

The Old Testament Church

Introduction

The title of our lesson is “The Old Testament Church.” With that as our title, some might respond, “Why are you are looking for the church in the Old Testament? God didn’t come up with the church until the New Testament.” But is that what the Bible says about the church? No.

***Ephesians 3:10-11** — To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known **by the church** the manifold wisdom of God, According to **the eternal purpose** which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

And later in that same chapter.

***Ephesians 3:21** — Unto him be glory **in the church** by Christ Jesus **throughout all ages**, world without end.*

What does that verse tell us about the false but popular notion that the church is just a temporary Plan B that God set up after he postponed the real kingdom that is still yet to come? That verse confirms that idea is false. Ephesians 3:21 confirms that the church is the **eternal** kingdom.

But do you mean to say that some people really believe that Jesus failed in what he came to do and that God set up the church as a cosmic Plan B until Jesus could try again later? Yes. Many people believe that.

Many people say that the church is not discussed anywhere in the Old Testament. According to them and their so-called “postponement theory,” Jesus came to this world intending to establish an earthly kingdom, but his plans were thwarted by the disbelieving Jews. So instead Jesus established the church as a temporary “Plan B” until he could come again and give his plans for an earthly kingdom another try. Here is how the *Wycliffe Dictionary of Theology* describes their beliefs:

It is held that the Old Testament prophets predicted the re-establishment of David’s kingdom and that Christ himself intended to bring this about. It is alleged however, that because the Jews refused his person and work he postponed the establishment of his kingdom until the time of his return. Meanwhile, it is argued, the Lord gathered together ‘the church’ as a kind

of interim measure.

That's what they say. But what does God say? What does the Bible say?

For starters, what did Jesus say about his mission on this earth? In John 19:30, Jesus said, "It is finished." Just those three words alone are enough for us to know that Jesus' mission did not end in failure, but of course we know that from many more words than just those three. Jesus' mission was not a failure, and our having to take the time to refute such a proposition is a sad commentary on how badly the word of God has been twisted and distorted by denominational division. The church has **always** been part of God's plan.

What was Christ's mission? Christ came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). Those in the church were once lost, but now they are saved. Christ's mission is accomplished in the church. Why then does Jesus need to come set up a different organization? He does not.

One very important reason we know that the church is not an accident is that the New Testament writers tell us that the church is a fulfillment of many Old Testament prophecies. Let's look at some of those prophecies.

Genesis 3:15

Genesis 3:15 — *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

We don't need to look very far in the Old Testament before we come across a prophecy about the church — but how is Genesis 3:15 a prophecy about the church? To answer that question, all we need to do is ask another question: how did Jesus bruise Satan's head?

Certainly one way that Jesus did that to Satan was by Jesus' own death on the cross. Satan likely saw that event, at least initially, as a great victory, but of course it was just the opposite. Jesus' death was a great defeat for Satan and was a great victory for Christ. But the defeat did not end there. God bruises Satan's head again whenever God's people experience their own victories in Christ by living in faithfulness to Christ in the face of persecution and temptation. How do we know that? Listen to Paul.

Romans 16:20 — *And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.*

That verse unmistakably points us back to Genesis 3:15, and also unmistakably tells us that Genesis 3:15 is fulfilled in part by God's people in the church. The book of Romans was directed to the people of God living under Roman persecution, something that was about to get much worse for them. Their victory in Christ was a defeat for Satan — and how was their victory obtained? It was obtained in the church, to which they and we

were added at our baptism, our new birth. John tells us the same thing.

1 John 5:4 — *For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*

Genesis 12:2-3

Genesis 12:2-3 — *And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

In Genesis 12, we find the great promise to Abraham — that in him all the families of the earth would be blessed. Just all the Jewish families? No, all the families, both Jew and Gentile. This blessing would be for the entire world. Where is that blessing available? Let's listen as Paul tells us.

Galatians 3:7-9 — *Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. 8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. 9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.*

But what does it mean to be “of faith”? What does it mean to be “the children of Abraham?” Paul answers those questions in the same chapter.

Galatians 3:26-29 — *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

The promised blessing to Abraham's descendants in Genesis 12 is enjoyed today by those who have been baptized into Christ, and that group is the church.

Genesis 49:10-12

Genesis 49:10 — *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. 11 Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: 12 His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with*

milk.

