

# WRITINGS OF DONALD E CURTIS

by Donald E. Curtis

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*A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Donald E. Curtis, compiled for study and devotional reading.*

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What changed because Jesus died?

Study By: Donald E. Curtis But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:39, NASB 95) The Question What changed because Jesus died?

I suspect that some answer entered your head.

- What was it?
- How did it come to be there?
- How sure are you that it is correct?

Sometimes it is good to revisit settled knowledge. So think about your answer. Can you take your answer and find an Old Testament parallel? If so, can your answer be that which changed because Jesus died? Jesus was the "Word become flesh." His death must certainly have brought about fundamental and monumental changes. Does your answer have that kind of punch? The Issue

Many New Testament truths and ideas are also Old Testament truth and ideas. But that which changed because Jesus died is both radically new and covered in the New Testament with crisp details. Strangely, it is also absent from our Christian vocabulary. I can illustrate this by using Galatians 3:2 as a good introduction to what changed and why a new analysis is needed. The letter to the Galatian churches is commonly known to be Paul's response to Jews persuading Galatian believers to be circumcised to bring them under the Covenant of Law to receive its blessings. Paul considered this an accursed corruption of the Gospel and wrote this letter to counteract it. It is in this context that he wrote: This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? (Galatians 3:2)

Now here is the interesting thing about this verse. Awhile ago, I began to ask people a fill-in-the-blanks question using this verse. This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive \_\_\_\_\_ by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? (Galatians 3:2) When I asked people to fill in the blank portion, they gave me these answers:

- Salvation - This is a good and reasonable answer. Certainly salvation comes by way of faith and not by works of the Law. Most people quickly chose this as the missing word.
- Grace or mercy - "For by grace you have been saved by faith." Perhaps grace is a better word since it is the operating principle of salvation.
- Eternal Life - The end result of salvation is eternal life.

Very few, close to none, ever responded with the word "Spirit." The only explanation for this is that somehow, the truth of salvation by faith has superseded or pushed aside the truth of the Holy Spirit. We hear the words "receive," "works of the law," and "hearing with faith" and we think "salvation" and not "Holy Spirit." But clearly for the Galatians, the Holy Spirit was very important and was something that they received by faith. For Paul, it was receiving the Holy Spirit that stands against the works of the Law. For the church to think "salvation" where Paul wrote "Spirit" is a serious defect in our understanding that keeps us from experiencing a gospel of power.

### Salvation by Faith is Not New

Since the Reformation, salvation by faith alone has been the cornerstone teaching of the protestant churches. Our gospel tracts, sinner's prayers, altar calls, vacation bible schools, missions, and many other programs work hard to make this message as clear as we can. We want to save sinners. That we do so is far from wrong as shown by New Testament verses like these:

"She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21) For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (Romans 1:16) But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. (Galatians 3:23-25) For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

These verses and very many more like them tell us unequivocally that salvation is by faith alone. Obedience and good deeds play no part. Legalism is rightly seen as the enemy of faith. The New Testament has a clarity about the role of faith that is absent from the Old. So it is natural, good, and right to speak of salvation by faith as critical to the gospel message. The New Testament makes clear that obedience to Law and good works contribute nothing to our salvation. But let's look at some other verses:

... Then men began to call upon the name of the Lord. (Genesis 4:26 b) Then he [Abram] believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness. (Genesis 15:6; Galatians 3:6) But the righteous will live by his faith. (Habakkuk 2:4b, Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, Hebrews 10:38) And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be delivered (saved); (Joel 2:32 a, Acts 2:21, Romans 10:13) But I have trusted in Your lovingkindness; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. (Psalms 13:5) But as for me, I am like a green olive tree in the house of God; I trust in the lovingkindness of God forever and ever. I will give You thanks forever, because You have done it, And I will wait on Your name, for it is good, in the presence of Your godly ones. (Psalms 52:8-9) The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life; Whom shall I dread? (Psalms 27:1) So while the New Testament makes clear the central role of faith in salvation, these and other verses indicate that salvation by faith is not something that changed because Jesus came and died. If Abraham was saved by faith as Genesis says and Paul repeats, then how is this something that changed when Jesus died? Furthermore, the book of Hebrews tells us unambiguously that the Old Testament saints found approval with God through

their faith: But My righteous one shall live by faith; And if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul. Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval. (Hebrews 10:38-39; Hebrews 11:1-2) The writer to the Hebrews quotes Habakkuk 2:4 and then goes on to tell us that by faith "men of old gained approval." And then there is the whole of Romans chapter 4 from which I have extracted these quotes: For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." (Romans 4:2-3)

How then was it credited? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them, and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised. (Romans 4:10-12) But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, And whose sins have been covered. "Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account." (Romans 4:5-8)

Romans 4:1-25 underpins salvation by faith from Old Testament references. Salvation has always been by faith and was never offered as a result of obedience to the Law. Jesus' death did not usher in a new era by which people can find right standing with God by faith. People could always approach God by faith. On the other hand, Paul also writes, "the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe." And the Gospel of John says: For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. (John 3:16) Paul also links this faith with Jesus' death: being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed." (Romans 3:24-25) Was it possible to have faith in the Son before He came and died? The answer is that Jesus' death is effective outside the flow of time as we understand it. Consider these verses:

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, (2 Timothy 1:8-10)

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad." So the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?" Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am." (John 8:56-58) So salvation by faith was granted from eternity, but revealed when Jesus appeared. Plus, Jesus tells us that Abraham

somehow saw the day of Jesus' coming. And so the principle that salvation has always been by faith stands firm. It is not what changed because Jesus died. The Holy Spirit is New

Now, let's return to Galatians 3:2 and its complete context. Notice the repeated references to the Holy Spirit and the opening link to Jesus' death:

You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain-if indeed it was in vain? So then, does He who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? (Galatians 3:1-5) It is not salvation by faith that Paul sets up against works of the Law, but receiving the Spirit!

Why do we not see this?

- The Reformation rightly restored the doctrine of salvation by faith against the Roman Catholic system of works and salvation through the Church. Unfortunately, it did not also restore the critical role of the Holy Spirit.
- Controversy over doctrines like the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" and the wild excesses of Pentecostalism make us wary of exploring the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- The King James translation refers to Him as the "Holy Ghost," which is confusing at best and spooky at worst. Plus, since the KJV was not consistent in translating pneuma as ghost and, so, implicitly disconnected concepts that should have been connected. Here is just one example:
- Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (Acts 2:38)
- This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? (Galatians 3:2) And so that which should be front and center in our Christian world view operates in the background.

I intend to show that the presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer is that which principally changed because Jesus died. The implications of this fact are enormous. You need not fear that I will raise controversy by promoting tongues or "renewal" or a separate experience subsequent to "salvation." Rather, I wish to show you that the Spirit is what brings power to the gospel message:

- By the Holy Spirit, we are made a new creation. We are made different from the inside out.
- By the Holy Spirit, we have intimate access to the Father even in times of temptation and failure.
- By the Holy Spirit, we have unity, power and gifts to do Jesus' work on earth.

See-the above list contains no surprises. But here is the change: No saint in the Old Testament had this. None! The Holy Spirit came on individuals like Samson and David, but He did not indwell and His presence was often temporary. And so when we read about the activity of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament we are reading about what changed when Jesus died.

Let's look at the evidence:

## John the Baptist

John the Baptist was the prophet who prepared the cultural soil for Jesus' ministry. He spoke of sin and performed a baptism oriented around repentance from sin. But notice how he describes what Jesus will accomplish:

"As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." (Matthew 3:11) "I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." (Mark 1:8)

John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." (Luke 3:16)

"I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.'" (John 1:33)

Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." (Acts 1:4-5)

Each of the four gospels quotes John as saying that Jesus is coming to baptize us in the Holy Spirit. For John this was the key distinction between himself and Jesus. As the forerunner, it fell to him to explain why Jesus would be different from what came before. That difference was that He would baptize us with Holy Spirit. Jesus then underscores this by referencing John's baptism and the soon coming Holy Spirit.

