

The New Covenant – Part 3

DETOUR

Once again, before getting started, there is a detour. This detour deals with the importance of doctrine. When I arrived at Spring Valley Bible Church, I understood the importance of doctrine. What I learned from Herman Mattox was the importance of faith. It goes back to:

Hebrews 4:1 Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.

Hebrews 4:2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

Doctrine (promises) + Faith → His (Faith) Rest

This is not a lesson on the importance of doctrine, but it will act as an introduction to a future lesson on the importance of doctrine. Many new believers are being caught up in post-modern emotionalism with little or no doctrine. It makes them feel good. But the Bible says doctrine is important. We may give it different terms: knowledge, understanding, wisdom. It may give us joy. It may also convict of sin. But we need it.

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

2 Timothy 3:17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Interesting that we are to be “equipped for every good work.”

This thought for today’s lesson started with this year’s Chafer Theological Seminary conference in Houston at Robby Dean’s church (March 6-8). There was a speaker who I admire very much. That is Randal Price.

His bio from DeanBible.org: “Dr. Randall Price, Th.M. in Old Testament, Dallas Seminary; Ph.D. Hebrew Literature and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Texas; post-grad work in archaeology, Hebrew University, Jerusalem. Former Distinguished Research Professor of Biblical and Judaic Studies, Liberty University; President, World of the Bible Ministries, Inc. is author or co-author of 40 books and co-directs the Qumran Cave Excavation Project, Dead Sea, Israel. Dr. Price has traveled to Israel 110 times, including leading Israel tours and archaeological digs. He is married to Beverlee Price and they have 5 - children and 13 grandchildren.”

Off all the things he said, one thing grabbed my attention. It was a quote from Daniel Wallace, a DTS professor who is an expert on Greek. Dr. Wallace said, “Those in ministry must close the gap between the church and the academy. We have to educate believers. Instead of trying to isolate laypeople from critical scholarship, we need to insulate them. They need to be ready for the barrage, because it is coming. The intentional dumbing down of the church for the sake of filling more pews will ultimately lead to defection from Christ.” [Underline is mine.]

When he said “...close the gap between the church and the academy,” I understood he was saying something similar to what R. B. Thieme said about the importance of doctrine. Without doctrine, how does a Christian

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know who he is, what his purpose is in life and what is in store for him from the present through eternity? Paul said more than once in the thundering diction of the King James, “What, know ye not?” Knowledge combined with faith was important for the apostle Paul. Wisdom the highest form of knowledge, and understanding, is identified as something very valuable to the believer.

1 Corinthians 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it.

Paul likens spiritual instruction to food for the soul. He expects believers to grow in grace. A new believer needs easy basic doctrine to start the growth process. But after that, the believer must progress, just like a child grows into an adult and is able to deal with a variety of challenging situations.

1 Corinthians 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

You have perhaps seen in life or on television, the evangelist who gives the gospel leading to the salvation of many people. But what happens next? Those new believers may be lured into a life of unbelief by unscrupulous anti-Christians. Do you know what you believe? Do you know why you believe? Do you use that information to guide your christian life?

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Another quote from Randy Price was, “What Scripture says God says.” The Bible is God’s communication to us.

A wife may continually ask her husband what he is doing. She may do this out of love. She wants to know everything about him because she loves him. So, do we not love God and want to know everything about Him? The Bible is His communication to us. It is His way of telling us about Him and His plan for us. We should have a “hunger” for the Word. It contains our spiritual food.

From another slide from Randy Price's presentation includes the following:

“What has caused a reassessment of the traditional evangelical view of biblical inerrancy in the last 50 years?”

