body with a celestial identity:

"...our realm is inherent in the heavens..." (Phil 3:20)

This is not simply poetic language. Paul consistently places the Body of Christ in connection with the celestial realm:

"...and seats us together among the celestials..." (Eph 2:6)

This heavenly language is not attached to Israel's kingdom promises. It belongs to a different administration with a different calling. Paul further explains that the Body serves a revelatory purpose:

"...that now may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestials, through the ecclesia, the multifarious wisdom of God..." (Eph 3:10)

The Body of Christ is not merely saved individuals awaiting heaven. It is a display of God's wisdom to celestial powers themselves.

The Celestial Conflict

Scripture also reveals that the heavens are not presently in complete subjection to God. Paul writes:

"for it is not ours to wrestle with blood and flesh, but with the sovereignties, with the authorities, with the world-mights of this darkness, with the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials." (Eph 6:12)

This explains why the Body of Christ possesses a heavenly calling. The celestial realm itself requires reconciliation and administration. Just as Israel functions within God's purpose for the earth, the Body of Christ functions within His purpose for the heavens. The two administrations therefore correspond to two spheres requiring divine order.

Two Destinies Within One Plan

Once this structure is recognized, the distinction between the two evangels no longer appears arbitrary.

- ❑ **The evangel of the circumcision:** prepares Israel for earthly rule, fulfills covenant promises, and establishes blessing among the nations.
- ❑ **The evangel of the uncircumcision:** reveals grace apart from law, forms the Body of Christ, and prepares a celestial administration.

These are not competing systems; they are coordinated parts of one larger purpose.

Not Two Gods—But One Coordinated Purpose

This distinction must be handled carefully. The existence of two evangels does not mean two Gods or two conflicting methods of salvation. Rather, it reveals one God administering different aspects of His purpose through different audiences and callings. The earthly administration and the celestial administration ultimately meet under one headship:

“...to head up all in the Christ...” (Eph 1:10)

This is unity, not contradiction.

Why This Matters

Without this distinction, many passages appear impossible to reconcile. Earthly promises become spiritualized, kingdom passages become confused with Body truth, and the unique character of Paul’s revelation becomes obscured. However, when the two purposes are recognized, Israel’s kingdom passages remain literal, Paul’s celestial language remains distinct, and the structure of Scripture begins to align naturally. What once appeared fragmented begins to reveal deliberate design.

A Framework Begins to Emerge

At this stage, a larger framework is beginning to form:

- ❑ Israel is connected to the earth.
- ❑ The Body of Christ is connected to the heavens.
- ❑ The circumcision evangel prepares a priestly nation.
- ❑ The uncircumcision evangel prepares a celestial body.
- ❑ Both operate under Christ.

The distinctions are therefore not random; they are structural.

Moving Forward

The existence of two evangels is not evidence of confusion within Scripture, but evidence of a larger and more detailed purpose than many readers have considered. One administration prepares the earth for righteous rule through Israel, while the other prepares a celestial administration through the Body of Christ. Together, both move toward the final heading up of all things in Christ.

Preparing for the Next Step

With the purpose behind the two evangels now established, we must return to the ministry of the Messiah Himself. If Paul's evangel is central to the celestial calling, we must examine more closely why it remained absent during the earthly walk of Jesus. The next step is to explore why Jesus preached the kingdom and not Paul's gospel.

Chapter 7: Why Jesus Preached the Kingdom (Not Paul's Gospel)

Introduction

At this point, a natural question arises: if the evangel of the uncircumcision, Paul's evangel of grace, is so clear and central, why is it not found in the earthly ministry of Jesus? Why do the accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John focus on the kingdom, the Messiah, and Israel, rather than on justification apart from works, the cross as the basis of salvation, or the formation of the Body of Christ? This is not a minor observation; it is a defining one.

