



DOES THE CHURCH UNDERSTAND ISRAEL?

A HEBRAIC PERSPECTIVE

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An Hebraic Perspective
A Teaching by David Serle
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The words from Isaiah came to my mind, when it says, the Lord says, “But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.” When we pick up the word of God we are picking up something which is alive, for it is quick and powerful for those who like me were brought up on the Authorised Version. “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart of man.” [Hebrews 4:12, NKJV]. It’s an awesome thing to be handling the Word of God.

Ephesians chapter 1. We said right back at the beginning of yesterday evening, wasn’t it, we are not coming here with a cut and dried theology. Not a cut and dried outline of prophecy. I’m not here to tell you when the Rapture is going to take place. I wouldn’t tell you if I did know, and I don’t know. We have to be ready though anytime, we can’t tell. We are not coming with a pre-set scheme of things. I think I might lose one or two of you tonight in my setting out of my bigger model – but we’ll see!. What are we saying? We need a bigger perspective of what God is doing.

I quoted this this morning – it’s a hymn by Wesley actually, “O Lord, enlarge our scanty thought To know the wonders thou hast wrought!” We need this bigger perspective of what God is doing, and this emaciated gospel has robbed the church of much of its heritage. It has robbed us much of our understanding, that deep, rich understanding of Scripture. And the purpose of these conferences is to bring back some of that rich understanding that comes from understanding the Hebraic roots. We say Hebraic because ... well, what we really want to say is biblical, but if we said it was biblical everybody says, “Well our theology is biblical,” and everybody has the same perspective on it. So we have to use something which sets it apart; it’s a different way of thinking about it. So we need to know ... what we are considering together is a bigger perspective. Yes, we are not going to agree on the details. You are not going to agree with everything I say and you can come back at the *yeshivas* with some of the differences and understanding of some aspects, some perspectives. But what we want to do is to give everybody the tools to then go away and think about it more deeply. You need to think if your thinking has been challenged or has been channelled by Greek thinking; by Greek philosophical perspectives. In Colossians, Paul says, “Let no man take you captive through deceptive philosophy.” And there are many deceptive philosophies around, there are many wolves in sheep’s clothing, to pick up David’s point yesterday. Some of it is blatant and some of it is not so blatant. We need to know how to recognise it.

You all know, of course, that when they train bank clerks to recognise counterfeit notes, they don’t go through all the possible counterfeits, they get them to look at the genuine article. And they look and look and study the genuine article so that when they see a counterfeit they can recognise it instantly because it is not the genuine article. We need to understand the genuine article!

Ephesians chapter 1, reading from verse 3, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly

places in Christ; according as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself," notice it is, "according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace,in which he has made us accepted in the beloved." He has taken us into his favour in the person of His beloved Son. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, which he has abounded toward us in all wisdom and understanding; having made known unto us the mystery of his will," – this is one of the mysteries that can't properly be understood until [we understand the] place and purpose of Israel in God's plans. It is the mystery of His will, "according to his good pleasure which he has purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the administration of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom we also have obtained an inheritance," note the also there. Everybody focuses on the inheritance but in Paul's thinking, it is only an "also." Not an afterthought, but it is an 'also.' [continues reading] "being predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom you also trusted, after that you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

What's the purchased possession? Colossians chapter 1, and bear that question in mind as we read this passage. The answer is in here. Colossians chapter 1, verse 12. Towards the end of my message, if I get there, I hope to focus on verses 15 to 20 that Michael read to us in the prayer meeting this morning. He had no idea where I was going to be going with this message – the pre-eminence of Christ, the supremacy of Christ. Colossians chapter 1 verse 12 [edited] ["]¹²giving thanks to the Father who has made us fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. ¹³Who has delivered us from the power of darkness and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. ¹⁵Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created by Him and for Him. ¹⁷And He is before all things, and by Him all things are held together. ¹⁸And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. ¹⁹For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and ²⁰by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. ²¹And you, who were once alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now has reconciled ²²in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and unblameable, and unreprovable in His sight." What is the purchased possession? It is not a rhetorical question. What does that passage tell us what the purchased possession is?

Audience: "Israel and us?"

Christ is a Redeemer, he has redeemed us, but it is more than that. What is Colossians chapter 1 saying has been redeemed, has been reconciled?

Christine: "all things"

All things! Yes, all things, which includes the seed of Israel. It includes the church, but it includes the Creation. All things, and again here in verse 20 we get "reconciling all things". The phrase "all things" occurs seven times. Having reconciled "all things," he said, "and you." All things – and you. You are included in the "all things;" it is God's big plan.

Now we are going to have a look at God's big plan for Israel, that is where we are going. That's the point of this conference, isn't it? Romans chapter 15. If you want a one verse answer to Replacement Theology, it's here. I am grateful, again, to my friend, David Andrew for pointing that out. I said I was going to be speaking on that verse. He said, "The verse is the answer, it's the nail in the coffin to Replacement Theology." Romans chapter 15, verse 8, "⁸Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister (or a servant) of the circumcision" – that's Israel, that's the Jews", a servant of Israel – "for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers" – promises made to the Patriarchs – "⁹and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy." So you can't say verse 8, is the church being brought in. In that sense, it's Israel, number one, *and* the Gentiles. "The Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy as it is written 'for this cause I will confess You among the Gentiles, ¹³and sing to Your name. ¹⁰And again he says: 'Rejoice, you Gentiles, with His people!'". ¹¹And again: 'Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles! Praise Him, all you peoples!' ¹²And again Isaiah says, "There shall be a root of Jesse, And He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in Him shall the Gentiles trust." "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit."

In contrast to the standard model that we considered this morning, a phrase we have used a lot, and Replacement Theology, I started to think, okay, what is God's theology of Israel? We've all got our theologies, whether Replacement Theology or not. This is a huge subject, of course, and we are not going to go through it at this time of a Saturday night when you have all eaten so many profiteroles. You'll just want to get your head down and go to sleep. It is a huge subject but I just want to skim through Romans 9 to 11. I did hear someone do a full explanation on this with 68 power point slides!

Paul actually gives in outline, God's theology of Israel. Romans 9 verse 4, and what we need to notice about this verse is that it is *in the present tense*. So this means it applies now. It is after the cross, it is after Pentecost, it's in the present tense; he says of the Israelites, "⁴ ... to whom pertains the adoption, and the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; ⁵whose are the fathers and from whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.

