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Regrettably, many who undertake to teach the Scripture lack a basic orientation to the Scripture. One of the fundamental requirements is an understanding of the Old Covenant and the New, together with a familiarity with the existential stages of the nation Israel. A man cannot competently teach the Scripture apart from the understanding that the Old Covenant and the New are covenants of marriage. Moreover, he must have a knowledge of the fundamental changes in the nation of Israel from the wedding at Mount Sinai to the Crucifixion of Christ Jesus in Jerusalem. The *Writings of the Prophets*¹ constitute the context for the *Writings of the Apostles*.² The Scripture is a coherent whole, no part of which may be set aside.³

¹Incorrectly and absurdly termed the “*Old Testament*.”

²Incorrectly and absurdly termed the “*New Testament*.”

³John 10:34–36.

1 The “Children” (the Descendants) of Israel

The line of Israel is comprised of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Not every descendant of Abraham is an Israelite; the descendants of Ishmael are excluded. Nor is every descendant of Isaac an Israelite; the descendants of Esau are excluded.

- Abram⁴ + Hagar = Ishmael
- Abraham + Sarah = Isaac (the “child of promise”)⁵
- Isaac + Rebecca = Esau & Jacob
- Jacob + [Rachel + Bilhah (maid)] + [Leah + Zilpah (maid)] =
 - Reuben
 - Simeon
 - Levi
 - Judah
 - Dan
 - Naphtali
 - Gad
 - Asher
 - Issachar
 - Zebulun
 - Joseph
 - Benjamin
- Joseph + Asenath (the daughter of Potipherah, priest of On)⁶ =
 - Ephraim
 - Manasseh

With respect to inheritance, Jacob elevated the two sons of Joseph, placing Ephraim and Manasseh on a equal footing with his other eleven sons. By replacing Joseph with Ephraim and Manasseh, Jacob imparted to Joseph a double portion of the inheritance. The double portion normally is given to the first son, Reuben.

2 Israel Under the Old Covenant

The Old Covenant was a covenant of marriage. Mortals being parties to the covenant, the Old Covenant by design was temporary, for the death of either party dissolves a covenant. Israelites entered the covenantal relationship automatically upon birth. The covenantal relationship was dissolved upon death. Accordingly, the Old Covenant could not provide benefit beyond the Grave. However, Israelites living in the eras which preceded the present era of the New Covenant could be Justified by faith in the promise of the New Covenant.⁷

The terms of the Old Covenant are set forth in the Law of Moses. The Law of Moses, being specified in a finite set of commandments, is but a representation of the Law of God. Moreover, the Law of Moses is a compromised representation; consider the provisions for divorce.⁸ And whereas the Law of Moses governs only actions, the Law of God governs thoughts and intents of the heart.⁹

⁴The Lord God changed the name of Abram to Abraham, Genesis 17:5.

⁵Galatians 4:28, Romans Chapter 9.

⁶Genesis 46:20.

⁷Matthew 8:11–12, Luke 13:23–30.

⁸Matthew 19:1–12.

⁹Matthew 5:27–28.

During her existence, Israel went through a number of structural changes. Early on, Israel rejected the Son of God as her king. The final act of Israel as a physical nation was the murder of her King, the Incarnate Christ. Of course, the death of Christ Jesus terminated the covenantal relationship of the Old Covenant. The purpose of this paper is to set forth the major existential states and the salient features of each.

2.1 The Wedding, at Mount Sinai

At Mount Sinai, Moses read in the hearing of the people the words of the marriage covenant. The people agreed to abide by the terms specified. Then Moses went up the mountain to receive additional commandments.¹⁰ During the forty days and forty nights Moses remained on the mountain, the newly-wedded bride demonstrated her proclivity, by creating and worshiping an idol, the golden calf.¹¹

composition: 13 tribes

husband: Son of God

wife: “Israel”

king: Son of God

governing law: Law of Moses

2.2 The Son of God Rejected as King

The initial era of Israel began with the wedding at Mount Sinai and extended through the era of the Judges. During this era, the Son of God reigned as King over Israel. The Throne from which the King reigned was in Heaven. Of course, the King in Heaven was invisible to the eye of the flesh. Sadly, much of the populace lacked eyes of faith, being unregenerate. Expressing their desire was to be like all the other nations, the people demanded a visible king; this was in the days of the Prophet Samuel. Through Samuel, the Lord God warned the people of the terrible cost of a visible earthly king, but the people would not listen. So the Lord vacated the Throne, and made Saul the King of Israel.

