

Year-Beginning Odds and Ends

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[0 : 00] I came to the end that I owe you some additional information in connection with what we brought last week in saying that there is no such thing as the Old Testament and the New Testament as presently declared both by Protestant and Catholic faiths.

And why in the world would that be and what could I possibly mean by that? But there is only what we call the Bible, and it is not categorized as Testaments at all.

And I know that that's somewhat strange to even think in those terms, because after all, as you open your Bible, you will see at the very beginning where it tells you that this is the Old Testament, and it begins with Genesis, and it ends with Malachi.

Then you can open the New Testament, and there it tells you clearly before you get to the text that it is the New Testament that begins with Matthew and ends with Revelation. And the question needs to be asked, who put those designations there?

They are not part of the inspiration of Scripture. They were never part of the original autographs that God inspired the different ones to write. In fact, if you will keep this in mind, all of the marginal notes that you have in your Bible, if you have them in the center column or below, if you have a Schofield Reference Bible or a Reference Bible or any other Reference Bible and all of the notes that are added, none of those belong in the text.

[1 : 30] None of those are part of what God inspired. Not even the chapters that are called chapters 1 and chapter 2 are not inspired. They were not written that way originally.

Neither are the verse divisions and the numbers that are given to them part of the original text. The original text was limited to the original text. What was inspired was what God moved each writer to write, and it had nothing to do with all of the marginal notes and other things that you see in your Bible, some of which, most of which, are very good and very helpful, but they're not part of the original text.

Neither is the phrase the Old Testament or the New. And we talked a little bit earlier about the word testament. Told you it is only used six or eight times in the Bible, and in each case, it should never be translated testament, because the word in the Greek is bereith, and the word in the Hebrew is bereith, and the word in the Greek is diatheke, and both of those mean covenant.

And covenant is all they mean, and covenant is what they always mean, and testament is completely out of the picture altogether. So the word testament, whether you see it in the Old or New, or whatever translation you see it, is a really illegitimate term, and it should always be rendered covenant, because that's what it was in the original text.

Now, if the Bible does consist of the same content that we call the Old and New Testaments, then, and indeed it does, so we still enjoy all of the books inspired by God from Genesis to Revelation, but those designations for testament ought to be ignored.

[3 : 19] I am not here to split hairs, but to strive with you for accuracy, because the word of God, simply because it is the word of God, is deserving of all of the accuracy that we can assign to it.

First thing I would like you to look at is, and when I say, when I say there actually is no new covenant that is in existence per se, I have to qualify that, because there is an aspect of it, and those of you who may have obtained one of the more recent volumes of Christianity Clarified will recall what I meant when I introduced that term about there being an aspect of it.

There is one aspect of the new covenant that is now in force, and we are all beneficiaries of it, but the new covenant in toto, as it was prophesied, has never yet come into existence.

And I want to show you why I am confident that that is so, and again, in the interest of accuracy, we must look at a few references, and the first is in Isaiah chapter 55.

And I want to remind you that when you come to the prophet Isaiah, virtually everything from chapter 40 on has to do with a completely new venue altogether.

[4 : 50] The first 39 chapters of Isaiah, and by the way, this is one of the things that led some of the liberal scholars to say that Isaiah has two authors, and they refer to it as Deutero-Isaiah, and they believe that Isaiah didn't write either one of them.

Somebody else did. Somebody wrote Isaiah the first 39 chapters, and somebody else, another person, wrote from chapter 40 through to chapter 66. So you have two different authors, and they call it Deutero-Isaiah.

But it is quite interesting to note that when the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in 1947, one of the documents that was there was the Isaiah Scroll.

All intact, just as indicated, written, obviously, by one author, and that author we believe to have been Isaiah, the son of Amos.

And what he penned in the first 39 chapters is gloom and doom and destruction. And it is taking Israel to task for their insolence, for their disobedience, for their idolatry.

