

ACTS 28

the great New Testament dispensational divide

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The Bible is a book of redemption.

It unveils God's plans to remove sin and death and the enemy who facilitated its introduction. But it also reveals different purposes for different called out companies of God's redeemed and these differences we must seek and keep separate. Just because the Bible is full of salvation through the shed blood, does not mean all the Bible is about us today.

On the very day Adam disobeyed, the first elements of God's redemptive plan were displayed. Our Lord's substitutionary death was anticipated when Adam and Eve were covered with coats of skin from the animal sacrificed. Even Cain was provided a sin offering as found here;

If you do well, shall you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin (offering) crouches at the door; and its desire is for you, and you shall rule over it. Gen 4:7

The Saviour who would die and pay the penalty of sin and sins was promised as the seed of the woman in Gen.3:15. The redemptive plan unfolding from Genesis was an earthly one. Sin entered the world, the remedy and restoration is on the earth for this purpose of God.

When Abraham offered the son he loved, Isaac, our knowledge of the redemptive plan increases and we see the seed of the woman; Christ the son of man, and the seed of Abraham as the redemptive thread. Hebrews brings out this genealogy;

Since then the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise partook of the same; that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death (that is, the Devil), and deliver those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For truly He did not take the nature of angels, but He took hold of the seed of Abraham. Heb 2:14-16

So from the opening pages of the Bible, the Lord revealed how sinners would be saved BUT, from the opening pages the purpose was focused on the earth and the restoration of Paradise, Paradise does not mean heaven, see Rev.21 & 22. One redeemer shines through the pages, but God's different purposes must not be confused together.

This shed blood redemption purpose for the earth was further unveiled through Abraham's seed, namely Israel. In Gen.15:13-14, Israel's bondage and suffering then their "great substance" deliverance is seen. The Feasts are steps the Lord took to deliver Israel in the past. In those steps blood was shed linking Israel's past and future greater deliverance with Christ the seed of Abraham the Lamb of God. The Saviour is identified with His people Israel; He took and will take the same steps of suffering to glory. The believers before Acts 28 hoped in the Feasts and the glory anticipated. Paradise and the New Jerusalem are not our destination but we are saved by the same Saviour.

Two charts of the Feasts appear on the next pages but as we follow the steps from suffering to glory please do not subconsciously replace the words Promised Land with the word Heaven or Israel with church. The Feasts have nothing to do with us dispensationally but we are saved by the same Saviour so they are for, but not about us.

The Feasts show redemption through the blood; Israel are sinners needing salvation. Those who are destined for the glorified Promised Land and the New Jerusalem will also be saved by the One Saviour. Abram was called into a land and promised he would become a great and mighty nation and through him all families of the earth would be blessed. These blessings including redemption are on the earth but ours are in the heavenly places.

Leviticus 23

The Feasts given to ISRAEL

23:1-2 Moses to Israel. MY FEASTS Proclaim

23:3 **The Sabbath (of Rest).** (The weekly reminder)
7th day. Holy assembly. In your dwellings. No work.

23:4 FEASTS of JEHOVAH. In their season

1. 23:5 * **PASSOVER.** (10th) 14th day. 1st month

2. 23:6-8 * **UNLEAVENED BREAD.** 7 days. No work. **8**
[**Firstfruit**] 16th day 1st month, when in land.

3. 23:15-21 * **WEEKS.** (Pentecost) (:21) 7x7sabbaths+1day = **50.** No work.
[**Firstfruits**] 2 loaves with Leaven

23:22 Harvest sharing for the poor and the stranger (alien =gentile) Stranger.
Num. 1:51, 3:10:38. Gentiles blessed of Israel, (Gal.3, Roms.15:27)

4. 23:23-:25 **TRUMPETS.** 1st day. 7th month. Sabbath, trumpet blasts. No work.
[**harvests** the firstfruit anticipated]

5. 23:26-32 **ATONEMENT.** 10th day 7th month. No work. (or destroyed)
Afflict /deny (humility, repentance) or cut off. Is.53. Lev.16. H.Priest,
Holiest of all. Scapegoat. National cleaning. Joseph's brethren know Him.
Lev.25 Jubilee trumpet. 7x7 yrs+1year =**50.** Liberty, Restoration

6. 23:33-36 * **TABERNACLES.** 15th day, 7th month. No Work. **8**
[**harvests** the firstfruit anticipates]

23:37-:38 The FEASTS of the LORD with offerings

6. 23:39-:43 **BOOTHES.** 15th day, 7th month
Celebrate, celebrate.
(No Offering mentioned). Israelites build booths to remember.