composition: 13 tribes

husband: Son of God

wife: “Israel”

king: Saul

governing law: Law of Moses

2.3 The Kingdom Taken from Saul

Before he was crowned, Saul appeared to be humble. But in the role of King, Saul proved to be arrogant, tyrannical, and disobedient. The Lord commanded Saul to destroy utterly the Amalekites and all that they had. But Saul took as booty the livestock, and he saved alive the king of the Amalekites, Agag. The disobedience cost Saul both his crown and his life. The Lord God caused Saul and his son, Johnathon, to be slain in battle, thus ending the Dynasty of Saul.

The Lord gave the Throne of Israel to David, the son of Jesse, who the Lord described as “*a man after his own heart.*” Moreover, the Lord promised to David an everlasting Dynasty. The promise is fulfilled in the everlasting reign of Christ Jesus. Jesus, the son of David, was seated upon the revived Throne of David, at the right hand of God the Father. Because he was a man of war, David was not permitted to build the Temple. The work of constructing the Temple fell to the son of David, Solomon.

¹⁰Exodus Chapter 24.

¹¹Exodus Chapter 32.

composition: 13 tribes

husband: Son of God

wife: “Israel”

king: David

governing law: Law of Moses

2.4 The Kingdom Divided

The Lord God promised to Solomon glory exceeding the glory of all earthly kings. Of course, the expense of the glory fell upon the populace, which demanded of the Lord a visible king. The lavish and extravagant lifestyle of Solomon demonstrated to the people of Israel the gravity of the warning of the Lord God concerning the cost of an earthly king.

At the beginning of the reign of the son of Solomon, Rehoboam, the people, weary and impoverished by the tax burden imposed by Solomon, petitioned Rehoboam for a reduction of taxes. Instead of granting the request, Rehoboam threatened an immense increase in taxation.

In response to the threat, the ten northernmost tribes of Israel immediately disavowed allegiance to the Throne of David. The ten tribes, comprising the bulk of the populace of Israel, formed a separate kingdom, keeping the name “Israel.” The kingdom also is known as “the Northern Kingdom of Israel.” The capital of the new kingdom was Samaria. The King was Jeroboam. Only three tribes, Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, remained loyal to the Davidic dynasty. After the division, the kingdom ruled by the Dynasty of David is known as “Judah” or “the Southern Kingdom of Israel.”

Very importantly, the division did not terminate the marriage relationship of the Old Covenant. The Covenant remained in effect independently for each kingdom. The Prophets portray the relationship as that of a man married to two sisters.¹² Because few understand the significance of the term “Gentile” which William Tyndale coined in his English Bible, few understand that this rebellion and consequent division of the Kingdom is the very root of the animosity of the “Jew” toward the “Gentile.”

composition: 10 tribes

husband: Son of God

wife: “Israel” or “Northern Kingdom of Israel” or “Samaria”

king: Rehoboam

governing law: Law of Moses

composition: 3 tribes

husband: Son of God

wife: “Judah” or “Southern Kingdom of Israel” or “Jerusalem”

king: Jeroboam

governing law: Law of Moses

¹²Compare the marriage of Jacob to the sisters Leah and Rachel.

2.5 The Northern Kingdom Divorced

Following the breach of the Kingdom, the Northern Kingdom gave herself over to idolatry, which is adultery. About two centuries after the division, the Lord God exercised his prerogative as Husband, and divorced his unfaithful wife, Israel. In the divorce, the ten tribes of Northern Kingdom were evicted from the Land of Promise and lost their identity as the “People of God.” The eviction was accomplished by several waves of invasion by Assyria, circa 721 B.C. The divorce did not affect the covenantal status of the Southern Kingdom, which now was the Remnant of Israel.

A fact of which very few take note is that the same prophecies which announced the impending divorce of Israel also foretell the restoration of alienated Israel. According to the prophecies, the breach of the nation eventually was to be healed:

- The descendants of the tribes of the Northern Kingdom and the descendants of the tribes of the Southern Kingdom were to be gathered.
- The tribes were to be restored to covenantal relationship.
- The reunion of Judah and Israel were to be united under a single captain.

