

**Critique of New Covenant Theology and “Abraham’s Four Seeds” by
John G. Reisinger**

By Wayne ODonnell, 12/30/23

This is a critique of Abraham’s Four Seeds (1998) by John G. Reisinger. John has been influential in the New Covenant Theology (NCT) movement that started among Reformed Baptist churches. Reformed Theology can be thought of as having two major parts: 1) Calvinism, or the so-called “Doctrines of Grace,” that say God sovereignly chooses most people to be tortured in hell forever, and 2) Covenant Theology that says the church is Israel. New Covenant theology keeps the Calvinism part intact, and improves Covenant Theology by jettisoning the Covenant of Works and Covenant of Grace, which aren’t mentioned in the Bible, and by saying under the Old Covenant, Israel was Israel, though under the New Covenant, the church is Israel.

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God’s Slight of Hand

New Covenant Theology teaches the Old Testament clearly promised the physical land of Canaan to the ethnic nation of Israel, but that the whole thing was actually a 2000 year-long sham.

Reisinger, Loc. 1637-1818¹, my underlining. I personally believe the NT Scriptures make the physical land to be a type of spiritual rest and the Israelite to be a type of a true believer. However, we could not come to that conclusion from anything in the OT Scriptures. The following description of a real physical land is the uniform message of the OT Scriptures: “And the Lord said to Abram, ... Lift up now your eyes and look from the place where you are northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all this land which you see, to you will I give it, and to your seed for ever. And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then will your seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it to you” (Gen. 13:14–17). ... [Genesis 15, verse] 18 again states the essence of that covenant to be the physical land. ... The text gives the specific boundaries of the land: On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, To your seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates... (Gen. 15:18). No mention is made of “the blessing to all nations” in this entire chapter. ... From Genesis 17 throughout the rest of the OT Scriptures, the land will occupy one of the central features of the covenant that God made with Abraham and his seed. Actually, it is the central feature. ... The Dispensationalists are right when they insist that the heart of the Abrahamic Covenant as expressed in the language of the OT Scriptures is the promise that “Israel will inherit the land of Canaan forever.” ... Only special revelation from God could allow anyone to spiritualize the land promise in the Abrahamic covenant. ... It proves nothing to quote Joshua 23:13 and similar texts to prove “all this has already been fulfilled.” In David’s day, long after Joshua 23:13 was written, the fulfillment of the ‘covenant of Abraham’ was still understood as future. ... “O you seed of Israel his servant, you children of Jacob, his chosen ones. ... Be you mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations;

¹ Reisinger, John G.. Abraham's Four Seeds . New Covenant Media. Kindle Edition.

even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath to Isaac; And has confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, Saying, 'To you will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance'" (1 Chron. 16:13–18). [Also Ps. 105:6–11] ... These words are plain. The promise of the physical land is just as much a part of the everlasting covenant that God made with Abraham as the promise "I will be their God and they will be my people." We may believe that the NT Scriptures spiritualize the land promise, but we cannot deny that the covenant itself, as given to Abraham, concerned the natural land of Canaan. ... I believe the Dispensationalist is wrong in not seeing that the NT Scriptures spiritualize the land promise, but the answer is not to deny what the Old Testament Scriptures clearly say. As one brother said, "Just because the Dispensationalist ties the horse up to the wrong hitching post does not mean that there is no horse." ... The physical land is without question the heart of the promise in Psalm 105:6–11, but salvation, or spiritual rest, becomes the heart of the fulfillment of the same promise in Luke 1:68–79 and other NT passages. ... [Luke] totally spiritualizes the words found in the OT Scriptures. ... There is absolutely no question that inheriting the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession is the heart of the covenant that God made with Abraham and also constantly told Israel to remember. ... Use the OT Scriptures to interpret the New, and you will get entirely different answers than if you use the NT Scriptures to interpret the Old.

Reisinger says, quoting Hodge ...

Reisinger Loc 1892. The promises which he had made ... were not made to the natural descendants of Abraham as such, but to his spiritual seed.

Reisinger blames Paul for the sham based on Galatians 3:15.

Gal. 3:16. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He says not, "And to seeds," as of many; but as of one, "And to your seed," which is Messiah.

John is saying that from the time of Abraham in 2000 BC, until the time of the New Testament in 35AD, no one could have understood what God was 'really' saying in the scriptures. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the twelve tribes, Moses, David, Jeremiah, indeed all Jewish people who knew the Lord and revered the scriptures would have believed that the physical land of Canaan was promised to the ethnic nation of Israel, and then, POOF!!! In the New Testament God revealed that all along he was promising spiritual rest instead of land, to the church instead of ethnic Israel.

John continues ...

Reisinger, Loc. 1834-1842. Dispensationalism keeps insisting that the faithfulness of God to keep his covenant is at stake in Israel inheriting the land of Canaan sometime in the future. This reasoning misses the whole point of the real promise. Suppose a father promised his son a car if he graduated from High School with a B average. The boy pictures in his mind a small compact. He really works and graduates with a B+ average. On his graduation day his father hands him a set of keys and says, "Your new wheels are in the garage." The boy rushes out to the garage trying to imagine which compact and what color awaits him. Imagine his amazement if he found a brand new \$30,000 sports car with every option imaginable. Would one expect the boy, in great disappointment, to go in to his dad and say, "Gee, I was expecting a Geo™ or an Escort™?"

But New Covenant Theology doctrine is more like if a father promised his son a car upon graduation and then gave his sister a hug instead (none of that crass materialism).

John says ...

Reisinger, Loc. 1842. Do you think that any OT believer, including Abraham himself, would trade what he now possesses in the presence of God for every inch of Palestine? ... If you were a Jew living in the celestial city, would you feel that God had gone back on his Word for giving you a heavenly city instead of the earthly city of Jerusalem? Would you lament his unfaithfulness to his unconditional promise made to Abraham?"

Yes, John, I would feel God had gone back on his word. I would be happy with what I got but this is bigger than what any of us receives. Based on your doctrine, God would be perjuring himself, which would be a very big thing indeed! If God was planning to give rest to the church instead of land to Israel, he should have promised that, rather than deceive all those generations from Abraham to Messiah. But of course the flaw is in John's doctrine, not in God. "God forbid. Yes, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, "So that you may be justified in your sayings, and may overcome when you are judged" (Rom. 3:4).

Interpreting the Old by the New

In the excerpts above we already saw that John thinks "Only special revelation from God could allow anyone to spiritualize the land promise in the Abrahamic covenant," (Loc. 1770) and he thinks we have that special revelation from God in the way the New Testament scriptures interpret the Old Testament scriptures. "Use the OT Scriptures to interpret the New and you will get entirely different answers than if you use the NT Scriptures to interpret the Old" (Loc. 1818). Interpreting the Old by the New, and not visa versa, is a basic tenant of NCT. But it's an unscriptural principle.

The correct principle is that neither the Old or New Testament is more or less important because both are God's word. And that if you're going to use one to aid your interpretation of the other, you've got to make sure you're not teaching anything in the New that would contradict the Old. To do so would mean you're teaching a false revelation. Paul and Jesus followed this principle.

Rom. 1:1. Paul, a servant of Jesus Messiah, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God, which he had promised before by his prophets in the holy scriptures.

Lu. 24:44-47. He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written [and as they were written] in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me." 45 Then he opened their understanding, so that they might understand the scriptures, 46 and said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Messiah to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance and remission of sins would be preached in his name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem.

Even the passing away of the Old Covenant and the priesthood of Yeshua was prophesied in the Old Testament.

Heb. 8:13. In that he said, "A new covenant" [in Jeremiah 31], he made the first old [by so naming it back in Jeremiah's time even before it was replaced]. Now that which decays and waxes old is ready to vanish away.

Ps. 110:4. The Lord has sworn, and will not repent, "You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

Of course, there are new revelations in the New Testament; mysteries that were previously hidden but now revealed, like about God's new creation, the church.

Eph. 3:3-6. By revelation he made known to me ... the mystery of Messiah, 5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men as it is now revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, 6 that the Gentiles would be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Messiah by the gospel.

But there can be no revelation in the New Testament that contradicts the Old, that says the Old Testament now means something else. So let's look at some of the key passages that Reisinger says change the interpretation of Old Testament scriptures, that "only special revelation from God could allow" (Loc. 1770) and see if they actually contain that special revelation.

Galatians 3

In the survey on the 5 Jewish Covenants we said the Abrahamic Covenant is an unconditional covenant, meaning God just said he would do it without any "if" preconditions, containing 3 promises: a land, a nation, and a blessing. The unconditional Abrahamic Covenant is further amplified by 3 additional unconditional covenants. The Land Covenant (Deut. 29) amplifies the land promise, the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam. 7; 1 Chron. 17) amplifies the nation promise, and the New Covenant (Jer. 31) amplifies the blessing promise. The Mosaic Covenant, also called "the Law," is a conditional covenant, containing many "ifs," that stands in contraposition to the Abrahamic Covenant, also called "the Promises."

Gal. 3:17-18. The covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Messiah [the Abrahamic Covenant], the law, which was four hundred and thirty years

after, cannot disannul, that it would make the promise of none effect. 18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

Paul argued in the previous verse, verse 16, that the Abrahamic Covenant promised the coming of Messiah.

Gal. 3:16. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He says not, "And to seeds," as of many; but as of one, "And to your seed," which is Messiah.

What in the world is Paul talking about? Doesn't he know "seed" in Hebrew, "zera" (זֵרַע) is a 'collective' noun. It's both singular and plural, like our word "sheep" (although "sheep" is a noun whose singular and plural are the same rather than a collective noun like a "flock"). One sheep, two sheep. To figure out what Paul's talking about lets look at some of the references to Abraham's "seed" in Genesis. Notice that the Gentiles only enter into the Abrahamic Covenant via the third promise, the blessing.