Jesus' Mission Was Deliberately Limited

Jesus Himself defined the scope of His earthly ministry with a direct statement of limitation:

"I was not commissioned except for the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt 15:24)

This was not symbolic language. He did not come at that time to establish a universal message for all nations, reveal the full scope of grace, or introduce the Body of Christ. He came to confirm the promises made to Israel, present Himself as their Messiah, and proclaim the nearness of the kingdom. As Paul later explained:

"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." (Rom 15:8)

This mission aligns perfectly with the evangel of the circumcision.

The Message Was the Kingdom—Not the Cross

Throughout Jesus' ministry, the message remains consistent:

"Thenceforth begins Jesus to be heralding and saying, 'Repent! for near is the kingdom of the heavens!'" (Matt 4:17)

The focus was the kingdom, the Messiah, and Israel's response. What is notably absent is just as important as what is present. During this time, there was no consistent proclamation that His death would be the basis of salvation, that His resurrection would justify believers, or that faith in His finished work was the sole requirement. Those elements, central to Paul's evangel, were not presented as the message during this period.

What Did They Believe?

What were people required to believe during Jesus' ministry? The text makes it clear that they were called to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, and the promised King. For example:

"Now answering, Simon Peter said, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.'" (Matt 16:16)

This confession was affirmed as correct. It was not expanded at that time to include His death for sins or His resurrection as a requirement of belief. This defined the content of faith for that specific administration.

The Disciples Did Not Understand the Cross

Even more decisive is the understanding of the disciples themselves. When Jesus began to speak of His coming death, Peter began to rebuke Him (Matt 16:22). Later, we are told:

"And they understand none of these things, and this declaration was hid from them, and they knew not what was said." (Luke 18:34)

This cannot be overlooked. If the core message of that time required belief in His death, burial, and resurrection, the disciples would have understood it. But they did not; the meaning was intentionally hidden from them.

The Cross Was Not Yet Good News to Them

At the time of the crucifixion, the response was not one of understanding, but of confusion and despair. The disciples were scattered and afraid; they did not expect a resurrection. Theirs was not the response of those who believed "He is dying for our sins," but rather the response of those who believed their Messiah had been taken from them. At that time, the cross was not yet understood as "good news."

The Shift After the Resurrection

Only after the resurrection does understanding begin to change, and even then, the full meaning was not immediately developed. It is through Paul that the cross becomes the center of the evangel, the means of justification, and the foundation of salvation. Paul declares:

"...that Christ died for our sins... and that He has been roused..." (1 Cor 15:3-4)

This is not a restatement of the earlier kingdom message; it is a clarified and revealed message within a new administration.

Why This Matters

This explains the fundamental difference between the two administrations. During Jesus' earthly ministry, the focus was Israel, the message was the kingdom, and belief centered on His identity as Messiah. The cross was not yet proclaimed as the basis of salvation. Later, under Paul, the cross becomes central, grace apart from works is revealed, and a new administration begins.

A Progressive Revelation

This does not mean Jesus' teaching was incomplete or incorrect; it means that God's plan unfolds in stages. What was once hidden is later revealed. Paul describes this as a secret:

"...the secret which has been concealed from the eons..." (Col 1:26)

Not Contradiction—But Timing

What appears to be a contradiction is often a matter of timing:

- **Earlier:** The Kingdom is proclaimed to Israel.
- **Later:** Grace is revealed to the nations.

Each is true within its own administration. Confusion arises only when they are treated as the same message.

Moving Forward

Jesus' earthly ministry was not a failure to reveal grace, but a faithful fulfillment of His mission to the house of Israel. This progressive revelation shows that God's plan unfolds in stages, with truths intentionally hidden until the appointed time.

Preparing for the Next Step

If Jesus' earthly ministry was focused on the kingdom, we must ask how the cross fits into the narrative. The next step is to explore how the significance of the crucifixion changed as God's plan progressed from one administration to the next.

Chapter 8: The Cross: What Changed?

Introduction

By now, a clear distinction has emerged. During Jesus' earthly ministry, the message centered on the kingdom. Under Paul, the message centers on the cross. This raises an important question: **What changed?** The cross itself did not change. What changed was how it was understood, proclaimed, and applied.