23:43 Moses declared (to Israel) the FEASTS of the LORD

While the Feasts show redemption through our Lord's blood, they DO NOT show our calling or hope today. Their purpose is earthly, ours in Christ, is heavenly. The Feasts are about Israel and redemption for all families of the earth. They are not about the church His Body and God's purposes in the heavenly places.

Feasts – Seed's suffering to glory

Israel, Christ and believers to Acts 28

SABBATH (weekly) Gen.1-4, 12, 15, 17, 22

The Sabbath links redemption (sin & death gone) and Paradise lost but to be restored, Rev.21-22

1 **PASSOVER** a lamb's blood god's judged

2 **UNLEAVENED BREAD** delivered by armies

Firstfruit LAND Christ's res'n. 1Cor.15:20, 23

3 **WEEKS** (Pentecost)

Firstfruit LAND Ex.28, 31, 35, Num.11 Acts 2

Gap between feasts, not representing today
Gentiles blessed with Israel's harvest. Gals.3

1 **TRUMPETS** (7) Israel gathered into Kingdom

Harvests LAND Res'ns and Israel del'd by armies
Josh.6, Ex.19, Matt.24-25, 1Thess.4
1Cor.15:54-55 is res'n to LAND

2 **ATONEMENT** (Day of) Israel unleavened.

Lev.16, Roms.11:26-32

3 **TABERNACLES / BOOTHS**

Harvests LAND
Gen.3:24 Messiah's throne between
cherubim, Is..51, inner P.land Eden.
Sin and death removed, Satan bound
eventually destroyed.
Israel of God, Kingdom of Priests Rev.5:10
The feasts anticipate Rev.21-22.

The Feasts show redemption through His blood but they represent
steps in an earthly not an heavenly purpose.

From Egypt to the Promised Land- not from earth to heaven

The Feasts are not ABOUT the Church His Body or the heavenly purposes of today

The Feasts present our Lord's shed blood but this does not mean we are part of the purpose and inheritance they anticipate. The redemption for people on the earth which started back in Genesis and continued through Exodus and the Prophets was the plan in view when the wise men traveled from the east to worship the Saviour.

Gabrielle told Mary her child would reign over the house of Jacob forever, Lk.1:32-33. Joseph was told that Mary's son would save His people from their sins. This did not mean our calling had begun. Please read Luke.1:67-75 and 2:25-32 where Gentiles were included in the blessings of salvation. The inclusion of the Gentiles was anticipated in Lev.23:22 and does not mean the earthly purpose had changed to an heavenly one. As the Lord said, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth" and "...many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven". The Kingdom of Heaven our Lord referenced is not a kingdom IN heaven but one originating FROM there. Ps.72 & 89.

This Festive calendar earthly salvation plan was postponed at Acts 28 and while we are saved by the same Saviour, we belong to a different purpose. We have been raised and seated in the heavenly places which purpose of God is not revealed by the Feasts given to Israel. You and I are not spiritual Israel; we are not destined for Paradise or the New Jerusalem.

One great theme of the Bible is redemption through our Lord's shed blood and how sinful people can dwell with a Holy God. The feasts show this blood bought redemption and they show how God will dwell on the earth again between cherubim in Israel's temple. They do not show our calling and inheritance in the heavenly places.

This wonderful festive theme is for, but not about us. God made promises to different families of His children. Some He promised the earth and to others the heavenly places. We must not mix these different callings. All families of God are saved by the One Saviour, but not all His redeemed children will dwell in the same place.

