

The apostle's use of the Old Testament.

- 1. The apostles constantly appealed to the Old Testament for teaching.
 - Issues included salvation, how we are to live, warnings about sin, our identity as the "body of Christ," and much more.
 - Our focus today is on O.T. blessings that now apply to us.

2. They pointed to:

- Prophetic statements about Gentiles (non-Jews) abandoning their false ways, and becoming followers of the true God.
- Old Testament Scripture that teaches us about Jesus, the Messiah, and what he has accomplished for us.
- What the Old Testament teaches about our moral obligations.
- Promises and blessings that were given to Old Testament Israel, which are now applied directly to New Testament Christians.

Examples of O. T. blessings that now apply to us:

1. We are recipients of the New Covenant and all that it does.

 In several Old Testament passages, God tells Israel that he is going to make a new covenant with them. The term "new covenant" isn't always present; but it is in this passage:

(Note the contrast God makes between the new and old covenants.)

"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

It will not be like **the [old] covenant I made with their** fathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt— a **covenant they broke**, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.

Jeremiah 31:31-32 (BSB)

• Here are the specific details of this covenant:

"But this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD. I will put My law in their minds and inscribe it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they will be My people.

No longer will each man teach his neighbor or his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquities and will remember their sins no more."

Jeremiah 31:33-34 (BSB)

In the New Testament, Jesus connects himself to the New Covenant. This is the reason we can be saved.

... after supper He took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you.

Luke 22:20b (BSB); also 1 Corinthians 11:25.

This new covenant was the focus of Paul's ministry:

And [God] has qualified us as ministers of a new covenant...

2 Corinthians 3:6a (BSB)

The book of Hebrews quotes the entire Jeremiah passage (which mentions Israel), applies it directly to us (followers of Jesus, the church) and tells us that Jesus made it possible:

[God] said: "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. ... [He continues here with the rest of the quote.]

Hebrews 8:8b (BSB); see chapters 8-10.

[We have come] to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant ...

Hebrews 12:24a (BSB)

2. As "God's people," we have a glorious calling!

 God told the nation of Israel that they were chosen to be a special people with a special calling:

"'[I] brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'"

Exodus 19:4b-6a (NIV)

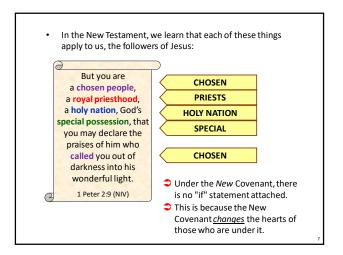
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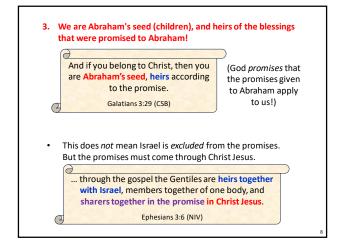
SPECIAL PRIESTS

HOLY NATION

Note the word "if," at the beginning of the second sentence. An obligation is attached to this statement.

This is because the Old Covenant <u>did not change</u> the people's hearts. They needed to trust God for that change – and few did.





Even before the O. T. distinction was made between Jews and Gentiles, Abraham was promised to be "the father of many nations."

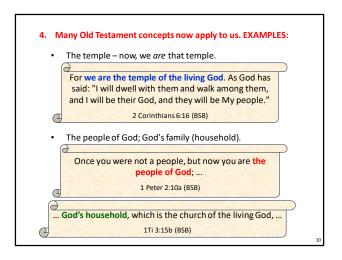
 In the Old Testament, we read about many nations that came from Abraham: Israel, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Midian, and the Ishmaelite tribes.

 In the New Testament, we discover that "many nations" includes all of us who are saved.

He is the father of us all. As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed ...

 Romans 4:16b-17a (NIV)

This "promise" issue is quite complex, applying also to Jesus – who makes possible its application to those who were originally "outsiders." (See Galatians 3:16.)