The Cross in the Kingdom Proclamation

During the evangel of the circumcision, the cross is present, but it is not the center of the message. In fact, when it is first addressed publicly after the resurrection, it is presented in a very specific way. Peter declares:

"Let all the house of Israel know certainly, then, that God makes Him Lord as well as Christ, this Jesus Whom you crucify!" (Acts 2:36)

Here, the crucifixion is not presented as "good news," the basis of justification, or a finished work to be believed. It is presented as an accusation, a call to accountability, and a reason for repentance. The response demanded was: "...*Repent and be baptized...*" (Acts 2:38). This aligns completely with the kingdom message.

The Cross as a Stumbling Block

Paul later explains how the cross was perceived by those under the first administration:

"...we are heralding Christ crucified, to the Jews, indeed, a snare..." (1 Cor 1:23)

For Israel, the idea of a crucified Messiah was not good news. It was unexpected, offensive, and contrary to their expectations of a reigning king. This explains the confusion of the disciples during Jesus' ministry and their despair immediately after His death.

The Disciples' Perspective Before Revelation

Before the fuller revelation, the cross was not understood as a victory. It appeared to be a loss, a defeat, and the end of their hope. This is why:

- **Peter rebuked the idea** (Matt 16:22).
- **The disciples failed to understand it** (Luke 18:34).
- **They scattered at the crucifixion.**

Their perspective was consistent with the kingdom expectation; they were looking for a Throne, not a Tree.

Paul's Perspective: The Cross as the Center

With Paul, the cross moves from the background to the center. He does not treat it as an unfortunate event or a temporary setback. He declares it as the foundation:

“...Christ died for our sins...” (1 Cor 15:3)

He goes even further, stating:

“...not ashamed am I of the evangel, for it is God's power for salvation...” (Rom 1:16)

In Paul's letters, the cross is no longer an accusation against the killers; it becomes the means of salvation for the world, the basis of justification, and the ultimate demonstration of grace.

More Than Forgiveness

Paul's teaching on the cross goes beyond the forgiveness of sins; it addresses the condition of humanity itself. He explains that:

- **The old humanity is crucified** (Rom 6:6).
- **Believers are no longer identified with Adam.**
- **A new creation exists.**

This is not simply a covering of sin; it is a total transformation of identity.

The “Much More” of the Cross

The cross accomplishes more than what was previously understood. Paul reveals implications that were not part of the earlier proclamation:

- **Justification apart from works** (Rom 3:28).
- **Reconciliation beyond Israel** (Col 1:20).
- **A new Body without distinction** (Eph 2:14–16).

These are not small expansions; they are significant developments in divine revelation.

Why This Was Not Revealed Earlier

If the cross is so central, why was it not presented this way during Jesus' ministry? Because its full meaning had not yet been revealed. Paul states:

"...the evangel... is not in accord with man... but through a revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal 1:11–12)

He calls it "...*the secret which has been concealed...*" (Col 1:26). This indicates that while the event of the cross was present in the narrative, its full significance was intentionally hidden until the appointed time.

Not a Change in Truth—But in Revelation

It is important to understand that the cross itself did not change, and God's purpose did not change. What changed was the **revelation** and the **application**. During the kingdom proclamation, the cross exposed Israel's rejection. Under Paul, the cross becomes the solution for all.

The Resulting Distinction

This explains the difference between the two administrations. In one, the cross is referenced within a call to repentance; in the other, it is the foundation of salvation. In one, it is part of the narrative; in the other, it is the heart of the message. This is not a contradiction, but a progression.

Moving Forward

The cross is the ultimate pivot point of Scripture. While it was initially an accusation against a nation that rejected its King, it was later revealed to be the very foundation of salvation and justification for the entire world.

Preparing for the Next Step

The shift in the message of the cross points to a larger unveiling of truth. We move now to examine the unique source and content of the "secret" revelation given to Paul, truths that were hidden during the earthly ministry of Jesus.

Chapter 9: Paul's Unique Revelation (The Secret Made Known)

Introduction

By this point, the pattern is unmistakable. Jesus' earthly ministry focuses on Israel and the kingdom, and the early apostles continue that proclamation. Paul, however, introduces something distinct, centered on the cross and grace. This raises a necessary question: **Where did Paul get his message?** Was it a continuation of what came before? Was it a refinement of the kingdom message? Or was it something revealed directly to him?