Jesus before His Death Just before His arrest and execution, Jesus told His disciples why it was good that He was going to die: But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. (John 16:7) And who is this helper? Jesus has already mentioned Him several times:

I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. (John 14:16-17) But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. (John 14:26) When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, (John 15:26) But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you. (John 16:13-15)

John the Baptist connected Jesus' coming with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Jesus now connects His death with the coming of the Holy Spirit. It will not be in the Old Testament sense: "abides with you." It will be in a new sense: "will be in you."

## Jesus before His Ascension

Here are Jesus' last words before He went to the Father. Remember that He told His disciples that if He went away He would "ask the Father and He will give you another Helper."

Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." (Acts 1:4-5)

"...but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. (Acts 1:8-9) His last words were the promise of that the Holy Spirit would come.

**Pentecost** The Jewish feast of Pentecost is the day that the Holy Spirit came and a New Covenant was born. The event, in context, reveals the magnitude of the New Covenant that is ours because Jesus died. But first, please note how Paul's words to the Galatians are consistent with the core theme of John the Baptist's preaching and Jesus' promises at the end of His ministry. Paul asked the Galatians, "did you receive the Spirit by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?" It would seem that the giving of the Holy Spirit is the key distinctive of Christianity and the fundamental change that occurred because Jesus died.

Few Gentiles understand what the Jewish feast of Pentecost is about. It is a major Jewish holiday that occurs about 50 days after Passover-hence the Greek designation Pentecost. To the Jews, it is known as Shavuot and it is based on an historical event with the following time marker: In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. (Exodus 19:1)

"In the third month:" The sons of Israel left Egypt the day after they ate the Passover lamb. Passover was on Nisan 15. Add 50 or so days and you are in the month of Sivan, the 3rd month. Nisan is the first month, Iyar is the second and Sivan is the third.

Here is the event: The Lord also said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments; and let them be ready for the third day, for on the third day the Lord will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.

"You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Beware that you do not go up on the mountain or touch the border of it; whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. No hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot through; whether beast or man, he shall not live.' When the ram's horn sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain." So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and consecrated the people, and they washed their garments. He said to the people, "Be ready for the third day; do not go near a woman." So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain

quaked violently. When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder. (Exodus 19:10-19) Immediately after these things the Lord speaks the Ten Commandments to the children of Israel to which they respond:

All the people perceived the thunder and the lightning flashes and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood at a distance. Then they said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, or we will die." (Exodus 20:18-19) This is the grand beginning of the Mosaic Covenant based on law.

- God's presence rested on a mountain. There was smoke, fire, thunder and a loud trumpet blast.
- There was a barrier in front of the mountain to keep the people at a safe distance. It was not needed. No one dared come close.
- God's speaking put the people in mortal fear for their very lives. The holy and perfect God meets the people who are morally flawed. No one can draw close. They must be kept apart.

After Jesus came and He died, a new noisy and fiery Pentecost played out: When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance. (Acts 2:1-4) In the first Pentecost a single fire descended on Mt. Sinai and the people backed off and remained at a distance. In the second Pentecost, the fire came and split up, rested on, and then filled each believer in the room. In the first Pentecost, God spoke from the mount. In the second Pentecost, God spoke through the believers by the Holy Spirit. Because Jesus died, the holy, distant, and fearful God now lives in men and women of faith. This is a monumental change brought about by Jesus' death. To meditate on the two events is to see the magnitude of the change. The distant terrifying God is now near and intimate. The First Sermon

John the Baptist heralded Jesus as the one who would baptize in the Spirit. Jesus tied the coming the Spirit with His death. Pentecost shows us the significance of the Spirit in bringing the presence of God to men and women. It is not surprising that the first sermon was Spirit centric: For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: 'And it shall be in the last days,' God says, 'That I will pour forth of My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, And your young men shall see visions, And your old men shall dream dreams; ...'(Acts 2:15-17) Then, at the end of the sermon:

Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:37-38) The 3,000 Jews that day repented and received the forgiveness of their sins, but they also received something no Old Testament saint ever received. They received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Now note again the words of Paul in Galatians:

You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain-if indeed it was in vain? So then, does He who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? (Galatians 3:1-5) Old Testament Promises In Acts 1:4, Jesus referred to Holy Spirit as "what the Father has promised" and Peter quoted a promise in Joel about a coming era of the Spirit. Joel is not the only reference that is relevant. Understanding the others will help us understand the significance of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian. In the days of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the Mosaic Covenant of law brought the curses on the people. The people had failed to earn the promised blessings. Both, Jeremiah and Ezekiel received words of a coming change.

Here is Jeremiah:

"Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 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. They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the Lord, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." (Jeremiah 31:31-34; and quoted in Hebrews 8:8-12) Now here is Ezekiel:

"Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances." (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

Jeremiah indicates that the means by which the New Covenant will come about is forgiveness, "...for I will forgive their iniquity." That is, the New Covenant is not about forgiveness, it is mediated by forgiveness. The forgiveness of sin that came about because Jesus died is extraordinarily deep. But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (Hebrews 9:11-14)

"Cleansing of the flesh" removes the stain of committed sin without affecting the underlying cause. But Jesus' death brought about a "cleansing" of the "conscience" - that mechanism within that prompts us to choose right paths.

Peter, arguing against Gentile circumcision before the Jerusalem council said this:

After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us; and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith." (Acts 15:7-9) And earlier, Peter had had this exchange with the Jewish believers:

"And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?" When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life." (Acts 11:16-18)

"Repentance that leads to life" i.e. the new creation, law written on the heart, the fruit of the Spirit. The blood of Jesus provided a deep cleansing of the heart/conscience by which the Holy Spirit may indwell us. The goal of Jesus' death was not our forgiveness, the goal was the baptism of the Holy Spirit this forgiveness made possible.

#### 1. By the Holy Spirit, we are a new creation

If you examine the typical presentation of the gospel, it will emphasize the forgiveness of sin and perhaps address knowing God and being in relationship. Strangely, Jeremiah's notion of "writing law on the heart" is absent from most gospel presentations. But Paul makes this connection and links it to the operation of the Holy Spirit: being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. Such confidence we have through Christ toward God. (2 Corinthians 3:3-4) Then there is Ezekiel's new heart-or as Paul puts it-a new creation:

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. (2 Corinthians 5:17) The fundamental problem with the Mosaic Covenant of law is that the promise of blessing and the threat of cursing are not sufficient to change the human heart. Jeremiah stated it well when he said, "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17:9) Think of someone who is angry or jealous. Is the heart issue corrected by telling that one, "Now don't be angry?" or "Beware the green eyed monster?" Would it not often increase the very thing it meant to change? This is the weakness of law; it only identifies sin, but does not promote changed behavior. But the promise of the New Covenant and a New Spirit mean just this thing-change and the ability to be better people. The Holy Spirit is the active agent of change in the believer and works directly against the natural heart. Paul writes: But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. (Galatians 5:16)

And: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23) The operation of the Holy Spirit writing law on our hearts goes beyond keeping us from murder and stealing. If I, by the Holy Spirit, have learned to "love my neighbor" and even to "love my enemies," of what need is there for the commandment "Do not murder?" If I, by the Holy Spirit, have become generous and kind, of what need is there for the commandment, "Do not steal?" If I, by the Holy Spirit, have become faithful in all my dealings, of what need is there for the commandment, "Do not commit

adultery?" The action of the Holy Spirit is to create positive goodness in our hearts in increasing measure. As such it is much greater than the mere commandment that prohibits bad behavior.

Look at what Paul writes in Romans concerning the Holy Spirit and our character: For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (Romans 8:3-4)

...for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. (Romans 8:13-17) The Old Testament saints did not have this. This is new. It is time we emphasized this. Our characters can change from within by the action of the Holy Spirit writing God's ways on our hearts.

## 2. By the Holy Spirit, we have intimate access to the Father

Think back to Mt. Sinai with its boundaries and terror brought about by the close presence of God and how different it was on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came.