In 1 Peter 2:9, the church is called a “royal priesthood.” Why is the church royal? Because we have a King, our Messiah, and because we reign in life with our King (Romans 5:17). Genesis 49:10-12 was directed to Judah, the leader of the tribe from which Jesus came (Hebrews 7:14). This promise to Judah is a preview of the covenant that would later be given to another descendant of Judah, King David, in Psalm 89 — an eternal throne. These verses are pointing to Christ as the eternal King, and there can’t be an eternal King without an eternal kingdom. That eternal kingdom is the church.

But what does it mean in Genesis 49:10 when it says “until Shiloh come”? What is Shiloh? That word is simply an untranslated form of the Hebrew expression meaning “one to whom it belongs.” It may also be related to the Hebrew word *shalah* meaning peaceful. Either way Shiloh is pointing straight to Christ, the eternal *and final* King from the line of Judah. And if there is any doubt about that phrase at the end of verse 10, those doubts are put to rest by verses 11-12, which clearly point to Christ, as Revelation 19:13 confirms: “And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.”

2 Samuel 7:16

2 Samuel 7:16 — *And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.*

That promise to David is a restatement of the promise to Judah — that David’s throne would be established forever. We know that promise was fulfilled by Christ.

Luke 1:32 — *He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.*

But 2 Samuel 7:16 says more than that — God in that verse tells David that his **kingdom** would be established for ever. That eternal kingdom is the church.

Psalm 2:6

Psalms 2:6 — *Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.*

Psalm 2 is one of the most well-known Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament. Verse 7 is a clear description of Christ: “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.” And so is verse 6: “Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.”

But is Psalm 2 also a prophecy about the church? Yes, and to see why we need to ask another question — what is the “holy hill of Zion”? Let’s listen as the book of Hebrews answers that question.

Hebrews 12:22-23 — *But ye are come unto **mount Sion**, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn.*

The holy hill of Zion on which God set the King is the church, the eternal kingdom of that eternal King. We will see other prophecies describing the church as a mountain.

Psalm 89:36

Psalm 89:36 — *His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.*

In Psalm 89, God says that the throne of David will endure forever. Further, God says that, unlike some of God's other promises in the Old Testament, the promise in Psalm 89:36 was not conditional. It was going to happen with absolute certainty, and it did happen when Jesus came and occupied the throne of David.

But Psalm 89:36 also says that something else will endure forever — **his seed**. Who is that? First, that seed of David certainly includes Jesus.

Romans 1:3 — *Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.*

But that seed also includes the spiritual offspring of Jesus.

Galatians 3:29 — *And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

Isaiah 53:10 — *Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see **his seed**, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.*

Psalms 22:30 — *A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.*

Who are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise? What seed did Jesus see after he was put to grief? What group became his spiritual offspring? What seed serves him? The answer to each of those questions is the same — the church, the eternal kingdom that shall endure forever. We are his seed.

Psalm 110:4

Psalm 110:4 — *The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest*

for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

Earlier we looked at 1 Peter 2:9 where the church is called a royal priesthood, and we have already seen several prophecies pointing to the royal aspect of that description. Here we see a prophecy about the priestly aspect of that description.

Why is the church a royal priesthood? Because the head of the church is both our King and our High Priest. Just as we reign in life with Christ in the kingdom of Christ, so also are we all priests in the priesthood of Christ.

1 Peter 2:5 — *Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*

But Jesus was from the tribe of Judah, not the tribe of Levi. So how then could Jesus be priest? Two ways. First, Jesus is priest not according to the order of Levi but rather according to a more ancient priestly order, the order of Melchizedek. And second, there has been a change in the law under the new covenant so that priests no longer have to come from the tribe of Levi.

Hebrews 7:14-17 — *For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. 15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, 16 Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. 17 For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*

When the Old Testament prophesied that Jesus would be both king and priest, that was also a prophecy that the people of Christ would be a royal priesthood. And this prophecy from Psalm 110 is pointing to the priesthood of Christ and to the church, his holy priesthood.

Isaiah 2:1-5

Isaiah 2:1-5 — *The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2 And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. 3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

5 O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.

Isaiah 2 is a central prophecy about the church. Isaiah 2 is so important that we see it repeated by later prophets — almost verbatim in Micah, and in very similar words later in Isaiah and in Ezekiel and Zechariah.

First, how do we know that this prophecy is about the church? Because Jesus tells us it is in Luke 24.

