

GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



GIG202 – The New Covenant Is for Israel – Part 1

Hello, and thank you for joining me on this podcast. I am entitling this podcast *The New Covenant Is for Israel*. I am recording this actually to be part of a book that I am completing on anti-Semitism, and I thought it would be great to take this chapter, at least, and make it a podcast, so that everyone can receive the teaching that I am bringing here; because I do think it is something that everyone really needs to hear, especially during these days when anti-Semitism is running so rampant within our country and the world. During this podcast, I want to deal with the idea of supersessionism and replacement theology. The reason is because I think that these two issues, which are really one teaching with two names, supersessionism and replacement theology, play very deeply within the Church into this idea of anti-Semitism; and they are at the root of anti-Semitism. Certainly, they grow out of a root of anti-Semitism that has existed within the Church.

Somehow I want to deal with this so that we can show through the New Testament Scriptures that these concepts are absolutely incorrect. They are false teachings, and also, they are really unnecessary. Because somewhere within the idea of these two doctrines is the concept that the Gentile Christian believers are able to receive and participate in all of the prophecies, the promises that are to come through the Scriptures. Well, if we follow these Scriptures through the New Testament, we find that that is already granted to the Gentile believers by the Word of God, and we are included in the promises. Therefore, it is unnecessary to use supersessionism and replacement theology, and the concepts that they hold, in order to try to prove or gain some sense that people who are Gentile believers in Christ are able to appropriate the promises and the provisions that God is granting through the Scriptures. It is already there.

I think that sometimes this idea of replacement theology comes from a jealousy, where we feel like we are the younger brothers and the Jewish people are the older brothers, and therefore we need to replace them if we are going to inherit the family blessings; because normally, things are passed down from the oldest to the youngest. So having been grafted in of late, there is, I think, this sense that somehow we do not have enough just by being grafted in; we also have to replace or get rid of those who were originally the ones to receive what God was making available. So, that is where we are going with this teaching.

I want to begin by reading some verses out of Hebrews the seventh chapter where Paul is dealing with this idea of the high priest, the priesthood, and how it was necessary to have a new covenant because of the breaking of the covenant that came at Sinai. Before these verses that I am going to read, Paul is talking about the priesthood of the Hebrew Scriptures – how it worked, what they did. Then he begins to contrast that in verse 1 of chapter 8 about Christ, and how He was a high priest coming really from a different angle, having been appointed to the right hand of the Father, having ascended into heaven, and so forth. I want to just read a few of these verses, starting with verses 26-27 from Hebrews chapter 7: “For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He

offered up Himself.” So he is distinguishing Christ, as a high priest, from the priesthood that was found in the Hebrew Scriptures.

When we go down to verses 1-2 of Hebrews chapter 8, it says, “Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.” So he is showing that there is a difference coming in Christ, because He is approaching this from the heavenly places as a high priest at the right hand of God. He goes on in verses 6-7 to say, “But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. For if the first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second.”

It is important that we make clear what covenants are being spoken of here, in order not to get confused in this understanding, which I think many times is what happens in the thought process of replacement theology. It is talking about a better covenant; why is this a better covenant? Well, it is a better covenant because it is a unilateral covenant. And it is being compared... in verse 7, it says, “The first covenant, if it had been faultless, there would be no occasion sought for a second.” The first covenant that he is referring to is the covenant at Sinai. He is not talking about the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, or other covenants that we find; he is talking about the covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai. And he is saying that this covenant had faults in it. What were the faults of the covenant? The fault was humanity. It was mankind. It was the nature of man that was the weakness of that covenant. Because we see that at Mount Sinai, the covenant that was made between God and Israel was not a unilateral covenant, as it was with Abraham, it was a bilateral covenant. God laid out certain things, and Israel said, “Yes, we will follow those things. We accept this covenant and we will do what You are asking us to do.” We know that they were not able to do that. And as we go along, we will see that no man could have been capable of fulfilling the Law from a human nature, or while in a human nature. Therefore, they failed, and a second covenant then was sought – that is what verse 7 is saying: “For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second.”

Then he goes on in verses 8-13,

For finding fault with them [what was the fault with the first covenant? it was them], He says, “Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, when I will effect a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not like the covenant which I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; for they did not continue in My covenant, and I did not care for them, says the Lord.

“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their minds, and I will write them on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

“And they shall not teach everyone his fellow citizen, and everyone his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for all will know Me, from the least to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.”

When He said, “A new covenant,” He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.