Paul answers this question clearly.

Not Received from Man

Paul is explicit about the source of his authority and his message:

"...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." (Gal 1:11–12)

This is a direct claim. His evangel was not learned from the Twelve, derived from earlier teachings, or developed through religious study. It was revealed. This origin alone sets his message apart from any other.

A Revelation After the Ascension

This revelation did not occur during Jesus' earthly ministry. It came later, after the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. Paul's encounter on the road to Damascus marks the beginning of this shift. From that point forward, the glorified Christ, rather than the earthly Jesus, revealed truths that had been previously hidden from the world.

The Secret Previously Concealed

Paul repeatedly refers to the content of his message as a "secret" (or mystery):

"...the secret which has been concealed from the eons and from the generations, yet now was made manifest to His saints..." (Col 1:26)

A scriptural secret is not something that was partially understood or hinted at; it is something that was not previously made known at all. It was never revealed in earlier writings nor proclaimed during Jesus' earthly ministry. Now, however, it has been made manifest.

What Was Revealed

This unique revelation includes several key elements that were not part of the earlier kingdom proclamation:

1. **The One Body:** Paul describes a new entity, a joint body without distinction between Jew and Gentile. *"...that He should be creating the two, in Himself, into one new humanity..."* (Eph 2:15). This is not Israel expanded; it is a new creation.
2. **Justification Apart from Law:** While earlier teaching focused on the Law and Israel's response, Paul declares: *"...we are reckoning a man to be justified by faith apart from works of law"* (Rom 3:28). This is the Law set aside as a means of justification.
3. **The Full Meaning of the Cross:** Building on previous chapters, Paul demonstrates that the cross provides more than just forgiveness; it signifies the definitive end of the old humanity. *"...our old humanity was crucified together with Him..."* (Rom 6:6).
4. **A Celestial Calling:** Paul introduces a new expectation: *"...our realm is inherent in the heavens..."* (Phil 3:20). This is distinct from the earthly kingdom promised to Israel; it is a different sphere entirely.
5. **Reconciliation Beyond Israel:** Paul expands the scope of God's work: *"...to reconcile all to Him..."* (Col 1:20). This extends beyond national boundaries and points to a broader, universal purpose.

Completion of the Word

Paul makes a striking statement regarding his ministry: *"...to complete the word of God..."* (Col 1:25). This does not mean adding new books beyond God's intent, but rather bringing to light the final portion of God's purpose that was once concealed. The revelation is only "complete" when these hidden truths are fully disclosed.

Why This Matters

If Paul's message was revealed directly, was previously hidden, and contains elements not found in earlier scriptures, then it cannot be viewed simply as a continuation of the kingdom message. Instead, it must be understood as part of a distinct divine administration. Failing to recognize this distinction leads to the mixing of incompatible messages, confusion regarding requirements, and unavoidable contradictions in biblical interpretation.

A Consistent Pattern

When this revelation is acknowledged, a consistent pattern of divine progression emerges rather than one of disorder. The transition moves:

- From the **Kingdom** proclaimed to Israel to **Grace** revealed to the nations.
- From a system where the **Law** was involved to **Justification** entirely apart from it.

- From an **earthly expectation** to a distinctly **celestial calling**.

Not Replacement—But Expansion

It is important to clarify that this progression does not mean Israel has been replaced or that earlier truths are now invalid. Rather, it signifies that God's purpose is broader than previously revealed. A new administration has been introduced and additional truth has been made known, yet each administration remains valid and operative within its own specific context.

Moving Forward

Paul's message was not an expansion of what the Twelve taught, but a direct revelation from the glorified Christ. Recognizing this "secret" as a distinct divine administration prevents us from mixing incompatible messages and creates a consistent pattern of divine progression.

Preparing for the Next Step

With Paul's unique revelation defined, the full structure of Scripture begins to fit together. To see how this structure functions in practice, we must return to a detailed look at the earthly program focused on the nation of Israel.