Luke 24:45-49 — *Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, 46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: 47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, **beginning at Jerusalem.** 48 And ye are witnesses of these things. 49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.*

Luke 24:47 is pointing straight back to Isaiah 2:3, and Luke 24:49 is saying that these events would be fulfilled in Acts 2, which they were.

And what does Isaiah 2:2 say would be established? “The mountain of the LORD’s house.” We saw that mountain in an earlier prophecy.

Psalms 2:6 — *Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.*

Hebrews 12:22-23 — *But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn.*

The church is the mountain of the Lord’s house that was prophesied in Isaiah 2 and that was established in Acts 2 according to that prophecy.

But what about the remainder of this prophecy? When will “they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks?” When will “nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more?” That, too, has already happened. That peace is already enjoyed in the church, and that peace has been enjoyed in the church since the day the church was established in Acts 2. How do we know that? Because Paul tells us in Ephesians 2.

Ephesians 2:14-18 — *For he is our **peace**, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making **peace**; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and preached **peace** to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. 18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.*

The historical enmity between Jew and Gentile was abolished in Christ, as was the enmity between man and God. There is peace in the church — peace among the people of God, and peace with God. That is the great prophecy of Isaiah 2.

Isaiah 9:6-7

Isaiah 9:6-7 — *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.*

This beautiful prophecy of Christ points to several aspects about the church that we have already seen. That Jesus is our “everlasting Father” points to the church as his spiritual offspring. That Jesus is the “Prince of Peace” points to the peace that we just saw in Isaiah 2 and Ephesians 2. That his government will see no end points to the eternal nature of the church. That Jesus is on the throne of David points to the royal aspect of the church. That the kingdom is ordered by Christ points to the God-given pattern for the church. That the church is established with judgment and with justice points both to the events in Acts 2 and also to the judgments that followed, the judgments of Jerusalem and Rome, but also the judgment of any earthly kingdom that would threaten God’s people.

Isaiah 11:6-10

Isaiah 11:6-10 — *The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. 7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. 10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.*

This prophecy is similar to that in Isaiah 2 — both are pointing to the peace in the church as described in Ephesians 2. Verse 10 is a wonderful prophecy of the universal nature of the church. The church is not just for Jews, but is for Jew and Gentile. Paul points to this same verse in the closing chapters of Romans.

Romans 15:8-12 — Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: 9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. 10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. 11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. 12 **And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.**

Isaiah 35:5-10

Isaiah 35:5-10 — Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6 Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. 7 And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. 8 And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. 9 No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: 10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

This prophecy contains in verse 8 one of the most beautiful descriptions of the church found in either testament — “an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness.” The church is that highway. The church is that way of holiness.

Ephesians 5:27 — That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but **that it should be holy and without blemish.**

1 Peter 2:9 — But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, **an holy nation, a peculiar people.**

Isaiah 49:5-6

Isaiah 49:5-6 — And now, saith the LORD that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength. 6 And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my

servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

This prophecy from Isaiah 49 is a wonderful prophecy about the worldwide blessings that are available in the church — both to the Jew and to the Gentile. How do we know? Because Paul and Barnabas speaking in Acts 13 tell us.

Acts 13:46-47 — *Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. 47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, **I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.***

But also notice the other prophecy from that same verse in Isaiah 49 — “to restore the preserved of Israel.” That concept of restoration is something we will see more explicitly in some later prophecies, but we see a hint of it here. As we will see, it is not pointing to the restoration movement of the 1800’s, but rather to a much earlier restoration.

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Jeremiah 31:31-34 — *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*

In this famous prophecy of the new covenant from Jeremiah 31, God in verse 33 says, “I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.” That prophecy was fulfilled in the first century. How do we know? Because Hebrews 8 tells us.

Hebrews 8:6-13 — *But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. 8 For*

*finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: 9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. 10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; **I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:** 11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. 12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. 13 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.*

Who were the people of God in the first century? Upon whom did God write his law? Who enjoyed the blessings available only under the new covenant? Who had forgiveness of sin? Who knew God, from the least to the greatest? The church. That was all true of the church in the first century, and it all remains true of the church today. Jeremiah 31 is a prophecy about the church. We are the promised people of God.

Ezekiel 34:20-26

Ezekiel 34:20-26 — *Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD unto them; Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle. 21 Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad; 22 Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. 23 And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. 24 And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken it. 25 And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. 26 And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing.*

This prophecy from Ezekiel is very similar to the prophecy from Isaiah 2 that we looked at earlier. The flock in verse 22 is the church. The one shepherd in verse 23 is Jesus, the head of the church. The covenant of peace in verse 25 is the peace in the church that is described in Ephesians 2.

