

THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO ABRAHAM

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INTRODUCTION.

Popular religion today talks about a "Gospel Age" as if the word "Gospel" refers to something that came into being in the New Testament. If this was so, then what would we do with verses that mention the gospel being earlier preached to Abraham (and to Israel), such as:

Gal. 3:7-9 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen (people) through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham.

And

Hebrews 4:2 For unto us was (is) the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

And

Hebrews 4:6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: (Num 14:22,23)

Obviously then, there is a connection between this Gospel mentioned in the Old Testament and that given in the New Testament, a connection commonly missed when speaking about "the Gospel". The "*as well as unto them*" shows this, as well as do the words "*preached before*", and "*first preached*". The first obvious question to ask is to whom was the gospel first 'preached'. Without any doubt, this was limited to Abraham and his offspring and thus to Israel, with Israel being the "*them*" and the "*they*" in the above verses. So indeed, the Gospel in both Testaments is addressed "us as well as unto them", that is, to the one and the same people. The issues of "law" and "faith" do not change this.

To try to avoid this, the denominations turn this about claiming wrongly that the "*children of Abraham*", and "Israel" have somehow changed into what they term "spiritual children or spiritual seed", or to what they call "The Church". They claim they have the Scriptures and long-standing traditions to prove this, but word-studies soon highlight the errors. For example, the term 'children' as *huios* is generally used of the offspring of men-[Strong's 5207]. When we continue on in the Galatians passage we have to realise that *ethnos* translated as "heathen" is exactly the same word translated "nations" in the same passage. It is also the same word that is transliterated from the Latin elsewhere as "Gentiles". The same word *ethnos* is also used of Israel in other places. It is only by ignoring these translation differences that commentaries can wrongly say things like, "These are the Gentiles who believe and become Abraham's spiritual seed". These translation problems cause doctrinal problems, particularly in regard to "The Gospel", as to what it is and to whom it applies.

In examining this passage further, "*And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen (people) through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham*", the words "*foreseeing*" and "*before*" tell us that the gospel preached to Abraham was identical to that of Jesus and the apostles, and that it is addressed to the same people. It is further proved to be the same since God gave it to Abraham as a promise which could not be disannulled by the Law or anything else-[Gal. 3:16-18]. In this latter portion of Scripture, it should be registered that in the phrase, "*And to thy seed which is Christ*", the word 'christ' should not have a capital "C" since the phrase can also be translated, "*And to thy seed which is anointed*".

Anyone who wants further proof about the Gospel being addressed only to Israelites should consider the verses below:

Acts 3:25-26 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with

our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

This is so specific as to whom the "ye" and the "you" are by race. The words "our fathers" determine this, as do "Ye are the children of the prophets". The "kindreds of the earth" can only be the descendants of those to whom the covenant promise was made. The word "kindreds" is *patria* (Strong's 3965), which is given as, " *a lineage running back to some progenitor, ancestry -a race or tribe*". In the Hebrew, the word "families" = *mishpachah* is translated 289 times as "families" and 9 times as "kindreds". It is used for genetic descendants such as the sons of Noah (Genesis 10:32) or to the relatives of Abraham (Genesis 24:38), the descendants of Abraham or specific families within Israel. "The earth" as *ge* refers to a country or a land enclosed within fixed boundaries, rather than the whole globe (and every race in it), as the churches want to make it.

In this verse, the "*having raised up His son Jesus*" is a key feature of the Gospel. Israel was promised this would happen-[Acts 3:22]. Paul highlights this matter of "he rose again" in his definition of what the Gospel is.

1 Cor. 15- Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel (euaggelion) which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures. (PSALMS 2:7, 16:10)

Paul is very specific as to whom the "you" and the "our" refers to. It is the Israelites who had "the fathers" of Israel- Please see 1 Cor. 10:1-4 where Paul is speaking to the same people. The words, "*according to the scriptures*" refer us back to prophecy made to Abraham and Israel. It is the same Gospel!

Another verse confirms this, where "Gospel" = *euaggelizo* is translated as "glad tidings"

Acts 13:32 And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus

Cornelius who was being addressed here, is used by many as an example of a so-called "Gentile" non-Israelite being saved. The place of birth, or citizenship tells us nothing about race. But this man's race can be determined by Scripture, even if he is not described as a "Jew" [or "Judean"]. In the AV of Acts 10:28, Cornelius is described as being of *another nation* but, the Greek text uses the word *alloghulos* which is a compound of *allos* [another of the same kind], and *phulos* [a kindred tribe (*phule*)].

Cornelius was a devout man, we are told, and he feared [the] God, therefore he was one who could believe. According to Vine, *devout* means *careful as to the presence and claims of God*. So Cornelius knew the Old Testament claims of God upon Israel. We do not find *devout* being used of people other than Israelites. Also, he feared "God" [Acts 10:2] and he prayed to [the]God and was heard by [the]God. "God" here is *ho theos*, the term used to denote the one true God. So, Cornelius was not a Roman polytheist! He was an Israelite!