1. “The onset of postmodernism in evangelicalism has reduced confidence in the propositional claims of the Bible (overemphasis on the relational aspects of biblical revelation, rather than its foundational doctrinal truths: less exposition, more story-telling). This has led to Cognitive Dissonance and Deconstructionism.”
2. “The increasing number of evangelical students graduating with doctorates in biblical studies and theology from non-evangelical institutions (assimilation of non-evangelical perspectives such as higher criticism of the Bible, resulting in revision or modification of former views as they become professors in schools).”
3. “The exposure of evangelical laypeople to television programming, popular novels, and movies based on non-biblical worldviews and higher-critical assumptions with little or no refutation from the local church.”

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What is “postmodernism” as it applies to the Church? GotQuestions.org provides a reasonably understandable answer:

“Post-modern Christianity is just as difficult to lock down in a concise definition as post-modernism itself. What started in the 1950s in architecture as a reaction to modernist thought and style was soon adopted by the art and literary world in the 1970s and 1980s. The Church didn’t really feel this effect until the 1990s. This reaction was a dissolution of "cold, hard fact" in favor of "warm, fuzzy subjectivity." Think of anything considered post-modern, then stick Christianity into that context and you have a glimpse of what post-modern Christianity is.”

“Post-modern Christianity falls into line with basic post-modernist thinking. It is about experience over reason, subjectivity over objectivity, spirituality over religion, images over words, outward over inward. Are these things good? Sure. Are these things bad? Sure. It all depends on how far from biblical truth each reaction against modernity takes one’s faith. This, of course, is up to each believer. However, when groups form under such thinking, theology and doctrine tend to lean more towards liberalism.”

“For example, because experience is valued more highly than reason, truth becomes relative. This opens up all kinds of problems, as this lessens the standard that the Bible contains absolute truth, and even disqualifies biblical truth as being absolute in many cases. If the Bible is not our source for absolute truth, and personal experience is allowed to define and interpret what truth actually is, a saving faith in Jesus Christ is rendered meaningless.” <https://www.gotquestions.org/post-modern-Christianity.html>

There are several postmodern churches in the Dallas area. They may tailor the message of the Bible to fit the emotional needs of their

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congregation. If that changes the message of the Bible, they are doing a disservice to the people. The Bible is truth. Don't change the truth to make it sound nice.

In many churches, the Old Testament, which is the foundation of the New Testament, is never taught. That is not a problem at Spring Valley Bible Church. And that thought dovetails into our lessons on the "Suffering Servant." But here are reasons that the Old Testament is not taught in churches today from Randy Price's slides:

"Challenges to the Old Testament in Evangelicalism"

1. "OT is Ethically Objectionable - Events considered morally wrong that redefine the character of God (violence of Flood, Canaanite genocide, slavery, sacrifice)."
2. "OT is Culturally Unacceptable - Theological ideas that are counter-culture (traditional marriage, role of women, racism, homophobic, gender exclusive)."
3. "OT is full of Contradictions – Two accounts of creation, differences in genealogies, different numbers for same event, gods in competition with God."
4. "OT is Scientifically Inaccurate – No Creation, Adam and Eve, Flood, miracles."
5. "OT is Historically Inaccurate – Archaeology has disproven Israelite origins (Patriarchs, Exodus, Conquest, kingdoms of David and Solomon are legendary)."
6. "OT refuted by Jesus – Don't keep Law, Jesus' mercy and love vs. God's wrath and punishment, salvation by works in OT vs. faith alone in NT, forgive enemies vs. imprecatory psalms (cursing enemies), NT use of OT changes meaning."

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Something I knew in my heart to be true but hadn't seen an expert say, is that there are additions to the Bible that are comments obviously by someone other than the original writer. Those are inspired comments for us. Here is the slide info from Randy Price:

“Within the canonical process, and subsequent to the initial writing of a biblical book or books, a God-chosen individual or prophetic figure under the superintendence of the Holy Spirit could adjust, revise, or update pre-existing biblical material in order to make a given Scripture passage understandable to succeeding generations. Those revisions, or “maintenance changes” which occurred within the compositional history of the Old Testament and by recognized inspired figures are also inspired and inerrant.”[Underline is mine.]