Obviously, this healing of the breach is the union of “Jew” and “Gentile” in the Body of Christ Jesus, under the New Covenant.

composition: 3 tribes

husband: Son of God

wife: “Judah” or “Israel” or “Remnant”

king: Hezekiah

governing law: Law of Moses

2.6 The Fall of the Davidic Dynasty

About a century and a half following the divorce of the Northern Kingdom, the Southern Kingdom had fallen into state of idolatry worse than that of her sister. Moreover, the Prophets indict the Southern Kingdom for treachery. Babylon took an oath from the King, Coniah, and allowed him to remain on the throne. But Coniah, being by nature treacherous, violated his oath and sought deliverance from Egypt. Babylon then invaded Judah and deposed Coniah.

The deposition of Coniah constituted the fall of the Throne of David. Because of the treachery of Coniah, the Lord pronounced a curse upon Coniah, decreeing that no descendant of Coniah would prosper reigning on the Throne of David.¹³ Because of the curse, Joseph, the legal father of Christ Jesus, worked as a carpenter, despite the fact that Joseph held title to the throne of Israel. Joseph passed the title to Jesus. Through his mother, Jesus was a descendant of son of David. But, because of the virgin birth, Jesus was not physically a descendant of Coniah. Therefore, Jesus was able to assume the (revived) Throne of David, the curse upon Coniah notwithstanding.¹⁴

The Remnant of Israel, the Southern Kingdom, Judah, was taken captive to Babylon. Jeremiah prophesied the captivity would be seventy years in duration.¹⁵ The Prophet Ezekiel was sent to the captives, to offer them a glorious future with a great new Temple. The Prophecy of Ezekiel contains detailed plans for the Temple. However, the offer was conditioned upon repentance.¹⁶ Those of the Remnant generally were unrepentant; consequentially, they refused

¹³ Jeremiah Chapter 22.

¹⁴The Protestant Pulpit seldom, if ever, mentions the curse upon Coniah. This is because, according to Protestant Theology, the factor which necessitated the virgin birth is the “Sin Nature.” Protestant Theology, based heavily upon the myth of the Talmudic Jew, holds that every descendant of Adam is born a sinner, because of a Sin Nature which is transmitted genetically through the male gamete. But, according to the Scripture, all of the progeny of Adam are sinners because of a judicial imputation, Romans 5:12-19. The Lord God imputed to each of the descendants of Adam the transgression of one man, Adam, that, correspondingly, he might impute to all the righteousness of one man, Christ Jesus.

¹⁵ Jeremiah 25:11-12, Jeremiah 29:10.

¹⁶Consider Ezekiel 43:9-11.

the offer presented by Ezekiel. Indicative of their recalcitrance, the Remnant while captive in Babylon concocted the evil of Talmudic Judaism.¹⁷

After seventy years in Babylon, a portion of the captives returned to the Land of Promise and built a modest temple. But the Temple soon fell into neglect. There followed four centuries of prophetic silence. However, during this period, the providential Hand of the Lord was very apparent:

- The conquests of Alexander the Great established the Koine dialect of Greek as the common language of the Ancient World.
- The Lord caused the Ancient Hebrew manuscripts of Scripture to be translated into Koine.¹⁸
- The Prophecy of Daniel pinpointed the epoch of the Incarnation with great accuracy, creating expectation among the Remnant.
- The Son of God was incarnated as Jesus of Nazareth.

The prophetic silence was broken by the cry of John the Baptizer.¹⁹

composition: 3 tribes

husband: Son of God made the Incarnate Christ

wife: “Judah” or “Israel” or “Remnant”

king: none

governing law: Law of Moses

2.7 The Termination of the Old Covenant

The Son of God became incarnate for the purpose of death.²⁰ Following the Incarnation, the Southern Kingdom murdered her husband, Jesus, the Incarnate Christ. The death of Jesus in the role of Husband of Israel irreversibly dissolved the marriage relationship of the Old Covenant. The relationship cannot be revived, even for an instant.²¹ The death of Jesus in the role of Covenant Sacrifice inaugurated the New Covenant.²² Importantly, the termination of the marriage enabled those formerly bound by the Old Covenant to enter into the New Covenant.²³

Even as the Old Covenant instantly made the descendants of Jacob into a nation, so also the dissolution of the Old Covenant brought to an end the national status of Israel. The transition was underscored by the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70.²⁴ Any earthly national entity comprised of mortal men, including the contemporary Jewish state, which claims to be “Israel” has no relationship to the Lord God other than that of “enemy impostor.”