These things show how neatly the Scriptures fit together about the Gospel applying to Israel only. The "*fathers*" (of Israel) and "*us their children*" confirm this. It is still the same promise that God made to Abraham's seed as a genetic line.

We find this proof continues when we examine other verses where the word *euaggelizo* = "Gospel" is translated as "glad tidings". In Luke Chapter one we have an account of an angel

speaking to Zacharias the Priest. This is what is recorded.

*Luke 1:16-19 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. (Mal. 4:6) And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these **glad tidings**.*

Here we find another clear statement as to whom the Gospel applies. Again we have "*the fathers*" and "*the children*". The "children of Israel" are said to be the sole receivers of the glad tidings. They are the ones Jesus turns to the Lord their God. The 'glad tidings' were what Jesus 'preached'. As the next verse shows, they were about the Kingdom of God. Jesus did not preach outside of the Promised Land.

*Luke 8:1 And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing **the glad tidings** of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him.*

Paul goes on to show that there is no difference between the Judean Israelites and the Greek-speaking Israelites in regard to being recipients. Both may call upon the name of the Lord and be saved.

*Rom 10:12- For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach **the gospel** of peace, and bring **glad tidings** of good things! But they have not all obeyed **the gospel**. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

This is another 'glad tidings' passage, which has *euaggelizo*, translated twice as "Gospel" and once as "glad tidings". It is called the "Gospel of peace". The next verse confirms that this peace was sent, "to the Children of Israel". None other than the seed of Abraham ever come into the picture.

*Acts 10:34 The word which God sent unto **the children of Israel**, preaching peace by Jesus Christ:*

This is a New Testament confirmation of the Old Testament verses, which tell us about God giving His Word to Israel only.

How long was it sent for? The next verse says it is forever! Who is involved? Abraham and his seed!

*Luke 1:55 He hath holpen (held fast to) his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, **to Abraham, and to his seed for ever**.*

Had this changed from being a promise made only to the twelve tribes in Paul's day?

Acts 26:6 And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly (together) serving God day and night, hope to come.

Has God rejected His national people Israel in favour of non-Israelite "believers"? No!

Rom. 11:1 I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.

There is no scope for a spiritual or figurative meaning.

The Gospel As Defined In Mark:

The gospel of Mark starts by identifying "the gospel of Jesus Christ" with the advent of John the Baptist as a fulfilment of the prophecy to Israel in Malachi.

Malachi 3:1: Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

Who did John minister to? "The messenger of the Covenant", is about God's covenant with Abraham.

Mark 1:5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

Jesus came preaching the same Gospel as John.

Mark 1:14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Now, what was this "Gospel" Jesus proclaimed? Jesus had not been crucified at that time, so something is missing from what is presented as being the gospel today. What are all the references to the Kingdom about in the New Testament? The word "Gospel" in the verse above is exactly the same as that in "*the everlasting Gospel*" of Revelation 14:6. The word 'everlasting' is *aionios* and so it continues without change for all time. Thus there cannot be such a thing as a "gospel age". Peter agrees with this when he associates the word "everlasting" with the gospel.

2 Peter 1:11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

In "an entrance" there is a "doing" factor here, just as there is in the "repent" message of John the Baptist, Paul and Jesus. Exactly what the "doing factor" is, is what the churches have come to ignore. Without digressing on the subject of repentance, any sincere seeker should study every reference to the subject, and no doubt he will then find himself at odds with the churches which are presenting "another gospel" with its associated curse-[Gal. 1:6-9]. We will come back to this matter of the curse, because it involves the matter of healing, something the churches look for but never find.

WHAT IS THAT EVERLASTING GOSPEL PREACHED TO ABRAHAM?

1 Chron 15:16-18 Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations; Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac; And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance;

Psalms 105:8-11 O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen. He is the LORD our God: his judgments are in all the earth. He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant: Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance:

One thousand generation has not passed yet, so the Covenant still stands, and despite Israel's failures, it will still come to pass. Most interested people have some idea of what is termed "The Promised Land", and how Israel was cast out of that land because of their disobedience. Israel has never fully and exclusively occupied that land, so God's oath must yet be fulfilled. Hebrews 8:6 tells us, "*Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first*

preached entered not in because of unbelief" and that God would make a new covenant to enable Israel to come to fully occupy that promised land again. Note the words, "*first preached*" again, which refers to Israel in the Old Testament.

Hebrews 8:8-10 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.

This limitation of the New Covenant to Israel (as two Houses) is another thing the churches disallow.

We find another, "*as well as unto them*" confirming the Gospel as still being the same as that given to Abraham's seed, Israel.

Heb. 4:2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

Jesus came to demonstrate God's promised mercy to Israel, to restore 'faith', or the conviction that the everlasting Gospel still applied. He provided a way of forgiveness to Israel, removing the "works of the law", that is the Levitical law, which had been added "*because of transgressions*"-[Gal. 3:19].

