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Volume X
Issue 248

A Holy Nation

A Look at God's Earthly Purpose in Israel

Part 2

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

ISRAEL'S SABBATH:

Their Sign and Covenant

The recognition and observance of holy days was something that belonged to the nation of Israel and was a part of their ritualistic relationship with God. The most common of these days of worship was their weekly Sabbath.

As we read through the Bible many are surprised to find that there is no mention of the observance of the Sabbath from Adam to Moses. Many would have you believe that during this period of over 2400 years those in a right standing with God observed the Sabbath, but there is not the first mention of any such practice prior to Moses.

There is not one example of a seventh-day Sabbath observance from Adam to Moses. Even Job, the outstanding saint of the Old Testament has no reference at all to the keeping of a Sabbath. This is because the Sabbath was given to Israel; it belonged to them as a Nation.

Thus, the observance of the weekly Sabbath was not made known until the law was given at Mount Sinai (Exodus 20:9-11).

*You came down also upon Mount Sinai ... and made known unto them **Your Holy Sabbath** ... by the hand of Moses Your servant (Nehemiah 9:13-14).*

Old Testament saints could not possibly have observed the Sabbath prior to this time if it had not been "made known unto them." So, clearly the first twenty-four centuries were without the observance of a Sabbath ordinance.



The Sabbath was actually a "sign" and a "covenant" between God and the nation of Israel.

*And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying, "Speak also unto the children of Israel, saying, 'Verily My Sabbaths you shall keep: for it is **a sign between Me and you** throughout your generations; that you may know that I am the LORD Who sanctifies you. You shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you ... Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for **a perpetual covenant**. It is **a sign between Me and the children of Israel** ...'" (Exodus 31:12-17).*

We learn that Sabbath-keeping was a part of the Law of Moses, that it was a Jewish "sign" and "covenant" with God. It was not a "sign" or "covenant" between God and the Gentiles, or God and the Body of Christ, but God and the nation of Israel!

We must learn to make a difference where God makes a difference.

The "Sign Nation"

Israel was the "sign nation." Signs were a divine requirement under God's relationship *with Israel*.

*For the Jews **require a sign** (I Corinthians 1:22).*

By God's design, Israel was His *sign nation*; signs were their *birthright* when He brought them out of Egypt.

(see **NATION**, page 2327)

Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

ISSN: 1936-9360

Volume X, No. 248 – July 6, 2010

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- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7)
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (1 Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11)
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25)
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1)
- the organic nature of the church, the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12)
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13)
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15)
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13).
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
 - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14)
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NATION (continued from page 2325)

*And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe you, neither hearken to the voice of the **first sign**, that they will believe the voice of the **latter sign** (Exodus 4:8).*

Thus, signs belonged *TO* Israel.

*We see not **our signs** (Psalm 74:9).*

Thus, signs belonged *IN* Israel.

*Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given me are for **signs and for wonders in Israel** from the LORD of hosts (Isaiah 8:18).*

The “Covenant Nation”

Israel was the “covenant nation.” Covenants were how Israel’s relationship was structured with God.

*Who are Israelites; **to whom pertain ... the covenants**, and the giving of the law ... (Romans 9:4).*

Divine covenants made with the nation of Israel had an accompanying sign. The Abrahamic covenant had *circumcision*; the Davidic covenant had *water baptism*; and the Mosaic covenant had *the Sabbath*.

Many today would seek to mix the gospel of God’s grace with Israel’s covenants and signs. If one truly was to keep the law of the Old Testament Sabbaths, one must observe many different days. Besides the weekly “seventh-day Sabbath” there were at least fifteen fixed dates that were Holy Sabbaths unto the Lord.

Under the law the Sabbath was, without a doubt, a day of ceasing from all forms of work. There was to be no food preparation, no leaving home, no buying, no selling, no fire and no journeys (*c.f.* Exodus 16:29; 35:2-3; Numbers 15:32-36). Try *that* for Sabbath observance.