An interesting point that Dr. Price made was that the placement of the books in the “TaNaK” (from Torah-Neviim-Ketuvim). They show an intentional Messianic bias.

Old Testament Canon Set Up to Reveal Messiah

- ◆ Final Shape (Ezra) Ezra 7:10
Messianic seams reveal authorial messianic intent of the OT

The diagram illustrates the structure of the Old Testament Canon, divided into three main sections: Torah (Law), Nevi'im (Prophets), and Ketuvim (Writings). Each section is contained within a yellow box. Between these boxes are vertical dashed lines representing 'Messianic seams'. The word 'MESSIAH' is written vertically on the left side of each seam, and 'MEDITATE' is written vertically on the right side. Below the seams, specific biblical references are provided: 'Deut 34:10' under the Torah, 'Isa 1:8' under the first seam, 'Mal 4' under the Nevi'im, 'Isa 1' under the second seam, and '2 Chr 36:23' under the Ketuvim. Arrows point from the seams towards the right, indicating a progression or connection to the New Testament.

- ◆ Last word of OT points to first words in NT
2 Chr 36:23 “Let him go up” is a call for “the one whose God is with him,” who is to *build* the Temple of Jerusalem.
Matthew 1 introduces the genealogy of Jesus Christ, Son of David announced by an angel as the Savior with the title Immanuel “God with us” who claims to rebuild the Temple in 3 days (Matt 26:61; Heb 3:1-6)

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From <https://deanbible.org/dbmfiles/slides/2023-ChaferConf-06-Price-Slides.pdf>

Deuteronomy 34:10 Since that time no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face,

Deuteronomy 34:11 for all the signs and wonders which the Lord sent him to perform in the land of Egypt against Pharaoh, all his servants, and all his land,

Deuteronomy 34:12 and for all the mighty power and for all the great terror which Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

-----1st Seam-----

Joshua 1:8 This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.

Malachi 4:4 “Remember the law of Moses My servant, even the statutes and ordinances which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel.

Malachi 4:5 “Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord.

-----2nd Seam-----

Psalm 1:1 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!

Psalm 1:2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night.

2 Chronicles 36:23 “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may the Lord his God be with him, and let him go up!’”

Here is something that links what Randall Price said to what the lessons in the Suffering Servant teach about Jesus. This is from Michael Ridelnek in his book “Messianic Hope.” As I have said previously, Michael Ridelnek is a “Messianic” Jew in that he is a believer who has chosen to maintain his ties to Judaism and by that bring in other Jews to belief in “Yeshua” as the savior/Messiah.

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“Here is my point, not just in this chapter but in the whole book: beginning with Jesus, moving to the apostolic period, and continuing until today, the message of Messiah has been proclaimed by using messianic prophecy. It is a foundational element for identifying Jesus as the true Messiah. As has been shown, the views of the modern academy have made their way into evangelical scholarship, leading to a minimization or even a denial of messianic prediction. Evangelical scholarship must rethink this trend because, as Jacob Jocz has noted, messianic prophecy is "the infallible guide leading in a straight line from Moses and the Prophets to Jesus and the Apostles." Without it, "The Messiahship of Jesus becomes a purely subjective conviction without anchorage in historical revelation.””

Now, let us get back on track. Last week, there was a review of the New Covenant. Today, let us look at some New Covenant and related passages.

Robby Dean calls the list of related passages in the Old Testament “confirmation.” The first passage he calls on is Joel 2:28-32. Now, some things to remember: a) Only the Jeremiah 31 passage includes “new” in New Covenant b) some passages do not even include the term “covenant.” Instead they will use other words to tell us “what time it is.”

Joel 2:28 “It will come about after this That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions. [This is a passage quoted by Peter in Acts 2. I already discussed this previously so I will stay with the New Covenant concept.]

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Joel 2:29 “Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

Joel 2:30 “I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, Blood, fire and columns of smoke.