Here is another picture. Think of the High Priest approaching the Mercy Seat in the Holy Place during the Day of Atonement:

- He had to be a man.
- He had to be descended from Aaron.
- He could only approach once a year.
- He had to carry blood for his sins and the sins of the people. The Holy of Holies in the temple was off limits to all but a handful of men through the centuries. When Jesus died, that changed. According to the writer of Hebrews:

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16) The "throne (seat) of grace (mercy)" is the mercy seat in heaven as can be seen from this parallel passage-also in Hebrews:

Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (Hebrews 10:19-22) Unlike the singular ancient high priest who had access to a copy of the

Holy Place, because Jesus died we have:

- Access to the real Holy Place in heaven.
- It is open to Jews and Gentiles.
- It is open to men and women.
- It is there in "time of need" i.e. when we are tempted or even in the midst of sin. In other words, our weakness is no longer something that separates us from God and the help that He brings. As you might guess, the Holy Spirit has a role in our access: In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. (Romans 8:26-27)

If you need a good illustration for this access, consider the meeting between Jesus and the Samaritan woman (John 4:1-54). Here is the critical point in the narrative:

He said to her, "Go, call your husband and come here." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband."

Jesus said to her, "You have correctly said, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly." (John 4:16-18)  
Ultimately, the woman's response to this exchange was this:

"Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?" (John 4:29)

Jesus had brought the woman into His space. He revealed that He knew her dirty secrets. How was it that she felt safe? We say that God loves sinners with an unconditional love, but this story takes that concept deeper. Jesus never met a sinner He did not like! He is on our side. He's for us-not in a condescending way, but in a way of friendship. The Holy Spirit does for us, what Jesus did for the Samaritan woman, Zaccheus (Luke 19:1-10), Matthew and his friends (Matthew 9:9-13), the woman sinner at Simon's house who anointed Jesus' feet (Luke 7:36-50), and others. We meet, we feel safe, we draw close, and we are changed.

3. By the Holy Spirit, we have unity, power and gifts to do Jesus' work on earth.

Jesus said that we would receive power by the Holy Spirit and Paul writes:

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)

... But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills. (1 Corinthians 12:11)

Because Jesus' death has provided us with the Holy Spirit each of us can expect to have a manifestation of the Holy Spirit by which we advance the ministry of Jesus on earth. Paul goes on to say that by the Holy Spirit we are collectively the body of Christ: For even as the body is one

and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:12-13) When Jesus was on earth, His ministry was, except for a few remote healings, geographically limited. When He taught, He could be heard by those who were present, not those in the next town. When He commanded the dead to rise, he and the corpse were in the same place. When he cast out a demon, demons in other locales were safe. He brought the words, power, and presence of God, but being the Word made flesh, that presence was localized. But when the Holy Spirit came, believers began to do things in Jesus' name by the power and gifting of the Holy Spirit. As we believers, filled with the Holy Spirit, disperse across the globe, so does the work of Jesus Christ.

Jesus said:

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father. Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it." (John 14:12-14)

Asking in "Jesus' Name" is not a magical incantation that we add to the end of our prayers. It is doing His work in such a way that He gets the credit. Filled with the Holy Spirit, manifesting His gifts, and yielding to His guidance, we are Jesus' work and ministry on the earth. Look at 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 again and note that work of each person in the trinity:

- Variety of effects, but the same God (Father). To me this indicates that the Father desires to do something on the earth, and calls upon the Son who sets up...
- A variety of ministries, but the same Lord (Son). And these ministries do their work by · A variety of gifts, but the same Spirit.

All this is new. We are the people of God: we know Him; by the Holy Spirit we get to see what He is doing; and with manifestations of the Holy Spirit, we do Jesus' work on earth.

#### Practical Matters

There are three things that need to be done. First and foremost, we must make this truth a personal reality. We must walk by the Holy Spirit as a counter to our sin nature. We must confidently approach God and understand that we are safe because He wants to help. We must seek the gifts and manifestations of the Holy Spirit as the means by which we serve in Jesus' Name.

Second, we must include the gift of the Holy Spirit as a key part of the gospel. Salvation by faith existed in the days of Abel and the deep forgiveness offered by the death of Jesus' is the means by which the Holy Spirit is given to us. Here is an example: The Bible tells us that we were made in the image of God. Since God is a person who creates and communicates, we are creatures who create and communicate. Since we share these things with God and their origin is with Him, our greatest satisfaction and purpose come from being in relationship to Him as His people. Unfortunately, our personalities all become warped by an inner selfishness that separates us from that relationship. In seeking our own paths, we do damage to others and to His creation. No

amount of will power or self-help manuals can correct this core problem which the Bible calls sin. Jesus came to show us God's love and intention to fix our sin so that we can have a relationship with God. His life showed us that God loved us and His death provided forgiveness for our sinful ways and gave us the gift of the Holy Spirit to bring God's life into ours. When we repent of our sins and believe that Jesus died and rose again, we can receive the Holy Spirit who will gradually change us into people of love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, gentleness, and self-control as we allow Him to fill us. We become God's children and can become disciples of Jesus Christ and help do His work on earth through gifts that the Holy Spirit gives us. When we die, we will be completely healed of our sinful ways and be in God's company forever. This better aligns with Jeremiah 31:31-34 than most gospel presentations. It is also centered on relationship with God rather than heaven as the goal of the gospel, puts the Holy Spirit in the center, and provides a promise of worthwhile change in this life.

Third, we must better incorporate the Holy Spirit in our teaching. This is especially so regarding the Christian life.

- Power to approach

- Acts 2:1-47 vs. Exodus 19:1-25: It is no longer appropriate to speak of a Holy God from whom we are separate because of sin. Jesus has provided such a deep cleansing by His death and blood, that God is always approachable by those who want to draw near. The woman at the well is a better model for how God now engages men and women.

- We have confident access to the throne of grace in time of need. We have confident access to the Holy Place and the presence of God by the blood of Jesus Christ.

- Paul writes in Romans 8:1-39 that contrary to having a spirit of slavery and fear, we have a Spirit that informs us that we our children of God whom we may address is as "abba:" a endearing form of "father."

- In the gospels, sinners felt safe in the presence of Jesus. Our churches, if they are to do Jesus' work on earth, must strive to do the same. A correct understanding of the Holy Spirit allows us to welcome sinners without compromising godly standards.

- Power to change

- Does our teaching imply the use of will power to avoid sin? Do we use terms like "obeying the 10 commandments?" Would it not be better to focus on the work of the Holy Spirit to bring forth genuinely godly behavior? I can obey one of the commandments by not murdering anyone today, but have I actually set aside my self-interest to love someone today? Let's teach how to walk by the Spirit.

- Power to serve

- Does our teaching separate clergy and laity? Do we model ministry by staff and professionals? Why should we not rather encourage the active participation of all Christians to seek gifts of service from the Holy Spirit?

Here's the end of the matter. The gospel has power! Power to approach. Power to change. Power to serve. We need to expect more.

Hints, Allegories, and Mysteries: The New Testament Quotes the Old Study By: Donald E. Curtis  
The Ideal

Although its detractors use terms like "hyper-literalism," the grammatical-historical method of Bible study has much to commend it. Who can fault a system that strives for objectivity in its pursuit of the knowledge of God? The grammatical-historical method encourages us to read and study without predefined doctrinal lenses. It encourages us to seek out, recognize and put aside long held presuppositions about Christianity and the Bible. Consequently, with the Holy Spirit, an open mind, and hard study anyone can discover important truths and discern the amazing internal consistency of the scriptures. The grammatical-historical method reads poetry as poetry, history as history, and prophecy as prophecy. At every juncture, the common idiomatic sense of language is what rules. In other words, the primary meaning of a passage of scripture is never an allegory, unless it is so declared by the author. The Dilemma

Although one might be an ardent practitioner and defender of the grammatical-historical method, it must be recognized that it has a fundamental problem. That problem, simply stated, is this, "If grammar and historical context are so vital to correctly dividing the word of truth, why did the New Testament authors sometimes violate it? Should they not have been the very models of scriptural correctness?"