ISRAEL’S HOLY DAYS AND THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE

The religious observance of days is a test of one’s understanding of the entire teaching of “*the revelation of the mystery*” (Romans 16:25) committed to Paul. During “*the dispensation of the grace of God*” (Ephesians 3:2; Colossians 1:25), the law, as a rule of conduct, is not once applied to the believer. We find the Sabbath mentioned nine times in the book of Acts – a transitional book – in reference to the Twelve Apostles in Israel’s Kingdom Church, and without mention of the “*revelation of the mystery*” which was given to Paul. During this unique period Paul himself took advantage of the Sabbath to

share the gospel (I Corinthians 9:20); but when you get to the writings of Paul, which constitute the body of truth for this age (Romans 2:16), there are only two references to the observance of days. Read these passages carefully:

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ (Colossians 2:16-17).

... How turn you again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto you desire again to be in bondage? You observe days, and months, and times, and years (Galatians 4:9-10).

In these two passages we learn that all of Israel’s holy days were simply a “*shadow of things to come*,” and that Paul even refers to them as “*weak and beggarly elements*.”

Sunday Worship

Among the most destructive errors of our day are those that are a result of mixing law and grace. A fine example of such wresting of the Scriptures of which we are to beware (II Peter 3:16-17) is the so-called “Christian Sabbath.”

In this error it is taught that the Old Testament observance of the “seventh-day Sabbath” has somehow been transferred to a “first-day Sabbath.” This is taught and practiced in many denominations with different degrees of “bondage” attached (Galatians 4:9-10). Although this teaching was much more bold in past generations, its effects are still firmly established in present day Christendom. Yet the fact established by Paul’s letters is that believers in this age have no divinely decreed days of observance – *NONE*.

No day is holy in itself – all days are alike. A day or anything else is holy only by divine decree. No such decree appears anywhere in those epistles written by Paul. The Body of Christ has no “signs” or “covenants” and no observance of days. Paul actually feared those who observed days.

You observe days, and months, and times, and years. I fear for you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain (Galatians 4:10-11).

Even though Paul encouraged the reception of those members of Christ’s Body who observed days, he said that they observed them as a result of being “*weak in the faith*,” and that they were not to be received “*to doubtful disputations*.”

Him who is weak in the faith receive, but not to doubtful disputations (Romans 14:1).

The Lord's Day

There is also the teaching that Sunday is "the Lord's Day." This is clearly the religious "traditions of men" (Mark 7:13; Colossians 2:8). There is absolutely NO such teaching found anywhere in the Bible! The Lord's Day (or "Day of the Lord") is actually a prophetic day starting at the end of this age. For further study on the Day of the Lord see Revelation 1:10; Isaiah 2:12; 13:6-18; 34:8; Jeremiah 46:10; Amos 5:18-20; Joel 2; Zechariah 14; Malachi 4:5-6; I Thessalonians 5:2; II Peter 3:10.

The "first-day" of the week is by no means a day to be observed and is not subject to any special rule. This topic is essential in understanding God's new order for today (i.e., "the dispensation of the grace of God"). We enjoy every day as unto the Lord.

ISRAEL'S DAY OF PENTECOST

Over the past century a great deal of emphasis has been placed upon the Hebrew *Day of Pentecost*. Many have established their doctrinal systems around their understanding of this Jewish event. Some believe it to be the "birthday of the church," while others even hold it to be the "standard" for church practice and experience.

Without ever fully examining the meaning and placement of the *Feast of Pentecost* from the Scriptures themselves, they proceed to arrange their doctrine and practice upon this event. To them the *Day of Pentecost* is the pattern of God's will and plan for our day.

Yet, have they ever considered what *actually* took place on that specific *Day of Pentecost* some two millennia ago? We will briefly consider two important points concerning the *Day of Pentecost*.

THE DAY OF PENTECOST WAS A PART OF THE LAW OF MOSES

The Day of Pentecost Was a Jewish Feast Day Required Under the Mosaic Law.

This feast is also known as the "feast of weeks" (Deuteronomy 16:10) and "feast of harvest" (Exodus 23:16). The word *Pentecost* actually means "fiftieth" because it was observed *fifty days* after the *Feast of First Fruits*. This was one of the seven great annual feasts of the Lord, and the second of three feasts that required all males to be present "before the Lord" (Exodus 23:14-17).

Pentecost brought to a close the grain season. The cereal harvest began with barley at *Passover* and ended with wheat at the *Day of Pentecost* (Exodus 34:22 – at *Pass-*

over they waved the sheaf; at *Tabernacles* they mark the end of the fruit season).