Joel 2:31 “The sun will be turned into darkness And the moon into blood Before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.

The Day of the Lord leads into the Millennial Kingdom in which the New Covenant is put into operation.

Joel 2:32 “And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the Lord Will be delivered; For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem There will be those who escape, As the Lord has said, Even among the survivors whom the Lord calls.

Jeremiah preached just before, during and after the exile of the Southern Kingdom, Judah. It is much later than Joel.

Per Robby Dean, “It's [Joel] written about 9th century BC, about 800 BC. So, this is very early. This isn't long after the Northern Kingdom separates from the Southern Kingdom.”

“The Day of the Lord is described in the second chapter of Joel. It is related to the Great Tribulation, that last 7 year period in Israel's history. It's the period of Daniel's 70th week.”

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“After what? After the Day of the Lord. After this judgment is completed, the 7-year tribulation period, Church Age believers won't go through that. We will be raptured. We will be taken to heaven before the 7-year tribulation. The 7-year tribulation relates to God bringing Israel to a point of repentance so that they turn to Jesus as Messiah. That's what this is describing. That is part of the New Covenant terminology. We haven't gone into that but in Jeremiah 31, but when Joel writes in the 8th century he's writing 300 years before Jeremiah specifies the New Covenant. So this is one of the first references to what happens at the end of the Day of the Lord period when Jesus comes to establish His kingdom and to enact the New Covenant.”

“See in Jeremiah 31 we're told that the key element of the New Covenant is that all the nation is regenerated. The Holy Spirit indwells and fills every Jew to the point that no one needs to be taught about God because they have an internal knowledge of God. So, there won't be a need for pastor-teachers or evangelists among the Jews at all. So this is clearly New Covenant terminology, New Covenant description in Joel 2:28-32.”

Robby Dean sees Paul quoting Joel 2:32 in Romans 11:26:

Romans 11:26 and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob.”

Romans 11:27 “This is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.”

Also referencing Joel 2:32 is Matthew 24.

“That is how they will be delivered and at the end of the tribulation period. What happens if you know the map of Israel, is at the mid point

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of the tribulation when the Antichrist sets himself up in the Holy of Holies of the Tribulation Temple to be worshipped as God, Jesus said in Matthew 24 that when you see this sign, flee to the mountains.”

Matthew 23:39 For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’”

“That's a reference to Joel 2:32. So they call on the name of the Lord. They'll be delivered. This is when the remnant calls on Jesus. He comes as the Jewish Messiah, delivers them, defeats the anti-Christ and establishes His kingdom and inaugurates the New Covenant when you have this pouring out of the Holy Spirit. In terms of a fifth element of the New Covenant, you have confirmation in Joel 2:28-32.” (The five elements outlined by Robby Dean: 1. Scripture, 2. Persons, 3. Importance, 4. Provisions, 5. Confirmation)

Before we move on to other Old Testament passage, there are four New Testament passages, at least two of which have already been mentioned.

Luke 22:20 And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.

1 Corinthians 11:25 In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

Hebrews 8:7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no

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occasion sought for a second (i.e. second covenant = The New Covenant).

Indeed Hebrews chapters 8 and 9 talk of the accomplishments of Jesus concerning requirements for the New Covenant.

2 Corinthians 3:4 Such confidence we have through Christ toward God.

2 Corinthians 3:5 Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,

2 Corinthians 3:6 who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

There were three prophets who were contemporaries that mentioned the New Covenant in one way or another. Let's start with Hosea.

“Hosea son of Beerli prophesied about the middle of the eight century B.C., his ministry beginning during or shortly after that of Amos. Amos threatened God's judgment on Israel at the hands of an unnamed enemy; Hosea identifies that enemy as Assyria (7:11; 8:9; 10:6; 11:1). Judging from the kings mentioned in 1:1, Hosea must have prophesied for at least 38 years, though almost nothing is known about him from sources outside his book. He was the only one of the writing prophets to come from the northern kingdom (Israel), and his prophecy is primarily direct to that kingdom.” From the NIV Study Bible on the book of Hosea.