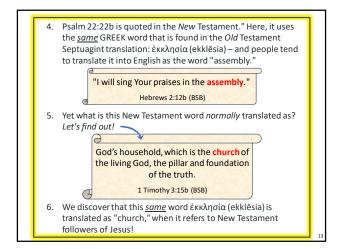


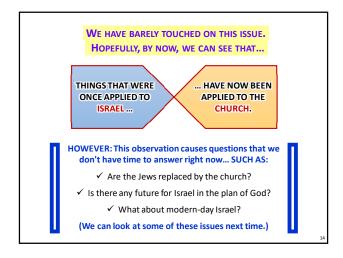
5. Terms used to describe the Israelites (as a group or nation) are now applied to followers of Jesus. Family, brothers (in the *generic* sense, implying "brothers and I will proclaim Your [= God's] name to my brothers ... All descendants of Jacob, honor Him! All offspring of Israel, revere Him! ISRAEL Psalm 22:22a, 23b (BSB) o. you, O people of Israel ... the entire family I rescued from Egypt ... Amos 3:1b (NLT) For both the One who sanctifies [= Jesus] and those N.T. CHURCH who are sanctified [= saved people] are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers. Hebrews 2:11 (BSB)

Even the word "church" or "assembly" was "taken over" from Israel!
 This is difficult to see, <u>only</u> because translators tend to consistently translate the concept as "assembly," when it applies to Israel, and "church" when it applies to followers of Jesus.
 Consider the following:

 I will praise You in the assembly.
 Psalm 22:22b (BSB)

 In this verse, the <u>Old</u> Testament original HEBREW word for "assembly" is: 'properties of the properties of the word: ἐκκλησία (ekklēsia). (This <u>Old</u> Testament translation, called the "Septuagint," was used by the early church.)
 This verse (Psalm 22:22) is quoted in the GREEK <u>New</u> Testament. Guess what word is used! LET'S FIND OUT!!





We can also learn about <u>JESUS</u> in the Old Testament!

THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHES US THAT <u>JESUS</u> IS GREATER THAN ANYTHING THAT WAS PART OF THE OLD TESTAMENT SYSTEM.

6. Jesus is like Moses... but is <u>superior</u> to him!

• Moses told the people that "a prophet" like him would come.

The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your brothers. You must listen to him.

Deuteronomy 18:15 (BSB)

• In the Old Testament, many prophets did come... but <u>none</u> were as great as Moses. The later prophets spoke about someone greater who would one day come after them.

• As time progressed, the expectation of this greater prophet increased. But it would be a long time before all the details would be understood.

When Jesus came, some recognized him as the one that Moses (and the other Old Testament prophets) spoke about.

Phillip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

John 1:45 (NIV)

Others wondered if he might be the one. At the same time, they didn't understand the relationship between "the prophet" and "the Messiah." (Jesus is both.)

On hearing his words, some of the people said, "Surely this man is the Prophet."

Others said, "He is the Messiah."

John 7:40-41a (NIV)

In the end, we learn that Jesus is the prophet ...

"Moses said, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from among your own people. ...'

When God raised up his servant, Jesus, he sent him first to you people of Israel, to bless you by turning each of you back from your sinful ways."

Acts 3:22a, 26 (NLT)

... and that he is also greater than Moses.

Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself.

Heb 3:3 (NIV)

(The book of Hebrews goes on to demonstrate this fact. It shows us how Jesus is greater.)

7. The entire O.T. sacrificial system points to Jesus. He is superior to it all – and he is the reason we can be saved!

• The Old Testament ceremonial activities were important... but they were mere "shadows" of the "reality" – which is Christ!

Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day.

These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

Colossians 2:16-17 (NIV)

• Christ is both priest and sacrifice in a much greater temple.

But when Christ came as high priest ... He entered the Most Holy Place [in heaven] once for all by His own blood, thus securing eternal redemption.

Hebrews 9:11a, 12b (BSB)

As a result, this Jesus would accomplish for us a salvation that Moses could *never* bring to us! (The Law could teach us what is right... but it could not change our hearts.)

Through Him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses.

Act 13:39 (BSB)

8. Ultimately Christ fulfills all that Moses and the prophets said would happen! This was the basis of Paul's message:

"I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen:

that the Christ would suffer, and as the first to

rise from the dead, would proclaim light to our

Acts 26:22b-23 (BSB)

people and to the Gentiles."

What is the significance of all this? Just like Israel... ⇒ We don't deserve these blessings; yet they have been "gifted" to us! ⇒ We should be aware that: ✓ With privileges and blessings come responsibilities and accountability. ✓ God doesn't give people blessings so that they can waste them and misuse them. (This applies to Israel... and also to us.) ⇒ This means we need to be careful about what we do with these blessings! From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and from him who has been entrusted with much, even more will be demanded. Luke 12:49b (BSB)



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