"Who are Israelites" – to whom pertains the covenants. They belong – present tense – to Israel. The glory, the covenants, the adoption, the giving of the law, the service of God – present tense, Paul is saying that this is now. It's not *then* and it is not as some pre-millennialists like to say, in the future. Paul is saying there is something going on *now*. They still belong to them. So what's happened? Six times in the next couple of chapters he says, "they have been blinded, temporarily blinded,"

but just for a season, by God. Yes, you can say that is a response to their unfaithfulness, to their rejection of the Messiah. God has done that – temporarily set them aside, we can say. Some of them, not all of them, because Paul goes on then to argue – there is a remnant in chapter 11, verses 5-7; there is a remnant who is being saved through the preaching of the gospel.

This is Paul, Paul says, “I am part of Israel.” Has God cast aside His people? No! Has He rejected them for ever? No! If you listen to 80% of the church they say, “yes, He has: end of story”! He is not finished with them for ever. The remnant **now** is being saved through the preaching of the gospel [Paul is proof, Rom. 11:1]. But God has a much bigger purpose for them. We referred to these verses earlier, chapter 11, verse 25, when the fullness of the Gentiles comes in and so all Israel shall be saved. God has purposes. This is not the remnant being saved into the church. He has already spoken about them, in the earlier part of chapter 11. When he gets to the end of chapter 11 he says, “**all** Israel.” The fullness of the Gentiles will have been saved, and now all Israel. This is, of course, those who are elect, those who are chosen, those who God is calling into His kingdom, but He has a purpose for Israel as an ethnic group, and the land of Israel. That’s not in these chapters, but God has purposes for them. Because if the covenants and the promises belong to them, present tense, is God going to take them away from them 2,000 years later? No! He wants to bring them in. As I referred to earlier, verses 12 to 15 where Paul describes their coming in as being “riches.”

If the gospel going out is riches to the Gentiles, how much more, how much greater, the riches that come to, not just to Israel, but to the Gentiles, to the world, through their regathering. And he says, “if the casting off of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead. That could be taken, maybe if we go back to Ezekiel 37, and think of the bones, “Dem bones, dem bones”, coming together and being clothed with sinews, of having flesh, and then the breath of God comes in … That could be it, couldn’t it? Giving them the dead, life from the dead.

In the context of what Paul is saying, He has got a much bigger plan in mind, hasn’t He? He has riches from the Gentiles; their fullness will be magnificent. Steve will remind me - “val ha komer”, was it, or something, isn’t it, I can’t remember? [Audience: “Light to heavy?” “Kal v’hommer”] Yeah that one. He argues from the lesser to the greater, this is a standard Hebraic way of teaching. So, if the lesser thing is the blessing that comes through the Gentiles, how much greater God’s restoration through His chosen people. Why is He going to do this? Verse 28 chapter 11. Verse 28, “concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sakes, but concerning the election they are”, present tense, “beloved for the Fathers”, the Patriarchs. Present tense, ‘they are beloved,’ not were or will be’ but ‘are beloved.’ Why? Because God’s calling and His promises are irrevocable, based on Covenant. Going back to John’s message this afternoon, on ‘hesed’ covenant mercy – God has committed Himself, constrained Himself willingly, voluntarily, not out of need, not out of greed, He has constrained Himself voluntarily to blessing this people group. And, as the guy in ‘Fiddler on the Roof’ might say, ‘Lord, can’t you choose someone else now and again?’ – they have not enjoyed that election, that choice, but God’s promises and His calling are irrevocable.

In verses 25 to 27 here Paul answers five questions about this. The five questions, they are not on the slide, I haven't got a slide for this ... The five questions are:

- (1) When will they be saved?
- (2) Who will be saved?
- (3) Where will they be saved?
- (4) How will they be saved?
- (5) And who will save them? And then we will ask,
- (6) Why will they be saved?

(1) When will they be saved? Verse 25, when God finishes His purposes for the Gentiles. James, the brother of the Lord, refers to this in Acts 15 when he quotes Amos 9; a quotation which has been dramatically taken out of context, "raising up the fallen tabernacle of David". Firstly, that's not the point that James is making there. The point James is making there is that the salvation of the Gentiles is consistent with what the Old Testament has said. We have just had a whole lot of verses there, quotations that Paul made, haven't we? And he refers to Amos chapter 9 'in Him should the Gentiles trust.' That's the point he is making, but the whole thing has been turned and twisted with our Replacement, our Greek spectacles on, to mean the restoration of 24/7 worship in [IHOP] the International House of Prayer in America. 'The fallen tabernacle of David' – ah, that was the temple David built around the ark when the tabernacle was still at Shiloh or wherever it was. It wasn't Shiloh, was it? And he had 24 hour worship and Levites dancing round. So, those Jewish concepts have been Christianized; the prophecy has been robbed of its actual meaning and turned into a justification ... I won't describe any more about that, you can watch that online if you want. They are Livestreaming it ... I don't know how long for... they have tried to copy our good friends, the Moravians, who had a 100-year prayer meeting! ...That's brilliant. But to try and justify it on the basis of twisting that verse around, this is what happens. So, what is he saying? When will they be saved? to get back to the point. When God has finished His purposes for the Gentiles, when the full number has come in. The word 'fullness' there means the complete crew. The ship's waiting to sail, and it can't sail before the crew is complete. That's the sense. And 'comes in' is a reference to arriving at a destination. So that's why I say it is the completion of God's purposes for the Gentiles. The full crew has turned up now. 'Behold the Gentiles,' they say, but now God is going to save ... well,

(2) Who is He going to save? Is it the remnant? He has talked about the remnant earlier on, and if you discuss this with Reformed theologians and Replacement Supersessionists ... Well, they say, there has always only been a remnant, and in a sense, they're right. So is it only the remnant that is being saved here? Who was talking about this earlier when we were talking in the *yeshiva*. The word 'remnant' can mean a 'remainder.' It doesn't have to mean just a tiny group, it can be all the others. Remember "all Israel" came to Hebron to make David king. Or did all two million of them take an

excursion down to Hebron? A representative group represented all of them. So 'all Israel,' – so is it a remnant or is it the rest? Is it all Jews alive at the time? What about the Old Testament saints? The Old Testament saints' hope was to be resurrected and come into the Messianic kingdom. Is this the time when that happens?

You see, I'm being very Hebraic here, I'm only asking questions, I'm not giving you answers. Whatever your theology is of the End Times, it has to be able to answer these questions satisfactorily and leave you with a solution which matches the other Old Testament prophecies about the Messianic kingdom. In the Messianic kingdom there is clearly an earthly people called Israel. There is clearly a whole group of other earthly people called Gentiles because the Gentiles bring their riches to Israel. There is clearly a worshipping community of Israel in Jerusalem because the Gentile nations have to come up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles, Zechariah 14. If they don't they won't get any rain. If it was up to us it would be great if there was no rain! [laughter]. But in the context it means no food – judgment. So, whatever your theory about the End Times is, I have my own ideas on it, but I'm trying not to get them into my Big Model because I want the model to be something which is consistent with Scripture and doesn't include a particular End Time scenario; we don't want to get into End Times discussions at this conference because it's not part of the conference.