¹⁷In essence, Talmudic Judaism is a scheme whereby a man may violate the Spirit of the Law while technically remaining within the Letter of the Law. The religion of Talmudic Judaism would characterize the Remnant until dissolution of the Old Covenant, and it would forevermore characterize the unrepentant Jew.

¹⁸In the present day, the translation is known as the *Septuagint*.

¹⁹Matthew 25:1–13. The cry at midnight, verse 6, was sounded by John the Baptizer.

²⁰Hebrews Chapter 2, Hebrews Chapter 9.

²¹The proponents of Dispensational Theology teach that the era of the Old Covenant has been suspended and that the present era of the Church is a temporary “parenthesis.” They argue that the “Dispensation of Israel” cannot come to an end until the lapse of one additional “week” (seven years). They argue that the remaining week shall resume once the Church is “Raptured.” But that teaching is entirely false and absurd. The event called the “Rapture” is a myth which denies the necessity of the Resurrection.

²²Hebrews Chapter 9. The English words “testament” and “testator” never should appear in a translation of the Scripture. The concept in view in the Scripture is that of a Covenant (Greek, *diatithemi*) and the corresponding Covenant Sacrifice (Greek, *diatheke*).

²³Romans 7:1–6.

²⁴Failing to apprehend that the Old Covenant was a covenant of marriage, some Protestants erroneously teach that it was the destruction of the Temple which terminated the Old Covenant. But the Old Covenant was dissolved years earlier, the moment Christ Jesus died.

3 Israel Under the New Covenant

The Scripture reveals that God the Father currently is in the process of bringing into existence a comprehensive global government. The government which the Lord has ordained for the Earth is a kingdom. Not surprisingly, the name of the Kingdom of God is “Israel.” But, unlike Israel under the Old Covenant, Israel under the New Covenant is compromised exclusively of the redeemed, and thus is termed “*the Israel of God*.²⁵

3.1 A Task Spanning Many Generations

The process of creating the government is much more difficult, and of necessity has taken far longer, than most people imagine. The King must be seated. A company of officers must be assembled and trained. The task is not yet complete.

3.1.1 A Righteous Government

A distinguishing characteristic of the government envisioned by the Lord God is righteousness. Under the government of God, successive generations of mankind may work, play, and reproduce, utilizing the resources of the Earth and enjoying the fruits of their labour, all the while being free from the threat of disease, crime, and governmental oppression.

But a righteous government must be staffed with righteous officers. Adam and the Woman were placed in the Garden for the purpose of testing. Adam and the Woman schemed together to snatch from the hands of the Lord the reins of government. They ate of the fruit of the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good & Evil* in the expectation of gaining the understanding necessary for government. Rebelliously disobedient, Adam and the Woman failed the test, thus demonstrating the incapacity of mortal man to govern.

3.1.2 A Family Affair

A complicating factor is that God the Father desires the government to be a family affair. Even the Lord God cannot reproduce himself, but, through the transformation of the Resurrection, the Lord is able to change a corruptible mortal creature of the flesh into an incorruptible immortal being of the Spirit Realm, and to give that being birth into the Family of God. Thus, every officer of the Kingdom is a member of the Family of God.

3.2 The Session of the King

The declaration recorded in the Second Psalm, “*Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion*,” speaks of one of the greatest works of God the Father. The words reflect uncountable instances of deliverance, many cases of Providential provision, numerous miracles, and even angelic interventions. In many, if not most, of these events, the enemies of the Lord God exercised all of their ingenuity and resources to thwart the Lord. The rulers of the Kosmos, from kings and governors down to the slave master and the usurer, understand that they shall be cast down and trodden underfoot by the Righteous once the government which the Lord is bringing into existence is fully operational.