Ezekiel 34 is pointing to the time when the worldwide blessing promised to Abraham

would be realized, and that happened when Jesus came and established his church. Jesus alluded to this prophecy in John 10.

John 10:16 — *And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.*

The one church is that one flock. Christ, the head of the church, is that one shepherd.

Ephesians 4:4-6 — *There is **one body**, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 **One Lord**, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

Ezekiel 37:22-27

Ezekiel 37:22-27 — *And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: 23 Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. 24 And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. 25 And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. 26 Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. 27 My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

Is there one church or are there many churches? Look at the great prophecy in verse 22 — “And I will make them **one nation** in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and **one king** shall be king to them all: **and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all.**”

There are so many wonderful prophecies about the church in these verses from Ezekiel 37! We see the oneness of the church in verse 22. We see the holiness of the church and the forgiveness of those in the church in verse 23. We see the one shepherd who is head of the church and from the line of David in verse 24. We see the eternal nature of the church in verse 25. We see the beautiful covenant of peace from Ephesians 2 in verse 25. And we see God dwelling with his people in the church in verse 27.

Ephesians 2:22 — *In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

Ezekiel 40-43

These four chapters from Ezekiel are perhaps the strangest Old Testament prophecy about the church. They contain a detailed architectural blueprint describing a huge temple that has never been physically built, yet Ezekiel is told that this temple is where God will abide forever.

Ezekiel 43:7 — *And he said unto me, Son of man, the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, **where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever**, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by the carcases of their kings in their high places.*

So what is this temple? What does this huge temple represent? If we want to know what this temple is, we can work at the problem backwards by asking another question: where is it that is God going to abide forever? The answers to each question will be the same, and we already know the answer!

In Exodus 25:8, God said “Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.” In many ways the rest of the Bible is simply a variation on that theme. God wanted to dwell among his people, and yet his people were sinners. What was the solution? John 1:14 tells us the solution: “the word became flesh and dwelt among us.” A literal translation of this passage is that the word became flesh and “tabernacled” among us. How does God dwell forever with his people?

Ephesians 2:20-22 — *And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for **an habitation of God** through the Spirit.*

We as Christians are looking forward to many blessings that we don't presently enjoy – but God dwelling among us is not one of them! That blessing is already true in the church! We in the church are the dwelling place of God in the Spirit! When God showed Ezekiel the blueprints for this giant temple, God was telling Ezekiel something about the church! But what is a giant architectural blueprint telling us about the church?

These four chapters are an expansion of what we saw in Isaiah 35 – the church is the way of holiness! A primary theme in these chapters is measurement. The word “measure” is used 48 times in those chapters! How do we measure up? Can we measure up? Yes, in Christ. Yes, in the church of Christ.

Ephesians 4:12-13 — *For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the*

*ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, **unto the measure** of the stature of the fulness of Christ*

Ezekiel 40-43 are pointing to the church and to what Christ has done for his church.

Daniel 2:44-45

Daniel 2:44 — *And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. 45 Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.*

Verse 44 is one of the most important verses in the Bible, and certainly one of the most important links between the Old and the New Testaments. From our verse-by-verse study of Daniel, we know that “the days of these kings” in verse 44 were the days of the first century Roman emperors. We also know that the stone cut without hands in verse 45 is the church, the eternal kingdom of verse 44 that would destroy Rome.

What do we learn about the church from these verses in Daniel 2?

First, we learn that the church is not a mistake or a fallback plan. The church has been part of God’s plan right from the start. The premillennialists have a severe logical problem with their interpretation of Daniel. First, they say that Jesus wanted to create an earthly kingdom in the first century, but failed to do so. But they also say that Daniel talks about the delayed kingdom. Now, how could it be true that the need for a delayed kingdom was unexpected, yet Daniel predicted it? Is the church a Plan B?

Acts 20:28 — *Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God **which he obtained with the blood of his own Son.***

Does that sound anything like a Plan B? No. When the premillennialists belittle the church, they should pause to consider the price that God paid for that church.

Second, we learn that the church is not a divided kingdom. There is one and only one stone in this image. The kingdoms shatter into pieces, but the stone does not. There is one church and only one church. If God had wanted two churches, he would have made one for the Jews and one for the Gentiles, but he did not. Instead, he combined both Jew and Gentile into one flock, the one church.