In the Dispensation of the Grace of God There Is No Observance of Holy Days.

During God's current dealings with mankind there are no special days. The Jewish days (feasts included) are spoken of as "weak and beggarly elements" and "bondage" by our apostle (Galatians 4:9-11).

THE DAY OF PENTECOST WAS A PART OF PROPHECY

The Day of Pentecost Was a Part of the Prophetic Program Dealing with Israel.

The events surrounding Israel's holy *Day of Pentecost* reveal that it was a day of prophetic significance.

Peter spoke to his Jewish audience on the *Day of Pentecost* telling them of its prophetic nature.

*But **this is that** which was spoken by the prophet Joel (Acts 2:16).*

Peter goes on to quote the prophecy of Joel.

"And it shall 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 shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy" (Acts 2:16-18).

Paul, the apostle, quoting Isaiah 28:11-12, also clearly reveals to us that the tongues (languages) present on the *Day of Pentecost* were a part of Israel's prophetic program.

In the law it is written, "With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear Me," says the Lord (I Corinthians 14:21).

What was the purpose of the *prophesied* tongues on the *Day of Pentecost*?

The Tongues on the Day of Pentecost Were for a Sign to Israel.

*Wherefore **tongues are for a sign** ... (I Corinthians 14:22).*

Signs were a divine requirement under God's relationship with Israel.

For **the Jews require a sign** (I Corinthians 1:22).

By God's design, Israel was His *sign nation*; signs were their *birthright* when He brought them out of Egypt.

*And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe you, neither hearken to the voice of **the first sign**, that they will believe the voice of **the latter sign** (Exodus 4:8).*

Thus, signs belonged **to** Israel.

*We see not **our signs** (Psalm 74:9).*

Thus, signs belonged **in** Israel.

*Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given Me are for **signs and for wonders in Israel** from the LORD of hosts (Isaiah 8:18).*

Tongues were a sign to *unbelieving* Israel.

*Wherefore **tongues are for a sign**, not to them who believe, but **to them who believe not** (I Corinthians 14:22).*

Tongues were also the sign of *Israel's fall*. In I Corinthians 14:20-22 Paul explains the purpose of tongues, quoting Isaiah 28:11-13.

*For with ... another tongue will He speak to this people ... **that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.***

The Scripture teaches us that the *Day of Pentecost* was a part of the Jewish economy, anchored in the Law of Moses, and fulfilled according to God's prophetic plan with the nation Israel. It belonged to a Hebrew dispensation, and with the Circumcision's Twelve Apostles.

The pattern of God's will and plan for our day is the "*dispensation of the grace of God*" (Ephesians 3:2). We do not look back to Israel's law or prophecy, but to God's *current* administration of grace and the mystery revealed to us by Paul, the apostle of the uncircumcision.

THE DAY OF PENTECOST WAS NOT THE BEGINNING OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

Many Christians assume that the day of Pentecost is somehow about the Body of Christ. They imagine that the Body of Christ began on the day of Pentecost. Without ever stopping to prove why (I Thessalonians 5:21), they then move ahead to establish their doctrines concerning this dispensation with this as their key. Many have never

considered what actually took place on Pentecost. What follows is a list of fourteen reasons why the church could not have begun at Pentecost.

1. There already was a "church" in existence on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41, 47). This church was *not* the church which is His Body (Ephesians 1:22-23), because this was hidden until it was revealed to Paul (Ephesians 3). This "church," to which the believers of Pentecost were added, was the kingdom church, and was based on the confession of Peter that Jesus was the Christ (or Messiah). Peter was then given the keys to this kingdom "church" and the power to "*bind*" and "*loose*" (Matthew 16:15-20; *c.f.* John 20:23).

2. Peter preached the "*Last Days*" of Israel on Pentecost and not the first days of the church which is His Body (Acts 2:16-17).

3. There is no indication in Acts 2, or anywhere in Scripture, that the Body of Christ is being formed, or is present on Pentecost.

4. Pentecost was a Jewish feast day given in the Law of Moses (Leviticus 23; Deuteronomy 16). In the dispensation of the Grace of God there is no observance of days, and they are spoken of as "*weak and beggarly elements*" and "*bondage*" (Galatians 4:9-11). It is inconceivable that the Lord would begin the church which is the Body of Christ on a feast day – a feast day which He had for another economy.