Chapter 10: Israel's Program (The Earthly Administration)

Introduction

With Paul's unique revelation now established, it is important to return to what came before and clarify its place. The evangel of the circumcision is not incorrect, incomplete in a negative sense, or replaced by something "better." Rather, it is part of a distinct administration with its own specific purpose. To understand the full structure of Scripture, we must see Israel's program clearly, on its own terms.

A Nation Chosen with Purpose

Israel's role is not incidental; it is central within the earthly administration. Paul emphasizes the unique standing of the Jewish people:

“What, then, is the superiority of the Jew? ... Much in every way!” (Rom 3:1–2)

He further lists the specific assets belonging to them:

“Who are Israelites, whose is the sonship and the glory and the covenants and the lawgiving and the divine service and the promises...” (Rom 9:4)

Israel was chosen as a nation, given specific covenants, and entrusted with divine revelation to serve as the channel for God's earthly purpose. This establishes their preeminence within this specific administration.

The Covenants and Promises

Israel's program is rooted in literal, national, and earth-centered promises made to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These promises, concerning land, descendants, and blessing through a chosen line, are not redefined or transferred to another group. They remain tied to the physical nation of Israel.

The Role of the Law

The Law of Moses was given specifically to Israel to define righteousness and expose sin. Paul explains that “...*through law is the recognition of sin*” (Rom 3:20). Within Israel's program, the Law establishes standards and reveals failure, serving to prepare the nation for its future fulfillment.

The Kingdom Expectation

At the heart of Israel's program is the expectation of a kingdom that is earthly, visible, and national. It involves the restoration of the nation and rule under the Messiah. This expectation is consistent from the prophets through the ministry of Jesus and the early apostles; it is not corrected or replaced, it is simply delayed.

The New Covenant (Future Fulfillment)

The prophets spoke of a future covenant where God's law would be written on Israel's hearts, resulting in a transformed national identity. This covenant is not yet fully realized, nor has it been transferred to the church. It remains part of Israel's future within the earthly administration.

Israel's Temporary Setting Aside

Despite these promises, Israel's program has experienced a pause. Paul describes this as a partial, temporary, and purposeful hardening:

"...callousness, in part, on Israel has come..." (Rom 11:25)

This "setting aside" allows the nations to be addressed directly under the administration of grace, but it does not cancel Israel's ultimate role.

God Has Not Rejected His People

Paul addresses the status of Israel directly to ensure there is no misunderstanding:

"God does not thrust away His people..." (Rom 11:1)

He adds that "...*the gracious gifts and the calling of God are not to be repented of*" (Rom 11:29). Israel's promises, calling, and future remain entirely intact.

Future Restoration

Paul points toward a future reversal where "...*all Israel shall be saved...*" (Rom 11:26). This corresponds with the restoration of the nation and the establishment of the kingdom. This is not symbolic; it is the literal continuation of Israel's program.

Israel and the Nations

Within this administration, Israel holds a position of leadership, and the nations are blessed *through* them. This reflects the original design of God working through a chosen nation to reach the rest of the world.

Not the Body of Christ

It is vital to maintain the distinctions between these two entities:

- **Israel's Program:** National, earthly, and operating under covenant promises.
- **The Body of Christ:** A joint body, celestial, and operating under pure grace.

A Complete and Coherent Administration

When viewed on its own terms, Israel's program is structured and consistent. It explains the purpose of the Law, the ground for the kingdom, and the role of the Messiah. There is no confusion within this system, until it is mixed with the administration of grace.

Moving Forward

Israel's program remains a coherent and valid part of God's plan, centered on literal covenants and an earthly kingdom. Though currently paused during the administration of grace, its promises are intact and its future restoration is certain.

Preparing for the Next Step

Having defined the earthly program, we must now provide the same clarity for the second system. We turn to the present heavenly administration and the unique identity of the Body of Christ.