In Egypt God's promise that Abraham's seed would become a great and mighty nation was realized and Israel was delivered to be God's inheritance in the Promised Land.

There, Israel would dwell and the Lord would dwell on the earth with them;

You shall bring them and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance, the place, O Jehovah, You have made for You to dwell in; the Sanctuary, O Jehovah, which Your hands have established. Jehovah shall reign forever and ever. Exo 15:17-18 See also Ex.34:9.

But this did not mean salvation was for Israel alone, for all families of the earth were to be blessed in Abraham. Christ came through Abraham and took away the sin of the world and Israel was to be a channel for God's glory to the world. The Lord dwelt among Israel teaching them about His holiness. Israel needed to know and understand about the sin bearer and His shed blood, and every other aspect of redemption. Once taught these things THEN they could be the Kingdom of Priests and tell the world about the Saviour.

The Lord declared this education program as follows;

And He humbled you and allowed you to hunger, and then He fed you with manna, which you did not know, neither did your fathers know it, so that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of Jehovah man shall live. Deu 8:3

And Jehovah said to Moses, Come up to Me in the mountain, and be there. And I will give you tablets of stone, and the Law, and commandments which I have written, so that you may teach them. Exo 24:12

The law was a trainer or schoolmaster for Israel. While observance of the law did not make them right before God, it provided many lessons for them (and us). We read about this in Roms.3:19-22 and Gals. 3:22-25.

In the Old Testament Israel was delivered to show forth the Lord's glory to the world, and in the New, this remains the purpose up until Acts 28. Please follow this great earthly redemptive plan in these Scriptures;

Abram

And I will bless those that bless you and curse the one who curses you. And in you shall all families of the earth be blessed. Gen 12:3

Moses

When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the sons of Israel. For Jehovah's portion is His people. Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. Deu 32:8-9

David

His name shall endure forever; His name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed. Psa 72:17

The Prophets

And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those who escape from them to the nations,the far away coasts that have not heard My fame, nor have seen My glory. And they will declare My glory among the nations. Isa 66:19

The Gospels

Lord, now You will let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word. For my eyes have seen Your Salvation which You have prepared before the face of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the nations, and the glory of Your people Israel. Luk 2:29-32

When John the Baptist exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John.1:29), this did not mean our calling in the heavenly places had started. The Gospels record His crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection but, the earthly purposes are unchanged.

The Lord came to provide the redemption Israel and the world needed. Israel had seen this redemption in type and shadow. Israel was taught by God about sin and sins and how access into His presence was through the shed blood. But this did not mean the earthly calling was now heavenly.

He came to Israel who needed to repent and believe. We know the nation rejected Him but the witness during the Gospels and Acts was to Israel 1st and foremost.

It is Israel who will be a light to lighten the Gentiles and in those opening chapters of Acts, Israel was called upon to repent and believe. Then the world would be blessed as God had promised;

You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, "And in your Seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed."

(Gen.12:3) Having raised up His son Jesus, *God sent Him to you first*, to bless you in turning every one of you away from his iniquities. Act 3:25-26

These purposes for the earth through Israel remained until Acts 28. In the Gospels and Acts period the believers looked for the fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets, and the Lord's return to the earth. The Feasts were being fulfilled and the earthly plan they foreshadowed was coming to pass.

The Scriptures up to Acts 28 looked to the Trumpet return of the Lord to Zion, the New Jerusalem, see Romans, Galatians and Hebrews.

After Acts 28 a change in purpose was revealed to us through Paul, a previously hidden purpose for the heavenly places. A new company is seen, the Church which is His Body. But there was no change in redemption through our Lord's blood and justification by faith. Are you beginning to see these differences?

From Acts 2, the message concerning Jesus of Nazareth as Israel's Saviour, Messiah and coming King was proclaimed to the Jews inside then outside the land. In Acts 13:32-35 Paul's gospel was the promises made to the fathers and he then uses 3 prophecies which speak of Messiah's glory on the earth. Read Ps.2, Is.55 and Ps.16.