Gen. 12:1 Now Jehovah said to Abram, Get out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house, to the [THE LAND] land that I will show you: 2 and I will make of you a great [THE NATION] nation, and I will [THE BLESSING] bless you, and make your name great; and you will be a blessing, 3 and I will bless them that bless you, and him that curses you will I curse: and in you will all the families of the earth be blessed. 4 So Abram went, as Jehovah had spoken to him; ... And Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem. ... 7 And Jehovah appeared to Abram, and said, "To your seed (zera, זֵרַע, usually plural) I will give this land," and there he built an altar to Jehovah, who appeared to him. [The blessing isn't mentioned.]

Gen. 14:1 And Jehovah said to Abram, after Lot was separated from him, [THE LAND] "Lift up now your eyes, and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward: 15 for all the land which you see, to you will I give it, and to your seed (zera, זֵרַע, usually plural) for ever. 16 And I will make your seed (zera,

זָרַע, plural in context) as [THE NATION] the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then may your seed (zera, זָרַע, plural in context) also be numbered.”

Regarding the next passage, Genesis 15, Reisinger says, “No mention is made of “the blessing to all nations” in this entire chapter. I am sure you see the significance of that fact” (Loc. 1653). But unfortunately John doesn’t see the significance, that Genesis 15 refers to an ethnic nation on physical land, rather than to the spiritual blessings all ethnicities everywhere have in Messiah.

Gen. 15:3. And Abram said, Behold, to me you have given no seed (zera, זָרַע, usually plural): and, lo, one born in my house is my heir. 4 And, behold, the word of Jehovah came to him, saying, This man will not be your heir; but he that will come forth out of your own bowels will be your heir. 5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, [THE NATION] Look now toward heaven, and number the stars, if you be able to number them: and he said to him, So will your seed (zera, זָרַע, plural in context) be. 6 And he believed in Jehovah; and he reckoned it to him for righteousness. 7 And he said to him, I am Jehovah that brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give you this land to inherit it. ... And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him. 13 And he said to Abram, Know of a surety that your seed (zera, זָרַע, plural in context) will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them; and they will afflict them four hundred years; 14 and also that nation, whom they will serve, will I judge: and afterward will they come out with great substance. 15 But you will go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried in a good old age. 16 And in the fourth generation they will come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full. 17 And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace, and a flaming torch [the Angel of the Lord (the Word, pre-incarnate Yeshua) within the shekinah glory] that passed between these pieces. 18 In that day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, To your seed (zera, זָרַע, usually plural) [THE LAND] have I given this

land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates: 19 the Kenite, and the Kenizzite, and the Kadmonite, 20 and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Rephaim, 21 and the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Girgashite, and the Jebusite.

Gen. 16:7. And the Angel of Jehovah found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. 8 And he said, "Hagar, Sarai's handmaid, where did you come from and where do you go?" And she said, "I am fleeing from the face of my mistress Sarai." 9 And the Angel of Jehovah said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hands." 10 And the Angel of Jehovah said to her, "I will greatly multiply your seed (zera, זָרַע, plural in context), that it will not be numbered for multitude."

Reisinger also realizes it's important regarding Genesis 17 that "again we note the absence of the promise concerning 'blessing all nations;'" (Loc. 1671) but doesn't realize why.

Gen. 17:1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, Jehovah appeared to Abram, and said ... 2 I will make my covenant between me and you, and [THE NATION] will multiply you exceedingly. 3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, 4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with you, and you will be the father of a multitude of nations. 5 Neither will your name any more be called Abram [exalted father], but your name will be Abraham [father of a multitude]; for the father of a multitude of nations have I made you. 6 And I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come out of you. 7 And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your seed (zera, זָרַע, plural in context) after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, [THE BLESSING?] to be a God to you and to your seed (zera, זָרַע, usually plural, but here singular?) after you. 8 And [THE LAND] I will give to you, and to your seed after you (zera, זָרַע, plural in context), the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. 9 And God said to Abraham, And as for you, you will keep my covenant, you, and your seed (zera,

זָרַע, plural in context) after you throughout their generations. 10 This is my covenant, which you will keep, between me and you and your seed (zera, זָרַע, plural in context) after you: every male among you will be circumcised. 11 And you will be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it will be a token of a covenant betwixt me and you. 12 And he that is eight days old will be circumcised among you, every male throughout your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any foreigner that is not of your seed (zera, זָרַע, plural in context). ... 15 And God said to Abraham, As for Sarai your wife, you will not call her name Sarai, but Sarah [princess] will her name be. 16 And I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son of her: yea, I will bless her, and she will be a mother of nations; kings of peoples will be of her. ... 19 And God said, ... Sarah your wife will bear you a son; and you will call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his seed (zera, זָרַע, usually plural) after him. 20 And as for Ishmael, ... I have [a, not the, BLESSING] blessed him, and will [a, not the, NATION] make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes will he beget, and I will make him a great nation. [BUT NO LAND! Ishmael has no part in the Abrahamic Covenant] 21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this set time in the next year.

Gen. 21:19 And God said to Abraham, Let it not be grievous in your sight because of the lad, and because of your handmaid; in all that Sarah says to you, hearken to her voice; for in Isaac will your seed (zera, זָרַע, usually plural) be called. 13 And also of the son of the handmaid will I make [a, not the, NATION] a nation, because he is your seed (zera, זָרַע, singular in context) [but not because he has any part in the Abrahamic Covenant]. [Reisinger seems to think Ismael and Esau have a part in the Abrahamic Covenant. He says, "Notice carefully that the promises given to Abraham, in the early part of this chapter, are almost identical to the promises given to Ishmael in the later part" (Loc. 1658). But "almost"

doesn't count with God. They aren't the same promises or the same covenant.]

Gen. 22:15 And the Angel of Jehovah called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, 16 and said, By myself have I sworn, says Jehovah, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 that in blessing I will bless you, and [THE NATION] in multiplying I will multiply your seed (zera, זֵרַע, plural in context) as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and [THE BLESSING] your seed (zera, זֵרַע, singular in context) will possess the gate of his enemies; 18 and in your seed (zera, זֵרַע, singular in context) will all the nations of the earth be blessed; because you have obeyed my voice.

This is the only place in the promises to Abraham that God uses an explicitly singular "seed," referring to Messiah, and only to the Blessings to All the Families of the Earth promise of the Abrahamic Covenant, while the Land and Nation promises are plural, to the ethnic Jews. "Your seed (zera, זֵרַע, singular in context) will possess the gate of his (אֹיְבָיו, oivav) enemies, and in your seed (zera, זֵרַע, singular in context) all the nations of the earth will be blessed," Gen. 22:17-18. The ם (v) at the end of the word enemies (אֹיְבָיו, oivav) makes it "his enemies" instead of "their enemies." The apostles obviously didn't use the "Don't Sweat the Details," New Covenant Theology method of interpreting scripture because Paul based his whole doctrine of the singular seed of Messiah versus the multiple ethnic seed of Abraham on **ONE HEBREW LETTER IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**. Paul used the Yeshuaic "jot and tittle" method of interpretation: "Truly I say to you, 'Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle will in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled,'" Mt. 5:18. Paul the Apostle vs. New Covenant Theology: "We must not get our concept of the kingdom out of Joel and then demand that the events in Acts ... agree on a one to one basis. This method will easily prove that Joel's prophecy was not literally fulfilled at Pentecost and therefore it awaits a millennium fulfillment" (Reisinger, Loc. 1050).

Gen. 24:6. And Abraham said ... 7 Jehovah, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house, and from the land of my nativity, and who spoke to me, and who swore to me, saying, To your seed (zera, זֵרַע, usually plural) [THE LAND] will I give this land; he will

send his angel before you, and you will take a wife for my son from thence.

The Gospel

Thus, the gospel is only mentioned as being part of the blessings promise of the Abrahamic covenant.

Reisinger, Loc. 815. The true blessing of Abraham is nothing less than justification by faith (Gal. 3; 4 and Rom. 4).

Reisinger, Loc. 910. Dispensationalism clearly acknowledges that the gospel is one of the things being promised in Genesis 12:3. In a footnote explaining the Abrahamic Covenant, Scofield says: "In you will all families of the earth be blessed." This is the great evangelic promise fulfilled in Abraham's Seed, Christ (Gal. iii:16; John viii:56–58).

Reisinger, Loc. 1892, quoting Hodge. The promises which he had made, ... were not made to the natural descendants of Abraham as such, but to his spiritual seed.

Reisinger says ...

Reisinger, Loc. 146. The apostles preached the gospel as the fulfillment of the covenant that God made with Abraham. "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, And in your seed will all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. To you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:25–26).

But he should have said "The apostles preached the gospel as the fulfillment of the BLESSINGS PROMISE OF THE covenant that God made with Abraham.

Reisinger, Loc. 153. You and I, who believe the same gospel message today, enjoy the same inheritance of justification because by faith, we are "Abraham's true seed," and the true "heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:29).

But he should have made it clear we are heirs according to the BLESSING promise.

Gal. 3:6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. 7 Know you therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. 8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel to Abraham, saying, In you will all nations be blessed. [Reisinger quotes this at Loc. 7879] [not In you the Gentiles will inherit the nation or the land.] So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. 10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. 11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just will live by faith. 12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that does them will live in them. 13 Messiah has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangs on a tree: 14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Messiah; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. 15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannuls, or adds thereto. 16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He says not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to your seed, which is Messiah. 17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Messiah, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it would make the promise of none effect. 18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. 19 ... If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness would have been by the law. 22 But the scripture has concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Messiah might be given to them that believe. ... 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Messiah, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a

schoolmaster. 26 For you are all the children of God by faith in Messiah Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Messiah have put on Messiah. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Messiah Jesus. 29 And if you be Messiah's, then are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

When the Physical and Spiritual Will Combine in Perfect Harmony

Ethnic Israelites enjoyed the nation and the land, and suffered exile as a nation from the land even if unbelievers, but they can't experience the blessings aspect of the nation and the land combined in the Messianic Kingdom unless they are also born again.