[6 : 02] And the first 39 chapters deliver Israel over to the wrath and the punishment of God for their evil. And the last part of the book, from chapter 40 on, begins with comfort, comfort ye, comfort ye, my people.

It is a complete switch, total about-face. And what it is about is God revitalizing Israel, Israel coming to a place of blessing and benefit, Israel coming to a place of millennial blessing, when the rule and reign of Christ will be in effect, and the plan of God will be moving along, and Israel will be the head, not the tail, and all nations of the world will flow into Israel.

And ten men will take hold of the skirts of him that is a Jew and says, we will go with you for God is with you. The last half of Isaiah speaks of all blessing and restoration and benefit.

And that's what is involved here in chapter 55. If you would look at verses 1 through 3, He, O everyone who thirsts, come to the waters. You who have no money, come buy and eat.

Come buy wine and milk without money and without... Sounds pretty good, doesn't it? No money? Why do you spend money for that which is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy?

[7 : 30] Listen carefully to me and eat what is good and delight yourself in abundance. Incline your ear and come to me. Listen that you may live and I will make an everlasting covenant with you according to the faithful mercies shown to David.

Has that covenant ever actually been installed? No, it has not. It is still a subject of prophecy never yet fulfilled.

And if you look at the context, it is quite apparent that this is speaking exclusively of the nation of Israel, God's covenant people. And in Isaiah chapter 61, just a few pages, Isaiah chapter 61, and if you would, look at verses 8 and 9.

For I, the Lord, love justice. I hate robbery and the burnt offerings, and I will faithfully give them their recompense. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

Then, their offspring will be known among the nations and their descendants in the midst of the peoples. All who see them will recognize them because they are the offspring whom the Lord has blessed.

[8 : 58] and as you go on and read this, it's all good news. Rejoicing in the Lord, my soul exalts in the Lord. This is all millennial content and it is talking of a time when this will be a reality, and it certainly has never been to this time.

Jeremiah chapter 31, please, just over the next book. Jeremiah chapter 31, in verse 31, a very familiar passage.

Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord. Yes, they are coming. Let me ask you this. Have they ever arrived? No, they have not. They are still days that are coming.

They have not arrived. The verse goes on to say, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

Now, the reason both of those are mentioned is because at the time Jeremiah wrote this, which was approximately 500 years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, at the time he wrote this, Israel was a divided nation.

[10 : 05] They were separated. There was the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom. And the southern kingdom consisted of Judah and Benjamin.

That was it. Just two tribes. The northern kingdom was the other ten tribes that had seceded from the union. And it was all on the basis of a taxation argument.

It was the son of Solomon who was going to tax the people. It was Rehoboam. And he was going to add a great tax burden to them and the people said, we're not going to put up with this.

We are going to secede from the union. To your tents, O Israel. What interest have we in David? And they pulled out of the union. And they went up north from whence the tribes came.

They established their own capital. It was called Samaria. They built their own temple. They installed their own priesthood and they installed their own king. None of whom were legitimate and none of whom had divine sanction.

[11 : 10] They were all spurious. And in the south remained the two which was where Israel's capital was located in Jerusalem. That's where the temple was.

That's where the priesthood was. They continued on business as usual. But now the kingdom is torn apart. And here they're going to be brought back together again.

They will be healed and they will be one nation. And that is why the text says I will sow in verse 31 I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

What was wrong with the covenant they had? Well he goes on to tell us not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt my covenant which they broke although I was a husband to them declares the Lord.

But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days declares the Lord. I will put my law within them and on their heart I will write it and I will be their God and they shall be my people and they shall not teach again each man his neighbor and each man his brother saying know the Lord for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them declares the Lord for I will forgive their iniquity and their sins I will remember no more.

[12 : 39] This is all millennial content. Has this ever happened? Has this ever taken place? No. No. Not at all. And while we're in the prophets let's come to Ezekiel chapter 11.