Now see, this is some of the language and the thinking whereby churches have developed these doctrines of supersessionism and replacement theology. Just look at the language. He is saying, “When

this covenant is growing old..." So we have this "Old Testament" – and our thinking about the Hebrew Scriptures is that they are old, and what is in there is old, and how it is done is old, and it is beginning to disappear. So this new covenant is being seen as a replacement of the covenant which is obsolete. But what we have to remember is that it is obsolete because the people were incapable of following it and accomplishing it. That is why he says, "Finding fault with it..." What was the fault? It was the human nature, or human flesh, that was incapable of walking in what the Law was requiring. So there was nothing wrong with the Law; there was nothing wrong with the promises. It did not replace, and he is not talking about, the covenant with Abraham – he is talking about the covenant at Sinai. That covenant is what is being replaced to bring in something new, or different; just like you could say that the covenant at Sinai was a new covenant. It was different than the covenant that God had made with Abraham, with Isaac, with Jacob. One of the big differences is the fact that those covenants were, by and large, unilateral covenants, and the covenant at Sinai was not unilateral; it was the fact that God was saying, "I want you to do this, and I will make a covenant with you if you will do this." And they said, "Yes, we will do this," following the Law. That was the basis of the covenant.

Now, even here in what we are reading, He says, "Finding fault in that covenant, I will effect a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It is not like the covenant which I made with the fathers." What is different than the covenant that He made with them on Mount Sinai? This is another unilateral covenant that God is now making to replace the Sinai covenant, which could not be followed. Now keep reading: "On the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, for they did not continue in My covenant, and I did not care for them." Verse 10, "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days. I will put My laws into their minds, and I will write them on their hearts, and I will be their God and they shall be My people." See, everything here that is happening in this covenant is God saying, "I, I, I – I am going to do this." What is Israel doing? Nothing. They are not putting the Law in their minds. They are not putting the Law in their hearts. God is doing it. We are back to a unilateral covenant, where God is doing the work here, not the people; because He has already proven through the Sinai covenant that man cannot become righteous as God is seeking them to become righteous, in order for Him to be a God to them and for them to be His sacred people.

So, that is really what we are seeing with this concept of a new covenant. And yes, the old covenant is being displaced by this new covenant. But again, He is not replacing the Law, the teaching, those things; He is replacing that agreement between Himself and Israel, where Israel was saying, "We will do this." It is now proven that they cannot do this, and therefore, God is saying, "Okay, new covenant. I will do this on My own. I will put this in your heart." So we see that the new covenant is, in fact, a new covenant; it is, in fact, a new unilateral covenant; and it is, in fact, instituted by Christ at the Last Supper. This is the significance of what we see in the Last Supper.

In Luke 22:19, it says, "...when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.'" Again, in First Corinthians 11:23 he says, "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you." Now the reason I want to read this out of Corinthians is that it is so necessary to understand that when Paul is teaching about the covenant – about the institution of the covenant at the Last Supper, when he is talking about the priesthood and what Christ did – he is recounting something that was given to him by revelation when he was taken into the Presence of the Lord. Remember, Paul was not there; he did not come into Christ until after Christ ascended. When Paul is saying, "For I received from the Lord that

which I delivered to you," he is talking about the fact that the Lord Himself revealed all of these things in detail to him upon meeting him, after he was smitten blind on the way to Damascus.

I am reading this because Paul's detail is very intricate, and it is very powerful, knowing that this is where it came from. It is not a disciple trying to recall what happened at the Last Supper; this is a detailed revelation that was given to Paul firsthand. Verses 23-26:

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 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. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."

It is very important what we are doing here; we are tying together the reality of this new covenant that was prophesied in Hebrews. Remember, Paul is prophesying; he is pulling prophecy out of Jeremiah chapter 31, starting at verse 31. Paul is taking a prophecy about a new covenant that God promised to make with Israel and Judah. He is pulling that into the context of the risen Christ, and saying that Christ is the one who instituted this new covenant at the Passover in what we call the Last Supper. Here he is talking about the fact that, "This is My blood, which is the new covenant." What we see, then, in the Last Supper is that Christ, as the High Priest, was instituting at that Last Supper this new covenant that had been prophesied by Jeremiah. And then, following that Last Supper, He is going to the Cross and ratifying this new covenant by His blood.

Remember, the covenant must be ratified in blood, because it is like a will and testament – it is only good after the death of the one who is effecting the covenant. So Christ is effecting this new covenant, which again is a covenant that is unilateral; God is talking about what He is going to do. So, what are we seeing in this? We are seeing that replacement theology claims that Israel was rejected for failing in being obedient to the Law; and also, they add in not receiving Christ as the Messiah. Therefore, they say a new covenant was established by Christ which bypassed the old Law and covenant, as well as bypassing the Jewish people as God's chosen people, because of their failure. Notice how some of the details are taken here; there is a certain level of accuracy, but it is also twisted. And, of course, that is how you make rat poison, right? You take wheat and you put just a little bit of poison on it, and that is how you kill rats. Well, I tell you, there have been a lot of people destroyed in their faith by this poison doctrine, which has come to make it appear as though God was rejecting His people. God is not rejecting His people. We will make that very clear as we go forward.