Apparently not: for the very first Old Testament reference in the New Testament has no sound connection to its original Old Testament context. And the third and fourth quotes are no better! As we read and compare the New with the Old, we uncover usages that sometimes strike us as odd. To see this, take a look at some New Testament quotes of the Old Testament. The Example of Matthew 1:22-23 Compare Matthew's quotation of Isaiah 7:14 and the extended quote from Isaiah which follows:

Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel," which translated means, "God with us." (Matthew 1:22-23)

Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel. He will eat curds and honey at the time He knows enough to refuse evil and choose good. For before the boy will know enough to refuse evil and choose good, the land whose two kings you dread will be forsaken. The LORD will bring on you, on your people, and on your father's house such days as have never come since the day that Ephraim separated from Judah, the king of Assyria. In that day the LORD will whistle for the fly that is in the remotest part of the rivers of Egypt and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. (Isaiah 7:14-18)

Isaiah's prophecy really outlines a timetable for the destruction of two troublesome foreign kings named Rezin and Pekah. Isaiah says to Judah's king Ahaz, in effect, that by the time a particular maiden<sup>1</sup> marries, has a son, and sees him through his "Bar Mitzvah", these two kings will be gone. Some commentators try to say that Isaiah is not speaking to Ahaz, but to the whole "House of David." They take this mental handle and try to stretch the meaning to make it fit the true virgin birth to come. But Isaiah 7:16 ties the prophecy to the two kings and Isaiah 7:18 calls upon Egypt

and Assyria to be the instruments of their destruction. What have Egypt and Assyria to do with the conception and birth of Jesus?2 Note how the New English Translation phrases Isaiah 7:14: For this reason the sovereign master himself will give you a confirming sign. Look, the young lady over there is about to conceive and will give birth to a son. You, young lady, will name him Immanuel3. (Isaiah 7:14) The NET Bible completely captures Isaiah's original sense. So what was Matthew thinking when he so boldly proclaimed the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14? The Example of Matthew 2:15 Now compare Matthew 2:15 and Hosea 11:1

He remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son." (Matthew 2:15) When Israel was a youth I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son. (Hosea 11:1)

Hosea's prophecy specifically refers to the nation of Israel and the Exodus from Egypt. Whereas, Isaiah 7:14 has some interesting handles to grab and stretch, Hosea 11:1 just doesn't! His words are what they are and cannot possibly be said to predict that a future Messiah would spend any time in Egypt. Why would Matthew say that Hosea's words were fulfilled? The Example of Matthew 2:17-18

Then what had been spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: "A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children; and she refused to be comforted, because they were no more." (Matthew 2:17-18)

Thus says the Lord, "A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; She refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more." Thus says the Lord, "Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears; for your work will be rewarded," declares the Lord, "And they will return from the land of the enemy. There is hope for your future," declares the Lord, "And your children will return to their own territory." (Jeremiah 31:15-17)

Jeremiah refers to the land weeping for the Israelites who have been dispersed to foreign lands. Following the verse about weeping, Jeremiah says, "'Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears; for your work will be rewarded,' declares the Lord, 'And they will return from the land of the enemy.'" There is nothing about a king slaughtering children, because of the birth of Messiah. Rather the tears are a precursor to joy; not the hopeless despair of the young mothers whose children Herod destroyed. The Example of John 13:18 Even Jesus abandoned strict grammatical-historical usage when He quoted Psalms 41:1-13.

"I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats my bread has lifted up his heel against me.'" (John 13:18) Note the broader context of Psalms 41:1-13 : As for me, I said, "O Lord, be gracious to me; Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You." My enemies speak evil against me, "When will he die, and his name perish?" And when he comes to see me, he speaks falsehood; His heart gathers wickedness to itself; when he goes outside, he tells it. All who hate me whisper together against me; against me they devise my hurt, saying, "A wicked thing is poured out upon him, That when he lies down, he will not rise up again." Even my close friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me. (Psalms 41:4-9)

It is difficult to conclude that this Psalm's author intended it to refer to Jesus the Messiah, because verse 4 reads, "As for me, I said, 'O Lord, be gracious to me; Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You.'" Did Jesus have some secret sin in His life? To ask the question is to answer it. Of course, He didn't.

What is going on?

Matthew, Paul, the writer to the Hebrews, Jesus and the other New Testament authors often quote scriptures out of grammatical and historical context. Note the troubling word "fulfilled" in the four verses above. In what way can anyone say that a verse quoted out of context is "fulfilled?" The issue, of course, is that we cannot actually complain. We are not reading the papers of young biblical scholars. We are reading inspired Scriptures. It is not up for correction. We cannot give it a bad grade. One can find and read case-by-case attempts to say that the problem text, if read just so, is not a problem<sup>4</sup>. In truth, though, the more firmly one holds to the grammatical-historical method, the larger the problem looms! Either you accept the violation or bend the method to remove the violation. Either way the strict application of the grammatical-historical method falters. It seems better to discover a paradigm for understanding the scriptural anomalies. But how might one go about it?

Coming to Grips

There are, of course, scholars for whom this is not an issue. For them, the grammatical-historical methodology is good for everything except prophecy. They understand prophecy to have a large symbolic element, and thus, for example, see the Church as the fulfillment of the Messianic Kingdom. As Robert P. Lightner wrote in his *The Last Days Handbook*:

All evangelicals do use the literal method for their understanding of most of the Bible, but some, namely those of amillennial and postmillennial persuasion, think it best to use a less than literal hermeneutic with much unfulfilled prophecy. It is at this point that the evangelical world is divided over things to come and this is what puts prophecy in the middle of the debate. Premillennialists cannot understand why their brothers and sisters insist on using a different method in interpretation with some unfulfilled prophecy but not with all of it. They wonder on what grounds is the less-than-literal approach to be restricted to only some themes of unfulfilled prophecy?<sup>5</sup>

Based on how Matthew, Paul, Jesus, and others sometimes quoted the Old Testament do the amillennial and postmillennial scholars have a better grasp of prophetic meaning? Should we abandon the grammatical-historical hermeneutic for interpreting unfulfilled prophecy? It is my thesis that this is not the case, but a satisfactory resolution only comes from coming to grips the hermeneutic used by the New Testament authors. *The Jewish Connection*

One promising avenue of research toward resolving this issue emerges when we realize that the authors of these mysterious quotations were Jews writing and living in a Jewish context. This becomes especially apparent when we observe that the preponderance of the problem quotations exist in those books that have a distinctly Jewish focus. It is generally acknowledged that Matthew's highlights Jesus as the King of the Jews. The gospel of John is increasingly regarded as a Jewish book. The writer to the Hebrews clearly wrote to the first century Jewish believers. These are the books that contain the most problematic of the New Testament quotes of the Old.

If one examines the Jewish roots of Christianity, one discovers that there is a long standing “rabbinical” hermeneutic that can explain the New Testament use of the Old Testament. Dr. David H. Stern, a Messianic Jew and translator of the Jewish New Testament, in his Jewish New Testament Commentary, describes four rabbinical modes of scriptural interpretation. According to Dr. Stern, the Jewish authors of the New Testament both understood and used these four modes. In his words:

We must understand the four basic modes of Scripture interpretation used by the rabbis. These are:

(1) p’shat (“simple”)—the plain, literal sense of the text, more or less what modern scholars mean by “grammatical-historical exegesis,” which looks to the grammar of the language and the historical setting as background for deciding what a passage means. Modern scholars often consider grammatical-historical exegesis the only valid way to deal with a text; pastors who use other approaches in their sermons usually feel defensive about it before academics. But the rabbis had three other modes of interpreting Scripture, and their validity should not be excluded in advance but related to the validity of their implied presuppositions.

(2) Remez (“hint”)—wherein a word, phrase or other element in the text hints at a truth not conveyed by the p’shat. The implied presupposition is that God can hint at things of which the Bible writers themselves were unaware.