So when we consider again God's oath to Abraham and read of Jesus saying, "*I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also*", we have a clue as to where this promised place might be. The word "place" = *topos* = "*a place, any portion or space marked off, as it were from surrounding space*"-[Strong 5117]. It is the territory of the Kingdom whence we read, "*for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem*"-(Isaiah 2:3). The churches like to call the 'place' "heaven", but they cannot produce one single direct verse which says when a Christian dies he (or she) goes to "heaven".

It is unthinkable that Paul would teach another gospel to that of John the Baptist and Jesus, but somehow the churches do. Paul says:

Gal. 1:6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

The first "another" is *hetros* (different) whereas the second "another" is *allos* (the same). There is no change in the word "Gospel" here from that "preached to Abraham".

The churches hide this gospel and apply their version to everyone rather than to just the "lost". The word "lost" =622 *apollumi* are those Israelites who are lost to God's mercy and who are destined to punishment because of it. Only Israelites can be "lost". Jesus came to seek and to save these "lost" 'sheep'.

2 Cor.4:4 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.
The same word *euaggelion* is used for "gospel".

HEALING IN THE GOSPEL THAT WAS PREACHED TO ABRAHAM.

We have to consider here whether or not the prime message of healings is to individuals, or to the nation of Israel. Israel under God's judgment is poor, broken-hearted and blind, downtrodden and bruised, exactly as God had pre-determined as being their state under punishment. The Messiah came for a national purpose, namely to fulfill prophecy that He would have mercy on Israel and reverse the effect of God's judgment on Israel. This is told in the verse below.

Matt. 1:21 "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

The word here for "people" is *laos* which Strongs 2992 gives as, "a people, people group, tribe, nation, all those who are of the same stock and language". It is very hard to imagine the modern churches as being of the same stock and language. The prophecy this fulfills was made only to Israel. "God with us" means 'with Israel'. The word "save" = *sozo* = "restore to health". Jesus came to bind up the wounds of "his own" nation, of whom we read, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name"-[John 1:12].

The KJV says of Jesus' coming:

Luke 4:18-10 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

The NASB puts this way.

Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free those who are downtrodden,

In Isaiah 58:1, 59:10-11 it is "the house of Jacob" who "*grope like the blind*" and who "*mourn sore like doves.*" This was the condition of a nation under judgement. When we consider the context of the above passages, especially in Isaiah 61:1 from which it is quoted, that context is solely in terms of Israel. The words, "*To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion*" confines the application to Israel, as also does, "*Blessed are they that mourn*". The word "mourn" is translated 43 times as "beseech". We read in the Gospels about people beseeching Jesus for their personal healings. They wanted their portion of what was available for the whole nation. What is it they inherit? It is the Kingdom of Heaven; it is "the earth", which is that earth promised to Abraham. What Israel is freed from, is from being freed from the curse of the broken Law of God. John the Baptist was to turn the Children of Israel to the Lord "their God", or as Mary testified in Luke 1:55, "*He hath holpen (held fast to) his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever*".

Luke 1:71-72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

The basis of mercy is God's oath to Abraham. Throughout the Bible there is a consistent application and limitation to the seed of Abraham, a limited application that the churches will not accept. Perhaps they think that God was wrong to make an oath to Abraham. Perhaps they think that Simeon was wrong when he waited for "*the consolation of Israel*". There is little beseeching for mercy upon Israel in the Churches, even for mercy upon individuals. Maybe many beseech for healing, but not for mercy. Why? Because "*the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth*"-[Hab.1:4]. Do churches teach "*What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? God forbid*"-[Rom. 6:1-2]- or do they say, "God understands our humanness and loves us just the same"?

The question of whether or not the prime message of healings is to individuals, or to the nation of Israel is resolved by putting first things first. When Israel is healed from God's judgment, what is also reinstated is what Israel had before they transgressed God's Law. There is a

simultaneous happening as we read in Matthew 11:5 about individuals who beseeched Jesus. Then we read, "*The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.*"

This fulfils Isaiah 29:18-19, "*And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, that the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.*" The Churches create their own problems in that they want physical healings apart from the Gospel preached to Abraham. We see that they receive judgement for presenting "another gospel", instead. They try to get around, "*the Holy one of Israel*" by saying "Israel" now means, "The Church".

Gal. 1:8-9 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

CONCLUSION.

Need any more be said? God is sovereign. He made an oath to Abraham! To not believe God in this is to receive a curse; it is to become anathema to God.

Mal. 2:1-3 And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you. If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart. Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts; and shall take you away with it.

But what is there for those who believe the Gospel that was first preached to Abraham?

Isaiah 52:7-12 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD. For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward (or gathering).

Speaking of God's Covenant with Israel, and of "seed's seed", we read of them that turn from transgression:

Isaiah 59:20-21 And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.