The conference is to get an overview of what God's purposes are, not into the nitty-gritty as such, as we actually won't know until it happens.

So, who is it? It's not the remnant – they have been included in the church. The remnant are already saved. Was Paul part of the church? Is the pope a Catholic? I'm not sure about that one. But I know that Paul was part of the church. So the remnant that Paul talks about in the early part of the chapter, *are* saved into the church. The one thing to note is, it is the same people who were rejected who are received back. It's the same people group who are rejected who are received back.

(3) Where will they be saved? Verse 26, 'there shall come out of Zion, the deliverer.' Not out of London, not out of Chicago, not out of Rome. He's coming out of Zion. Oh well, you say, Zion, of course, is the people of God, isn't it? It's just figurative! Well, I don't think Paul's readers would have thought that way. And I don't think the people in the Old Testament, where this quote comes from, there is a mixture of quotes. Isaiah 59, primarily, they wouldn't have understood that. If you had said Zion they would have pictured a particular hill just to the southwest, I think it is, of the Temple Mount. This was Zion, the *place* where God had His eye on. And Hosea chapter 1 verse 10, and [chapter] 3 verse 5, we are told 'it is in the place where it was said, 'you are not My people, but you will be called My people' in the place where it was said. Where was said, in Israel? The prophets operate in Israel. The only place where it was said, 'not My people but you are going to be My people.'

(4) How will they be saved? Verses 26-27 [Romans 11: 26-27], 'I shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. This is my covenant when I take away their sins,'

'Turned away from ungodliness,' only possible through the work of the Holy Spirit. Have you thought about the law? In one of our sessions today, I can't remember when, the Law was incapable of saving. All the Law could do, it could bring recognition of sin, condemnation for sin. 'Turning away from sin' is only possible through the work of the Holy Spirit. If you want references for that: Zechariah 12: 10-14 – where He pours out the Spirit of supplication upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And Zechariah 13, verses 1 and 2.

(5) Who is going to save them? Us? Who's going to save them? God Himself intervenes and saves them. In some way your theology of the End Times has to be able to fit that in. God Himself! 'I will – the Deliverer.' Messiah.

Romans 15:8, we read that, Jesus has become a servant of the circumcision, the Jews, for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the Patriarchs. So that's the five questions that are answered here.

(6) We can also now also ask, *why* will they be saved? How will they be saved?

When? Who? Where? How? Who will save them? And why will they be saved? Because – that brings us right back full circle – to God's purposes for the nation. What was God's purpose for the nation? To be a demonstration of the coming kingdom of God on the earth; God's kingly rule over a nation of priests. That was their purpose, that's what He was wanting to do. And we get that confirmed at Sinai, we get it confirmed in the New Covenant, we get it confirmed right the way through into the age of the Messiah.

I am tending to turn away from the term Millennium. There are so many overtones, so many Greek overtones. Well, actually, if it was Greek it would be 'Chiliasm'. That's the Greek word for 1,000. And the early church fathers were all chiliasts. Up to Augustine, they all believed in the Millennium. Anyway, we are not going back there. I want to call it 'The Age of Messiah.' Let's use that term, the Messianic Age. It's the start of the *olam ha'ba*, the End Times thinking in Jewish theology. The Jews don't have a theology as Steve keeps telling me.

They will be blessed in order to be a blessing. That takes us right back to Genesis chapter 12 – the Abrahamic covenant will be fulfilled in them, as the same people, it will be fulfilled on this earth in the Messianic kingdom. I can see no other way of understanding the Old Testament prophecy. And there was a question, posted up to say how did the prophecies of Isaiah fit into the standard model. The answer is, they don't. Or you just make them about us Christians – we get all the blessings and the Jews get all the curses.

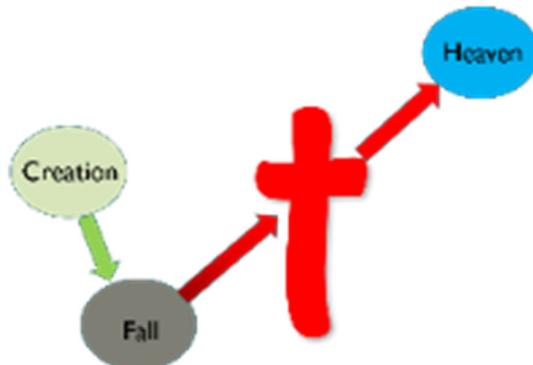
We are right back where we started this afternoon, in Genesis 12 – blessed in order to be a blessing. God always blesses ... have you noticed this? When you are blessed, when God gives you a blessing, it is usually through someone else. Blessings don't drop out of the sky, well, not normally. It is usually through someone else, and God's plan is to bring blessing to 'one' through 'another'. And it's 'another' who is distinct from the 'one'; that's the way God's blessings work. So, for those of us who are married, our blessings come through our spouse. You might not have noticed this but I think you probably noticed this – your spouse is not you, yeah? There is a difference and there is a dependency.

And the Bible seems to me to say in the Messianic Age, the Jews will be a blessing to the Gentiles. There's a difference, there's a dependency. Now the Gentiles will be a blessing to the Jews. This is the way God works. At this moment He is blessing the world through the church. I'm not sure that the world is blessing the church. This is God's plan. Jeremiah 30 verse 11, 'I am with you,' that's Israel, not the church by the way. 'I am with you,' says the Lord, 'to save you. Though I make a full end all the nations where I scattered you.' Jeremiah 30, verse 17, 'I will restore health to you,' that's Israel not the church, 'and heal your wounds,' says the Lord, 'because they called you an outcast saying 'This is Zion, no one seeks her.' God is defending the integrity of His Name, of His character, of His promises, of His purposes. And the church is pulling it down. Isaiah 60: 14-15, "The sons of those who afflicted you will come bowing to you and all those who despised you will fall prostrate at your feet...whereas you have been forsaken and hated...I will make you an eternal excellence.". King James the First didn't like that – he had someone put in the Tower of London for suggesting that the kings of the earth would bring their the glory and lay them at the feet of the Jews!

Zechariah 8:23, "In those days ten men of every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man saying, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you'." There's about 48 of us here grabbing the sleeves of the Jewish man in the corner over there. Because we've heard God is with him. We have seen it in his books.