Third, we learn that the church is not of human origin. In verse 45, we see that this stone was cut out by no human hand. This stone is not from man. The church is not a

denomination. Read what Paul had to say when denominations first started to form.

1 Corinthians 3:11 — *For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

The one church rests upon that one foundation, and that one church was created and established by God. It is not the work of man.

Fourth, we learn that the church is powerful and eternal. This eternal kingdom in Daniel 2 completely demolishes and replaces its opposition.

Hebrews 12:28 — *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.*

As Foy Wallace said, “Daniel’s kingdom is indestructible. Paul’s kingdom is immovable. If they are not one and the same thing, how can Paul’s kingdom be moved to let Daniel’s kingdom begin?” This fifth kingdom in Daniel 2 is the church of Jesus Christ, and it will demolish and outlast any human organization just as Daniel says it will, and that includes a large number of **man-made** organizations that call themselves churches today.

Daniel 7:13-14

Daniel 7:13-14 — *I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*

Who is this Son of man? He is Jesus Christ, the Messiah. In fact, this is where the Messianic title “the Son of Man” came from. But when did Jesus come with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of days? Not in Acts 2, but in Acts 1.

Acts 1:9 — *And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.*

These verses from Daniel 7 are showing us the ascension of Christ back to heaven following his resurrection from the dead. And once Jesus arrived there, he was given the kingdom that was established in Acts 2.

But why can’t Daniel 7 be pointing to the end of all time? Because when the world comes to an end Jesus will *deliver* a kingdom to God, not *receive* a kingdom from God.

1 Corinthians 15:24 — *Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.*

Jesus *receives* a kingdom in Daniel 7:14. When did that happen? That happened as soon as the kingdom was established — in the first century. That kingdom is the Lord's kingdom, the Lord's church — and that has always been true of the church. We belong to Christ. That is why we are called the church of Christ. That is not our name; it is our description.

Acts 1 shows us the ascension as it was viewed by those on earth. Daniel 7 shows us the ascension as it was viewed by those in heaven — and what an incredible scene it is! The victorious Christ returns to the glories of heaven and is presented before the Father to receive the eternal kingdom that he purchased with his blood.

Hosea 1:10-11

Hosea 1:10-11 — *Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. 11 Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel.*

Once again we have a wonderful prophecy about the blessings to both Jew and Gentile available in the church. How do we know that? Because Paul tells us.

Romans 9:23-26 — *And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, 24 Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? 25 As he saith also in O see [Hosea], I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. 26 And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.*

Joel 2:28-32

Joel 2:28-32 — *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: 29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. 30 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. 32 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name*

of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

Of all of the prophecies about the church that we have seen, it is this prophecy that the Holy Spirit guided Peter to quote first in the first gospel sermon preached in Acts 2 on the very day that promised church was established.

Acts 2:14-21 — *But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: 15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. 16 **But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;** 17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: 19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: 21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

This prophecy from Joel 2 is describing that momentous day in the same way that Jesus described it — as a day of **power**.

Mark 9:1 — *And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with **power**.*

Luke 24:49 — *And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with **power** from on high.*

Acts 1:8 — *But ye shall receive **power**, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

The eternal kingdom came with power in Acts 2, and that power remains to this day. There is no more powerful organization on earth than the church of Christ.

Ephesians 1:19 — *And what is the exceeding greatness of his **power** to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty **power**.*

Ephesians 3:20 — *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the **power** that worketh in us.*

You mean the church was more powerful than the mighty Roman empire? Yes, and

that was true from the very first day of its existence. That is what Joel 2 is telling us.

Amos 9:11-12

Amos 9:11-12 — *In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: 12 That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this.*

In Acts 1:6, the apostles asked Jesus, “wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” We sometimes look at that question and say that the apostles must have still been expecting an earthly kingdom — but where in that question is there any hint of an earthly kingdom?

There was nothing wrong with the apostles’ question in Acts 1:6. It was a very good question. How do we know? At least three reasons. First, Acts 1:3 tells us that Jesus had just spoken to them for forty days “of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” Second, Jesus’ answer in verses 7-8 displays no suggestion that the apostles misunderstood the nature of the kingdom — they just wanted to know when it would come. And third, God did restore the kingdom to Israel in Acts 2, just as the apostles asked. How do we know that? Because Amos 9 prophesied that it would happen, and because Acts 15, quoting Amos 9, confirms that it happened.