Jeremiah Ezekiel is the next book and he too is a prophet. Ezekiel chapter 11 and for time's sake let us begin with verse 17 Ezekiel 11 17 Therefore say thus says the Lord God I shall gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries among which you have been scattered and I shall give you the land of Israel.

Well that's partially fulfilled because they're in the land of Israel now but there's still millions of Jews scattered throughout other parts of the world and when they come there verse 18 they will remove all its detestable things and all its abominations from it and I shall give them one heart and shall put a new spirit within them and I shall take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh that they may walk in my statutes and keep my ordinances and do them and then they will be my people and I shall be their God has this ever been fulfilled absolutely not however active imagination one may have you cannot say this has already taken place it has not all of these things relate to this new covenant sometimes referred to as an everlasting covenant it is always held in contrast to the existing covenant under which the

Jews were operating which they proceeded to violate constantly that was the law of Moses and what God is saying is listen the new covenant I'm going to give you is going to be completely different because it's going to come with an enablement to maintain it and to keep it and to keep it with the right spirit as opposed to the way you function under the old covenant now the question is has this ever happened of course not of course not then what is this thing that we call the new covenant that is mistranslated as testament new testament well when you close out I'm going to give you a couple of other references but we're not going to turn to them for those of you who are taking notes ezekiel 18 and verse 31 and ezekiel 36 verses 22 through verses 22 through 28 just for time's sake

I want to get those on the record but all they do is reinforce what we have already said so I want to hasten on if we may as to how we came by these names and what they actually mean this new covenant that is referred to by our Lord and it is in all of the synoptics but I want you to look primarily at Luke 22 because it is so critical to what we've been talking about it's found also in Matthew Mark and Luke it isn't in John's gospel because John is writing for an entirely different reason but I want you to look at Luke gospel chapter 22 and we'll begin with verse 14 it's a passage that I'm sure is familiar to you but you may see it on a little different light this time Luke 22 and verse 14 when the hour had come Jesus reclined at table and the apostles with him and he said to them I have earnestly desired to eat this

[16 : 40] Passover with you before I suffer for I say to you I shall never eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God what is that that's precisely what we've been talking about this that is this millennial reign that is yet coming still future and it is future from the time that Jesus mentioned it here until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God and having taken a cup when he had given thanks he said take this and share it among yourselves for I say to you I will not eat until the kingdom of God comes and the kingdom of God will not come until the king comes and when the king comes he will affect the kingdom of God the kingdom of God does not now exist and having taken some bread when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them saying this is my body which is given for you do this in remembrance me and in the same way he took the cup after they had eaten saying this cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood anybody have a king

James and what does it say you know testament right yeah well the new American corrected that this is the new covenant in my blood what then would lead anyone to think that the new covenant has been fulfilled probably this in connection with his death on the cross that seems to be well we know how climactic it was in one sense because it was on that cross that the son of God who knew no sin was made sin for us we might be made the righteousness of God in him there was an incredible transaction that took place on that cross between the son and the father there was a separation that took place and that separation constituted spiritual death and the fact that that separation encompassed only three hours of time from noon till three o'clock in the afternoon does not in any way lessen the seriousness or the sobriety of that separation the father and the son were separated for a space of three hours now for you and for me we would say well really what's the big deal about that

I mean three hours anybody can put up with anything for three hours but do you realize what we're talking about here this is a rupture that occurred within the framework of the triune God now I can say that and I can believe that but I certainly don't understand that something of unimaginable proportions happened when Jesus cried out my God my God why have you forsaken me during those three hours the aloneness the utter agony the agony that deity can feel that we cannot begin to understand because make sure you understand this the crown of thorns and the nails in his feet and the nails in his hands and the spear in his side were nothing compared to what he experienced and three hours of estrangement from his father we cannot begin to get into that it was horribly unspeakable beyond words we do not understand what took place in that separation