The Session of the King (which is to say, the seating of the King upon his throne, which marks the commencement of his royal duties) was an epic event. The Justified of every prior age of history have longed to hear the joyous news, “*The King has been seated!*” For with the Session of Jesus, the Anointed, the Kingdom of God, first prophesied in the Garden,²⁶ became a reality.

The term “gospel” means “glad tidings.” There is but one true Gospel, the *Gospel of the Kingdom of God*. The very essence of the Gospel is the message that the King has been seated, and his never-ending reign over the Kingdom of Heaven has begun.

3.3 The Process of Salvation

Salvation is not a transaction. Rather, Salvation is a process. The call of the Gospel is issued, but not to everyone. Those who respond and obey through baptism are justified and placed in the *Way of Life*. The purpose of the *Way of Life* is Sanctification, which is the development of a godly character. Sanctification entails repeated cycles of instruction,

²⁵ Galatians 6:16.

²⁶ The “Heel & Head” prophecy, Genesis 3:14–15.

testing, discipline, and repentance. The process of sanctification is life-long. Those who endure to the end thereby attain to the Resurrection to Life Everlasting. Those who fail to respond to the call of the Lord to Salvation or those who with contempt reject the call thereby judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life.²⁷

3.4 The Resurrection Out From the Dead

The great confidence of the Justified is the *Resurrection Out From the Dead*. This is true, irrespective of the historical in which an individual lives. All of the Justified have part in the same Resurrection.

3.4.1 Two Processes: Transformation & Birth

The *Resurrection Out From the Dead* is more complex than it commonly is envisioned, for it has two functions. The best-known function of the Resurrection is transformation. The one raised from the Grave is changed from a mortal corruptible being of flesh to an immortal incorruptible being of the Spirit Realm.²⁸

However, it is not generally understood that the Resurrection also is a process of birth. The Resurrection is the “*birth from above*” about which Jesus spake in his conversation with Nicodemus.²⁹ In the Resurrection, the Justified are born into the Family of God, being placed as mature Sons.

3.4.2 Preservation of Identity

A factor in resurrection which few consider is preservation and restoration of the identity of the individual. Of course, apart from preservation of the identity, resurrection makes no sense. This factor is ignored because of the popular notion that the essence of man is an “Immortal Soul.” But the notion is false.

According to the Scripture, man is a chemical organism which is animated by a spirit imparted by the Creator. The animating spirit, termed the “*Spirit of Life*” or the “*Breath of Life*,”³⁰ is imparted upon the first inhale at birth.

The animating spirit is non-sentient. This evident from the multiple passages of Scripture which state that both activity and thought ceases at the moment of death, and that the dead do not praise the Lord God. Thus, the animating spirit does not correspond to the Protestant notion of “soul.”

Man does not *have* a soul; rather, man *is* a soul. The term “soul” is an Old English term; it means creature or being. “Soul” corresponds to the Greek term *psuche*. Upon creation, Adam was a *soul*; but not until he was animated by impartation of the Spirit of Life did Adam become a “*living soul*.”³¹

At death, the animating spirit returns to God the Father, and the chemical organism begins to decompose.³² The function of the animating spirit is manifest by the accounts in Scripture of the death of Christ Jesus and the death of Stephen. At the moment of death, each commands his animating spirit to God for safekeeping, and each refers to the spirit as “*my spirit*.”³³

It seems obvious that one function of the animating spirit is to maintain a record of the identity of the individual, that is, his personality, character, and thoughts. Upon death of the individual, the animating spirit returns to God the Father, who preserves for the purpose of resurrection. Upon resurrection, the same animating spirit is imparted by the Lord to the body of resurrection.³⁴ Thus is the identity of the individual maintained through death and resurrection.

²⁷ Acts 13:46.

²⁸ I Corinthians Chapter 15. The term “corruptible” (*phthartos*, perishable) has no moral connotation. The body of resurrection is incorruptible in that it never shall suffer disease, injury, or disfigurement. It never shall age, it never shall grow weary from exertion or lack of sleep.

²⁹ The English Bible translates *anōthen* as “again,” apparently doing so on the basis of the mistaken interpretation of Nicodemus. But *anōthen* means “from above” or “from the beginning.”

³⁰ The Greek term *pneuma* means wind, breath, air, or spirit. Context governs.