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Hosea 2:16 “It will come about in that day,” declares the Lord, “That you will call Me Ishi (my husband) And will no longer call Me Baali (my master).

Hosea 2:17 “For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, So that they will be mentioned by their names no more.

“In other words, under divine discipline God is going to discipline Israel so harshly that they will never again be involved in idol worship. That is exactly what happens when the Israelites return after the Babylonian captivity. That's what led in reaction to the development of Phariseism. They were so concerned and distraught because God had taken them out of the land that they wanted to eradicate any possible form of idolatry from the land when they returned in 538 BC. Eventually that leads to the idea of all the legalism. What they did is, they had the Mosaic Law. The Mosaic Law has 512 commandments. So they wanted to make sure that you didn't break any of those commandments so what we have to do is we have to build a fence of commandments around the law to establish these secondary prohibitions. If you break one of those you still haven't broken the law, but it's going to keep you from getting too close and actually breaking the law. That was what they would view the Mishnah, the rabbinical teaching at the time of Christ. Along comes the Talmud. The Talmud builds a second fence around the other two. The idea being that as you build these traditions of the Pharisees and the rabbis that it would keep the Jews from getting close to breaking the laws in the Mosaic Law. So it was such a harsh discipline, the destruction, the violence, the famines that occurred – the fact that under siege the mothers were cannibalizing their own children. The violence that

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occurred in both the Northern Kingdom with the Assyrian invasion and later the Southern Kingdom under Nebuchadnezzar undergoing three foreign invasions in 605, 593 and finally 586 was so horrendous the Jews wanted to make sure that nothing like that would ever happen again. Rather than becoming grace-oriented and God-oriented, they just became legalistic. This is part of the fulfillment of Hosea 2:17.” I am again quoting extensively from Robby Dean.

Hosea 2:18 “In that day I will also make a covenant for them With the beasts of the field, The birds of the sky And the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish the bow, the sword and war from the land, And will make them lie down in safety.

Here is the indication that there will be another “new” covenant. Isaiah will reiterate the part of abolishing the weapons of war.

Hosea 2:19 “I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and in justice, In lovingkindness and in compassion,

Hosea 2:20 And I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness. Then you will know the Lord.

In verse 19, God says the covenant will be “forever.” An eternal covenant yet to be enacted for Israel. This is the “New Covenant.”

Another passage that is important in Robby Dean’s presentation is Isaiah 61:8-9

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Isaiah 61:8 For I, the Lord, love justice, I hate robbery in the burnt offering; And I will faithfully give them their recompense And make an everlasting covenant with them.

Isaiah 61:9 Then their offspring will be known among the nations, And their descendants in the midst of the peoples. All who see them will recognize them Because they are the offspring whom the Lord has blessed.

I am sure that the first time I read about these everlasting covenants, I didn't care. That is about Israel. I am in the Church. But if as Paul indicates, we will be ministers of the New Covenant; if we will be in resurrection bodies during the Millennial Kingdom maybe I would like to know what is going to happen. What will I see? Will I be like some angels and be witnesses to what God is going to do? Or will I actually participate under Jesus' command like the angels today? Now it has my attention.

Robby Dean relates what happens in the New Covenant as fulfillment not just of the Abrahamic Covenant and its related covenants, but also to the curses and blessings found at the end of the book of Deuteronomy.