(3) Drash or Midrash (“search”)—an allegorical or homiletical application of a text. This is a species of eisegesis—reading one’s own thoughts into the text—as opposed to exegesis, which is extracting from the text what it actually says. The implied presupposition is that the words of Scripture can legitimately become grist for the mill of human intellect, which God can guide to truths not directly related to the text at all.

(4) Sod (“secret”)—a mystical or hidden meaning arrived at by operating on the numerical values of the Hebrew letters, noting unusual spellings, transposing letters, and the like. For example, two words, the numerical equivalents of whose letters add up to the same amount, are good candidates for revealing a secret through what Arthur Koestler in his book on the inventive mind called “bisociation of ideas.” The implied presupposition is that God invests meaning in the minutest details of Scripture, even the individual letters. The presuppositions underlying remez, drash and sod obviously express God’s omnipotence, but they also express his love for humanity, in the sense that he chooses out of love to use extraordinary means for reaching people’s hearts and minds. At the same time, it is easy to see how remez, drash and sod can be abused, since they all allow, indeed require, subjective interpretation; and this explains why scholars, who deal with the objective world, hesitate to use them. These four methods of working a text are remembered by the Hebrew word “PaRDeS,” an acronym formed from the initials; it means “orchard” or “garden.”<sup>6</sup>

Here, then, are the tools to understand the New Testament’s uses of the Old Testament and to derive their intended meanings. There is even an English word, like the Hebrew “pardes”, that can help remember these strange terms: p’shat, remez, drash, and sod. That word is “paradise,” in which the consonants provide a mnemonic for the four terms. Interestingly, both words can mean “garden.” The New Testament quotes the Old Testament using all four rabbinical modes. The

p'shat, of course, is easy to discern. So, the remainder of this paper will bring to light some examples of hints, allegories, and mysteries. It will then discuss whether it is appropriate for us to incorporate these modes in our teaching and what the ground rules might be. Lastly, It will discuss how these four interpretive modes can bring together the covenant and dispensational theologians.

### Remezim (Hints)

Let me start with the three passages from Matthew. Somewhat arbitrarily, one might categorize them as remezim or "hints." The principle reason for this choice comes from Matthew's use of the word "plhrow," translated "fulfill." Although our tendency is to think of prophetic fulfillment in a predictive sense with "fulfill" meaning, "coming to pass," plhrow can also mean "complete," "fill full," or "fill to the brim." This, then, is the sense that Matthew had in mind for these quotations.<sup>7</sup> From this viewpoint, when Mary, while yet a virgin, conceived and gave birth to Jesus, it filled up or gave enhanced meaning to Isaiah 7:14. In other words, the significance of the historical event forever adds a shade of meaning to the prophetic event. A remez recognizes that God wired us with associative memories. Who can read "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" and not think of Jesus, His virgin birth, and the fact that He was God among us? Regardless of the p'shat meaning of Isaiah's words to Ahaz, they will forever afterwards also speak by association of the virgin birth of our Lord. The verse has a fuller meaning that it had before<sup>8</sup>.

Similarly, when Jesus' parents took Him to Egypt and later returned, it "filled full" the meaning of Hosea 11:1. Israel is called "God's son," but how much greater is the One who is more truly God's Son? That He would also dwell, for a time, in Egypt communicates God's desire that the Messiah would completely identify with His people. One can imagine that Matthew, who composed his gospel to reveal Messiah as Israel's King, decided to bring the subtle hint, contained in Hosea 11:1, into sharp focus.

Likewise, the words of Jeremiah are a perfect description for the grief of the mothers whose children Herod killed. And so the scripture, after the historical event, hints at and speaks to the horrible grief experienced by Bethlehem's mothers.

Here is an interesting example of the remez principle at work! You will not find it in the New Testament, but it illustrates the rabbinical concept of "hint" in a very fresh and enlightening way. And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High. (Genesis 14:18) Have you ever thought of the Sacrament of Communion when you read this passage? Have you ever looked more closely at the event to see if there was a prophecy of communion? Although there is no prophecy of the Last Supper here, the central importance of Communion in the Church provides an associative link between this verse and church practice. Genesis 14:18 is a remez of Holy Communion. Matthew recognized the same principle when he quoted Isaiah 7:14, Hosea 11:1, and other passages. The point is this. A scriptural text may carry semantic associations that go beyond the simple meaning of its words and context. It is a right-brained connection and, therefore, violates the western-enlightenment-left-brained preference for propositional logic. The importance of this has been stated well Dr. Daniel Wallace: The Holy Spirit does not work just on the left brain. He also works on the right brain: he sparks our imagination, causes us to rejoice, laugh, sing, and create. Few Christians are engaged and fully

committed to the arts today. Where are the hymn writers? Where are the novelists? Painters? Playwrights? A very high-powered editor of a Christian magazine told me two weeks ago that he knows of only one exceptional Christian fiction writer. What are our seminaries doing to encourage these right-brainers? What is the Church doing to encourage them?9 The interpretive modes of *remez*, *drash*, and *sod* are right brained, non-linear, associations of meaning that we can imagine that God intended from the beginning. Furthermore, their proper use may help encourage right brain activity in the church. Of course, there must be guidelines. We do not want them to become a source of strange doctrines and confusions.

Here is a *remez* from the Apostle Paul. For it is written in the Law of Moses, “You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing.” God is not concerned about oxen, is He? Or is He speaking altogether for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher to thresh in hope of sharing the crops. If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? (1 Corinthians 9:9-11) The strict exegete must chuckle uncomfortably whenever he reads “God is not concerned about oxen, is He?” From a strict grammatical-historical exegesis, God cares about them very much! The tension only increases with the words, “Or is He speaking altogether for our sake?” This seems to say that oxen are of no account whatsoever. Paul, it would seem, totally discounts the *p’shat* of the text. But Paul discerns that the commandment hints at a higher principle. That principle has no better translation than these words of Abraham Lincoln,

“It is the eternal struggle between two principles---right and wrong---throughout the world. It is the same spirit that says: ‘You toil and work and earn bread---and I’ll eat it...’ No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who seeks to bestride the people of his own nation and live by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical principle.” But note how terse and handy the scripture reference is. It is easy to memorize and communicates to young and old. But how does Paul get away with minimizing the importance of the ox? It is the rule of proportionality. If the commandment is good for oxen, how much more is it for mankind. If it is good for mankind, how much more is it for preachers of the gospel. For Paul, this commandment, by protecting the bottom of the agricultural food chain, protects those whom God most cares about.

*Remez* vs. *Sensus Plenior* The Roman Catholic Church has long promoted a view called *sensus plenior*, or fuller meaning. By this they mean that God crafted different levels of meaning into verses like Isaiah 7:14 and Hosea 11:1. The idea has some merit, but has the weakness of being “after the fact.” *Sensus plenior* describes, but does not explain why Matthew and others would use the Old Testament the way they did. It does not link the concept to a tradition of interpretation in the same way that *remez* does. Except for that weakness, *sensus plenior* is a close synonym for *remez*.

Along lines similar to *sensus plenior*, Tracy L. Howard coined the term *analogical correspondence*. He writes:

Having evaluated the different options, the most satisfactory answer to the problem of Matthew’s use of Hosea 11:1 is “*analogical correspondence*,” in which Matthew saw an analogy between the events of the nation described in Hosea 11:1–2 and the events of Messiah’s life in Matthew 2:13–15. As Matthew drew these correspondences he saw Jesus as the One who actualizes and

completes all that God intended for the nation.<sup>10</sup>

Tracy L. Howard's paper provides a good description of the mental processes behind *remezim*. Compare his phrase "actualizes and completes" with the Greek *plhrow*. Unknowingly, it seems, he has captured Matthew's intention for using this word in the first place.