Chapter 11: The Body of Christ (The Heavenly Administration)

Introduction

With Israel's program clearly defined, we turn to the present administration revealed through Paul: **the Body of Christ**. This is not a continuation of Israel's program, an expansion of the earthly kingdom, or a spiritualized version of national promises. It is a distinct administration with its own identity, calling, and expectation. To understand it properly, it must be seen on its own terms.

A New Creation

Paul describes the emergence of something entirely new:

“...to create the two, in Himself, into one new humanity...” (Eph 2:15)

This is not a matter of a Jew becoming a Gentile or a Gentile becoming a Jew. Rather, it is both being brought into an entirely new entity: **the Body of Christ**.

No Distinction Within the Body

Within this Body, the distinctions that once defined religious and national identity no longer apply.

“There is neither Jew nor Greek...” (Gal 3:28)

In this administration, there is no national advantage, no covenant-based superiority, and no distinction in standing. All members are placed on the same ground: **pure grace**.

Justification by Grace Alone

The foundation of this administration is unmistakable:

“For by grace you are saved, through faith... not of works...” (Eph 2:8–9)

And:

“...to the one who is not working... his faith is reckoned for righteousness.” (Rom 4:5)

This is not faith plus obedience, law, or performance. It is **faith alone, apart from works of any kind**.

Not Under Law

Paul is explicit about the believer's relationship to legal systems:

“You are not under law, but under grace.” (Rom 6:14)

This defines the administration. In this framework, the Law is not the rule of life, the standard of righteousness, or the means of sanctification. Instead, life flows from the Spirit, and conduct flows from one's new identity in Christ.

A Completed Standing

In this administration, the believer's position is not progressive, it is declared and finished.

“...there is now no condemnation...” (Rom 8:1)

And:

“...you are complete in Him...” (Col 2:10)

There is no partial acceptance, no future qualification required, and no additional standing to be earned. The believer is already fully accepted, fully justified, and fully positioned in Christ.

A Celestial Calling

The hope of the Body of Christ is not earthly. Paul writes:

“...our realm is inherent in the heavens...” (Phil 3:20)

This is a fundamentally different expectation from Israel's earthly kingdom. It involves a heavenly destiny, a transformed body, and participation in a celestial sphere. It is not an entry into the earthly kingdom, but a distinct calling beyond it.

Seated Among the Celestials

Paul goes even further by describing a present-tense reality:

“...seats us together among the celestials...” (Eph 2:6)

This describes a positional reality rather than a future reward or a conditional promise. The believer's identity and "citizenship" are already established in the heavenly realm. **This position carries future functional responsibility; as members of His Body, we are told**

that "we shall be judging angels" (1 Cor 6:3), further distinguishing our purpose from those whose calling is strictly terrestrial.

A Necessary Reconciliation

Why would the Body of Christ have a heavenly calling rather than an earthly one? Paul provides the answer by revealing that the heavens themselves require reconciliation. He writes that our struggle is not against blood and flesh, but against:

"...the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials." (Eph 6:12)

Currently, the celestial realms are occupied by spiritual authorities in rebellion against God. By "seating us together among the celestials" (Eph 2:6), God is positioning the Body of Christ to displace these spiritual forces. Our future role in "judging messengers" (1 Cor 6:3) is not merely a symbolic honor; it is a functional necessity for the administration of the heavens.

While Israel is the instrument for God's government on the terrestrial plane, the Body of Christ is His instrument for the "summing up of all things in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth" (Eph 1:10, CLNT).

One Body, One Head

The Body of Christ is not a loosely connected group; it is a unified, organic whole.

- **Christ is the Head.**
- **Believers are the members.**

This structure is functional and complete. It is not a nation, a covenant community, or a kingdom structure; it is a unique, spiritual organism.

Not Israel

It must be stated clearly: **The Body of Christ is not Israel.**

- It does not inherit Israel's covenants.
- It does not fulfill Israel's promises.
- It does not replace Israel.

It exists alongside Israel's program, operating within a completely different administration.

A Distinct Administration

When all elements are considered, the Body of Christ stands as a complete and coherent administration characterized by a new creation, a lack of national distinction, justification by grace, freedom from the Law, and a celestial calling. It does not require Israel's structure, the Law's system, or the kingdom's framework to be valid.