Jesus Christ was cursed by the father cannot imagine that this is the son whom he loved before the foundation of the world something took place there and it all happened because of you and me that's why it was there that's what this is all about this is what Christianity is all about this is what salvation is all about this is what eternal life is all about this is what acceptance with God is all about and it took place in the space of three hours that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself in those three hours and in those three hours the basis was made the payment was made for the establishment of the new covenant but it has never come into being on that cd volume that we did

I think we used the word aspect there are two aspects to this new covenant and this new covenant that Jesus is talking about here I cannot divorce from the new covenant that Jeremiah is talking about they're one and the same and it is as if Jesus was saying say fellas you remember reading about Jeremiah and what he said about the new covenant well I am shedding my blood to provide the basis for the new covenant and without the shedding of blood there is no remission and what did Moses do under the old covenant remember they slew an animal remember that slew an animal and then the covenant was presented to the children of Israel and they told Moses you go back up the mountain and you tell God that he's got a deal all that he said we will do and the tables of the law were presented to the people they were not imposed upon the people they were presented to the people for their consideration and

[23 : 49] God told them if you will sign on to this covenant and agree with it I will be your God and you will be my people and I'll watch out for you and you worship me exclusive of other gods and they said okay you tell God he's got a deal we will do it all that the Lord has said well we do Moses went back up and said people agreed you got a deal and God said okay you ratify the covenant so Moses went down they slew an animal they took the blood from the animal and he sprinkled the blood on the tablets of the law and then he sprinkled the blood toward the people and that kind of brought the law and the people together that was the official ratification of the covenant that's why that word in the Hebrew for covenant is berith and it means to cut they cut a covenant why did they call it cutting a covenant because you cut animals you cut the animals in half we saw that in

Genesis 15 and 17 where the animals were cut in half and laid on either side and then the people making the covenant passed between them and Hebrews makes it ever so clear that not with the blood of animals but with his own blood Christ provided the basis for the new covenant the old covenant was ratified with animal blood and that's why the writer says what he does in Hebrews about it being a temporal thing and it could not take away sin the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin you have to do this again next year and that's the day of atonement but when Christ died and shed his blood that made the final payment forever never to die again the payment was full and complete and he voiced that in saying it is finished the transaction is done so any who thought the new covenant had been ratified were probably operating on a faulty assumption and

I think I know perhaps what it is but I may be making a faulty assumption of my own and I'm thinking of 1 Corinthians chapter 11 and I should just like to read you a few verses the apostle Paul is speaking and he says in verse 23 I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you that the Lord Jesus the night he was betrayed took bread when the cup also after supper saying this cup is the new covenant in my blood do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me now what Paul is doing here in writing to the Corinthians he is reflecting back on what Jesus said in the gospels that we read earlier he's just repeating it and then in 2nd Corinthians chapter 3 here is perhaps where we have gone astray 2nd Corinthians chapter 3 and beginning with verse 5 not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves but our adequacy is from

God who also made us adequate as servants of the new covenant not of the letter but of the spirit for the letter kills but the spirit gives life now what is this new covenant well I think it'd be terrible to try to separate it from the other new covenant I mean after all there's only one new covenant and that's the new covenant and sometimes it may be called the everlasting covenant but that still ties in with it being the new covenant we are ministers of the new covenant but how can that be if the new covenant has never been actually fulfilled and that is because this is the first aspect of it when Jesus Christ died on that cross he accomplished multiple purposes and the first purpose was he paid in full the sin debt of the entire human race that's what

Paul meant when he wrote as in Adam all die even so in Christ shall all be made alive and writing to the Corinthians he said God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself every living single human being reconciled to God in the death of Christ that's the first aspect of the new covenant what's the second aspect the second aspect is when it is applied to the nation of Israel and it never has any Jew any Israelite anywhere in the world can be a beneficiary of the first aspect all he has to do as a Jew is believe on the