So the question then becomes, how do we reconcile all of that with our standard model? Our standard model of creation – fall – redeemed – we will all go to heaven, sitting on clouds and playing harps. [Audience "Judging the 12 tribes of Israel."] True, but that's not in the standard model, is it?! This is the problem. The standard evangelical understanding of the gospel has excluded all of that – all the purposes of God for Israel we have been talking about.

Alex Jacobs of CFI quoted this in a pamphlet (it comes from "The Word Biblical Commentary by a chap called James Dunn): 'Paul's gospel is the good news of Israel's heritage and Israel's covenanted blessings. To break the link between the Old and the New Covenant is not to liberate the gospel, but to destroy it. For his gospel is nothing if it is not the continuation and fulfilment of all that God intended for and through His chosen people.'



How do you fit that into this?

The answer is that you can't. We need a new model. And this is the point where I might lose one or two of you here. Not because of the complexity of this, but you

may not agree where I am going with it! But that's fine. In Hebraic thinking we can agree to disagree. This is not all clear - we all of us "see through a glass darkly". We said right back at the beginning, we have got to come to this with the spirit of humility. We are not dealing with – this is a danger that I have – of dealing with it as a philosophical speculation – we study the Bible as if it was a textbook in biology or geometry or something. Pull out all these principles and write Q.E.D. at the bottom. We are dealing with something here which is the will, the intention, the heart of the Living God. If we were able – and we are not – if we were able to see God in all His glory, and if we were able to penetrate through that glory to see what is the essence of God, being God (Paul talks about the gospel of the glory of the blessed God – glory is the outshining of all His attributes – God is The Blessed God, He is the Happy God, and that blessedness, is what it means to possess all those attributes) – if we could get right through to the heart of The Blessed God we would find at the heart for the universe, there is a pulsating heart, pulsating with divine love for you, for me, for His people Israel, for the creation He has created. He is not some absentee, blind watchmaker. He hasn't wound everything up and just left it to sort out its own course. Jesus, still to this day, sustains all things by the word of His power. As a baby lying in the manger He was sustaining all things by the word of His power. Hanging on the cross – "all things are held together through Him." This is mind-blowing, this is just so beyond us. We are not looking at some neat little mathematical formula or even the pictures I've drawn. We are dealing with the beating heart of love, a furnace of love. God wants to draw us into His purposes.

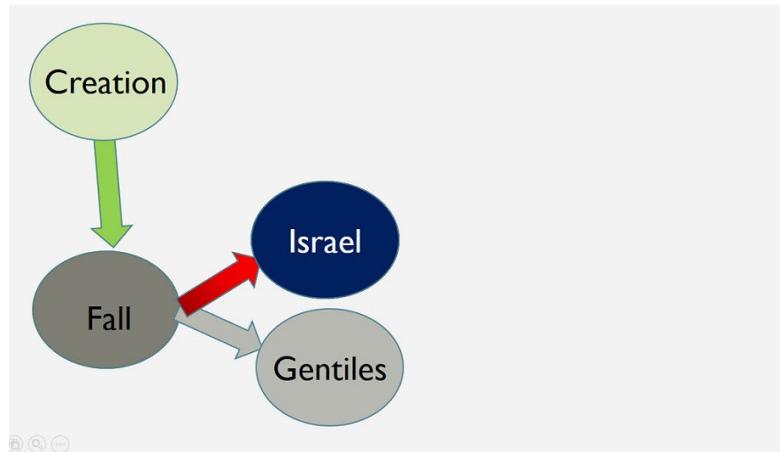
So what could our model look like? I also said earlier on – it is creation for consummation. God created something. He started something and like Magnus Magnusson, 'I have started so I will finish.' Even though the bell might have rung. The Reformed theologians have rung the bell!! No, He is going to finish – He started something. He is a God who finishes what He started. He is a God who keeps His promises. A God who is faithful. His character is bound up in His promises.

So we start off with Creation, we are going to head towards consummation.

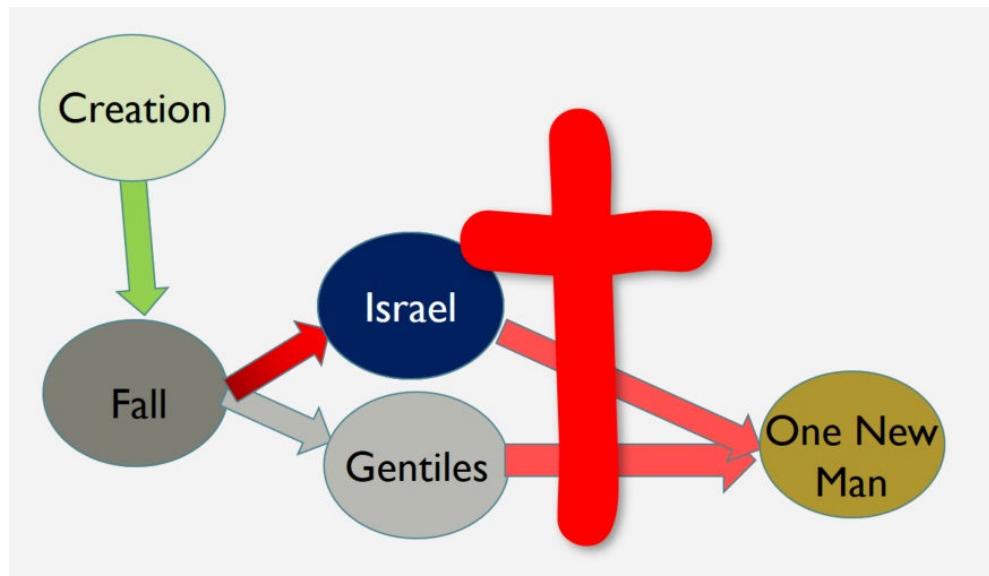


And then, of course, as we know, Creation was very good, we looked at that this afternoon. Sin came in and the enemy came in and Creation, along with man, fell. The ground was cursed on man's behalf. A virus has entered the system. The DNA of the universe has been disrupted by sin, not just human beings, not just what we're doing to the climate or whatever your view on that is. I don't know. Not just the way we've destroyed God's creation. The whole of Creation is actually affected by sin. So a mosquito bites you because he wants your haemoglobin, or she, they say the females do this, they want the haemoglobin to feed their eggs. They can get haemoglobin from red plants, but there's not enough of it because Creation is all topsy-turvy. And there

are far too many mosquitoes. So, if they can't get what they want they come and attack you. A very small example, but this is how Creation is spoilt. This is how Creation is subject to futility. Creation is disturbed.