Moving Forward

The Body of Christ stands as a complete and coherent administration, independent of the Law and national distinctions. As members of this new creation, believers possess a finished standing in Christ and a secure realm among the celestials.

Preparing for the Next Step

With both administrations now fully defined, Israel's earthly program and the Body's heavenly calling, we are ready to address the central issue. What happens when these two are mixed? This is where most biblical confusion arises, and the consequences of this blending are significant.

Chapter 12: What Happens When You Mix the Two Administrations

Introduction

By now, the distinction between the two administrations should be clear: Israel's earthly program and the Body of Christ's heavenly calling. Each is coherent, consistent, and purposeful. Individually, there is no confusion. The problem begins only when they are combined.

The Source of Confusion

Much of the confusion surrounding Scripture does not come from the text itself. Rather, it comes from applying passages to the wrong audience, combining different expectations, and blending distinct messages into one. When this happens, Scripture appears to contradict itself. However, the contradiction is not in the text, it is in the application.

Faith and Works Become Entangled

One of the clearest examples of this confusion is the relationship between faith and works. Paul states:

“...we are reckoning a man to be justified by faith apart from works of law.” (Rom 3:28)

Yet James states:

“...faith, if it should not have works, is dead...” (James 2:17)

When these are forced into the same administration, they create an immediate conflict. The reader is left wondering: Is faith enough? Are works required? Is salvation secure or conditional? But when each is placed in its proper administration, Paul speaking of justification for the Body, and James speaking of response within Israel's program, the conflict disappears.

Law and Grace Are Blended

Another major point of confusion is the relationship between Law and grace. Paul writes: “*You are not under law, but under grace*” (Rom 6:14). Yet many theological systems insist that the Law remains the rule of life or that obedience is required to maintain one's standing. This creates a hybrid system where grace begins the process but Law completes it. Paul directly warns against this:

“Having begun in spirit, are you now being completed in flesh?” (Gal 3:3)

Mixing these administrations results in legalism, guilt, and a constant state of uncertainty.

Assurance Is Replaced with Fear

Within the Body of Christ, we are told “...*there is now no condemnation...*” (Rom 8:1). But when kingdom warnings, intended for a different administration, are applied to the Body, believers are told they may fall away, that they must endure to the end to be saved, or that their standing is uncertain. This replaces confidence with fear. This happens not because Scripture is unclear, but because it is misapplied.

Identity Becomes Confused

When the administrations are blended, identity is lost. Many begin to believe they are simultaneously Israel, the Bride, and the Body. This creates confusion about calling and purpose. Scripture, however, maintains the distinction:

- **Israel:** A national people with an earthly role.
- **The Body of Christ:** A joint body with a celestial role.

The Gospel Itself Is Altered

The most serious consequence is the distortion of the evangel itself. Paul issues a severe warning:

“...if anyone is bringing an evangel besides that which you accepted, let him be anathema.” (Gal 1:9)

When law, works, or performance are added to grace, the message is no longer clear. The simplicity of faith is lost, and the finished work of Christ is overshadowed by human effort. What remains is a mixed message and a burdened system.

Why This Mixing Happens

This blending is not always intentional. It often stems from tradition, familiar teaching, or a sincere desire to unify all of Scripture. But good intentions do not remove the problem. When distinct administrations are treated as one, confusion is inevitable.

The Cost of Confusion

The consequences are not theoretical; they affect how people understand salvation and how they view God. Instead of resting in grace and walking in clarity, they struggle with performance, doubt, and inconsistency.

The Simplicity of Separation

The solution is not complex: **Recognize the administrations and keep them distinct.** When this is done:

- Faith and works are no longer in conflict.
- Law and grace are no longer blended.
- Assurance is restored.
- Identity becomes clear.

A Return to Clarity

This approach does not remove parts of Scripture; it places them correctly. Each passage retains its meaning, its audience, and its purpose. Nothing is lost, but everything becomes clearer.