[29 : 38] Lord Jesus Christ as his savior and he comes into the salvation of God just like we Gentiles when we came to faith in Christ but this new covenant has never been fully ratified its basis has been made for that but it's unfinished why is that it's because of the same principle that existed with the old covenant when God made up the old covenant and presented it to Israel he was giving it to them for their consideration and he was inviting them to sign off on it and be a party to it and when Moses presented it to them he gave them all the details and much as said well what do you think and the people kind of got together they discussed it they talked about it and they said yeah that's good you go back up and you tell

God we're going to do that we'll do what he says we'll we'll be obedient well we'll we'll we'll we'll we'll we'll go back to we'll we'll we'll we'll go back to every other sin and immorality that you can mention and that's what brought in the basis and the need for the new covenant and that too bless God is solely on the basis of his grace they did not deserve the first covenant which they broke they don't deserve second covenant which is the new covenant they don't deserve that either you know God does more things for us that that we don't deserve and in fact is there anything we deserve not really we deserve judgment we deserve punishment but God is ever committed to loving and to mercy and to grace all the day long have I extended my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people and then he says but how shall I give thee up oh

Israel God is stuck on the human race he has a love affair with the human race that won't let him quit loving us that is amazing amazing grace so this new covenant has never been instituted because Israel the party of the second part they've never showed up for the signing they're not interested the Jew deprives himself of the rest of the story that is found in the new testament which he does not accept which in reality is not the new testament and it is not even the new covenant what it is what we call these books from Matthew to revelation it's not the new testament even not the new covenant it is merely the continuation of the word of god that underwent a 400 year hiatus between the closing of what we call the old testament and the opening of what we call the new testament and whereas scholars are committed to the idea at least the vast majority are that the old testament speaks of the coming of the messiah the time is coming when god will send a deliverer this goes all the way back to genesis 3 and malachi in chapters 3 and 4 predicts the coming of two people one will be the forerunner that will be john the baptist who will announce the coming of the messiah and the other chapter refers to the messiah himself when he comes and then malachi closes what we call the old testament then 400 years of time goes by and no word from god no scripture being written nobody is writing anything god isn't revealing anything the world is passing four centuries and all of a sudden the one prophesied in that old covenant old testament arrives on the scene and matthew introduces him with the genealogy and john the baptist in fulfillment of what malachi said 400 years earlier is the forerunner and says for this cause have

I come that I might introduce him to Israel that's why I came baptizing and it would be just I suppose a very logical thing to jump on it and say well this is the new covenant no it isn't no it isn't Jesus provided and paid for the basis of the new covenant that has never been established and when it will be when those 12,000 Jews of each of the 12 tribes of Israel 144,000 have conducted their evangelistic campaign referred to in Revelation 7 and again in Revelation 14 and they succeed in bringing many of their own people the Jews to faith in Christ and they are holed up in the south in what I believe will be Petra awaiting the return of Christ and there they will undergo supernatural protection from the

Antichrist and supernatural feeding and supernatural water much in the same way God provided for them when they came out of Egypt then that will be the believing remnant and they will sign off on the new covenant they will look on him Zechariah says they will look upon him whom they pierced when Christ comes in power and great glory and they will mourn for the sins of their fathers and for their own and they will embrace Yeshua HaMashiach as their Messiah he will deliver them and save them from all their enemies and he will decimate the armies of the Antichrist in what is known as Armageddon and then there will be the marriage supper of the lamb and guess what the center contract will be the new covenant and

[36 : 27] Israel will sign off they will be the signatory Israel will be the second will be the party of the second part party of the first part is already signed off that was Jesus when he died and there have been 2,000 years waiting for Israel to come around and they remain now judicially blinded in their unbelief blindness in part has happened unto Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in that's when the fullness of the Gentiles will have come in and Israel will be on board and the new covenant will be signed off and established now only the first phase exists and we are beneficiaries of it and you know there is a parallel to this and I just want to briefly share it with you because it just speaks volumes to me