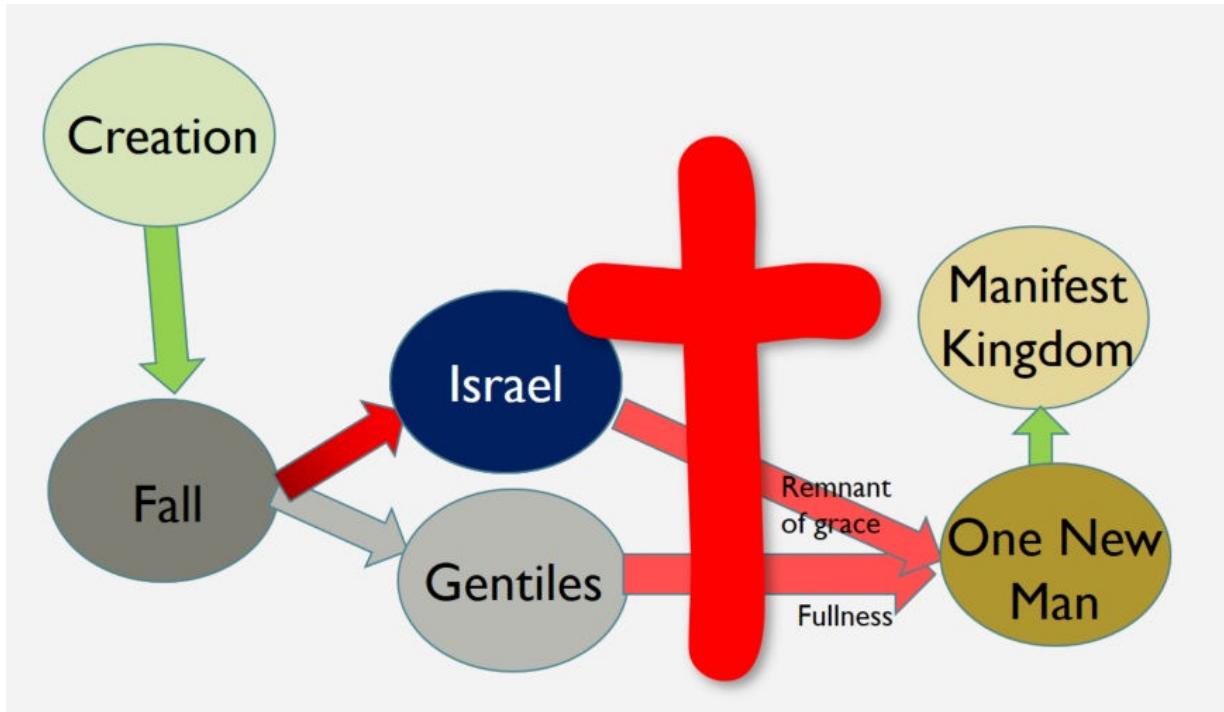


The next thing that happens in the Bible story is that God makes a covenant with a man called Abraham. An idol worshipper from Ur of the Chaldees. He takes him out of that and reveals Himself to him – the God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was yet in Ur of the Chaldees (Acts 7:2). Of course in creating Israel He created the chosen people, which means God created a people who aren't chosen, whom we now call Gentiles. Things didn't quite work out. They were working out to God's plan but from a human perspective they weren't, and eventually He has to send His Son, the Redeemer. And we read about that in Romans and Colossians.

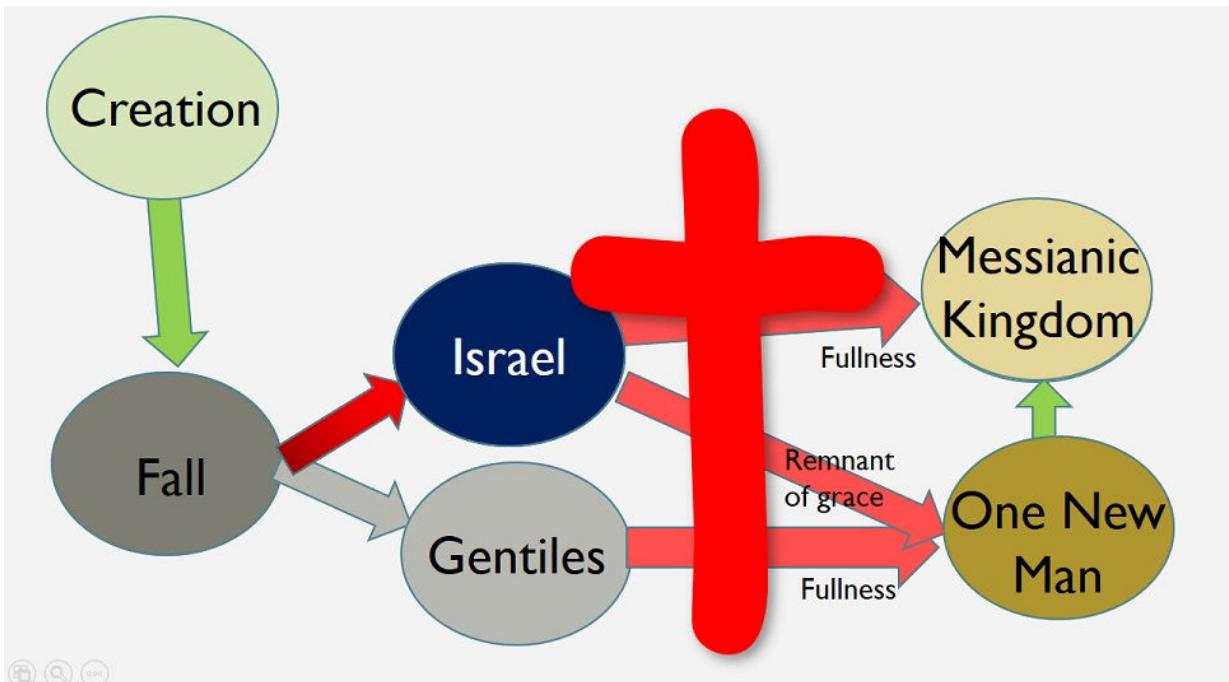


Through the Redeemer, we read of this in Romans, Gentiles and Jews are being saved. Remember in Ephesians we read about the One New Man – Jew and Gentile in one body reconciled ... Interesting, the reconciliation is *in* the one body not independently reconciled but brought together in one body. The One New Man is reconciled to God.

Jesus came preaching the kingdom, one of the aspects we discussed this afternoon: "Repent the king is coming," moving to something is consummated, something is coming together. Our gospel has to have something in it that shows where all this is going. We are going to what I have called here, the Manifest Kingdom of God.