³¹ Genesis 2:7.

³² Ecclesiastes 12:7.

³³ Luke 23:46, Acts 7:54–60. Prayer normally is made to God the Father. However, Stephen, in a vision seeing Jesus standing at the right hand of the Father, naturally would direct his request to Jesus.

³⁴ I Corinthians 15:35–57.

3.4.3 The Alternative to Resurrection

But not everyone is resurrected. Jesus warns that man should not fear man, for man can do no more than kill the body. The one to fear is the Lord God, for he is able not only to kill the body, but also to annihilate (Greek, *apollumi*, destroy fully, perish, lose) the identity.³⁵ Annihilation of the identity (Greek, *psuche*, soul, life, self) is accomplished simply by destroying the record maintained by the animating spirit. And the destruction is portrayed vividly by the flames and maggots of Gehenna, which place, sadly and inexplicably, the English Bible erroneously terms “hell.”

3.5 Staffing the Offices

Confronted with the claim that the Kingdom of Heaven is a present reality and the claim that the Anointed today is reigning over the Kingdom of God, the Protestant Pulpit mockingly asks for the evidence of the Kingdom and the Reign. Pointing to evils including warfare, oppression, crime, poverty, rampant sin, and environmental pollution, the Protestant Pulpit argues that these phenomenon are inconsistent with the Kingdom of Heaven and the Reign of the Christ. But the reason for the presence of evil, despite the Reign, is easily explained:

- The Kingdom of God moved from prophecy to actuality the moment the King, the resurrected Jesus, ascended into Heaven and was seated upon his everlasting throne.³⁶
- Jesus already has been reigning over the Kingdom for two millennia.
- God the Father desires his government, the Kingdom of Heaven, to be a family affair. Consequently, without exception, the officers of the Kingdom are the Justified who, through perseverance in the *Way of Life*, have pursued Sanctification.
- The Justified are drawn from every historical era, beginning with Adam and the Woman in the Garden.
- For the most part, the Justified lie unconscious in the Grave, awaiting the Resurrection.
- The Kingdom of Heaven has a great many offices.³⁷ However, the offices of the Kingdom of Heaven presently are vacant, and of necessity shall remain vacant until the Resurrection.
- The Justified cannot assume their offices in the Kingdom until, by means of the Resurrection, they are raised from the Dead, transformed from corruptible mortals into incorruptible immortals, and born into the Family of God.
- The Creation (the populace of the Earth), groans in suffering under the oppression of governments devised by man. But the relief for which the Creation longs shall come only when the Sons of God are manifested.
- The *Resurrection Out From the Dead* is the event which manifests the Sons of God.³⁸

³⁵Matthew 10:28, Luke 12:4–5. The identity is the individual. Resurrection is pointless, apart from restoration of the identity. For the passage in Matthew, the English Bible reads, “able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” For the passage in Luke, the English Bible reads, “after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell.” ¶ The Old English term “hell” is the correct translation of the Greek *ades*. Literally, *ades* is a hole in the ground or a grave. Figuratively, *ades* is the state of the Dead, in other words, “the Grave.” But, whether literal or figurative, “hell” is neither a place of everlasting torture by maggot and flame, nor is it a kingdom of “fallen” angels ruled by “the Devil.” ¶ However, the term *ades* does not appear in Matthew 10:28, nor does it appear in Luke 12:5. In both passages, the Greek word which the English Bible of Tyndale (and thus, the *King James Version*) erroneously translates “hell” is *geenna*, which is the name of the Valley of the Son of Hinnom. Usually transliterated “Gehenna,” *geenna* was the municipal dump of the city of Jerusalem. Fires burned continually in the valley, and never were quenched, for the flames consumed combustible refuse. But the flames were not “unquenchable.” Dead animals also were cast into the valley, so the maggot (English Bible, “worm”) always was to be found (Greek, *teleutao*, end, finish, die). But the maggots were not “immortal.” The bodies of criminals and worthless men also were cast into the valley, thereby receiving the figurative “burial of an ass,” Jeremiah 22:19. ¶ In summary, in Matthew 10:28 and in Luke 12:4–5, Jesus is not warning of everlasting torture in a place called Hell; rather, Jesus is warning of utter annihilation of the soul, that is, of the identity.