In Acts 28:1-10, the very supernatural gifts which had been the blessing of Israel from the Exodus were still evident and when Paul addressed the dispersed Jews in Rome he declared he was bound for the hope of Israel, Acts 28:20. The hope of Israel is not heaven.

After a day of proclaiming the Lord out of the OT Scriptures Acts, 28:23, the Jews disagreed among themselves and they were "let go". The Greek word translated "departed" in v25 first occurs in Matt.1:19 where Joseph considered "putting away" his wife. We are aware the Lord was a husband to Israel, Is.54:5 et al.

The judgment of Isaiah 6 is in Acts 28:25-27 and the earthly program was put aside with Israel who have been loammi since. In AD 70 Titus destroyed the Temple and Israel was scattered to the winds as God warned.

Acts 28 is the great dispensational divide of the New Testament. The chart opposite shows the earthly program of the Feasts given to Israel postponed at Acts 28. Redemption through our Lord's shed blood, forgiveness of sins and justification by faith through grace were not postponed. The earthly program through the nation of Israel was postponed.

After Acts 28, Paul was given the dispensation for today containing unsearchable riches of Christ, our economy was previously hidden, not found in the Feasts.

Feasts – with Acts 28 parenthesis

our calling was revealed after Acts 28
not from Genesis through the Feasts

SABBATH (weekly) Gen.1-4, 12, 15, 17, 22
Was Saturday, never changed to Sunday. The first of the weeks refers to the count to Pentecost.

These Feasts fulfilled

1 **PASSOVER** The Lamb Satan judged

2 **UNLEAVENED BREAD**
Firstfruit LAND Christ's res'n. 1Cor.15:20, 23

3 **WEEKS** (Pentecost) Acts 2 is not a beginning
Firstfruit LAND Ex.28, 31, 35, Num.11 Acts 2
The Acts period when Trumpets was expected.

Galatians 1&2 Thess. 1&2
Corinths. Hebrews Romans
These letters contain wonderful eternal truths, like Redemption, just'n. BUT, their hope is earthly and the New Jerusalem.

Acts 28, Israel put aside, a new dispensation to Paul alone

WE ARE HERE TODAY
Ephesians Philippians Colossians 1&2 Timothy Titus Philemon
Dispens'n of grace previously hidden in God this did not begin at Acts 2 it was revealed to Paul after Acts 28

The heavenly places, new blessings, new, hope

God's earthly purpose will be resumed

These Feasts will be fulfilled

1 **TRUMPETS** (7) Israel gathered into Kingdom
Harvests LAND Res'ns and Israel del'd by armies Josh.6, Ex.19, Matt.24-25, 1Thess.4 1Cor.15:54-55 is res'n to LAND

2 **ATONEMENT** (Day of) Israel unleavened.
Lev.16, Roms.11:26-32

3 **TABERNACLES / BOOTHS**
Harvests LAND
See notes on previous chart, page 3

Genesis to Acts 28, redemption on the earth, Paradise restored

1941 year gap

Paradise restored purpose resumed

Can we see God's redemptive purpose for the earth threading from Genesis through Israel's Feasts, the Acts period and Revelation? Only those letters of Paul written after Acts 28 reveal God's purposes for the above heavens. We must distinguish dispensational things that differ in God's Word.

Here are two groups of letters from Paul as they dispensationally fall either side of Acts 28. In both groups frequent references to the saving accomplishments of our Lord's death burial and resurrection and the blessed consequences for those who believe in Him can be found. However, the dispensational content is very different and these differences must be observed if we are to walk worthy of our calling today.

In the letters written before Acts 28, before Israel was put aside, the hope is all earthly. They were waiting for the Trumpet return of the Lord to the earth which was so imminent they were advised to remain single. 1Cor.15 is a clear example of the fundamental (or continuance) truths blended with the earthly dispensational truths prior to Acts 28. In 1Cor.15:3-4 we have Christ's death burial and resurrection but, the harvest resurrection for believers during Acts is 1Cor.15:54-55 where Paul refers to Isaiah 25 and Hosea 13. The resurrections of Isaiah and Hosea are to the earth, not heaven.