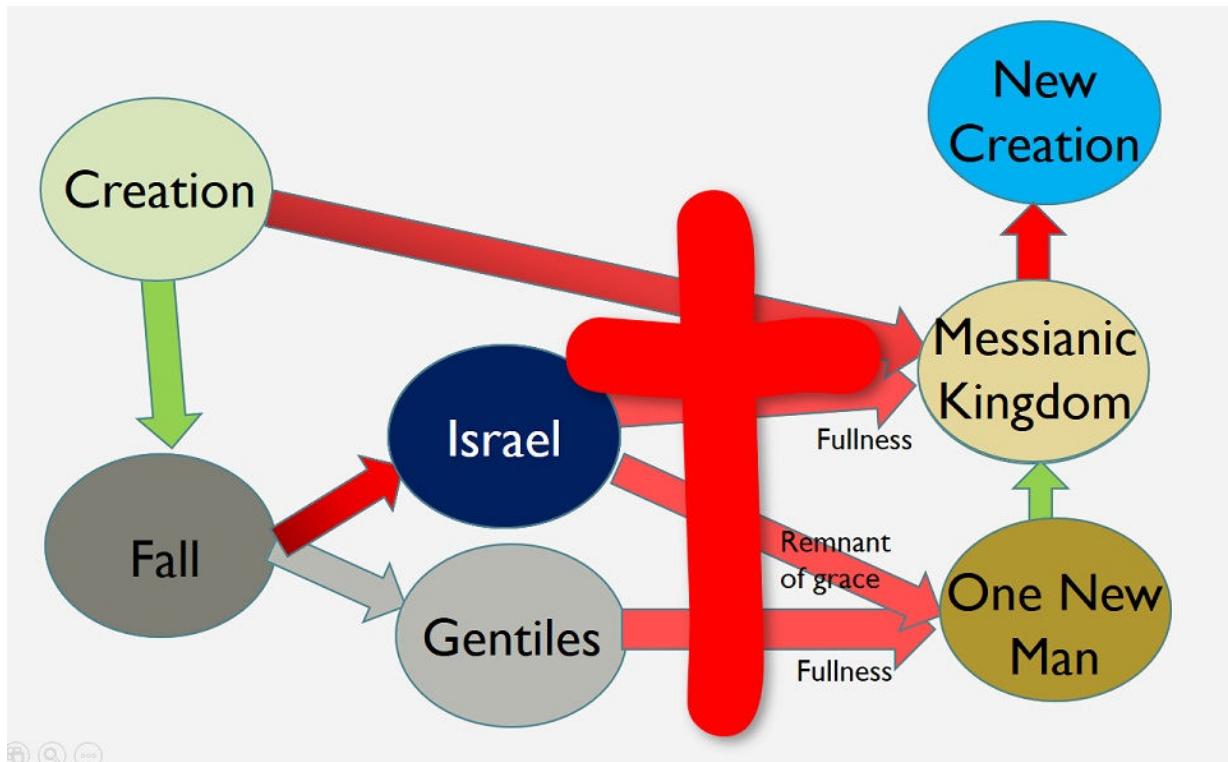
The kingdom of God that is within us is going to be seen, much more so than is seen now. It is only seen in part now. There is coming a time when Jesus will reign. So I called it the Manifest Kingdom because, as we read the New Testament, as we've read it in Romans 11:25, when God has called in the Gentiles, the fullness of the Gentiles (and a remnant of Israel is being saved at the same time), there comes a time when He brings in all Israel, the remainder – not the tiny little remnant, but **all** will come into the kingdom.



We discover actually that the kingdom that we are looking at is the Messianic Kingdom. And this is where I might lose one or two friends here. I think up to this point most Christian theologies would agree with this. They haven't got it in their standard model because of their disregard for Israel. But we probably could take almost everybody in the church, whatever their view on Israel is, whatever their view on the future of Israel, would come with us to this point: that the remnant of grace, the fullness of the Gentiles is the One New Man. And, as we mentioned we are a demonstrable kingdom maybe when Jesus comes back, when He wraps everything up, whatever. But we could probably take most people with us to that point.

But what we then, I would suggest, and I'm not going to be dogmatic about this, but I would suggest that we at least think that it may have to happen like this. That there comes a point when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in – God has saved them and the remainder of Israel. And we discover actually that the Kingdom what we have been talking about – in the church for 2,000 years – is actually a Messianic kingdom. It's the one that Jesus actually reigns on the earth for a set period of time. *Olam ha'ba* has come in, the “end of days” has arrived and the kingdom is seen manifested on the earth. Otherwise what do you make of Messiah's prophecies? What do you make of Zechariah?

Now God has a bigger purpose, a purpose for the land. Even in Revelation the Gentiles are coming up to Israel, bringing their fullness, in the end of Revelation, the last chapter in Revelation. We also discover in that Messianic kingdom, Creation itself is starting to be redeemed.



Isaiah 11, Isaiah 65-66 talk about the new heavens and the new earth. But in the new heavens and the new earth in Isaiah, the sinner is dying in his sins at 100 years old. He is not looking at the same, in the sense that idea, that John refers to the new heavens and the new earth wherein righteousness dwells. This is where the views of heaven and the Messianic kingdom merge. In the Old Testament the kingdom is an era which runs through into eternity in some way. Without going into the details of that – no time to do that anyway! So we see here that Gentiles, Jews, all Creation is brought into an age of blessing and it is all through the cross, isn't that what we read in Colossians 1? He is "reconciling all things to Himself through His blood shed on the cross"; all things coming into this age of reconciliation, the Messianic Age.

Then we can go off into heaven... well actually, I tell you, if you think you are going to go to heaven, you are going to be very lonely because in Revelation 21 and 22 God comes down to earth to dwell with His people. We're going to be living on the new earth. I sound a bit like a Jehovah's Witness at that point, but you have got to say this is what the Bible says. It doesn't say it in the way they say it. It doesn't mean what they say it means, but it is what the Bible says. God is going to dwell amongst his people on the earth. His servants will serve Him. You are going to be working in eternity. You are not going to be lying on a sun lounger basking in the light of the glory of the Lamb. Servants are for serving, God has got a job for you to do. You are in training for reigning now. We discussed that in one of the yeshivas.