Jn. 3:3. Unless a man is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Many Gentiles will see the kingdom of God and many Jews won't.

Lu. 13:28 There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you will see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. 29 And they will come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and will sit down in the kingdom of God.

We know from our studies on The Regathering of Israel how the nation of Israel will become both 100% ethnic Jews and at the same time 100% spiritually-justified believers. Not via the false Calvinistic way, by God causing all Israelites that survive the Tribulation Period to believe, but the way recorded in the scriptures by God making sure only believing Israelites survive the Tribulation Period.

Zech. 13:8. And it will come to pass, that in all the land, says the Lord, two parts therein will be cut off and die; but the third will be left therein. 9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they will call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, "It is my people," and they will say, "The Lord is my God."

Ezek. 20:34. I will bring you [ethnic Jewish people] out from the people [Gentiles], and will gather you out of the countries wherein you are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. 35 And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. 36 Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, says the Lord God. 37 And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: 38 And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they will not enter into the land of Israel: and you will know that I am the Lord. ... 40 For in my holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, says the Lord God, there will **ALL the house of Israel**, **ALL** of them in the land, serve me: ... 41 I will accept you with your sweet savor, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein you have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the [Gentiles] heathen. 42 And you will know that I am the Lord, when I will bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for the which I lifted up my hand to give it to your fathers. ... 43 And you will loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that you have committed. 44 And you will know that I am the Lord when I have wrought with you for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O you house of Israel, says the Lord God.

As Paul says ...

Rom. 11:25 For I would not, [Gentile] brethren, that you would be ignorant of this mystery, lest you would be wise in your own conceits; that blindness [PARTIAL] in part is happened to Israel, [TEMPORARILY] until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 26 And so **ALL Israel will be saved**: as it is written, There will come out of Sion the Deliverer, and will turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27 For this is my covenant to them, when I will take away their sins. 28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for

your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes. 29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

And then the physical will match the spiritual. Then the blessings promise of the Abrahamic Covenant will overlap the land and nation promises, because all the ethnic nation of Israel will be in the land of Israel and will all be regenerate through the blessing of the indwelling Spirit.

Zech. 14:20. In that day will there be upon the bells of the horses, "Holiness To The Lord," and the pots in the Lord's house will be like the bowls before the altar. 21 Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holiness to the Lord of hosts, and all they that sacrifice will come and take of them, and boil therein, and in that day there will be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts.

Acts 2

Acts 2:4-21. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. 5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. ... 14 Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said to them, ... 16 this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 17 And it will come to pass in the last days, says God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, and your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams: 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they will prophesy: 19 And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: 20 The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord come: 21 And it will come to pass that whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Peter, the eleven, and the devout men and proselytes hearing them, knew that someday Israel would experience a national justification that would result in Messiah setting up the Messianic Kingdom.

Zech. 12:9-13:2. And it will come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. 10 And I will pour on the house of David, and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they will look on me whom they have pierced, and they will mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son. ... 12 And the land will mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; [etc.] ... 14 All the families that remain [the remnant from the Day of the Lord and the Great Tribulation], every family apart, and their wives apart. 13 In that day there will be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

They also knew that, at that time, after the wonders in the heavens and earth, God would pour out his spirit on all Jewish flesh. Notice how Joel 2 matches with Zechariah 12. They both talk about the remnant, a mourning, an official organized national repentance, national forgiveness and salvation, and individual justification, and both place the occurrence in the same location, Jerusalem.

Joel 2:2-32. Let all the inhabitants of the land [i.e., Israel] tremble, for the day of the Lord comes. ... 11 For the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can survive it? 12 Therefore also now, says the Lord, turn you even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: ... 15 Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, 16 gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, [etc.] ... 18 Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people. ... 28 And it will come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions: 29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. 30 And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. ... 32 And it will come to pass, that whosoever will call on the name of the Lord will be delivered [saved]: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem

will be deliverance, as the Lord has said, and in the remnant whom the Lord will call.

Peter said to these devout Jews and proselytes who knew the prophecies, that the pouring out of the Spirit they were witnessing in Acts 2 is the same pouring out of the Spirit that will happen at the time of Israel's future national justification. He said it because it's true. The church experienced the filling of the Holy Spirit (along with the baptism of the Spirit) at Pentecost, and Israel will experience the filling of the same Holy Spirit at the time of their national justification. Peter wasn't saying Acts 2 was the time of Israel's national justification. The "wonders in the heavens" (Acts 2:30) like "the sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood" (Joel 2:31) will happen before and during the future day of the Lord. But there's no difference between the Holy Spirit being poured out on the church in Acts 2, and the Holy Spirit being poured out on Israel in the future. Peter said, "this is that" (Acts 2:4), instead of saying "this happened that it might be fulfilled" like God says about 14 times in Matthew. What better way to describe what was happening to those devout Jews and proselytes that were in Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost, than to tell them it's the same as what they already knew would happen, and were already looking forward to, when God would give national Israel a new heart to serve him.

So what does Reisinger say about this passage?

Reisinger, Loc. 1050-1057. We must not get our concept of the kingdom out of Joel and then demand that the events in Acts literally, meaning in natural language, agree on a one to one basis [he's referring to phrases like "your (Israel's) sons and daughters," and "wonders in the heavens," etc.]. This method will easily prove that Joel's prophecy was not literally fulfilled at Pentecost and therefore it awaits a millennium fulfillment. This is using the Old Testament Scriptures to interpret the New Testament Scriptures instead of the other way around. ... We must insist that our hermeneutical approach to the OT Scriptures be the same as that of the writers of the NT Scriptures. ... Instead of allowing the Apostles to tell us what the Old Testament prophets meant, both Covenant Theology and Dispensationalism make the Old Testament prophets establish what the Apostles have to say.

So the New Covenant Theology method of interpreting scriptures can be called the "Don't Sweat the Details," or the "Loosy Goosy" method of

interpretation. This is obviously not the apostles' method of interpreting scripture because we saw above that Paul based his whole doctrine of the singular seed of Messiah versus the multiple ethnic seed of Abraham on ONE HEBREW LETTER IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. "Your seed will possess the gate of his (אֹיְבָיו, oivav) enemies, and in your seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed," Gen. 22:17-18. The ם (v) at the end of the word enemies (אֹיְבָיו, oivav) makes it "his enemies" instead of "their enemies." Also, I doubt very much that NCT teachers don't give great weight to the tense, gender, case, word order, and every little detail in doctrinal passages in the New Testament. They just don't give God's words in the Old Testament the same reverence. Instead of starting with what they think Acts 2 says, and then changing what they admit is the straightforward Old Testament interpretation, they ought to use the Old Testament, along with everything else at their disposal, to arrive at what the apostles are saying. The correct interpretation of New Testament scriptures is often not the first thing that pops into a person's head based on their Gentile and denominational church background, especially if it supposedly changes interpretations that Reisinger says couldn't have been avoided before New Testament revelation.

Then Peter spoke of David's prophecies.

Acts 2:22-32. You men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, ... 23 him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain, 24 whom God has raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he would be held by it. 25 For David speaks concerning him, "I foresaw the Lord always before my face. ... My flesh will rest in hope, 27 because you will not leave my soul in hell, neither will you suffer your Holy One to see corruption." ... 29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Messiah to sit on his throne, 31 he seeing this before spoke of the resurrection of Messiah, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. 32 This Jesus has God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

Reisinger conflates David's prophecy concerning Messiah's resurrection to sit on David's throne, with David's prophecy concerning Messiah's ascension to sit at the right hand of God.

2 Sam. 7:12. When your days are fulfilled, and you will sleep with your fathers, I will set up [(קום, qum, raise up)] your seed after you, that will proceed out of your bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

Reisinger, Loc. 1119-1147. Peter clearly connected the resurrection and ascension of Christ with the establishment of the kingdom promised to David. When one compares the words of 2 Samuel 7 and Acts 2, it is impossible to miss that fact [Reisinger's hubris shows on almost every page of his book]. ... The Holy Spirit specifically tells us that when David spoke of "the raising up of Christ (resurrection) to sit on his (David's) throne" that David was expressly speaking of the resurrection and ascension of Christ that had just taken place (vv. 30, 31). Peter's words can only mean [hubris] that David's greater Son was to begin sitting on the promised throne at the time of Christ's resurrection and ascension. There is not the slightest hint [hubris] of a postponed future earthly throne in Peter's words. [Sure there is: "Sit on my right hand, UNTIL I make your foes your footstool."] If one takes Peter's words literally, he proves beyond question [hubris] that the Holy Spirit deliberately spiritualized the Old Testament prophecy of the Davidic kingdom. ... Further proof of this time factor can be seen in the words "while David was sleeping with the fathers." This can only mean [hubris] that Christ would sit on David's throne at the same time that David was still "sleeping with the fathers." [Despite Reisinger's quote marks, neither 2 Sam. 7 or 1 Chron. 17 say "while" David was sleeping, but merely after David's death.] ... The words "I will establish his kingdom" in the promise to David becomes "raise up Christ to sit on his throne" in the inspired interpretation by Peter. [No it doesn't. Peter is referring to 2 Sam. 7:12 and 1 Chron 17:11, "I will set up (קום, qum, raise up) your seed."] Again, it is

clear [hubris] that this event took place at the ascension of Christ. There is not the slightest hint [hubris] in Peter's words of any expectations of a future Davidic throne or kingdom that has temporarily been postponed. [Sure there is: "Sit on my right hand, UNTIL I make your foes your footstool."] ... The Holy Spirit could not possibly say any more clearly [hubris] that David's Seed is sitting on David's throne right now, [Sure he could, something like "raise up Messiah to sit on David's throne in heaven at this time," or "sit on my right hand on David's throne"], and that the kingdom promised to David has, in some sense, already been established at the ascension of Christ. ... It would be grasping at straws [hubris] to say that Christ now sits in heaven on a throne as Lord of the church, but he will later sit on a physical throne in Palestine as King of Israel. The NT Scriptures simply will not allow that distinction. [Hubris, hubris, hubris.]