Acts 15:13-19 — *And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: 14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. 15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: 17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. 18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. 19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God*

In what sense was the kingdom established in Act 2 a restored kingdom? In the sense that Jesus rules that kingdom from the restored throne of David, and in the sense that Jesus has raised up the tabernacle of David to be his church. That throne of David did not belong to the Gentiles — that is why Acts 1:6 asks whether the kingdom will be restored to *Israel*. For the Gentiles it was a new kingdom, but for the Jews it was a restored kingdom. But the Gentiles benefit from that restoration, and that is the central point in Acts 15. And Peter’s sermon in Acts 2 also pointed specifically to the restored throne of David.

Acts 2:29-30 — *Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. 30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne.*

Micah 4:1-5

Micah 4:1-5 — *But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. 2 And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 3 And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. 4 But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it. 5 For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.*

This great prophecy from Micah is almost word for word the same as the prophecy we looked at in Isaiah 2. Both point to the establishment of the church in Jerusalem as described in Acts 2, and both point to the peace in the church as described in Ephesians 2.

Zechariah 6:12-13

Zechariah 6:12-13 — *And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: 13 Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.*

Under the old covenant, priests came from the tribe of Levi. Jesus was from the tribe of Judah, and so Jesus could not be both priest and king under the old covenant. For that to ever be true, the old covenant would have to become just that — the **old** covenant. Did that happen? Yes, with the death of Christ, just as Jeremiah had prophesied.

Jeremiah 31:31 — *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.*

But how is that verse related to what we see here in Zechariah 6? Keep reading.

Jeremiah 33:15 — *In those days, and at that time, will I cause **the Branch** of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.*

That Branch in Jeremiah is the same Branch we see here in verse 12 — that Branch is Christ. When Christ came he would usher in a new covenant. And when he did, what would happen to the prior covenant?

Hebrews 8:13 — *In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.*

Jesus is both priest and king. That is the central prophecy in these verses from Zechariah 6. That is why we see these gold and silver crowns being placed on the head of Joshua, the high priest. Jesus is both our King and our High Priest.

Revelation 19:16 — *And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*

1 Timothy 6:15 — *Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.*

Hebrews 3:1 — *Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.*

Hebrews 4:14 — *Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.*

And you mean to say that couldn't happen under the old covenant? Right! That is exactly what Hebrews 7 tells us.

Hebrews 7:12-14 — *For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.*

But what does that last phrase in Zechariah 6:13 mean — “and the counsel of peace shall be between them both”? The “both” in that phrase are the two offices we just saw — priest and king. Both of those offices would be a counsel of peace; they would never be in disagreement or conflict. Why? Because they would be perfectly combined in the same person — and because that one person would be the prince of peace! (Isaiah 9:6) And who would enjoy this reign of peace under the perfect King and High Priest? Those in the royal priesthood, the church.

Zechariah 8:3-8

Zechariah 8:3-8 — *Thus saith the LORD; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain. 4 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. 5 And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. 6 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the LORD of hosts. 7 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; 8 And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.*

Zechariah 8:3 is pointing to the same events we saw earlier in Isaiah 2:2-3. Both here and in Isaiah 2 we see the mountain of the Lord. In both we see Zion. In one we see the city of truth, and in the other we see the law and the word of the Lord going forth. In both we see God dwelling among his people — dwelling in their midst in Zechariah, and teaching them his ways after they come to the city in Isaiah. That city is the new Jerusalem, which is the church. Just as the old Jerusalem was the dwelling place of God's people in the Old Testament, so is the new Jerusalem, the church, the dwelling place of God's people in the New Testament.

Look at verse 3. The city of truth! Don't you just love that description of the church? This is the only place in the Bible where that phrase occurs. But it is not the only place where this description is applied to the church.

1 Timothy 3:15 — *But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, **the pillar and ground of the truth.***

What we are seeing in Zechariah 8:3 is the church!

Who will get to enjoy these great blessings in the city of truth? Verse 4 answers that question, and the answer is *everyone* in the city of truth. The references to the very old and to young children is a figure of speech. By mentioning the extremes of the human lifespan, the text shows that the entire population would enjoy these blessings. No one would be left out! Not even the young or the old. Verses 4-5, in their mention of the young and the old, also remind us of Joel 2.

Joel 2:28 — *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.*

And we know with absolute certainty when that verse from Joel 2 was fulfilled. How?