³⁶Psalm 2, Psalm 110.

³⁷John 14:1–4.

³⁸Romans 8:16–23.

composition: all of the Justified from every historical era

husband: Christ Jesus (Greek, *o christos*, “the Anointed”)

wife: “Church” (Greek, *ekklesia*, “assembly”) or “Body of Christ”

king: Jesus, the Son of David, the Son of God

governing law: Law of God

4 The Protestant Conception of the Plan of God, Salvation & the Gospel

The Protestant Pulpit claims that it is proclaiming the Gospel and teaching the doctrines of the New Covenant. But the confused assertions emanating from the men who stand in the Protestant Pulpit make obvious the fact that they understand neither the New Covenant nor the Gospel. At the heart of the problem is a fundamental misunderstanding concerning the Plan of God.

4.1 The Plan of God

The Protestant misunderstanding of the Plan of God stems from the fact that Protestant Theology (properly, “Reform Theology”) was crafted under the influence of the tradition and mythology of the Talmudic Jew. Because of this influence, the Protestant views the present life as a struggle between supernatural forces of good and evil, vying over the souls of men. Beyond the supposed struggle of the present life, and the final consignment of men to Heaven or to Hell, the Protestant conception of the Plan of God fades into obscurity. But such a conception is false, containing unexplained voids and discordant transitions.

The Lord God is not the author of confusion.³⁹ Like the Scripture, the Plan of God is coherent. In his omniscience, the Lord envisioned a goal, together with every need required for attainment of that goal. The creation of the Natural Realm, the creation of Adam, the Promises to Abraham, the Old Covenant, the New Covenant, the Kingdom of Heaven, the Gospel, and Salvation all are part of the Plan. The purpose of the Lord God is to bring into existence a righteous government for the Earth.

The theology of the Protestant can be difficult to enumerate, inasmuch as there is no central authority and there are many variants. Moreover, the theology of the Protestant contradicts not only the Scripture, but often itself. Finally, Protestants mostly ignore the *Writings of the Prophets*, reasoning that a people in the relationship of the New Covenant have little or no need for Scripture pertaining to the Old Covenant.

4.2 The Writings of the Prophets as an Anchor

Without the anchor of the *Writings of the Prophets*, there is little check on Protestant interpretations of the *Writings of the Apostles*. Consequently, the disinterest of the Protestant in the *Writings of the Prophets* and in the history of Israel results in a distorted perspective which accommodates even the most bizarre of theological systems.

Daemonic Activity in the Epoch of the Incarnation. In particular, those lacking familiarity with the *Writings of the Prophets* do not appreciate that the phenomena of “daemon possession” seen in the Gospel Accounts was unknown in Israel prior to the Babylonian Captivity. While the Gospel Accounts record daemonic activity in the vicinity of Jerusalem, such activity does not appear in the epistles of Paul nor in the epistle of Peter.⁴⁰ One thing is sure: there is no such creature as a “fallen” angel.⁴¹

In view of the “strong delusion” principle which Paul discusses with the Thessalonians,⁴² a possible explanation for demonic activity in the epoch of the Incarnation is that the Lord God created a special creature of the category “daemon,” whose actions were in accordance with the expectations of the Talmudic Jews.⁴³ These creatures operated only in the vicinity of Jerusalem and only while the Old Covenant was in effect.

³⁹I Corinthians 14:33.

⁴⁰II Peter is spurious.

⁴¹Hebrews 1:13–14.

⁴²II Thessalonians 2:1–12.

⁴³Consider I Kings 22:19–23, II Chronicles 18:18–22. The Lord put a “lying spirit” in the mouth of the false Prophets who advised King Ahab, to deceive the King.