Peter was talking about Messiah's resurrection in Acts 2:22-32, not his ascension. "You ... have crucified and slain whom God has raised up [resurrected], having loosed the pains of death. ... David, ... being a prophet, knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Messiah to sit on his throne, he seeing this before, spoke of the resurrection [not the ascension] of Messiah. ... This Jesus has God raised up [resurrected], whereof we [apostles] all are witnesses," Acts 2:23-32. There could never come a time when Jesus could reign on David's throne without a resurrection. All Peter was trying to prove at this point to the Jews and proselytes he was evangelizing at Pentecost was that Jesus wasn't still in the tomb. A dead Messiah can't ever reign without a resurrection. Peter didn't talk about the ascension until verse 33, to show there would be an interval of time between Messiah's resurrection and his return to reign on David's throne.

The main reason religious Jews today don't accept Jesus as Messiah is because he didn't set up the Messianic Kingdom. "We ... find that Rabbi Akiva, the greatest sage of the Mishna, was willing to accept Bar Koziba ... as the Messiah until he was killed. ... It was only when he died that they realized ... he was not the true Messiah," Talmud, MT, Kings 11:4. Peter was only trying to prove that although Jesus had been killed, he was no longer dead. He would hardly have tried to get into the issue of Covenant Theology versus New Covenant Theology versus Dispensationalism in the church's first ever evangelistic message to fellow observant Jews. New

Covenant Theologians are reading their own doctrines into the passage, and then claiming this should be our model for how the apostles interpreted scripture.

Messiah has always reigned. He reigned from eternity past as the Word, the Angel of Jehovah, and now as Jesus Messiah. "He must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet," 1 Cor. 15:25. But he has chosen not to intervene openly in the physical affairs of the world until the day of wrath. "Do you despise the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? But after your hard and impenitent heart you treasure up to yourself wrath, against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God," Rom. 2:4-5. He is currently sitting at the right hand of the Father's throne in heaven; but in the Messianic Kingdom he will "rule all nations with a rod of iron" (Ps. 2:9; Rev. 2:27; 12:5; 19:15) from David's throne in Jerusalem. "To him that overcomes I will grant to sit with me in my throne [per 2 Sam. 7 and 1 Chron. 17 it will be both Messiah's and David's throne], even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne," Rev. 3:21.

Acts 2:33-35. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has shed forth this, which you now see and hear. 34 For David is not ascended into the heavens, but he said himself, "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit on my right hand, 35 UNTIL I make your foes your footstool.'" 36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God has made the same Jesus, whom you have crucified both Lord and Messiah.

The Jews knew that Elijah had been taken up alive to heaven for the purpose of waiting there to return at the end times to prepare Israel to receive the Kingdom (Mal. 4:5-6). (John wasn't Elijah. Jesus said, "IF you will receive it, this is [i.e. would have been] Elijah, that was for to come," Mt. 11:14. That generation didn't receive it; so he wasn't.) Nowhere in Acts 2, or anywhere else in the NT, does it say, "Jesus is reigning on David's throne in heaven," or "David's throne has been transferred to heaven," etc.

The Messiah's foes will be made his footstool when God sends the Messiah to destroy the Antichrist's armies and set up the Messianic Kingdom. Do you really think those "Jews, devout men" (Acts 2:5), many of whom had spent their entire lives waiting for Messiah, the Son of David, to come and set up the Messianic Kingdom, would have interpreted Peter's words to mean, "David's so-called throne is actually

in heaven. There isn't going to be a physical kingdom or Messianic reign as you've been expecting." And if Peter had meant that, do you really think those "Jews, devout men" (Acts 2:5) would have just accepted it from him without many days of scripture searching and discussion, like the Jews in Berea?

Acts 17:10-11. Paul and Silas ... coming [to Berea] went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. [The Bereans that were searching the scriptures in Acts 17 were unsaved Jews, proselytes, and synagogue-attending Gentiles; not Christians double-checking their pastor, as being a 'Berean' is used nowadays.]

Peter finished his preaching with an invitation.

Acts 2:38-39. Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Messiah for the remission of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God will call.

Reisinger tries to connect the phrase "all that are afar off" here in verse 39 with Joel's prophecy of "whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved" back in verse 21.

Reisinger, Loc. 1065. Joel was talking about this present age when the gospel of grace would be extended to all men, including the "far- off" Gentiles, and Peter was saying, "That age has come." That prophecy is being fulfilled in front of your eyes." "And it will come to pass that whosoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved."

But Peter had finished talking about Joel before David and his invitation. So was Peter referring to the Gentiles here? There are two options.

Eph. 2:12. You [Gentiles] were without Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, 13 but now in Messiah Jesus you [Gentiles] who sometimes were far off are made near by the blood of Messiah.

Dan. 9:7. O Lord, righteousness belongs to you, but to us confusion of face, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, [Jewish people] that are near, and [Jewish people] that are far off, through all the countries where you have driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against you.

Remember Peter's audience had come to Jerusalem for Pentecost from far off places, "devout men, out of every nation under heaven, ... Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, ... and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians" (Acts 2:5, 9-11). Jesus had commanded the apostles ...

Mt. 10:5. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter not, 6 but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Later, after his resurrection, he told them ...

Mt. 28:19 Go ... and teach all nations.

But they didn't go. It took the Holy Spirit speaking through the prophets in Antioch Syria to finally get them started in Acts 13.

Acts 13:2. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Separate to me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereto I have called them.

Do you really think Peter was preaching to those observant "Jews, devout men" (Acts 2:5) that salvation was open to the Gentiles, as Gentiles vs. as Jewish proselytes, in Acts 2, before the assembly in Acts 15, and before it took a chapter of persuasion in Acts 10 to get Peter to preach the gospel to Cornelius? Even as late as Acts 20, mentioning preaching the gospel to the Gentiles was cause got people mad enough to attack and imprison Paul. "And [the Lord] said to me, "Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles." 22 And they gave him audience to this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he would live." 23 And ... they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air," Acts 22:21-23.

Luke finishes Peter's Acts 2 Jewish evangelism message with ...

Acts 2:40. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation."

Peter exhorted them to save themselves from that generation of Israel because it was that generation of Israel that had rejected Yeshua's offer of the Messianic Kingdom for their generation, and was now unknowingly awaiting the 70AD judgment.

Mt. 12:41. The men of Nineveh will rise in judgment with THIS GENERATION [of Israel], and will condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and, behold, a greater than Jonah is here. 42 The queen of the south will rise up in the judgment with THIS GENERATION [of Israel], and will condemn it, because she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. 43 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, ... 45 then goes he, and takes with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so will it be also to THIS wicked GENERATION [of Israel].

Acts 3

Peter's evangelistic message in the Acts 3 is in two parts:

First Half. Israel needs to repent [Mt. 3:2; Mt. 11:20-21] to receive national forgiveness for the Messianic Kingdom to be set up in a future time.

Acts 3:14-21. You ... 15 killed the Prince of life, whom God has raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. ... 17 And now, brethren, I know that through ignorance you did it, as did also your rulers. 18 But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Messiah should suffer, he has so fulfilled. Repent therefore, and be converted, so that your sins may be blotted out, WHEN the times of refreshing WILL COME from the presence of the Lord. 20 And he WILL send Jesus Messiah [Mt. 23:39, "You won't see me again UNTIL you WILL say, 'Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord'"], which before was preached to you [Matthew 1-10], 21 whom the heaven must receive UNTIL the times of restitution of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

Second Half. Individuals need to believe to receive the spiritual blessing of forgiveness of sins during this present time.

Acts 3:22-26. For Moses truly said to the fathers, "A prophet will the Lord your God raise up to you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall you hear in all things whatever he will say to you. 23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, will be destroyed from among the people." 24 Yes, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. 25 You are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, "And in thy seed will all the kindreds of the earth be blessed [the blessings promise was fulfilled in Acts, not the land or nation promises]. 26 To you first [the Jews still have priority even after the resurrection] God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

Reisinger, Loc. 146. The apostles preached the gospel as the fulfillment of the covenant that God made with Abraham. Ye are the children 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 (Acts 3:25–26).

Yes, the second part of Peter's message in Acts 3 is about the spiritual blessings for all the kindreds of the earth. It's not about the land or nation promise.

Reisinger, Loc. 1819. The NT Scriptures definitely [hubris] spiritualize the land promise in passages where one would expect to find it reiterated. This is clearly illustrated [hubris] in every sermon in the book of Acts. ... The writers of the NT Scriptures always point a Jew back to the Cross and Pentecost as the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham (Acts 3:24–26). They never once point him forward with a future land promise.

No, the NT scriptures never spiritualize anything. They interpret the part of the Abrahamic Covenant that was spiritual as spiritual, and the parts

that were physical as physical - a good method of interpretation, versus interpreting physical things as spiritual. Reisinger is right that "Acts 3:24-26" are about the spiritual blessing of individual forgiveness of sin. But he's not right that Acts 3 anywhere "spiritualize[s] the land promise, or that the NT "never once point [a Jew] forward with a future land promise." Didn't he read the first half of Peter's sermon? "The times of refreshing **WILL COME** from the presence of the Lord. And he **WILL SEND** Jesus Messiah, ... 21 whom the heaven must receive **UNTIL** the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began," Acts 3:18-21. Where is this going to happen when God sends Jesus back to earth for "the times of the restitution of all things" if not to the land of Israel, just as all the prophets said?

Reisinger, Loc. 807. Ye are the children of ... the covenant ... saying to 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 everyone of you from his iniquities (Acts 3:25, 26). ... The heart of the blessing promised to Abraham in Genesis 12:3 dealt with the gospel of salvation by grace through faith, or "turning away everyone of you from his iniquities." The true blessing of Abraham is nothing less than justification by faith. ... There is not the slightest hint [hubris] in these verses of any blessing promised to Abraham having been postponed until some later date.