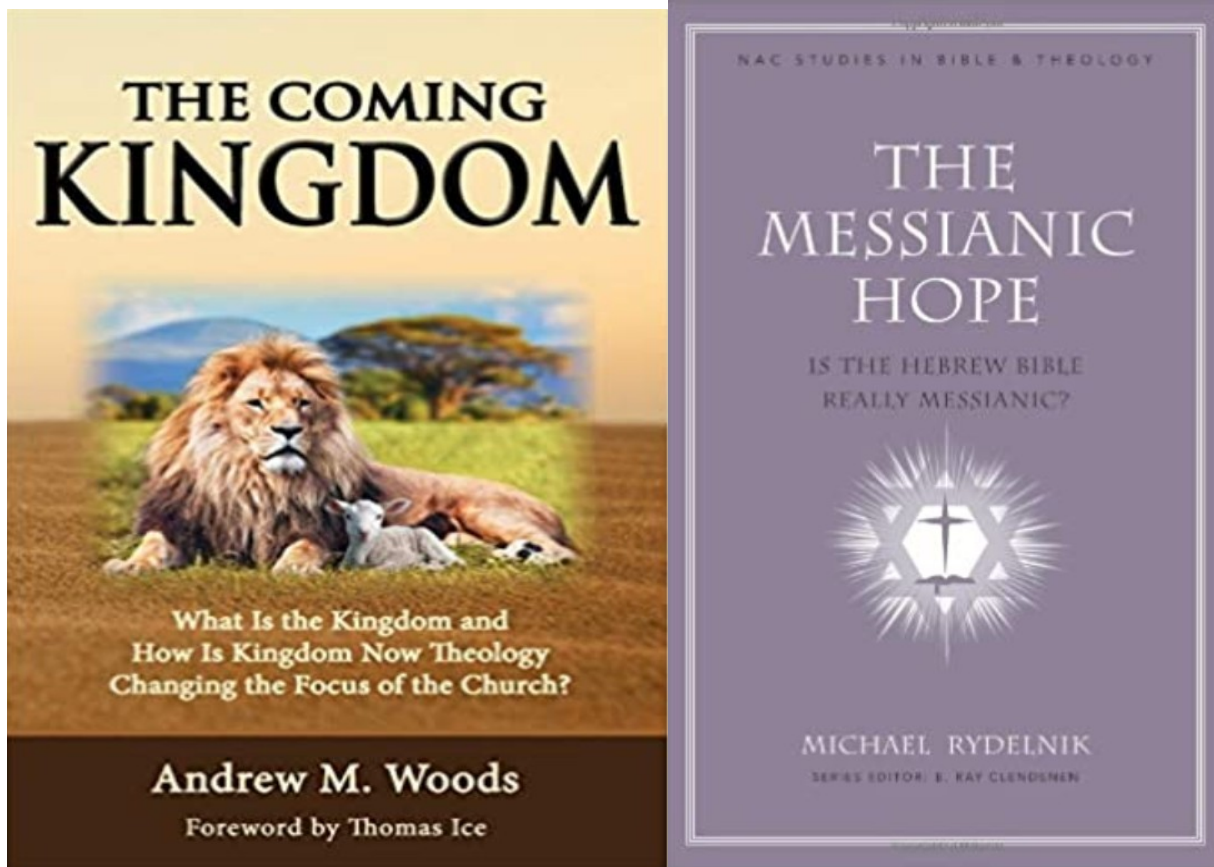
“First of all, in all 6 of these references there is a covenant promised to the nation that follows a period of national condemnation and judgment. That's exactly the kind of thing you have going back to Deuteronomy. The reason I keep going back to Deuteronomy is I want you to understand that everything in the Bible fits together. You have to understand these things in light of other parts of the revelatory process. In the Mosaic Law God promised Israel that if they obeyed Him, He would bless them with physical literal prosperity, agricultural fertility;

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and they would be known among all the nations. But if they were disobedient, God said He would take them through five different stages of discipline the most extreme of which was to remove them from the land (the land being the land that God had promised them) - promised Abraham in the Abrahamic Covenant reiterated in the Palestinian or Land Covenant. “

Enough of the New Covenant. I can see this could go on for weeks. But, I need to move forward with the Suffering Servant.

I do recommend further reading if you are so inclined using the following two books. I am sure there are others. I just happen to have these.



Both are available on Amazon.