5. There was no casting off of the nation of Israel on the day of Pentecost, which was necessary for the establishment of the Body of Christ (Romans 11:11-15, 32). On the contrary, the first real offer of the kingdom was made by Peter on Pentecost. The kingdom was not offered during the Gospels; it was only said to be "*at hand.*" It actually was impossible for it to have been offered until after the New Testament was established by the death of Christ (Luke 17:24-25; 24:26). Christ must first have suffered and then have entered into His glory (I Peter 1:11).

6. The Body of Christ is a joint body of Jews and Gentiles. Peter only addressed Jews at Pentecost. Notice the words, "*Ye men of Judea,*" "*Ye men of Israel,*" "*Ye,*" "*You,*" "*Your,*" "*Men and Brethren,*" and the "*House of Israel*" throughout the passage (Acts 2).

7. Part of the Pentecostal celebration was the two wave loaves of Leviticus 23. This is used as a type of the "*Jews and Gentiles*" by many, but this cannot match the clear teaching of I Corinthians 10:17, which shows that the Body of Christ is one bread. These two loaves are the House of Israel, and the House of Judah. ►

ISRAEL'S GREAT COMMISSION

8. Peter preached water baptism as a requirement for salvation (Acts 2:38) on the day of Pentecost. Water baptism has no part in the gospel message committed to Paul for the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:5). The Lord Jesus Christ had NOT sent Paul to water baptize (I Corinthians 1:17).

9. On the day of Pentecost the promise of the Father was fulfilled to the Nation of Israel. This was a spiritual baptism where Christ was the baptizer, and Israel was the baptized (Matthew 3:11-12; Acts 1:5). This spiritual baptism is quite different from the baptism of this dispensation, where the believer is actually baptized into Christ. The student of the Bible should learn to make a difference where God makes a difference. There are two different spiritual baptisms: one is to the kingdom church, the other is to the church which is His Body. One is associated with signs and wonders, and the other is not (I Corinthians 12:13; Romans 6:3-4).

10. Pentecost was a fulfillment of prophecy (Acts 2:16, 33) and thus had been "*spoken since the world began*" (Acts 3:24), whereas the body of Christ was a mystery which had been "*kept secret since the world began*" (Colossians 1:24-26).

11. If there was any dispensational change, the Apostles were completely unaware of it, for they continued at Israel's Temple (Acts 2:46; 3:1, 3, 8, 11; 5:20-21, 25, 42).

12. The Twelve Apostles and the kingdom church at Jerusalem also continued, throughout the book of Acts, to observe the Law of Moses (Acts 21:20-25; 22:12). This law was abolished in Christ, for His Body (Ephesians 2:15).

13. The kingdom church, in accordance with the kingdom teachings of Christ, sold their possessions and established a common treasury (Acts 2:44-45; 3:6; 4:32-35).

14. Peter, in his message on the day of Pentecost, did not preach the Gospel of the Grace of God, which is the clear and distinctive message of Paul given to him by revelation (c.f. Paul's use of "*my gospel*" in Romans 2:16; 16:25; II Timothy 2:8).

Some would argue that God started the Body of Christ on the day of Pentecost, despite the accounts given in Acts 2, and that Peter was simply ignorant of it being formed. This is not the case, since Peter had his understanding opened (Luke 24:45), the indwelling of God's Spirit (John 20:22), the Baptism into God's Spirit (Acts 1:5), and the filling with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4).

No, Peter was not ignorant – he was completely aware of the program which Christ was carrying out at Pentecost and was right on target.

Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-20; Luke 24:45-48; John 20:19-23; Acts 1:4-8

The passages of Scripture listed above are generally referred to in Christendom as the "Great Commission," "The Marching Orders of the Church," and "The Last Words of the Savior." None of these describe the truth of this Circumcision Commission given to Israel. The particulars of this commission are strictly Jewish in nature, which we will see; and totally incompatible with Paul's evangel (gospel.)

As a result, much of the teaching today from the "Great Commission" is centered on the application of a few select words from Israel's commission, such as "Go ye" and "Lo, I am with you always" from Matthew, and "Every creature" and "All the world" from Mark, etc.