Yes, again, Acts 3:25-26 are about the blessings promise of the Abramic Covenant which includes spiritual justification and sanctification. But, there's way more than a "hint ... of any blessing promised to Abraham having been postponed until some later date" if you also look at the first half of Peter's message. "He will send Jesus Messiah, ... whom the heaven must receive **UNTIL** the times of restitution of all things," Acts 3:20-21. (Reisinger must not have looked too hard to not even see "the slightest hint," or deal with the first half of Peter's message.)

Reisinger, Loc. 835. It seems obvious [hubris] that Dispensationalism cannot fit Peter's spiritualized interpretation of the promises made to Abraham and his seed into their system. Dispensationalism is forced to put into the future what Peter, in this text, specifically says has already been fulfilled. ... It is impossible [hubris] to take Peter's words literally and

then fit the 'postponed kingdom' view into this passage of Scripture.

Well, take a look at the first half of Peter's sermon, John.

Reisinger, Loc. 2305. Dispensationalism does not see that the Body of Christ is the very thing God has been working toward ever since the Fall. It does not realize that the great "days of the Messiah" prophesied by all of the OT prophets are not something to be experienced in a future earthly millennium. The very days in which we live are the days of which the prophets spoke (Acts 3:24–26).

Yes, Acts 3:24-26 are talking about "these days" (Acts 3:24), "the very days in which we live" (Reisinger, above). But the future earthy millennium is clearly referenced in the first half of Peter's message. What else would be an unforced interpretation of "the times of refreshing will come from the presence of the Lord. And he will send Jesus Messiah, ... whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began," in the context of a Jewish believer preaching to the devout OT believing Jews in the temple?

Luke 1

Lu. 1:67-79. Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, 68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he has visited and redeemed his people, 69 And has raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; 70 As he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began, 71 That we would be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; 72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

73 The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, 74 That he would grant to us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, 75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. 76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest: for you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; 77 To give knowledge of salvation to his people by the remission of their sins, 78 Through the tender mercy

of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high has visited us, 79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Reisinger, Loc. 1346. It would be difficult indeed to get the Dispensational view of a 'postponed earthly kingdom' into Luke's words.

At the time of Zacharias' prophecy when his son John was circumcised, there was no postponement of the Kingdom, because that generation of Israel didn't reject the Messiah until Matthew 11 and 12.

Reisinger, Loc. 1346, continued. This passage of Scripture shows that the pious Jew living prior to Christ's coming was looking forward to a spiritual kingdom.

Pious Jews were primarily looking forward to spiritual blessings like "holiness and righteousness, ... knowledge of salvation ... by the remission of sins through the tender mercy of our God, ... light ... and ... peace" (Lu. 1:75-79). But they were also (and rightly) looking forward to God keeping the "oath which he swore to our father Abraham" (Lu. 1:73) by providing a physical, not a spiritual, kingdom where "being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear" (Lu. 1:74). Just like Abraham, being a godly and justified man, primarily "looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10), but that didn't stop him from "sojourning in the [physical] land of promise" (Heb. 11:9). The spiritual and the physical aren't mutually exclusive. Even as we, who "through faith ... obtain the promise" (Heb. 11:33) of spiritual justification and sanctification, but are also looking forward to receiving the promise of a future "better [physical] resurrection" (Heb. 11:35). (Spirits and souls don't sleep and are never 'resurrected;' only dead bodies are 'resurrected.')

Reisinger, Loc.. "O descendants of Abraham ... He is the Lord our God ... He remembers his covenant forever, the word he commanded, for a thousand generations, the covenant he made with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac. He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree, to Israel as an everlasting covenant: "To you will I give the land of Canaan as the portion you will inherit" (Ps. 105:6-11 NIV). It seems impossible [hubris] to compare the above verses with texts like Luke 1:68-79 and not see that the NT Scriptures uses the same terms in a spiritual way. The physical land is

without question the heart of the promise in Psalm 105:6–11, but salvation, or spiritual rest, becomes the heart of the fulfillment of the same promise in Luke 1:68–79 and other NT passages. We do not find even a hint [hubris] of the physical land of Palestine in Luke’s words. He totally spiritualizes the words found in the OT Scriptures.

Salvation in Baptist churches might always be spiritual, but in the Bible it’s often physical, especially when it talks about being saved from enemies. In our time, after the Hamas October 7th massacre of Jews, and the world’s subsequent vocal support for Hamas and the Palestinians, with protestors around the world chanting, “Palestine will be free, from the river to the sea!” the Jewish people need physical deliverance from those who hate them as much as ever. “The Lord God of Israel ... has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began, that we would be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us, 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 to us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear” (Lu. 1:68-74).

Everyone knows the reason the Jews are in Palestine is so that they may “never again” be defenseless against ‘Christian’ Crusades and inquisitions, Russian and Polish pogroms, German holocausts, etc. And if “Palestine is free from the river to the sea,” meaning the nation of Israel is destroyed, the Jews will again have nowhere to go that can ensure their safety through changing times and governments. If the Jews have no land, and if they aren’t sovereign in their own land, (versus how they were ruled by Rome in NT times, for example) it’s impossible “that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies will be able to serve him without fear” (Lu. 1:68-74).

Hebrews 8

He is the mediator of a better covenant [the New Covenant], which was established on better promises [of the Abrahamic Covenant]. 7 For if that first covenant [the Law] had been faultless, then would no place have been sought for the second [the New]. 8 For finding fault with them [Israel], he says, “Behold, the days come, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 9 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 [the Law], because they [Israel] continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, says the Lord.

10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they will be to me a people. 11 And they will not teach every man his neighbor ... saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all will know me, from the least to the greatest. 12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. 13 In that he says, "A new covenant [in Jeremiah 31]," he has made the first 'old.' Now that which decays and waxes old is ready to vanish away.

Reisinger is inconsistent in interpreting the very same word "Israel" of verse 8-9 that God "found fault" with because "they continued not in my covenant," with ethnic Israel, and then interpreting the "Israel" of verse 10 to be the Church, despite the fact God says he "will be merciful to the unrighteousness" of the "Israel" of verses 8-9 that broke the covenant of the Law.

Reisinger, Loc. 2169. If we look carefully at the argument in Hebrews 8, that chapter alone will make it impossible [hubris] for us to hold the basic presuppositions of either Dispensationalism or Covenant Theology. We will clearly see in that passage a specific New Covenant replacing a specific and different Old Covenant. This makes the 'one covenant/two administrations' view [of Covenant Theology] impossible. A careful reading of verses 6, 7 and 13 of Hebrews 8 will clearly show that God has made this New Covenant with the 'house of Israel.' Since ... this covenant is in effect right now, then the church simply must be the house of Israel in some sense. Is not this exactly what verses 8–10 are saying? Thus the Dispensational view is impossible [hubris] in this chapter.

The New Covenant is in effect today for the church. "This is my blood of the new testament ('diathyky,' i.e. covenant, contract, will, testament) which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Mt. 26:28). Both Jewish and Gentile believers share in its spiritual blessings of spiritual justification and the indwelling Holy Spirit during this present time. But

God hasn't yet made this "new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah" (Heb. 8:8).

The Greek word "diathyky" (διαθήκη) means "contract," as in a unilateral (made by one party) contract, or a bilateral (made by two parties) contract. A "will" or "testament," as in "last will and testament," is an example of a unilateral contract. It is equivalent to a legal promise. The Mosaic Covenant (the Law, the Old Covenant) is a bilateral, conditional contract. "All that the Lord has spoken we will do," (Ex. 19:8; 24:3; 24:7; Deut. 5:27). The Abrahamic Covenant is a unilateral, unconditional contract, comprised of three unconditional promises. The New Covenant (contract, or will and testament), which per Jeremiah 31 promises forgiveness of sin and the indwelling Holy Spirit, also has to be a unilateral, unconditional contract, since it's based on the unconditional, unilateral "blessings" promise of the Abrahamic Covenant. The KJV translates the same Greek word "diathyky" as "covenant" in Hebrews 8 and as "testament" in Hebrews 9 and the gospels. Since the New Covenant is unconditional and unilateral, God made it with the Church at the time of Messiah's death, and will make it with Israel and Judah in the future, when the ethnic nation receives spiritual cleansing, and experiences its own Pentecost, as described in Zechariah 12 and Joel 2.

Reisinger, Loc. 2506. One brother asked, "Where are the Bible texts that establish the two covenants that you feel are the two major covenants in the Scripture?" I then said, This passage in Hebrews [8] clearly speaks about the two major covenants in Scripture. ... The Scripture always identifies the legal covenant made at Sinai as the Old Covenant and also always contrasts it with the New Covenant established by Christ.

Amazingly, for a book that is supposedly about "Abraham's Four Seeds," although Reisinger does have a chapter about the Abrahamic Covenant, he doesn't consider it a 'major' covenant. But the New Covenant is only an amplification of only one promise of the three Abrahamic Covenant promises. "The [Abrahamic] covenant that was confirmed before of God in Messiah, the Law [Covenant], which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it would make the promise of no effect," Gal. 3:17.

Reisinger, Loc. 625. Later in this book we will compare [Ex. 19:4, 5] with 1 Peter 2:5–11 and show that the true church is the 'holy nation, the kingdom of priests' that Israel never became simply because she never kept the legal covenant upon which these blessings

were promised. The blessings in Ex. 19:4, 5 are clearly contingent on Israel obeying or 'keeping the covenant.'

But ethnic Israel's promises aren't based on Ex. 19:4, 5 or any other parts of the conditional Mosaic Covenant (and neither are the church's), but rather on the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant, that God swore in an oath, "lifting up his hand" (Ez. 20:42; 47:14, etc.). The New Covenant did replace the Old Covenant upon which the judgment and condemnation of the Jewish people is based, but it didn't replace the Abrahamic Covenant upon which the blessings of the Jewish people are based, and whose spiritual blessings, but not the physical blessings of the land and nation, we believing church Gentiles share in, "being wild olive tree [branches] ... grafted in among them" (Rom. 11:17).