In the letters written after Acts 28 we notice a new purpose which goes back before the foundation of the world. We are not blessed with faithful Abraham in the Promised Land as in Galatians, but we have been raised and seated in the heavenly places where our Lord Christ is seated at God's right where we will appear with Him. Col.3:1-4 is not 1Thess.4:13-18.

Paul's Ministry BEFORE Acts 28

The great dispensational divide

We do not live on this side of Acts 28

BEFORE Acts 28, God's purposes were promise and prophecy, from Genesis

The removal of sin and death, Paradise restored and Israel a great nation abound in these Scriptures.

Paul's Acts period statement about his ministry and the letters which harmonize with it. Acts 26:22

"witnessing ..saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said was going to happen"

During and up to Acts 28 the dispensational purposes of God relate to the earth and the NJ. At Acts 28 these purposes were put to one side with Israel until a future date. During Acts Christ is Saviour, King and Bridegroom, the believers are a prophetic remnant, chaste virgins to judge the world.

Galatians
1&2 Thessalonians
1&2 Corinthians
Hebrews
Romans

Approx. 190 OT quotes, all Jewish themes and hope. The feasts in these letters. Gospels, Acts, James, general epistles and Revelation here

The great dispensational boundary is made clear by rightly dividing the Word of Truth; testing things that differ; Phils.1:9-10, 2Tim.2:15. Most Christians are dispensationalists and draw a line between the purposes of God for the earth through Israel and the present age of grace. Some draw it between Malachi and Matthew, in the Gospels, at the cross or at Acts 2, 9 or 13. It must be drawn at Acts 28.

Acts 28 Acts 28

Paul's Ministry AFTER Acts 28

The great dispensational divide

We live on this side of Acts 28

AFTER Acts 28 the revelation of a dispensation hidden in God to Paul alone. Feasts do not apply.

The purposes of God are in the heavenly places to where our church His Body has been raised and seated. Eph.2:4-8.

Paul's post Acts period statement about his ministry and the letters which harmonize with it. Eph.3:7-9

the unsearchable riches of Christ the dispensation which had been hidden in God.....

Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
Titus, Philemon
1&2 Timothy

Approx. 8 OT quotes, non Jewish themes, no feasts, a new hope previously unknown Eph.1:15-19

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After Acts 28 the dispensational purposes of God changed and are now focused in the heavenly places where Christ sits at God's right. This dispensation of grace is parenthetical, it fits between Pentecost and Trumpets. Christ is Saviour, Head, the believers are His Body, seated together in the above heavens, some might reign with Him there.

Acts 28 Acts 28

Replacement Theology.

One of the great tragedies resulting from our failure to distinguish dispensational things that differ either side of Acts 28 is the one which automatically assumes we have replaced Israel in some way. Have you heard that the OT was for the Jews and the NT is for us? This is a confusion and replacement theology epitomizes our failure to distinguish these things that differ.

Replacement theology is the natural result of the constant assumption that Israel was cast aside before Matthew, at the Cross or Acts 2 and the church became some sort of spiritual fulfillment of that which Israel physically typified. Few Christians recognize that Israel is a church, so we should be talking about the church Israel and the church which is His body. Two completely different called out companies through which the Father will accomplish different goals in different places.

The following terms are rich with replacement theology or a spiritualized assumptions and must be rejected for the confusion they create and affirm;

01. **We all belong to the one true church.**
02. **We are all New Covenant Christians.**
03. **We are spiritual Israel.**
04. **Acts 2 is the Birthday of the Church.**
05. **Acts is a history of the early church.**
06. **We are the Bride of Christ.**
07. **Heaven is the New Jerusalem.**
08. **The Kingdom of God is within us.**
09. **We are a Kingdom of Priests and a Holy Nation.**
10. **The traditional rapture can happen at any time.**

Visit our website, www.bibleunderstanding.com for lessons based upon right division and Acts 28, the great NT dispensational divide.

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