Such messages are usually merely devotional in nature and not doctrinal. It has probably been a long time since you have heard a detailed exposition of the specifics of this commission. In fact, the truth may be that you have never heard an exhaustive teaching of them because, most of the time given to their "exposition" is used in explaining away parts of them.

We want to look very briefly at these passages using the standard means of proper Scripture interpretation. I am sure that most of our readers are well aware that the Bible is not given to any private interpretation (II Peter 1:20). We cannot jump headlong into a passage of Scripture without using some standard principles. These principles, of which even the average student should be fully aware, have been used by the saints over the centuries.

I will just remind you of that excellent example of these principles as clearly seen in the sixteenth century writing of Miles Coverdale (1488-1569):

It shall greatly help ye to understand Scripture if thou mark not only what is spoken or written, but of whom, with what words, at what time, where, to what intent, with what circumstances, considering what goeth before and what followeth after.

It is not our desire to use all of these principles in this short study, for some of the teachings of these passages are generally received by many; but there are a number of these study principles which seem to have been completely overlooked or disregarded.

Who Is Being Addressed?

Most people clearly understand who is speaking in the

so-called “Great Commission,” but it seems only a very few know to *whom* Jesus was actually speaking. This is of utmost importance in properly understanding the Scriptures. Let’s read the passages closely and notice who was being addressed.

*The **eleven disciples** went away into Galilee ... and Jesus came and **spoke to them**, saying ... “Go **you** therefore ...” (Matthew 28:16-19).*

*Afterward He appeared unto **the eleven** ... and He **said to them**, “Go **you** into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:14-15).*

*And **you** are witnesses of these things (Luke 24:48).*

***The disciples** were assembled ... then said Jesus **to them** again, “Peace be to **you**: as My Father has sent Me, even so **send I you**” (John 20:19-21).*

*He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments unto **the apostles whom He had chosen** ... He **said to them** ... “But **you** shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon **you**: and **you** shall be witnesses unto Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:2, 7-8).*

Clearly, in every passage above, Israel’s Apostles are the only ones present. Now, by what strange rule of scriptural study do we interpret these passages to be “commissions” to anyone but to whom it says that they are?

This, then, is indisputably *not our* “Great Commission,” but rather the commission of Israel’s Apostles. It might also be noted that this is *not* our Lord’s *last* command, for He spoke from heaven through Paul giving us a GRACE Commission (c.f. II Corinthians 5:14-21).

What Is Being Said?

As we have mentioned earlier, the “Great Commission” is usually dealt with devotionally and not doctrinally; therefore its contents are obscure to the average church-goer. The size of this work will not allow us a full study of each passage but what follows are a few of the sections for our consideration.

*Teaching them to observe **ALL** things whatsoever I have commanded you ... (Matthew 28:20).*

In the “Great Commission,” Israel’s Apostles were to teach their converts *ALL* of the commandments that Christ gave while He was here on earth so that they might observe them. Honest individuals, even while deceived into believing that this commission is theirs, usually do not teach others to ob-

serve *ALL* of Christ’s commands. Note the following example:

Christ commanded a total disregard for the physical and material things even to the point of bare subsistence.

***TAKE NO THOUGHT** for your life, what you shall eat; neither for the body, what you shall put on ... and seek not what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, neither be of doubtful mind ... **SELL WHAT YOU HAVE**, and give alms ... (Luke 12:22-33).*

*So likewise, whosoever he is of you who **FORSAKES NOT ALL THAT HE HAS**, he cannot be My disciple (Luke 14:33 – c.f. Matthew 6:19-34; 10:8-11; 19:21).*

Jesus taught His Jewish followers to sell all that they had – forsaking all – and to take no thought for their physical sustenance. This is exactly what the Twelve Apostles did. They forsook *ALL* and followed the Lord.

Then answered Peter and said to Him, “Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed You; what shall we have therefore?”

And Jesus said to them, “Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, you also shall sit upon Twelve Thrones, judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel. And everyone who has forsaken houses, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit age-lasting life” (Matthew 19:27-29).

Obviously the Twelve Apostles took the commandments of the Lord to them literally. It is also obvious that He intended them to do so. Under Israel’s “Great Commission,” these Apostles were to teach “*whatsoever*” the Lord had commanded *THEM*, and they did just that.

