

A Departure: Pt. III

NOTE: This is a continuation of a series that began with the post [A Common Approach](#), and looks at the departure of the Jews from the truth of the Scripture and the Gospel. This series will also examine how the LORD God has dealt with His people, the Jews, particularly in the 20th Century.

As is shown in the Old Testament, the Jews plainly knew the very same gospel that we know. Throughout the Old Testament there are references to the Redeemer to come and that individuals were saved simply by believing in the Messiah to come. In fact, it was made very plain by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself when Nicodemus came to the Lord Jesus to ask about Him:

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? (John 3:1-10)

Here we find that the Lord Jesus Christ expected Nicodemus to understand the new birth, the differences between the physical and the spiritual, and that one only enters into the kingdom of God through the new birth. The question the Lord Jesus asks of Nicodemus: "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" refers to the incredulous response of Nicodemus to the Lord's statement: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." and the Lord's subsequent explanation: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Though He knew Nicodemus did not know these things, there is a plainly expressed expectation from the Lord Jesus Christ that Nicodemus ought to have some working understanding of the new birth.

Indeed, throughout the rest of the New Testament there are references to salvation in the time of the Old Testament. In every case, the message of salvation referenced in the Old Testament is referred to as "the gospel." This is significant as the term "gospel" is used by the Lord Jesus Christ to refer to the salvation that is in Him by grace through faith. He plainly expressed to every one who would hear, that upon repentance, one would be saved if they believed in Him. Thus, there exists a continuation of the message and means of salvation between the Old and New Testaments. In the following passages of Scripture, the fact that the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ was preached in the Old Testament is clearly expressed:

What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what

saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. (Romans 4:1-3)

And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. (Galatians 3:8)

For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. (Hebrews 3:16-4:2)

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? (Romans 10:12-16)

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him

that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. (*Revelation 14:6-7*)

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. (*Hebrews 13:8-9*)

Therefore it should be well understood that the evidence from the Old Testament itself, the references to gospel in the Old Testament that are found in the New, and the plain reference in Revelation to the everlasting gospel, that salvation has always been, and always will be the same, and that Christ to come was preached unto the everyone, and particularly the Jews, during the time of the Old Testament. This also makes clear the egregiousness of the departure of the Jews from a proper understanding and belief in the LORD God, and in the Messiah, or Saviour. In Galatians, chapter one, the seriousness of this departure is plainly expressed:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. (*Galatians 1:6-9*)

Which is to say that anyone who departs from the gospel as it is expressed in Scripture, is accursed. Since the gospel has never changed, and the message delivered to the Jews by Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and others was consistent with the gospel the LORD preached unto Adam and Eve after the Fall, for the Jews to depart from that specific message meant that whosoever of them departed, were accursed of the LORD for

doing so. This would also be the same for anyone else in the world who knowingly departed, or departs from the gospel, whensoever in history they live.

However, since the Jews were chosen because of Abraham, and agreed to carry the gospel unto the world, they occupy a particular place insofar as the LORD is concerned. After all, they agreed with the LORD that they would carry forth, and maintain His gospel and a specific witness of the righteousness of God to this world under penalty of sanction and retribution if they failed in the covenant. Thus, the magnitude of their departure from the truth can really only be understood in light of the following two passages of Scripture, both of which the Jews openly declared:

And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words. (*Exodus 24:6-8*)

But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas. Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. (*Matthew 27:20-25*)

To be continued . . .