"I would not, [Gentile] brethren, that you ... would be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part [ONLY PARTIAL] is happened to Israel, until [ONLY TEMPORARILY] the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so ALL [no longer even partial blindness] Israel will be saved, as it is written" Rom. 11:25. This has to be talking about the TEMPORARY blinding of ethnic Israel, because the church was never temporarily blinded. And it's not just that a lot of Jews will believe in the last generation, but "ALL Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26).

Reisinger, Loc. 2973. Romans seems to leave plenty of room for a revival of gospel faith among the Jewish people in the last days.

No, John. "ALL ... WILL BE" is more than "leave plenty of room for a revival."

Romans 9-11

The Heart of God & the Apostles vs. New Covenant Theologians

Rom. 9:1-3. I say the truth in Messiah, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirt,
2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.
3 For I could wish that myself were accursed from Messiah for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

The issue that Paul is bemoaning is that the majority of Jewish people (like the majority of Gentile people) aren't spiritually justified, and are "accursed from Messiah." Note the difference between the heart of God and the apostle versus the heart of Covenant and New Covenant theologians who give no special place to God's Jewish people in our age.

The Physical Blessings of Ethnic Israel

Rom. 9:4-5. Who are Israelites; to whom pertains:
[1] the [national] adoption, and
[2] the [shekinah] glory, and
[3] the [5 Jewish] covenants, and
[4] the giving of the [Mosaic] law, and
[5] the [temple] service of God, and
[6] the [Abrahamic] promises;
[7] whose are [Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and his twelve sons,] the fathers, and
[8] of whom, as concerning the flesh, Messiah came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

Paul doesn't just have "great heaviness and continual sorrow" in his heart because the Jews who don't accept Yeshua as the Messiah are his relatives, but because these things "pertain" to Israel now, even after the resurrection, not "used to pertain" to them. Notice all these things are physical, not spiritual. Even the Messiah is being referred to in his physical body and descent "as concerning the flesh."

The Topic of Romans 9-11: Why Doesn't Israel 'Nominally' Accept Yeshua

The question of Romans 9-11 is NOT, "Why aren't more Jewish people spiritually-justified, born-again believers," because as Paul goes on to say in Romans 11, believers have always been a small minority in Israel (Rom. 11:4), and among all Gentiles also, even now.

Neither is the question of Romans 9-11, "Why has God cast off Israel," as Reisinger says, because God says in the strongest possible language that he hasn't cast off Israel.

Rom. 11:1. I say then, "Has God cast away his people?" God forbid!

Reisinger, Loc. 591, 1683. If God was indeed Israel's God in the sense that he is the church's God, then why did he cast Israel off as a nation? Can God ever deal with the Body of Christ in the same manner that he dealt with the nation of Israel? This is the very question that Paul deals with in Romans 9–11. It is true that God was Israel's God in a national sense, but that was purely a conditional relationship. ... The special national relationship between God and the nation of Israel was based on the legal covenant made

at Sinai, and that special covenantal relationship was finally nullified by God because of Israel's continual failure to keep the covenant. ... Once Israel is established as a nation, then the promise of the Messiah is taken up into the Mosaic Covenant and becomes the property of the whole nation as a nation. ... Loc. 2044. A New Covenant (which fulfilled the promise to Abraham and his seed) was brought in.

Neither is the question, "How does a person get saved or come to faith," as Calvinists try to make this passage about.

The question of Romans 9-11 is, why isn't Israel, the nation and Jewish people as a whole, accepting Jesus as the Messiah? Israel almost always rejected the prophets but then God either forced them to accept them while they lived, like Moses "whom they refused" (Acts 7:35); or forced them to accept them after their death, like Jeremiah.

Mt. 23:29. You build the tombs of the prophets, 30 And say, "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets." 31 Wherefore you are witnesses against yourselves, that you are the children of them which killed the prophets.

So why didn't God make Paul's generation accept Jesus, their own Messiah, as the Messiah "nominally," like he forced them to accept Moses? Why isn't Israel today like the majority of Gentile 'so-called Christians' like Roman Catholics, who use NT terms, but are unjustified because they believe their organization's doctrine of justification by works? That is the situation that makes it look as though the word of God and the Abrahamic promises have failed.

There's Always Been Two Groups WITHIN Ethnic Israel

Rom. 9:6. Not as though **THE WORD OF GOD** has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel, which are [descendants] of [Jacob, Gen. 32:28] Israel.

The word of God hasn't failed because God will give all he has promised to ETHNIC ISRAEL, but not to EVERY INDIVIDUAL WITHIN ETHNIC ISRAEL. As we saw above, regarding the future Messianic Kingdom generation of Israel, "I will purge out from among you the rebels. ... I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn and they will not enter into the land of Israel," Ez. 20:38.

Almost every verse in Romans 9 from verse 7 on contains the concept of a **CALL** via the spoken and written **WORD OF GOD**. I've capitalized, underlined, and bolded them in the following verses.

National Justification: Isaac Called & Ishmael Not Called

Rom. 9:7. Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children, but, "In Isaac will your seed be **CALLED**" [Gen. 21:12].

God effectually called Isaac and not Ishmael to inherit the Abrahamic Covenant, not to spiritual salvation. "As for Ishmael, ... I will make him a great nation, but my covenant will I establish with Isaac," Gen. 17:20. This didn't cause Isaac to become a believer, or prevent Ishmael from becoming a believer. Abraham wasn't the only saved person in the world in his day, nor was Isaac in his generation.

Rom. 9:8-9. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are COUNTED for the seed. 9 For **THIS IS THE WORD OF PROMISE**, "At this time will I come, and Sarah will have a son" [Gen. 18:10].

Isaac had a supernatural physical birth since Abraham and Sarah were old and Sarah was barren. God spoke Isaac into existence by the promise "Sarah will have a Son." Likewise, only descendants of Abraham who also have a supernatural spiritual birth through the power of the word of God are the spiritual children of God, and they are the only ones "counted" as the descendants of Abraham who will inherit all the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant.

No one has the power to make himself be born as a son of God, but everyone has the power to believe. "To them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," Jn. 1:12-13.

The Jewish majority that aren't accepting Jesus as the Messiah, from Paul's day to ours, are the ethnic Jews who, like the Gentile Ishmael, haven't had a supernatural spiritual birth.

National Sanctification/Service: Jacob Chosen to Rule & Esau Chosen to Be Ruled

Rom. 9:10-13. And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; 11 (for the children being not yet born, neither having

done any good or evil), so that the purpose of God according to election [choosing, Gk: eklogy, ἐκλογή] might stand, not of works, but of him that **CALLS**, 12 **IT WAS SAID** to her, “The elder will serve the younger.” 13 As it is written, “Jacob have I loved, but Esau [Edom] have I hated.”

It says “not of works;” it doesn’t say “not of faith.” Faith isn’t part of the God-determined process in Rom. 8:29-30 and Rom. 9. It’s part of the process where the Bible says man truly chooses per Rom. 3-4 and Rom. 10.

Not only did God choose Isaac instead of Ishmael, but he also chose Jacob instead of Esau, not to believe, but to carry on the Abrahamic Covenant, and rule over the other nations on earth, by saying, “The elder will serve the younger.”

God’s choice was constrained within the boundaries of truth and his faithfulness to keep his word. He wasn’t absolutely free to choose. He was only free to choose one of Abraham’s sons, not some random Gentile, or even someone like “the steward of [Abraham’s] house ... Eliezer of Damascus” (Gen. 15:2).

“The elder will serve the younger” is talking about Jacob and Esau’s descendants. Esau never served Jacob; instead Jacob is the one who “bowed himself to the ground seven times until he came near to his brother,” (Gen. 33:3). Also, “Esau have I hated,” was said more than a thousand years after Jacob and Esau lived, and is talking about Esau’s descendants. “I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage [Edom] waste for the dragons of the wilderness. ... They shall call them, ‘The border of wickedness,’ and, ‘The people against whom the Lord has indignation for ever,” Mal. 1:3.

Edom will be one of two places on earth that will be perpetually burning pitch during the Messianic Kingdom. “My sword ... will come down on Edom, and on the people of my curse, ... and the land thereof will become burning pitch. ...The smoke thereof will go up for ever, ... none will pass through it for ever and ever, ... and it will be a habitation of dragons,” Is. 34:5-13. It doesn’t mean Jacob will be a believer and Esau an unbeliever, or Jacob’s descendants believers, and Esau;s descendants unbelievers. You or I might have some of Esau’s DNA in us, but we can still believe. Individual descendants of Esau will be able to enter the Messianic Kingdom, but Edom as a nation (southern Jordan today) will not.

The Jewish majority that aren’t accepting Jesus as the Messiah, from Paul’s day to ours, are the ethnic Jews who, like the Gentile Esau, are not elect or called. God doesn’t base his election on a person’s works. He

doesn't even base it directly on knowing who will believe, though he does know that. "Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not," Jn. 6:64. He chooses those whom he's already known from the foundation of the earth, because believing puts you into Messiah [Jn. 6:56; 1 Jn. 1:3] who is eternal. "He has chosen us in [ἐν, en; not into, εἰς, eis] him [not 'to be in him'], ... in [ἐν, en; not into, εἰς, eis] the beloved [not 'to be in the beloved']," Eph. 1:4-6. "Salute Rufus chosen in [not into] the Lord," Rom. 16:13. He foreknew us in Messiah and therefore wrote our names in the Lamb's "book of life from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8; 17:8). Thus, we are "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God," 1 Pet. 1:2. We are "the called according to his purpose, because whom he foreknew, he also predestinated," Rom. 8:28-29.

National Glorification: Moses Glorified & Pharaoh Destroyed

Rom. 9:14. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid!