*They continued steadfastly in the Apostle’s doctrine ... **AND SOLD THEIR POSSESSIONS AND GOODS** (Acts 2:43, 45).*

Then Peter said, “Silver and gold have I none ...” (Acts 3:6).

... As many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them ... (Acts 4:34).

Barnabas ... having land, sold it ... (Acts 4:36-37).

Could anything be clearer? What Jesus commanded, the Twelve observed. What Jesus commanded, the Twelve taught under the “Great Commission” to their converts. What Jesus commanded, the converts of the “Great Commission” observed. ►

Israel was looking for the imminent establishment of their kingdom upon the earth. The selling of their possessions was in light of that hope. Our hope is in Heaven where we are seated with Christ at the right hand of the Father.

With this in mind, let's now note the contrast between these things that Jesus commanded during His *EARTHLY* teaching ministry, and what He later taught in His *HEAVENLY* ministry through Paul. The Lord *does not teach members of the Body of Christ* to sell all that we have – forsaking all – and to take *NO THOUGHT* for our physical sustenance.

If any PROVIDES not for his own, especially for those of his own house, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel (I Timothy 5:8).

The children ought not to LAY UP for the parents, but the parents for the children (II Corinthians 12:14).

Even in the passages of Scripture where the Lord Jesus Christ instructs us through Paul to give, He does not instruct us to *SELL ALL* that we have, but that we have a proper attitude toward material possessions and make good use of our resources (e.g. I Timothy 6:17-19).

Now, all of this is just one example of what Jesus commanded during His *EARTHLY* teaching ministry to Israel (while He was “*a minister of the Circumcision*” – Romans 15:8). All of Christ's earthly commands to Israel were incorporated into the “Great Commission.”

Which Gospel Was Preached?

Preach the gospel (Mark 16:15).

Which “*gospel*” were Israel's Apostles commissioned to preach? There are, in fact, a number of evangels in the Scriptures: “*the gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven*,” “*the gospel of the Circumcision*,” “*the gospel of the Uncircumcision*,” “*the age-lasting gospel*,” “*the gospel of the Grace of God*,” etc.

The gospel mentioned in the “Great Commission” is denoted simply as “*the gospel*,” showing that it had already been defined in the so-called “Gospels” (i.e., Matthew, Mark, Luke and John).

This “*gospel*” could not be “*the gospel of the Grace of God*” which was later revealed and committed to Paul (i.e., “*my gospel*” – Romans 2:16; 16:25-26; II Timothy 2:8), for it was still hidden at this time.

Upon further study, one will note that the “*gospel*” of the “Great Commission” clearly is Israel's “*gospel of the Kingdom*” (Matthew 4:23; 9:35; Mark 1:14). It is the “good news” of the coming of their prophesied, literal, physical, earthly kingdom. This gospel which, during this age has been put on hold, will be preached again one day by Israel *after* the

fullness of the Gentiles has come in (c.f. Matthew 24:14).

Paul did not preach what “*the Twelve*” taught – he preached the gospel of the grace of God.

*... The ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify **the gospel of the grace of God*** (Acts 20:24).

The gospel committed to Paul did not come from himself or from others; it was given to him by divine revelation.

*... I certify you, brothers, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by **the revelation of Jesus Christ*** (Galatians 1:11-12).

So much was this a new message that Paul had to make a trip to Jerusalem to tell the Jesus' Apostles of this heavenly revelation.

*... I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles ... for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: but contrariwise, when they saw that the **GOSPEL OF THE UNCIRCUMCISION** was committed unto me, as the Gospel of the Circumcision was unto Peter* (Galatians 2:2-7).

Paul called this new gospel “*the Gospel of the Uncircumcision*.” He also distinctly called it his gospel – i.e., “*my gospel*.”

*In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to **MY GOSPEL*** (Romans 2:16).

*Now to Him Who is of power to establish you according to **MY GOSPEL*** (Romans 16:25).

*Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to **MY GOSPEL*** (II Timothy 2:8).

This was a new message “*which was kept secret in ages past*.”

Now to Him Who is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past (Romans 16:25).

So it was an evangel (gospel) that was not a part of Israel's “great commission.”

(to be continued)