What is happening is that Christ is instituting a new covenant. He is not doing away with the teaching, or the Law, which was given to the people. The new covenant is coming to create a heart wherein Israel can walk in the Law, walk in obedience to the things which God wanted them to. He is not rejecting the people, nor is He rejecting the Law. He is recognizing that there is a failure in that covenant, and therefore, God is fixing it. So, this new covenant did not replace the Law. It did not replace God's choosing of Israel. It replaced a broken covenant, and it replaced it with a unilateral covenant, which is very much like the original covenant that God made with Abraham. This covenant is opening the door for all to fulfill the Law by faith through grace. And just as an aside, by the way, the Jews did receive Yeshua. And in fact, they welcomed Him into Jerusalem as the Messiah fulfilling the prophecies that were given.

Now, let's take a closer look at this new covenant, and see if in fact it is a replacement of the Jewish people, and a replacement, necessarily, of the Law. Jeremiah 31, I will start with verses 29-30: "In those days they will not say again, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.' But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge." These two verses are very important in combating this idea of replacement theology, because part of what replacement theology says is that the failure of a few Jews removed God's choosing of the Jewish people; and it effected rejection by God of all of the Jews and the promises to them, and it replaced them with the Church and with the Gentile Christians. So, you can see that God, before He even gets into this new covenant, He talks about the fact that, "In the days of this new covenant, they are not going to say, 'Hey, your fathers sinned, and therefore you are all replaced.' But each individual will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge." And that applies to Gentile Christians as well as Jews, or anybody else from any other race – whoever sins, God is going to deal with those people individually. We have to remember that we will all stand before the throne of God and look Him in the face, and speak with Him face to face, and recount our lives before Him. It is not going to be a group effort. He is not going to take a race of people, He is not going to take the Jews and say, "You know, your fathers blew it 3,000 years ago, and therefore all the Jews since then have been rejected. Sorry, get out of My throne room." It does not work that way. Whoever sins, the Lord will deal with that person individually. So that must be clear, and it flies in the face of the whole idea of replacement theology.

Verses 31-33,

"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 [see, very specifically, He is only dealing with the covenant of Sinai], My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the Lord [so again, what was the failure of the covenant? It was the human nature]. "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days..."

Now remember, who is He making this covenant with? The house of Israel. He is not saying, "Behold, days are coming when I will make a new covenant with the Gentile Christian Church, in the name of Jesus." That is not what He says. "'Days are coming,' declares the Lord, 'when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.'" And then when we go down, it says, "'My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,' declares the Lord. '...this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,' declares the Lord."

So this new covenant, as we see and read it here, very clearly has nothing to do with the Church; it has nothing to do with Gentile believers; it has only to do with Israel, the house of Judah and all of Israel. That is who the new covenant is for. It is not for the Church. It is not addressing the Church. It is addressing the people of the covenant of Sinai, which were the Jewish people.

"'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.'" Again, He is not doing away with the Law. He is not doing away with the teaching. He is going to write it on their heart. "'And I will be their God, and they shall be My people.'" They will be able to walk in the Law because God is going to put it in their heart. That is the significance of a unilateral covenant – God is going to do it. He is going to do that which man cannot do, Jew or Gentile.

Verse 34, “They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, “Know the Lord,” for they will all know Me [the Jewish people, Israel, Judah, will all know Him], 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.’” The very foundation of supersessionism and replacement theology is the fact that God will never, ever, ever forget their failings and their sin, and He will hold it against them so thoroughly that He rejects them forever.

Verses 35-36, “Thus says the Lord, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; the Lord of Hosts is His name: ‘If this fixed order departs from before Me’” – what order? The sun coming up in the morning, the moon coming up, the stars coming up; if that order of day and night can be replaced before the face of God – “then the offspring of Israel also will cease from being a nation before Me.” What is He saying here? He is saying replacement theology is an impossibility, supersessionism is an absolute impossibility, because you are never going to make day and night cease from existing before God.

Verse 37. “Thus says the Lord, ‘If the heavens above can be measured and the foundations of the earth searched out below, then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done,’ declares the Lord.” So, “If you can measure the heavens...”; the people who believe in replacement theology better get out a big tape measure, because their job is to measure the heavens. And if they can successfully measure the heavens and the foundations of the earth, then they can convince God to cast off Israel from being a nation before Him. Otherwise, impossible.

So, what we can see is that Paul absolutely ties this prophecy from Jeremiah 31 about a new covenant to declare it the new covenant that was instituted by Christ at the Last Supper. He implemented that and determined it to be this covenant from Jeremiah 31, that Christ Himself was saying, “I am giving My body and My blood to ratify this as the new covenant with Israel.” Therefore, everything this covenant says, we have to pull in; and Paul does pull it in, in Hebrews. That is why we began there, in Hebrews 7 and 8, with the fact that Paul is making absolutely one these two covenants. The one is the fulfillment of the other; therefore, everything in Jeremiah applies. And so, we see from the New Testament Scriptures in the writings of Paul and what he is saying about these things, that it is impossible for there to be such a reality as supersessionism or replacement theology.

So I pray with all of my heart that we can see removed from the Church, once and for all, these ideas, these concepts, and these doctrines, and we can begin to walk in oneness with our Jewish brothers and sisters as our elder brothers, and realize that we are included in the promises through Christ.

Amen.