I was going to say, how does all that fit into the various theologies, so I'm going to have to skip all of that – a whole page of notes. But I will just say that in preparing for this conference – I said ... I think I hinted earlier – I was brought up on Dispensational teaching. There are shades of Dispensationalists, everybody is tarred with the same brush. There is a lot in Dispensationalism ... The early church fathers were Dispensationalists. If you read the Scriptures and you start from the beginning you will see that God deals with mankind on a different basis at different times. Now,

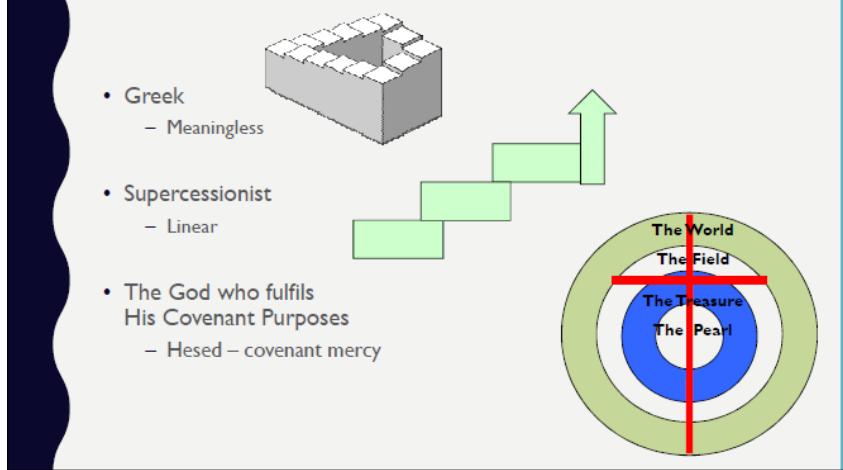
what are we saying? Now ultra Dispensationalism has gone off the scale somewhere. The early church fathers believed in the covenants that John [Bidwell] elaborated to us earlier – that's classic Christian theology.

Anyway, I was brought up under Dispensationalism. For the Dispensationalists, how does Israel fit into Dispensationalism? Israel was seen as the marker, the prophetic clock has started ticking. So the Dispensationalist, by and large, I hate to be tarring everybody with the same brush which I accuse other people of doing ... But by and large Israel was just seen as the next stage in prophecy. When the Jews come back to the land, therefore ... and we would say, this and this and this is going to happen and it might not be long. The Jews returning to the land was just a marker, and I've had to repent of that attitude. Just seeing Israel as a prophetic standard, a marker for the clock. I've had to repent of my attitude to the Lord – God is bringing them back for the purpose of blessing – that's a whole other topic we daren't go into. I would also say that Christian Zionists, people involved in Jewish roots, the Messianic Gentiles can also have an attitude of ... I come across people like this with an air of superiority – "Well, we know the truth; these poor people who are trapped in Replacement Theology: the 80% of the church which doesn't believe in God's purposes, but we've got the truth – people should come to us". There is the tendency to have a superiority [complex]. Paul's warning in Romans 11 to "boast not against the branches" applies to Christian Zionists as much as it applies to Supersessionists. We need to approach all of this with a spirit of humility because we just, at the end of the day, we can't be absolutely certain. All of these things we are interpreting from prophecy, we can have a conviction about them ... we can't be certain. I said to our Bible study group at church, that the only thing that I can be sure about is that I am saved. I can't even be sure that any of you are saved; it's not my responsibility. It's not your responsibility to judge other people whether they are saved or not. So we can be sure of those sort of things but when we come to talk about this stuff which is yet in the future and which Paul does say are mysteries, we daren't be dogmatic. We daren't stamp our foot and say, "This is how it is going to be." That puts you in some very dubious company – the Pharisees did that in the New Testament. They stamped their foot and said, "This is how it is ... this can't possibly be the Messiah." If Jesus was to come back tonight, would the world recognise Him? Would half the church recognise Him? I'm going to skip over all of that because I want to get to this last bit, to bring this to some sort of conclusion.

Martin Lloyd-Jones wrote a commentary on Habakkuk in 1943 or 44, I think it was, in the Second World War, "From Fear to Faith." I tried to get hold of a copy of it. I've read the introduction and I've got a quote from it but I haven't got the book. In his introduction he says, "The problem people are fearing so much is because history to them is a mystery", the mystery of history.

So I want to quickly look at three world views.

THE MYSTERY OF HISTORY



If we turn back to our friends the Greek philosophers, for them history was meaningless. It was just continually one circle, or if you like, a high followed by a low followed by a high followed by a low. It wasn't going anywhere. History was just meaningless. Because they wanted to escape from history, get into their heaven. Escape to the spiritual world. Work becomes something to be avoided, death was welcomed as a friend, an escape from this meaningless world. The Bible says death is an enemy, doesn't it?

Then there is the Supersessionist view (these are very sketchy views of history!), the Victorian idea of things are getting better and better and better. The Prime Minister at the turn of the twentieth century said, "On and on and on and up and up and up." Within 14 years we were killing millions of our fellow men. The Supersessionist one – if you've read the book, "Our Father Abraham" by Marvin Wilson; you will know the author whom I'm talking about anyway – he described this as the Rocket Model. As God's purposes unfold the whole rocket takes off first stage at Creation. Creation produces the second stage, which is Israel, so the first stage falls off and falls into the sea. Now, of course, they are recovering them and reusing them, but they got that idea from God. Creation has fallen away and it is no longer required. Israel comes along, the second stage of the rocket. Israel produces the Messiah. Having produced the Messiah God's purposes for Israel are finished, so Israel, second stage, falls away. And we get the third stage which lifts us into orbit and Jesus comes again and we all go to heaven. The Rocket Model.

What's the Hebraic view? I would suggest it's that God fulfills His purposes, His covenant mercy – *Chesed* – it's a wonderful word. How many times in the Old Testament? About 3,000 times? But it's covenant mercy; it's not just God as a grandfather just patting us on the head and saying, 'There, there, there.' It's God's covenant mercy, it comes out of His guaranteed promises to us. Yes, He dealt with all mankind at Creation, then He dealt with Israel and then He dealt with the church, but it wasn't that He just got lucky the third time. The first one failed, Adam failed, the Flood. Then the second one failed, the captivity and so on. And then they rejected

Jesus and so they are dealt with. The third time – ‘I’ll get it right this time.’ No! God has got this big purpose and it involves all of that. A little picture there taken from the parables of the kingdom in Matthew 13. The world is a field, the world is the first stage of Creation, if you like. The field is the world itself. In the field there is the treasure, Israel, and then God deals with the pearl, the church – all through the cross. He doesn’t stop in the middle. God then works outwards again, having bought the pearl. He’s purchased the field. He goes and digs the treasure up that’s hidden in the field, Israel. And then, having done that, He takes the whole field over, Creation restored – Christ reconciling all things to Himself, all things to Himself through His death on the cross.

The Supersessionist model is inadequate. The standard model is inadequate because it doesn’t deal with any of that, just progressively moving on, leaving Israel and the Creation ‘hanging’ in a non-consummated state – unfinished business!