It is interesting to compare Matthew's use of the Greek *plhrow* with the Latin *sensus plenior*; i.e. the old text is endowed with a fuller meaning. The main value, once again, of the term *remez* over *sensus plenior* is that the Jewish connection helps us discern why Matthew could and would employ the device in his gospel. It does not appear as much of a scholarly trick to get out of a difficult situation<sup>11</sup>. It also helps resolve an issue debated among scholars as to whether the original author in some way had to "know" or "intend" the full scope of the revelation his words could carry<sup>12</sup>. The Jewish thought, of which Matthew and others were partakers, is that God could intend additional meanings to surface later. As David Stern wrote, "The implied presupposition is that God can hint at things of which the Bible writers themselves were unaware."

**Drashim (Allegories or Types)** The rabbinical concept of *drashim* has a parallel with the Christian concept of "types." For example, there was a time during the wilderness wanderings of the Israelites when poisonous snakes came into the camp. People, when bitten by the snakes, died. So, the Lord directed Moses to craft a serpent out of bronze and lift it up in the camp. After that, if a snake bit someone, he could look at the snake and be cured. Christian theologians say that the "serpent in the wilderness" is a "type" of Christ. Both were lifted up for the sake of dying men. In fact, Jesus gave us the allusion of the bronze snake (John 3:14). He also gave us the connections between His burial and Jonah's great fish (Matthew 12:39-41). These are examples of *drashim*.

There is a classic allegory that Paul penned to the Christians in Galatia.

Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. This is allegorically speaking, for these women are two covenants: one proceeding from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar. Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother. For it is written, "Rejoice, barren woman who does not bear; break forth and shout, you who are not in labor; for more numerous are the children of the desolate than of the one who has a husband." And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also. But what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be an heir with the son of the free woman." So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman. (Galatians 4:21-31)

Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, defined, with God's direction, a doctrine of Gentile faith that was independent of the Laws and traditions of Judaism. In making his case, he quoted frequently from the Old Testament. Most of the time, he used the *p'shat* or simple sense so that: To declare the pre-eminence of Faith he quoted Genesis 15:6, "And Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." To declare the hopelessness of justification by Law, he quoted

Deuteronomy 27:26, "Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them." But in this section, Paul switched from p'shat to a drash drawn from Abraham's life. Although Abram believed that God would fulfill the covenant, he decided that God needed help. So Abram went into Hagar, who conceived and gave birth to Ishmael. Much later, Sarah miraculously conceived and gave birth to Isaac. Paul saw a parallel, in these events, between those who seek justification by human effort and those who trust God alone for their salvation. On the one hand, he showed the allegorical correspondence of Flesh-Hagar-Slave. On the other hand, he showed the correspondence of Promise-Sarah-Freedom. By way of the allegory, Paul asked the Galatians, "Whose son are you? Whose son do you want to be?" But Paul also used the allegory to exhort the Galatians to action when he writes, "Cast out the bondwoman." If they were children of the free-woman, then allegorically speaking they needed to cast out the son of the slave woman, i.e. those who were pressuring them to find justification through obedience to the Law and the traditions of men. Yes, Paul spoke allegorically, but the allegory was strong and full of meaning. It became the vehicle to communicate strong action.

However, Paul also believed the allegory to be, in some sense, inspired. That is, Paul believed that God intended for Sarah and Hagar to represent two covenants. What else could he mean by beginning this section with the words, "Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law? For it is written...?" Real history becomes a parable for the ages by the inspired hand of the Holy Spirit.

#### Sodim (Mysteries)

There are also places where the New Testament either quotes or alludes to an Old Testament passage in a way that reveals a hidden meaning. One is in John's Gospel. Several are in the Book of Hebrews. The Sod in John 1:1-5 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. (John 1:1-5)

Both John's Gospel and the Book of Genesis begin with the phrase, "In the beginning." The first subject, in both, is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and both separate light from darkness. But John calls Jesus "the Word." Why? As you ponder both passages side by side, you might begin to see a connection between Genesis' "God said" and John's "the Word." It is as if John looked at the phrase "God said" and saw Jesus hidden in the verb. As the Father speaks, the "spoken" Word executes.

Many have seen the parallel between the opening of Genesis and the opening of John. However, there is reason to think that it goes still deeper. This derives from a somewhat mystical understanding of Genesis 1:1. In Hebrew it reads, ".Jra\*h\* ta@w+ <y]m^V\*h^ ta@ <yh@l)a\$ ar`B\* tyv!ar}B=" Some rabbis have noted that the first Hebrew word after "In the beginning God created..." is ta. This word is rarely translated into English, because it is redundant with the h^ prefix of the next word. But this word, ta, is made up of the Hebrew letters aleph and tov, which are the first and last letters of the Hebrew alefbet. By extension the first and the last include all the ones in between. So one might mystically read, "In the beginning God created ta." That is He created the capacity for language in the Universe by which it could respond to "God said." What is

behind the capacity for language? For John, it is, perhaps, the eternal Word.

What makes this idea not quite so far fetched are the words of Jesus, also recorded by John in Revelation 1:8, "I am the Alpha and the Omega." In Hebrew, He would have said, "I am the Aleph and the Tav." Therefore, it is possible that both John 1:1 and Revelation 1:8 have roots in the hidden revelation in Genesis 1:1. Also, the Old Testament authors frequently employed the letters of the Hebrew alefbet in special ways. Psalms 119:1-176 has 22 sections of 7 verses each. The 7 verses in the first section all begin with the letter Aleph; the 7 verses in the second section all begin with the letter Bet; and so forth through all the Hebrew letters in order. Psalms 119:1-176 is, therefore, a 22 by 7 acrostic poem that uses the device to emphasize how the Word of God can make a man complete (all 22 letters) and perfect (7 verses per section). The virtuous woman in Proverbs 31:10-31 is portrayed by a 22-verse acrostic. And perhaps the most amazing use of the alefbet occurs in Zephaniah 3:8 in which all 22 of the Hebrew letters plus the 5 special final forms occur in a single verse. Such constructions require author intent and show the literary importance of the Hebrew letters in Hebrew literature.

It is not, therefore, impossible that as Moses penned Genesis 1:1 that he chose to use ta to mean more than just emphasis. John, then, seems to pick up on this hidden usage in uses it in John 1:1 and Revelation 1:8. The Sod in Hebrews 7:1 Then there is the great connection, brought to light by the writer to the Hebrews, between Jesus and Melchizedek. For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils, was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace. Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he remains a priest perpetually. (Hebrews 7:1)

Look at the hidden details the writer to the first century Jewish believers extracts from the text of Genesis 14:18. "Melchizedek", in Hebrew, means "King of Righteousness". "King of Salem" means "King of Peace." Scripture records no genealogy, no parents, no birth and no death for Melchizedek. Scholars with a strict grammatical and historical perspective would still assume that Melchizedek had parents, was born, and died. And, of course, they would be correct. But the writer to the Hebrews, taking a hint from Psalms 110:4, sees in their absence a hidden connection with Jesus, who is our eternal High Priest. Jesus, as the Son of God, had no parents and no genealogy. Jesus has always been and always will be.

It makes little difference that the writer to the Hebrews is also expounding on Psalms 110:4. Where did the psalmist get the idea? If the answer is, "From the Lord," that is fine. It only affirms that there can be hidden meanings below the surface of the p'shat or simple meaning of the text. Furthermore, the author alludes to there being more to know about the relationship between Melchizedek and Jesus (Hebrews 5:11)13.

Perhaps we could conclude that Hebrews 7:1 is a remez or a drash. That is certainly possible. What decides the issue for me is the effort the writer of Hebrews must take to bring the connection to light. It does not have the immediate and easy semantic association of Isaiah 7:14, nor does it have the human connection of Paul's allegory. Instead, it is more abstract and requires real decoding. Is it for Today?