Does this sound unfair that God would give the covenant to Jacob and not Esau? To the Jews and not the Gentiles? That God would let northern Jordan (Moab and Ammon), enter the future Messianic Kingdom but not southern Jordan (Edom)? That God would choose Paul as an apostle, but not Timothy, or you or I?

Rom. 9:15-16. For he **SAYS TO MOSES**, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." 16 So then it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy [Ex. 33:19].

The occasion when God said those words to Moses is significant. God wrote the ten commandments on two tablets of stone and gave them to Moses on Mt. Sainai. But when Moses came down with them and saw the people dancing around the golden calf he was enraged and smashed them. He went back up the mountain to get a second copy. God said he decided not to go to Canaan with the people and would make a nation of Moses instead. Moses, the meekest man alive (Num. 12:3), boldly interceded for the people, and God granted him his request. That would have been enough to call it a day, but Moses, in the height of Jewish hutzpah, went on to ask God to show him his glory. God was gracious to sinning Israel in this situation because of Moses' prayer.

God said he would be gracious to whom he would be gracious, and granted this request of Moses also, and was gracious to Moses. Moses had already seen God's glory while the Angel of the Lord (the pre-incarnate Yeshua, Ezek. 1:26) was in the shekinah glory. And several

people in Genesis, like Abraham (Gen. 18:2) and Jacob, had seen the Angel of the Lord without his glory. "I [Jacob] have seen God face to face," Gen. 32:30. But here Moses got to see the glory of the back of the Angel of the Lord outside the shekinah cloud. "You will see my back, but my face will not be seen," Ex. 33:23. Moses didn't see his face glorified until after the Angel of Jehovah had become flesh. "Jesus ... was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. 3 And, behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah talking with him," Mt. 17:1-3.

Although God had chosen Moses to lead the people, this wasn't part of Moses' duties or anything predestined. Not everything is predestined. Not every piece of dust at every point in time, "the beating of a heart, the laughter of a girl, the mistake of a typist, even sin," as Calvinists like Edwin Palmer claim in "Five Points." God only predestines what is essential to accomplish his goals and fulfill his prophecies. Men exercise free choice within those boundaries, like Moses did here. And God was under no obligation to grant this request, yet it pleased him to do so. We are free to ask, and God is free to graciously grant or not grant. That is what God's choosing is like on the positive side. On the negative side, ...

Rom. 9:17-18. For the scripture **SAYS TO PHARAOH**,
"Even for this same purpose have I raised you up, so
that I might show my power in you, and so that my
name might be declared throughout all the earth." 18
Therefore he has mercy on whom he will have mercy,
and whom he will he hardens.

God hardened the heart of Pharaoh, Moses' adversary, to not let Israel leave Egypt, not to make him unable to believe. Even when the plagues got to the point where even Pharaoh would have given in, God strengthened him so he wouldn't give in, because God wanted to complete all ten plagues, so the purpose of his name being declared throughout the whole earth would be accomplished. Like Moses, Pharaoh had free-will within the boundaries of predestined events, like his being made Pharaoh, like Moses was made Israel's leader. God's purpose in raising up Pharaoh so God's name would be declared throughout the whole earth could have been accomplished by either 1) Pharaoh humbling himself, learning how to worship God from Moses, and leading his armies to escort Israel to the land like Joseph's Pharaoh did to return Jacob's bones (Gen. 50:4-11), or 2) Pharaoh and the strongest army and country in the world being destroyed, which is what happened.

God knew the future as to which of those choices Pharaoh would make.

Ex. 4:21. I will strengthen his heart so that he will not let the people go.

Ex. 7:3-4. I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and ... Pharaoh will not listen to you [to let them go].

The first time God strengthened Pharaoh's heart (sometimes the Hebrew word used was "strengthen" and sometimes "harden") was after the plague of boils. It was Pharaoh's point of no return. Now ALL the plagues must be completed, so God wouldn't let Pharaoh give in from this point on.

The Lord strengthened the heart of Pharaoh [after the plague of boils], and he listened not to them [to let them go]. Ex. 9:12.

Ex. 9:14-16. [So now] I will at this time send **ALL** my plagues on your heart, ... and in very deed for this cause I have raised you up, to show my power in you, and so that my name can be declared throughout all the earth.

Pharaoh's servants said to him, "Let the men go, so that they can serve the Lord their God. Don't you yet know that Egypt is destroyed?" Ex. 10:7.

The Lord strengthened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go. Ex. 10:27.

The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, so he would not let ... Israel go. Ex. 11:10.

Encamp by the sea. For Pharaoh will say ... they are entangled in the land. ... And I will strengthen Pharaoh's heart, so he will follow; ... and I will be honored on Pharaoh, and on all his host; so the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord. 14:2-4. And the Lord strengthened the heart of Pharaoh, ... and he pursued after. Ex. 14:8.

It wasn't just Pharaoh's heart God strengthened so they would be destroyed but all the Egyptians.

I will strengthen the hearts of the Egyptians, and they will follow them; and I will get me honor on Pharaoh, and on all his host. Ex. 14:17.

God's purpose of his name being declared was accomplished. Many years later the Philistines could say ...

“Woe to us! ... These are the gods that struck the Egyptians with all the plagues. ... Why then do you harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts?” 1 Sam. 4:8, 6:6.

Pharaoh and the Egyptians weren't the only ones God ever hardened. But he never hardened anyone to make them unable to believe. Only to affect their temporary physical well-being.

Deut. 2:30-31. Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him, for the Lord your God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, so that he would deliver him into your hand, ... so that you would inherit his land.

Josh. 11:19-20. There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, ... for it was of the Lord to harden their [the Canaanites'] hearts, so that they would come against Israel in battle, so that he would destroy them utterly [physically, not spiritually].

Does this sound harsh?

Rom. 9:19-21. You will say then to me, “Why does he yet find fault? For who has resisted his will?” 20 Nay, but, O man, who are you that replies against God?

Pharaoh might have been better off if he had stayed a humble fisherman or something. But then he might have drowned in the Red Sea anyway from a boat accident. Who knows. God is sovereign to determine who is rich or poor, intellectual or practical, born in this country or that country, in this time or that time. “Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as to a faithful Creator,” 1 Pet. 4:19. God allows widespread suffering in the physical realm in this life to warn us away from eternal suffering physically and spiritually after death.

Rom. 9:19-21. Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, “Why have you made me thus? 21 Doesn't the potter have power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor?

Potters don't create different kinds of clay. They take the clay as they find it and make something appropriate from it according to their purposes.

Rom. 9:22. What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, 23 and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had before prepared to glory?

The unbelieving Jewish majority that aren't accepting Jesus as the Messiah, from Paul's day to ours, are the ethnic Jews who, like the Gentile Pharaoh, was used of God even as an unbeliever to accomplish his purposes. And they also are being used in God's plan, being "fitted" to destruction.

Rom. 9:24. Even us, whom he has **CALLED**, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

THIS IS THE FIRST MENTION OF THE WORD "GENTILES" IN THIS CHAPTER!!! This chapter isn't about believers (Jewish & Gentile) vs. unbelievers (Jewish & Gentile), as Calvinists and Covenant theologians make it out to be! It's about believing JEWS vs. unbelieving JEWS!!!

While the believers of both Jews and Gentiles are being "prepared" to glory. For example, our suffering prepares us to glory. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, produces for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," 2 Cor. 4:17.

25 As he says also in Hosea, "I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved [Hos. 2:23]." 26 "And it will come to pass, that in the place where it was said to them, "You are not my people; there will they be called the children of the living God [Hos. 1:10]."

Believing Gentiles don't become ethnic Jews, but it was known from the first that the Gentiles would eventually share in the spiritual blessings of the Jewish people. "And in you will all families of the earth be blessed.

Rom. 9:27-29. Isaiah also cries concerning Israel, "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant will be saved. 28 For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make on the earth [Is. 10:22]." 29 And as Isaiah said before, "Unless the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and been made like to Gomorrha [Is. 1:9]."

So it was never expected that every physical descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would receive the spiritual blessings of the covenant. Only a remnant will be saved. God makes sure that each generation of Israel has a believing remnant. Not by forcing them to be willing to believe, but by controlling the time and place of each person's birth so that there are always Jewish people who believe and accept Yeshua as the Messiah.

Rom. 9:30-33. What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. 31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. 32 Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone; 33 As it is written, "Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling stone and rock of offence, and whoever believes on him will not be ashamed."

The law helped prevent Israel from accepting that Jesus was the Messiah without also truly spiritually believing in him, like they only outwardly accepted all the prophets, and like the vast majority of so-called 'Christians' accept him. God arranged it so that Yeshua was a stumbling block to Israel, so that they wouldn't just add him to their list of prophets as unbelievers.

Rom. 10:19-21. But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses says, "I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you." 20 But Isaiah is very bold, and says, "I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest to them that asked not after me." 21 But to Israel he says, "All day long I have stretched forth my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people."

So Israel's current position of not accepting their own Messiah, while Gentiles who have no history of God's dealings with them, provoke Israel to jealousy when they see born-again Gentiles having true zeal to know and serve God because of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Rom. 11:5. Even so then at this present time also [like in Elijah's time] there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

God makes sure every generation of Israel has a believing remnant. Although the rabbis hate the Messianic Jews, they are actually the only

thing preserving the existence of the Jewish people. "As the new wine is found in the cluster [of grapes], and one says, 'Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it,' so will I do for my servants' sakes [the born-again Jews], that I may not destroy them all, and I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains, and my elect [of Israel] will inherit it, and my servants will dwell there." Is. 65:8-9.

Rom. 11:7 What then? Israel has not obtained that which he seeks for; but the elect [of Israel] has obtained it, and the rest were blinded. 8 According as it is written, "God has given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they would not see, and ears that they would not hear to this day [Is. 29:10; Deut. 29:4]."