I don't know about you but when Jesus Christ died on that cross he purchased us lock stock and barrel and when you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and you trusted him as your savior you know what he did for you well he did more for all of us than we can imagine but we know some things that he did for sure one is that he came into your life into your life into your body in some way that we really don't understand all we know is text says your body is a temple of the holy spirit which you have of God and you're not your own you're bought for the price and we are made up of body and spirit which comprises the soul and when you receive Jesus Christ as your savior God in his spirit entered your life he came into your body to take up residency and he with his spirit regenerated renewed made new your spirit he made you alive to

God on the inside this is called regeneration but he didn't do anything for your body now think of that you are redeemed what part of it is that that is redeemed it's just your spirit God didn't do anything to your body whatever deficiencies diseases abnormalities or anything else you had when you came to faith in Christ you still have after you trusted the Lord as your savior but he made you new on the inside and that is the part of you that when your body dies that spirit regenerated spirit exits your body and goes to be with the Lord this is what Jesus was talking about on the cross when he said father into thy hands I commit my spirit and he breathed his last gave up the spirit and his body was unchanged now what is

God going to do for our bodies oh it's wonderful he's going to glorify our bodies why doesn't he do that now because we are still in process we are not finished faithful is he who has begun a good work in you and what was that good work I think that was a regeneration and he will complete it that means he will finish what he has begun in you what he began in you this process of regeneration but it hasn't affected your body at all so there's two aspects to your salvation one is for your spirit the other is for your body and when the time comes that our body will be fashioned like unto the body of Jesus Christ we have a glorified in Romans 8 when he says the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now waiting to wit for the redemption of our bodies our spirit has been redeemed you are as saved as you can get but your body is still a mess isn't it and the time is coming when it is going to be made like unto that perfect spirit our bodies will be fashioned like unto his body then we will be a finished product then both aspects of

Christ's redemption will have been applied to us because you see the only thing that has been applied from that now is immaterial for our spirit our body yet awaits the application the price was paid in full for the redemption of everything but it hasn't been applied the only thing that has been applied is the first part that's the regeneration on the inside and that is that which determines your eternal destiny so does the new covenant even exist today yes and no it does impart and it does not impart part is already accomplished part is yet awaiting fulfillment maybe some would say this is splitting hairs but as far as I'm concerned it all ties together with the accuracy of the scriptures and would you pray with me father we've talked about a lot of things much of which we don't begin to understand as much as we would like but we are certainly accountable for what we do understand and we are so grateful that you have gifted us with a volition an ability to make moral choices and certainly the reality of acknowledging our sin acknowledging our undeservedness acknowledging our rebellion these are all acts of the will and we can implement them if we're honest with ourselves and we are so grateful that when we come to the end of ourselves acknowledge our sin admit it try to stop excusing it and justifying it and just throw ourselves upon you and your mercy realizing that you stand ready and eager to forgive us our sin if we will just acknowledge it repent of it and look to

[43 : 31] Lord Jesus as our only hope and Savior we are so grateful that you provided him we don't understand how you could love us like that but we're so glad that you do and our father our prayer for anyone here boy or girl man or woman who's never really faced the honesty of their situation never faced it with honesty that they may be compelled to do so even now align themselves with the truth that you've set forth in the scriptures and acknowledge that they have no hope but you and in simple childlike faith say Lord Jesus I know I have a need and I know I can't meet it and I thank you for dying so that you could meet it and I want what you provided for me I want to trust you I want you to come into this life of mine regenerate my spirit and make me what you want me to be I am at your disposal would you make that your prayer this morning and if you do

God love you and tell somebody else about it give them an opportunity to rejoice with you thank you father for what we have considered this morning thank you for tying these things in the scriptures together as you have we are grateful for being able to see them we know there's a lot that we missed we know that there's things that we don't understand but we want to be faithful and obedient to what we do understand to that end we commit each and every one here today in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ Amen