Because Peter told us in Acts 2:16 that it was being fulfilled on that day. Joel 2 was fulfilled in Acts 2, when the church was established. As with verse 3, verses 4 and 5 are talking about the church!

Verse 7 shows us a beautiful picture. It shows God gathering his people from wherever they are, from the east to the west, and bringing them into the holy city, Jerusalem, so that they can dwell with him and be his people. That holy city of Jerusalem is the church!

Hebrews 12:22-23 — *But ye are come unto mount Sion, **and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem**, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and **church of the firstborn**, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.*

Can there be any doubt that we are reading here about the church? Look at verse 8: “They shall be my people, and I will be their God.”

Jeremiah 31:33 — *But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; **and will be their God, and they shall be my people.***

2 Corinthians 6:16 — *And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and **I will be their God, and they shall be my people.***

Zechariah 12-13

In our recent verse-by-verse study of these two chapters from Zechariah, we saw how they describe what would happen much later in Acts 2. From the opening verses of Zechariah 12, we know that the prophet is speaking about the church.

Zechariah 12:3 — *And in that day will I make Jerusalem **a burdensome stone** for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.*

Daniel 2:44-45 described the church as a stone that would break Rome into pieces. Verse 3 describes Jerusalem as a stone that would cut in pieces all that gathered against it. Do we need any more evidence than that? This Jerusalem in verse 3 is the new Jerusalem of Revelation 21:2, the bride of Christ. This Jerusalem in verse 3 is the heavenly Jerusalem of Hebrews 12:22. This Jerusalem is the Israel of God in Galatians 6:16. This Jerusalem is the church.

Zechariah 12:10 — *And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they*

shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications.” When did that happen? Let’s listen as Peter answers that same question.

Acts 2:16-17 — *But **this is that** which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh.*

Did you hear it? “This is that.” *This*, the first gospel sermon preached on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2, is *that*, the fulfillment of the prophecy from Joel that God would pour out his spirit upon all flesh. That is the same prophecy we see here in Zechariah 12:10.

And what about the second half of Zechariah 12:10 — “and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.” When did that happen? We have an inspired answer as to the date of that prophecy’s fulfillment.

John 19:33-37 — *But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. **And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.***

Those who mourn in verse 10 are those that **look** on the one who was pierced. And those who *look* upon the one who was pierced are those who look at him and understand who he is and understand what caused him to die on that cross. They are like those who *looked* in Numbers 21:8 and John 3:14. We see a wonderful example of this in Acts 2.

Acts 2:36-37 — *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*

In verse 36, they *looked* upon the one whom they pierced, and in verse 37 they *mourned* because of it. That’s the same sequence we see here in Zechariah 12:10.

Verse 10 is focused on Acts 2. The prophecy in the first half of the verse was fulfilled in Acts 2, and the prophecy in the second half of the verse was fulfilled in Acts 2. But that’s not all — that second-half prophecy is also fulfilled every time someone hears the gospel and mourns once he understands what his sin caused.

What happens next? Peter was asked that same question at the end of Acts 2:37, and

we know how he responded.

Acts 2:38 — *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.*

How does Zechariah answer that same question? What happens next?

Zechariah 13:1 — *In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.*

What is this fountain that would be opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness? Well, what was provided in the first century that involved water and was for sin and for uncleanness? Didn't Peter answer that question in the verse we just read from Acts 2:38?

Zechariah 13:1 **links water and sins** in the first century. Acts 2:38 **links water and sins** in the first century. Each verse follows mourning over the death of the Good Shepherd. Zechariah 13:1 is an Old Testament depiction of baptism for the remission of sins!

Ephesians 5:26-27 — *That he might sanctify and cleanse it with **the washing of water** by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, **not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing**; but that it should be holy and **without blemish**.*

That washing of water by the word is the one baptism of Ephesians 4:5. That one baptism is water baptism (Acts 8:38). And it is water that fills this fountain here in Zechariah 13:1. There is no other water in the first century or in this current century that is for sin and uncleanness.

Acts 22:16 — *And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*

The links between Zechariah and Acts 2 are amazing! In Chapters 12 and 13 we have seen the outpouring of God's spirit, we have seen those who look at the one they pierced and finally understand what they have done, we have seen those same people mourn over their sin and ask what they must do, and we have seen the answer: wash in the fountain for sin and uncleanness.

E. Hall (2019)