Not to keep any individual ethnic Jewish people from believing the gospel, but to keep the rabbis and leaders and nation as a whole from accepting Jesus into their rabbinic Judaism, without accepting him as savior.

Rom. 11:11. I say then, have they stumbled so that they would fall? God forbid! But rather through their [Israel's] fall salvation is come to the Gentiles, for to provoke them [Israel] to jealousy.

God didn't cause Israel to be without the acknowledgement of Jesus as Messiah in this time in order to hurt the Jewish people, but to help them spiritually. By Israel's missing out on the Messiah during this time, the Gentiles are able to prosper in the gospel spiritually as Gentiles, which opens the gospel up to the whole world. But the purpose of that isn't primarily for the Gentiles, according to God, but "for to provoke Israel to jealousy, so that Israel also comes to spiritual salvation.

Rom. 11:12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness [when they have their national justification (Zech. 12) and receive their Messianic Kingdom]? 13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify my office 14 if by any means I may provoke to jealousy [so they believe] them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. 15 For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what will the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?

Since God can accomplish so much for the promotion of the gospel by handing it over to the Gentiles by diminishing Israel, how much more will

God accomplish when ethnic Israel is reconciled to God? The resurrection and the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom as the fulfillment of his promises.

Rom. 11:25-27. For I would not, [Gentile] brethren, that you would be ignorant of this mystery, lest you would be wise in your own conceits; that [PARTIAL ONLY] blindness in part is happened to Israel, [TEMPORARILY ONLY] until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written, "There will come out of Sion the Deliverer, and will turn away ungodliness from [ethnic] Jacob [Is. 59:20]," 27 because "this is my covenant to them, when I will take away their sins [Is. 27:9]."

Also, Zech. 13:1, "In that day there will be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness," at the time of Israel's national justification in Zech. 12:9-14. If New Covenant theologians are serious about learning how the apostles interpreted Old Testament scriptures, there's a lot of them quoted in Romans 11 about how God is not done working specially with ethnic Israel.

Rom. 11:28. As concerning the gospel, they [ethnic Israel] are enemies for your sakes, but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes. 29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

It's not possible God would predestinate an individual to glory (not to faith), Rom. 8:29, "for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son," and for that individual to not arrive at the glorification of his body to be like Messiah's currently glorified body. And likewise, it's not possible that Israel, who is his elect and called nation would not arrive at the glory of the Messianic Kingdom as he prophesied and promised.

Rom. 11:30-32. For as you [Gentiles] in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their [Israel's] unbelief, 31 even so have these [Israelites] also now not believed, that through your mercy [in Jewish evangelism and provoking them to jealousy by your faith] they also may obtain mercy. 32 For God has concluded them [Jews and Gentiles] all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

When the Gentiles as a whole, (not every individual), were in unbelief, believing ethnic Jews (the majority of the church up until Acts 15) struggled to believe Gentiles could be saved without becoming Jewish proselytes. Now that the number of Gentile believers overwhelms the number of Jewish believers, false doctrines within Covenant Theology and New Covenant Theology as to the status of ethnic Israel makes many Gentile believers think God has no further special purpose for ethnic Israel. But God has given each group their time of preeminence so that he can gather both Jews and Gentiles in the final Messianic Kingdom of Messiah. Pretty good plan!

Rom. 11:33. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

Addendum - Jewishness in the Book of Acts in Our Current Age

Reisinger, Loc. 1984. There were indeed great differences between Jews and Gentiles before the Day of Pentecost in respect to special privileges, but now there is no difference at all. ... Of course [the Jew] still has the same free offer of the gospel promise that all other men have, but neither he nor his physical children any longer have any special covenantal claim on God.

If there's no differences today, why does God still after Pentecost consistently use the phrases "up" and "ascend" when anyone goes towards Jerusalem, even if they're going somewhere in Turkey or Greece; and consistently use the terms "down" and "descend" when anyone goes away from Jerusalem even when they're outside the land? Why did Paul preach the gospel "to the Jew first" () in every city he evangelized, and say that Gentiles have special obligations to the Jews even today? Why did Paul continue to consider himself a Jewish pharisee as long as he lived? Why does the book of Acts end with Paul preaching not only the gospel of Messiah but also the gospel of the kingdom to the Jews in Rome?

1. Peter and John in the temple

Acts 3:1 Peter and John went UP [towards the temple] together into the temple

2. Stephen's preaching in Jerusalem. (Even when relating history.)

Acts 7:15 Jacob went DOWN [away from Jerusalem] into Egypt

3. After Cornelius' conversion

Acts 11:2 Peter came UP to Jerusalem [from Caesarea]

4. Philip's preaching in Samaria. (Even angels use it.)

Acts 8:5 Philip went DOWN [from Jerusalem] to the city of Samaria

Acts 8:15 Who [Peter and John], when they were come DOWN [from Jerusalem to Samaria], prayed for them

Acts 8:26 The angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Go ... to the road that goes DOWN from Jerusalem to Gaza."

5. Paul's flight from Jerusalem

Acts 9:30 They brought [Paul] DOWN to Caesarea [from Jerusalem], and sent him forth to Tarsus

6. Peter's Judaeen ministry

Acts 9:32 As Peter passed throughout all quarters, he came DOWN [from Jerusalem] also to ... Lydda

7. After Peter's escape from prison

Acts 12:19 [Peter] went DOWN from Judaea to Caesarea

8. The end of the 1st missionary journey to Galatia. (Even when in a foreign country far from Jerusalem.)

Acts 14:25-26 When they had preached the word in Perga, they went DOWN [west, away from Jerusalem] to Attalia, and from there sailed to Antioch [Syria]

9. The Law dispute in Acts 15

Acts 15:1 Certain men which came DOWN from Judaea [to Antioch Syria] taught the brethren

Acts 15:2 They determined that Paul and Barnabas ... should go UP to Jerusalem [from Antioch Syria]

10. The beginning of the second missionary journey to Greece. (Even when in a foreign country far from Jerusalem)

Acts 16:8 They passing by Mysia came DOWN [west, away from Jerusalem] to Troas

11. After the 2nd Missionary Journey to Greece. (Without this rule, you wouldn't know which church Paul saluted. Used twice in same sentence.)

Acts 18:22 When he had landed at Caesarea, and gone UP [to Jerusalem] and saluted the church, he went DOWN to Antioch [Syria, from Jerusalem]

12. Paul's final journey to Jerusalem to be imprisoned after the 3rd missionary journey to Ephesus

Acts 21:10 There came DOWN from Judaea [to Caesarea] a certain prophet named Agabus

Acts 21:12 Both we, and they of that place, begged him not to go UP to Jerusalem [from Caesarea]

Acts 21:15 We took up our carriages, and went UP to Jerusalem [from Caesarea]

13. Paul's trial before Felix. (Use of word 'descended.' Used by narrators, God and Luke.)

Acts 24:1 After five days Ananias the high priest DESCENDED with the elders

Acts 24:22 Felix ... said, When Lysias the chief captain will come DOWN [from Jerusalem to Caesarea], I will know the uttermost of your matter

14. Paul's trial before Festus. (Use of word 'ascended'.)

Acts 25:1 After three days [Festus] ASCENDED from Caesarea to Jerusalem.

Acts 25:5 Let them ... go DOWN [from Jerusalem to Caesarea] with me [Festus], and accuse [Paul]

Acts 25:6 [Festus] went DOWN [from Jerusalem] to Caesarea

Acts 25:7 The Jews which came DOWN from Jerusalem [to Caesarea] stood round about

Why did God spend so much of the last 8 chapters of Acts on Paul's defenses before rulers? Because after Acts 15 the Gentiles began to overwhelm the culture of the church which God intended to be comprised of equally in influence of Jew and Gentile, "to make in himself of **TWO**, one new man" (Eph. 2:15), even though the number of Jewish believers is much smaller. God doesn't want numerically greater Gentile culture to overwhelm the Jewish culture of the church's roots.

Paul offered animal sacrifices and promoted circumcision

Acts 21:21-25. They are informed of you, that you teach all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to apostatize from Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, nor to walk after the customs. ... We have four men which have a vow. ... Purify yourself with them, and all may know that those things, which they were informed about you, are nothing, but that you yourself also walk orderly, and keep the law. As for the Gentiles which believe, we have written [in Acts 15] ... that they observe no such thing. 1 Cor. 7:18. Is any man called being circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised [abandon his Jewish identity].

Defense before the chief captain. Paul said "I AM a Pharisee," not, "I WAS a Pharisee"

Acts 23:6-10. When Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Men and brethren, I AM a Pharisee."

Defense before Felix. Did Paul go to Jerusalem after his 3rd missionary journey to bring alms to his nation? (Jewish believers have dual citizenship.)

Acts 24:17. "Now after many years, I came to bring alms to my nation."

1 Cor. 10:31-32. Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God.

There are still Jews and Greeks [or Paul wouldn't be able to talk about them], employers and employees ["Servants obey, ... masters forbear threatening" Eph. 6:5-9], males and females (or homosexuality would be ok).

Gal. 3:24. The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Messiah, so that we could be justified by faith. ... For as many of you as have been baptized into Messiah have put on Messiah. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Messiah Jesus.

The end of the book of Acts and God's plan for the entire church age (not the Acts 29 group's agenda).

Acts 28:30-31. And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, ... preaching the [Messianic] kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Messiah.

Extra Notes:

Reisinger, Loc. 1771. The Dispensationalists are right when they insist that the heart of the Abrahamic Covenant as expressed in the language of the OT Scriptures is the promise that "Israel will inherit the land of Canaan forever." ... Only special revelation from God could allow anyone to spiritualize the land promise in the Abrahamic covenant. ... Reisinger, Loc. 1788. These words are plain. The promise of the physical land is just as much a part of the everlasting covenant that God made with Abraham as the promise "I will be their God and they shall be my people." We may believe that the NT Scriptures spiritualize the land promise, but we cannot deny that the covenant itself, as given to Abraham, concerned the natural land of Canaan.