The cross is the crucial moment but it is not the consummation. The Second Coming is not the consummation of God’s purposes. If you want the references ask me afterwards. The consummation of the Gentile church is not the consummation. That is the basis for consummation of God’s purposes for Israel, which is the basis for the blessing of the nations, and the consummation of the nations comes in the Messianic reign, which is eventually followed by the new heavens and the new earth – which *is* the consummation of God’s purposes. God walked with man in the garden of Eden, and in the new heavens and the new earth He dwells there with His people: “I will be their God and they will be My people” as John said this afternoon. The standard model leaves all of that out – the vindication of God’s purposes and the vindication of God’s character.

To quote Kendal Soulen again: “The gospel is the good news is of the king, the God of Israel’s coming reign. It proclaims in Jesus’ life, death and resurrection, the victorious guarantee of the completion of God’s purposes for the church, Israel, all the nations and creation and it tells us that Israel – the nation and the land - still has a significant part to play in that.” The good news for us is not just that God saves sinners but that He calls saved sinners to be part of His plan for consummation of all things. Quite how that works out, I don’t know. What I do know is that you have this treasure in earthen vessels, jars of clay. We have this glory within us and on the day when this glory is revealed – Romans 8, we looked at it this morning – then Creation itself is delivered from its bondage to corruption – the day when we are seen publicly manifested, with Christ at His Second Coming, as being alongside Him.

I do want to just read this from Derek Prince: “In the final pages of my book, ‘The Last Word on the Middle East’ I have endeavoured to momentarily lift the veil on this closing scene in the drama of Israel and the church.” This is the day when Jesus comes back in glory in the clouds to take His place and reign. “In this closing scene all the actors in the drama of establishing God’s kingdom on earth are brought together on stage. It is the same stage on which every previous crisis of the same drama has been enacted, Jerusalem and its surroundings. Angelic hosts, glorified saints and the preserved remnant of Israel take their respective places. But the central figure outshining all the rest, drawing them together round Himself is that of Messiah the King. Thus heaven will vindicate the confession that every Orthodox Jew has maintained through the long centuries even on his way to the stake or to the gas chamber: ‘I believe with perfect faith in the Coming of Messiah, and even if He tarries,

still I will wait every day for Him to come'. Thus too will heaven answer the prayer of the aged Apostle John on the isle of Patmos, the prayer echoed by every true Christian, as he closes his New Testament. 'Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.'

The climax of history is a mystery. It is still a mystery. Unfolding of God's plan for the universe: "eye has not seen, neither ear heard, neither has entered into the heart of man those things which God has prepared for them that love Him." BUT – people always leave the 'but' out, don't they? "But He has revealed them to us by His Spirit" [1 Corinthians 2:9-10]. *That* is why you are here, why I am here. I'm getting revelation as I am speaking. Are we, Foundations team, Saltshakers – are we there yet? No, we are not, we are working it out. We are working out what 'Hebraic' means. Are we willing to press on and to face the issues? It won't make us popular by any means. And it will set us against the tide of popular opinion and may lead to persecution. There could be people sitting in this room tonight who will be in jail for standing up for the truths of some of the things we have been saying, but God is calling us, in the words of the song, "Rise up church with broken wings". Which wings? Our wings have been broken by centuries of Greek philosophy. Does the church understand Israel and the Jews? No, but it can do if its eyes are opened to God's purposes for Israel and for all creation, by rolling back the Greek philosophical blinkers that have blinded Catholic and Reformed theologians for so many centuries. I said I don't want to talk about some of the new movements like the New Apostolic Reformation. These things are which are going on now!

Steve has written some 20 books – I think it is 19 today – and 20 is coming out in April. He has written 20 books on this. This is the tenth conference around the theme of 'Israel and the Church.' Some 400-500 people have been exposed to the Hebraic teachings that we have been embracing over the last five years – 2012 was the first conference, wasn't it?. But Foundations is not about conferences; Foundations is not about selling Steve's books (although that's very useful, but that's not what it is about). Even Freedom in the Spirit, the activities you've taken part in today. It is not about them. All of these things are part of the equipping of the saints for this ministry. If we just come together to have a nice blessed sort of time, enjoy our attitude towards Israel, enjoy Messianic dance, enjoy Messianic songs, whatever, just have a blessed experience ... As Steve says in one of his books, "Unless we are actually doing it with a heart of love for the people of Israel, it just becomes narcissism." We are back to that again, aren't we? So even people who love Israel can be narcissistic – "we are just having a nice bless-me time." Book 20 is about to come out and I want to remind you of this quote which we started off with earlier. "The Greek thinking that lies at the heart of 'the world' has been part of western society, including the church, for nearly 2,000 years now. Its roots lie deep within us. We are taught to think using the logical structures of Aristotle and we order much of our world according to the dualism of Plato. Then there are the variety of worldviews that owe so much to the band of Greek philosophers from ancient days, from Stoics and Hedonists to Epicurianists. This is our world, it's not going to change overnight. Neither are we.".

But God is calling us to actually start being agents of that change. You have come to a conference – I'm not preaching for information, I'm preaching for Transformation! That all of us, me included, that we be transformed in our attitude towards the Hebraic. It's not about me being blessed, getting my head filled with loads

of information. It's about loving God's ancient people – "touching His eye, touching the apple of His eye." Right in the centre of His eye. If you poked a finger in my eye you'll get a reaction. If we're poking a finger in the eye of God, we have got to be very careful. We are trying to get the heart of God – His people, Israel; His people, the church, and you ... there is just about 50 of us here, are part of that. We only represent about 10% of people who have had teaching about the Hebraic church over the years. Where is the impact? Where are we influencing our churches around us? I know one person who is here because someone else went home and lived out what they were hearing. Are we living it out or is it just something we do when we come away to a conference? We are being challenged. The wonder of the gospel is not that God saves sinners but He uses you, He uses saved sinners, for the transformation of the world. We can, we are not going to change instantly but we can. And we can with the Spirit's help. And Jesus promised, "He will lead you into all truth." And may He do it ... and soon!

SO HOW DID WE GET INTO THIS MESS? AND HOW DO WE GET OUT OF IT?

Quote from Steve's latest book "Livin' the Life" (available at F8!)

"The Greek thinking that lies at the heart of "the World" has been part of Western society, including the Church, for nearly 2,000 years now. Its roots lie deep within us ... We are taught to think using the logical structures of Aristotle and we order much of our world according to the dualism of Plato. Then there are the variety of worldviews that owe so much to the band of Greek philosophers from ancient days, from Stoics and Hedonists to Epicurianists. This is our world, it's not going to change overnight. Neither are we."

But we can make a start!