Moving Forward

The cost of blending administrations is a distorted gospel, a burdened life, and the loss of assurance. By keeping these programs distinct, we restore the simplicity of faith and allow the intended force of every passage to remain clear.

Preparing for the Next Step

With the confusion addressed and the structure restored, one final step remains: to see how both administrations fit into God's overall purpose. We turn finally to see how these two callings are part of one unified plan to head up all things in Christ.

Chapter 13: God's Full Plan (Heaven and Earth Reconciled)

Introduction

At this point, the distinction between the two administrations is clear: Israel's earthly program and the Body of Christ's heavenly calling. Each is defined, consistent, and purposeful. But a final question remains: **How do these two fit together?** Are they separate plans, competing purposes, or parts of something larger? Scripture points clearly to the answer.

One God, One Purpose

The presence of two administrations does not mean there are two competing plans. It means one divine plan is unfolding in stages. God is not divided, reactive, or adjusting to human failure. He is intentional, working toward a defined end. Paul writes:

"...to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth..." (Eph 1:10)

This verse provides the master structure. God's purpose includes both the heavens and the earth, and both are brought into unity in Christ.

Two Realms, Two Callings

Within that singular purpose, two distinct realms are addressed:

1. The Earth (Israel's Program)

- The literal kingdom.
- The fulfillment of covenant promises.
- National restoration and earthly rule.

2. The Heavens (The Body of Christ)

- The celestial calling.
- A new creation without national distinction.
- A positional reality in the heavenly sphere.

These are not the same, but they are not in conflict. They are perfectly coordinated parts of a universal whole.

Reconciliation of All

Paul expands on the scope of this work:

“...and through Him to reconcile all to Him... whether those on the earth or those in the heavens...” (Col 1:20)

This confirms that the scope is universal and the reconciliation is comprehensive. Nothing is outside the reach of God’s purpose; every realm is included in the final heading up of all things in Christ.

The Role of Israel in the Future

Israel’s program is not abandoned; it is simply paused. It will resume exactly where it left off. Paul states:

“...all Israel shall be saved...” (Rom 11:26)

This includes the literal fulfillment of the covenant promises, the restoration of the nation, and the establishment of the earthly kingdom. Israel’s role in the earthly administration remains entirely intact.

The Role of the Body of Christ

The Body of Christ also has a defined, eternal role involving a celestial calling and a position among the heavens. This is not a temporary solution or a replacement for Israel; it is a distinct part of the overall plan to administer God's grace in the celestial realms.

Not Competition—But Completion

It is important to see that the two administrations do not compete, overlap, or replace one another. They complete the full scope of God’s purpose:

- **Earthly rule** is established through Israel.
- **Celestial administration** is established through the Body.

Both function under the headship of Christ.

The Wisdom of the Structure

What once appeared confusing now reveals a masterful design. The Law had a purpose, Israel had a role, the cross has infinite depth, and grace has universal scope. Each element fits within the larger plan; nothing is random or wasted.

Mercy to All

Paul makes a profound statement regarding the heart of this plan:

“For God locks up all together in stubbornness, that He should be merciful to all.” (Rom 11:32)

This reveals the underlying engine of the plan: humanity fails, God responds with mercy, and grace extends beyond all expectation. The result is not partial or exclusive; it is complete.

Clarity Restored

When the two administrations are recognized, contradictions disappear and the underlying structure becomes visible. Confidence is restored. Scripture no longer feels fragmented, tense, or confusing. It reads as:

- **Coherent**
- **Intentional**
- **Unified**

Moving Forward

God’s purpose is not divided, but comprehensive, reaching into both the heavens and the earth. By recognizing the distinct roles of Israel and the Body of Christ, we see the masterful design of a God who coordinates every stage of history toward a final, merciful reconciliation.

A Final Perspective

The goal of this study has not been to divide Scripture unnecessarily or to challenge tradition for its own sake. It has been to recognize what is already present in the text, to respect the distinctions God Himself has made, and to allow Scripture to speak for itself. When this is done, clarity follows.

Two administrations. Two callings. Two distinct roles.

One God. One purpose. All brought together in Christ.