4.3 Pre-Historic Angelic Rebellion

Protestants generally believe in a prehistoric rebellion in the Angelic Realm. The tale is fantastic; yet it is taught from the Protestant Pulpit and is believed by Protestant congregations. Here follows the tale:

- The most magnificent creature ever formed by the hand of the Lord God was an archangel now known by the titles “Lucifer,” “Satan,” and “the Devil.”
- The magnificence of the archangel led to pride. As his pride increased, he came to believe that he could overthrow the Lord God.⁴⁴
- The archangel plotted and fomented a rebellion against the Lord God.
- One-third of the angels followed the archangel in rebellion.
- There followed warfare in Heaven between the “holy” angels and the rebels.
- The rebellion was quashed, and the rebellious angels, now termed “fallen angels,” were condemned.
- The sentence for rebellion should have been death. However, angels were created immortal, so that even their creator, the Lord God, is unable to kill them. For this reason, the fallen angels were sentenced to everlasting torture.
- The sentence was appealed. The exact basis of the appeal varies with the teller of the tale, but the general arguments seem to be either that a creature by design must rebel, or that a loving God cannot subject his creatures to everlasting torture.
- Man was created as a “courtroom demonstration” in order to “resolve” the appeal. Again, the exact manner in which mankind resolves the appeal varies with the teller of the tale, but the general argument seems to be that:
 - In response to his sin, Man is offered Salvation.
 - If even one man accepts the offer of Salvation, the appeal of the angels is demonstrated invalid.

It is critical to note the following facts concerning this tale of angelic rebellion:

- In the tale, no Salvation was offered to the angels. This makes a mockery of the claim that man was created as a “courtroom demonstration.”
- This tale makes man a mere contingency of the supposed angelic rebellion. Had there been no rebellion, the Lord God would not have created man. But the tale is blasphemous, for it implies that a supposed rebellion in the Angelic Realm caught the Lord God by surprise.

4.4 The Protestant *Gospel of Personal Salvation*

The Protestant has invented his own “Gospel,” which is the “*Gospel of Personal Salvation*.” A typical enumeration of this Gospel is as follows:

- Every man by virtue of the transgression of Adam is consigned at death to the fate of everlasting torture in a place called “Hell.”
- The Lord God indiscriminately offers every man the opportunity of Salvation, without cost and without obligation.
- The Salvation is made possible by the sacrificial death of Christ Jesus.
- Salvation consists of the combination of:
 - Acquittal from the fate of everlasting torture.
 - Transmutation of venue upon death from Hell to Heaven.

⁴⁴The Protestant claims Scriptural support for the supposed pride and fall of this creature, citing Isaiah Chapter 14 & Ezekiel Chapters 28 through 31. But these prophecies clearly are indictments of contemporary kings.

- Salvation is imparted by a momentary transaction:
 - The individual typically is instructed to “*invite Jesus into his heart*” or to “*receive Jesus as his personal saviour*.”
 - Supposedly, Salvation is imparted unconditionally and irreversibly. In the event of sin, the individual may be disciplined, but he never is in danger of losing his Salvation.
 - Immediately upon complying with the requirements (invitation or reception) the status of the individual is “saved” and “born again.”

The Protestant claims that the purpose of the Plan of God is to deliver from the fate of Hell every member of the human race who will accept deliverance. Accordingly, the Protestant claims that God and the “fallen” angel known as “the Devil” are locked in a struggle over each soul, with the Devil determined to persuade men to reject the offer of Salvation. Curiously, the Protestant offers no plausible reason for the concern of the Devil regarding the fate of man.

4.5 Historic Activity of “Fallen” Angels

The typical Protestant interpretation of the Scripture supports the notion of the Devil and fallen angels interfering in human affairs. But the interpretation is biased heavily by the translation of the English Bible.

For example, the Greek term *diabolos* means slanderer or accuser, and has no inherent angelic connotation. However, the precedent-setting English Bible of William Tyndale transliterates *diabolos* rather than translating the term. Thus, the translation of Tyndale makes the word *diabolos* appear to be the name of an entity, “the Devil.” Indeed, William Tyndale is the creator of the Devil.

4.6 A Tangled Web

The more thoroughly one inspects with objectivity the Doctrines which define the Protestant Faith, the longer grows his indictment of the Protestant Reformers and successors, and of William Tyndale and his English Bible. In the epic poem, *Marmion*,⁴⁵ of the Scotsman, Walter Scott, is found a fitting epitaph to the work of these men:

*Oh, what a tangled web we weave
When first we practise to deceive!*

– *From Canto VI, Stanza XVII of Marmion*

Russell Lee Harris

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⁴⁵The poem, published in A.D. 1808, concerns the Battle of Flodden, of A.D. 1513.