Must one be an inspired writer of sacred scripture to employ hints, allegories, and hidden meanings from the scriptures? There is no suggestion in the scriptures that this is so, and many who employ a grammatical-historical hermeneutic also acknowledge the existence of types (drashim). All that's left is to add the use of hints (remezim) and possible discovery of hidden meanings (sodim) to our interpretive toolkit. The scriptures model all four and, therefore, they seem to be legitimate. The fundamental issue with this notion is quality control and purity of doctrine. One can dialog over the simple meaning of the text and arise at consensus meaning (most of the time). How might one dialog over subjective interpretations? How do we avoid the pitfalls of error and protect people from falling prey to cults? Look at the following membership class notes that illustrate the core problem: The Kingdom of God, like any other kingdom has a culture and a language all of its own. Its language is of divine origin. It is the way in which deity has chosen to communicate with humanity. If we are going to dialogue with God in his word or in prayer we best learn the Language of his Kingdom. One cannot understand much of the Bible, without understanding the language of symbols, types, and shadows. Until we see the divine intent in the OLD TESTAMENT we will never fully comprehend the contents of the NEW TESTAMENT.<sup>14</sup> (Emphasis is in the original.) The pastor's sermons, at this church, are filled with symbols, types, and shadows. Consequently, he can say anything that he wants. There are no controls. His approach removes understanding of the scriptures from the common person and places it in the domain of the enlightened, i.e. those who "understand the language." If this leader develops cultic tendencies, his congregation will be ill equipped to challenge him. The situation could become bad indeed.

Paul also warns us to be careful. As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith. (1 Timothy 1:3-4) In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following. But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. (1 Timothy 4:6-7 a)

Remind them of these things, and solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless and leads to the ruin of the hearers. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness, (2 Timothy 2:14-16)

If it were not for the contraindications of the New Testament authors' use of the Old Testament (i.e. (remezim, drashim, and sodim), there would be no clearer proof texts for a strict grammatical-historical interpretation. Instead, we must take them as severe warnings about their misuse. We must work hard to discern when, why, and how to use them. The answer, it seems, is to use the scriptures as a model. That model contains these principles:

1. New Testament quotes of the Old Testament are largely in the p'shat sense. Christianity represented a dramatic change for the Jews and the Gentiles. It had to swim against the current of centuries of entrenched doctrine. Its champions had to show from the scriptures that the "new order" was not entirely new or unexpected. Nothing but a consistent presentation of plain simple

passages from the Old Testament could win the day. They were the proof texts for New Testament doctrine and were quoted to convince the Jews and the Gentiles of the truth about Jesus the Messiah. Our first rule must be to use the simple p'shat sense predominantly. People must first of all know what the Book says in order to benefit from its message.

2. New Testament quotes of the Old Testament never introduce or establish doctrine with anything other than the simple p'shat sense. Instead, the use of remez, drash, and sod serve to amplify and illustrate themes established by the sounder method. To put this another way, remez, drash, and sod are not a bridge to esoteric knowledge. They are servants of the p'shat. Paul, in Galatians, firmly laid a plain text foundation for justification by faith, before using an allegory to provide a human dimension. In the allegory, Paul was not trying to be deep, he was trying to be clear. The story of Hagar and Sarah would stick much better and longer than his propositional logic. On the other hand, without the logic the allegory has no power.

3. The more error prone is an interpretive model, the less frequently the New Testament uses it. Thus the New Testament employs p'shat, remez, drash, and sod in decreasing frequency.

Mysticism attracts people with a promise of a deeper experience with God that transcends the need for righteousness. Because of this, there is a persistent temptation to create a biblical mystique by emphasizing hints, allegories, and hidden themes above simple understanding. This is the area that Paul was warning Timothy about.

4. The New Testament books that favor a Jewish audience have the highest frequency of remez, drash, and sod. Matthew, Hebrews, and the writings of John contain the highest concentrations of this material, whereas Paul's letters use it very sparingly. This suggests that their use today has favorable implications for Jewish evangelism. Also by communicating outright that these are Jewish authors using Jewish principles of interpretation, we disarm the efforts of the anti-missionaries, who stridently use the quotes in Matthew to turn the ears of seeking Jews from the claims of Messianic Judaism.

5. Remezim derive their meaning by semantic association with New Testament events or by communicating universal principles in pictorial form.

6. Drashim make room for expanded meditation on major p'shat themes. One can even see where the force of the allegory stems from the maxim, "History repeats itself." Thus the choice of Abram to father a child by Hagar stems from the same misunderstanding driving the Galatian churches to choose justification by self-effort. The meaning of an allegory does not derive from a symbolic language of the scriptures, but on the common behaviors in the human heart that link past events to a current situation.

7. There is some room for seeking hidden messages in the scriptures, subject to the restrictions noted above. An important criterion before teaching from such a text, though, is for us to discern author intent. One could imagine the human author intentionally hiding a message in his text and that he gives clues to its presence. Such a criterion protects us from efforts like the equi-distant letter sequences concept discussed by Michael Drosnin in his book *The Bible Code*<sup>15</sup>. This is certainly true of Genesis 1:1, where one can connect aleph and tov (the basics of language) with the phrase "And God said." The abrupt appearance and disappearance of Melchizedek, who was obviously of great significance to Abram, leaves us wondering who he was and why more is not

said about him.

**Practical Points** This is not a call for a radical change in scholarly hermeneutics. The grammatical and historical approach to the scriptures is the foundation of understanding Biblical truth. It remains the only basis by which we can objectively discuss the doctrines of our belief. When it comes to communicating doctrine, we should allow ourselves greater latitude. This, of course, also means that we must communicate to our hearers the 4 interpretive modes, their principles and their boundaries. As in all that we do: “the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (1 Timothy 1:5). It is not to sound mystical. It is not to sound enlightened. It is not to seek our own glory. Instead, like the writers of the New Testament, we have a gospel of regeneration to communicate to a lost and dying world. That world consists of right and left brained people, who have different learning modes. The use of p’shat, remez, drash, and sod can broaden our audience and enhance the effectiveness of our teaching.

Here are some examples this point:

#### Moses, Joshua, and Caleb: A Drash and Remez

Moses the lawgiver could not lead the Israelites into Canaan, because he violated the command of God to speak to the rock. He struck the rock instead (Numbers 20:3-11). Instead, it was Joshua who led the Israelites into Canaan. Of all the first generation that left Egypt, only Joshua and Caleb entered the land.

Moses typifies the failure and sternness of the Law. Unless obedience is perfect, we are doomed to judgement and kept out of the Promised Land.

Joshua typifies salvation. Not only did Joshua and Caleb enter the land because of their faith, but Joshua’s name means “The Lord’s Salvation.” It was the “Lord’s Salvation” that led the Israelites into the Promised Land.

Caleb hints at the salvation of the Gentiles. Caleb means “Dog,” a euphemism for Gentiles, a remez of the coming salvation of the Gentiles by faith. **The Missing Name of God in Esther: A Sod** In his book, *Explore the Book*, J. Sidlow Baxter has this observation about the missing name of God in the Book of Esther. As a matter of fact the name of God does occur in this Book of Esther, in a most remarkable way. The name “Jehovah” is secretly hidden four times in an acrostic form, and the name Eyeh (“I am that I am”) once. In several ancient manuscripts the acrostic consonants which represent the name are written larger, to make them stand out, as though we might write it in English thus – JeHoVaH. There are no other acrostics in the book, so that the intentionalness of these five is clear. The five places where the acrostics occur are Esther 1:20; Esther 5:4; Esther 5:13; Esther 7:7; Esther 7:5. In the four acrostics which form the name Jehovah, the four words forming the J H V H are in each case consecutive. Each of the four is spoken by a different person. In the first two cases, the acrostic is formed by the initial letters of the words. In the other two it is formed by the final letters of the words. In the first and third acrostics, the letters spell the name backwards and the speakers are Gentiles. In the second and fourth, the letters spell the name forwards and the speakers are Hebrews<sup>16</sup>.

**Kingdom (p’shat) and Kingdom (remez)** Robert P. Lightner, in his *The Last Days Handbook*, wrote:

Those classified as evangelical (conservative, orthodox, or fundamental) have a great deal in common as they embrace the historic Christian faith. Yet they battle fiercely with each other over things to come. While they stand united when it comes to the great truths of the historic Christian faith, they are sorely divided in their understanding of God's plan for the future. Why?<sup>17</sup>

He then goes on in his book to lay out the different viewpoints side by side, with a good effort towards impartiality. One of his chapters, *Interpreting Scriptures*, is as good a discussion of the differences between covenant and dispensational approaches to the scriptures as one might read. His concludes:

All evangelicals do use the literal method for their understanding of most of the Bible, but some, namely those of amillennial and postmillennial persuasion, think it best to use a less than literal hermeneutic with much unfulfilled prophecy. It is at this point that the evangelical world is divided over things to come and this is what puts prophecy in the middle of the debate. Premillennialists cannot understand why their brothers and sisters insist on using a different method in interpretation with some unfulfilled prophecy but not with all of it. They wonder on what grounds is the less-than-literal approach to be restricted to only some themes of unfulfilled prophecy?<sup>18</sup> Do the rabbinical modes of scriptural interpretation provide firm footing for the interpretive work of the covenant theologians? Are they right in saying that there is no literal Messianic Kingdom on the earth? No, but it is time to understand that a merger is possible. This paper has argued for the recognition of four rabbinical modes of scriptural interpretation; p'shat, remez, drash, and sod. It has shown that Old Testament verses clearly have both a grammatical-historical meaning and an extended meaning that comes from semantic associations arising from future revelation. Reflect again on what Isaiah 7:14 meant to King Ahaz. At that time and in that place, it was not about the virgin birth of the Messiah. It was about the timetable of the removal of two troublesome kings. That is the p'shat. With the virgin birth of Jesus, who is God in the flesh, Isaiah 7:14 becomes a remez (hint) of the virgin birth. It is worthy to note that the remez today has more relevance than the p'shat of yesterday, but the p'shat stands firm in its truth nonetheless.

There is Old Testament prophecy concerning a Kingdom in Israel that will be ruled by the Messiah on David's throne. The p'shat of the Hebrew text reveals this. It is how the author of the book would have understood his own writing and it is what a Jew today would understand. It is also what a rabbi with his four rabbinical modes of interpretation would understand as well. So, a bible scholar should be free to hold such a position without being labeled a "hyper-literalist." But can the dispensational theologian really say, "That's all there is?" Did not Jesus say, as record in John 18:36, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm?" Is there not a real sense that the spread of the gospel is the spread of the "Kingdom of God?" In Matthew 24:14 Jesus says, "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come." How excited can a gentile nation really get over a future and far off kingdom in Israel? How is that kingdom good news to an outback aborigine? So the covenant theologians are on to something. The "Kingdom of God" is about the rule of God's Law in the hearts of men. It is about the power and authority of God over Sin, Satan, and Sickness. The words of Jesus lend support to their viewpoint. A bible scholar should be free to hold such a position without being accused of "spiritualizing" the text.

We can use the New Testament quotes of the Old Testament as a model and embrace both viewpoints.

There is a p'shat interpretation of Kingdom prophecies that speak of the return of Jesus in battle array to defeat the armies that have surround Jerusalem. It will be the day that all Israel will be saved and the day that Jesus assumes the throne of David. It is the time when Ezekiel's temple will be built. It is the age when the gentile nations will come to Jerusalem once a year to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.

There is a remez interpretation of Kingdom prophecies that speak of the spread of the gospel through the earth. Its force in the world is through the Church with Jesus Christ as its head. The Law of God is written on the hearts of men. Its citizens are the true children of Abraham by reason of faith. It is no longer possible to read about the coming Messianic Kingdom without thinking of the Church. The semantic associations are there and we should recognize them.

Both streams are true. Both streams have support from the New Testament. Why do we persist that we must accept the one and reject the other? At the return of Jesus the Messiah, both will be brought into unity. There will be a King in Jerusalem, but all other nations in the world will call him King and bring Him tribute. As in the days of the British Empire when colonial peoples would acknowledge the English crown, so will there be a commonwealth that is centered in Jerusalem.

#### Conclusion

Many have grappled with how the New Testament authors quoted the Old Testament. It is an important subject. There is legitimate hope to be found in recognizing and adopting a Jewish approach to the problem. There is a logical basis for doing so, because the authors, themselves, were Jews. Furthermore, the approach holds forth the promise of reconciling covenant and dispensational theologies. This small effort only scratches the surface of possibilities.

1 The word translated "virgin" in Isaiah 7:14 is "almah" rather than the stronger and clearer "betulah."

2 One possible reconciliation between Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:22-23 lies in a remark that Isaiah makes in the section that extends from Isaiah 7:1 through Isaiah 9:7. Briefly, in Isaiah 8:18, Isaiah says, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord has given me are for signs and wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion." Assuming that Maher-shalal-hash-baz is the son promised by Isaiah 7:14 for the short term prophetic fulfillment, Isaiah 8:18 leaves room for a second and more substantive fulfillment by a true virgin bearing the true Immanuel.

3 The New English Translation (Biblical Studies Press, 1996) [On-line]. Available: /netbible

4 It is amazing to me how often I read that Isaiah 7:14 is literally fulfilled with no indication that there is a contextual problem.

5 Lightner, Daniel P. The Last Days Handbook (Thomas Nelson Publishers 1990, pp. 130, 131) 6 Stern, David H., Jewish New Testament Commentary (Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992) 11, 12

7 This raises an interesting question about the use of plhrow in Matthew 5:17. Did Jesus “fulfill” the Law and the Prophets in the sense of walking perfectly in them? Or did Jesus “fill them to the brim” or “complete” them? If it is the latter, then the remainder of the Sermon on the Mount may be understood in the light of completing the Law. It is the backdrop for Jesus’ formula during the sermon, “You have heard that it was said <quote from the Law>, but I say <violation in the heart invisible to the eyes of men>” The Law is made complete by bringing the heart into the equation. In so doing, Jesus lays the groundwork and establishes the necessity of the new covenant that Jeremiah prophesied (Jeremiah 31:31-34). That is, the Lord will write His Law on our hearts (heart righteousness) and our sin He will remember no more (a permanent solution). By making obedience a heart issue and by sending the Holy Spirit for our sanctification, the Lord writes the “filled full” law on our hearts and we find the “obedience of faith.” [Romans 5:1] By His death and resurrection, He completely cleanses us from our sin.

8 It can be noted that the NET Bible translation of Isaiah 7:14, although accurate, no longer communicates the remez of the text. In my opinion, this is an unfortunate loss.

9 Wallace, Daniel B., *The Uneasy Conscience of a Non-Charismatic Evangelical* (Biblical Studies Press, 1994) [On-line]. Available: /docs/soapbox/estsw.htm

10 Howard, Tracy L., *The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15: An Alternative Solution* (Bibliotheca Sacra, October-December 1985)

11 See Howard, Tracy L., *The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15: An Alternative Solution* (Bibliotheca Sacra, October-December 1985) – Tracy Howard’s notion of Analogical Correspondence is an excellent parallel to my understanding of remez. Howard does a credible job of describing Matthew’s thought process and the term analogical correspondence is a good label for it. However, coining a new term to fix the hermeneutical problem does not fix the problem. It may define, but it does not explain. At best it only hides the problem. The concept of remez, however, has a plausible connection to the New Testament authors. Therefore, it is able to explain.

12 See Glenny, W. Edward, *The Divine Meaning of Scriptures: Explanation and Limitations* (Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society, December 1995)

13 Certainly the reference to “bread and wine” would be part of this. Note also the relationship, brought out in Hebrews 5:11-14, between maturity and our ability to really understand the scriptures.

14 Scaif, Gary *New Testament Biblical View of the Old Testament* (Ecclesia Kingdom Seekers)

15 For an interesting debunking of Michael Drosnin’s book, see: McKay, Brendan *Assassinations Foretold in Moby Dick* (1997) [On-line]. Available: <http://cs.anu.edu.au/people/bdm/dilugim/moby.html> 16 Baxter, J. Sidlow *Explore the Book* (Zondervan, 1978), 261.

17 Lightner, Robert P. *The Last Days Handbook* (Thomas Nelson Publishers 1990, pp. xi, xii) 18 *ibid.* pp. 130, 131

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