

Heirs of the Covenant

By William Finck

Many commentators often construe Paul's statements at Galatians 3:15-16 to mean that there is only a single heir of the covenant of Yahweh God, which is Yahshua Christ Himself. If this is a true interpretation, then Paul conflicts with many of his own statements, where we see several times that Paul tells us elsewhere that there is a plurality of heirs to the covenant. For instance, concerning the New Covenant Paul says at Titus 3:7: "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Then again concerning the New Covenant Paul says at Hebrews 6:17: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath". In Hebrews chapter 6, while discussing Yahshua Christ and the New Covenant, Paul illustrates that the heirs of that covenant were selected before the confirmation of the covenant by the Sacrifice made by Yahshua Christ. For this reason he also told the Romans at 15:8: "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".

Whenever there are such apparent conflicts in statements in the Bible, the reader is either incorrectly understanding the passage in question, usually because it is being taken out of context, or there are translational errors – something that happens often in the King James Version, and also in every other version of Scripture translated by men. Here Galatians 3:15-16 shall be examined, and it shall be seen that any apparent conflicts are resolved once the context and the translation of the passage are more thoroughly understood. First, the context of the promises found in the New Testament itself must be examined.

The making of a "New" Testament by Yahweh with the children of Israel was a matter of Old Testament prophecy. This is found at Jeremiah chapter 31, and here verses 31 through 36 are cited: 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: 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. ³⁵ Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, *and* the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts *is* his name: ³⁶ If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, *then* the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever."

From this passage in Jeremiah we see that the New Covenant is made exclusively with the house, or family, of Israel, and the house, or family, of Judah: the very Israelites of the old covenant. It is also apparent that as long as there are a sun, moon, and stars, the children of

Israel shall always be a nation, and that it is the sins of these very same children of Israel which are to be forgiven. Grace, which may have been better translated “favor”, is also a matter of prophecy, and we find in this same chapter of Jeremiah, at verses 1 and 2: “At the same time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.”² Thus saith the LORD, The people *which were* left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; *even* Israel, when I went to cause him to rest.” Here it is evident, that Yahweh is the God of Israel even after they were cast off, and that those cast off Israelites would be the ones to find grace with Yahweh in His new covenant, which He would make with them. Likewise Isaiah attests to the permanency of Yahweh’s covenant relationship with the children of Israel: “As for me, this *is* my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that *is* upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.”

It can be fully demonstrated from classical history that many of the tribes of the Mediterranean basin indeed descended from Old Testament Israelites. These Israelites colonized many areas long before the Assyrian and Babylonian deportations of Israel, which began around 741 BC and ended with the destruction of the temple in 585 BC. Of the Israelites who were taken away by the Assyrians, Micah the prophet says (4:7-8) “⁷ And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever.”⁸ And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.” It is this passage to which Matthew 21:43 should be cross-referenced.

Going back to examine the “promises *made* unto the fathers” which Paul mentions in Romans 15:8, we see that Abraham’s seed (offspring) – according to a promise made to him by Yahweh - were to become an innumerable multitude, and grow into many nations with their kings (Genesis 12:2-3, 13:14-16, 15:1-6, 17:1-10). Yet these promises were not to all of Abraham’s seed (offspring). We see that Ishmael was sent away, because even though he was circumcised and “believed” (Genesis 17:25-26), he was not to become an heir (Genesis 17:20-21, 21:9-13). Additionally, the children which Abraham had later with Keturah were also sent off, since neither were they to become heirs (Genesis 25:1-6). The promises of Yahweh would fall to Isaac exclusively (Genesis 18:9-15, 21:12, 26:3). Of Isaac’s descendants, Jacob and Esau, Esau sold his birthright, and by it his share of the promises. Yet Esau’s selling of his birthright may be viewed as a mere formality. He actually lost it by going against the desires of both Abraham his grandfather and Rebecca his mother, by marrying accursed Canaanite women (Genesis 24:3, 27:46, 36:1 ff.). Therefore the promises given to Abraham were passed down exclusively to Jacob-Israel. By these promises and other Biblical prophecies, we see that Jacob’s offspring were to become innumerable, and were to become nations and companies of nations (Genesis 28:10-16, 35:9-15).

“For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.” (Psalm 94:14)

While this is a mystery to most people, even in the churches and the halls of academia, this is not the fault of Yahweh God or of the apostles. All of these promises were surely fulfilled in history, and this fulfillment is revealed upon a study of both the classics and archaeology. Many of the Greek tribes, namely the Dorians and Danaans, along with the Trojans and those who sprung from them, such as the Romans and the Illyrians, had descended from Israelites dispersed long before the Assyrian invasions. Yet from the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions and deportations of Israel are descended the Kimmerians, Scythians and Parthians, from whom came all of the Germanic tribes of later history. The Word of Yahweh God is sure, and the seed (offspring) of Israel did indeed inherit the desolate heritages, as the prophet Isaiah also foretold (60:21-22): “²¹ Thy people also *shall be* all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. ²² A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the LORD will hasten it in his time.” Furthermore, the fulfillment of all of this prophecy may be seen where Isaiah says of Israel, at 54:1-5: “Sing, O barren, thou *that* didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou *that* didst not travail with child: for more *are* the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD. ² Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; ³ For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. ⁴ Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. ⁵ For thy Maker *is* thine husband; the LORD of hosts *is* his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.” This was fulfilled in history by the dispersed of Israel who ultimately became what are known today as the Celtic and Germanic peoples. Paul quotes from this very passage of the Galatians in chapter 4 of his epistle.

Several decades after the dispersion of Israel which began to take place following the Assyrian and Babylonian deportations of the people from Palestine, a small remnant returned to Judaea to rebuild the temple. This remnant was to provide Yahweh with the means by which He would ultimately redeem Israel through His sacrifice as Yahshua Christ. After this sacrifice, the news of which was to be brought to the “lost” sheep of Israel (Ezekiel chapter 34), the city of Jerusalem was to be destroyed. This is prophesied in Daniel chapter 9. The destruction of Jerusalem was necessary because “satan” (the adversary) had taken it over (Ezekiel chapter 35), which Paul attests to at Romans 16:20. For this reason, Paul explained in Romans chapter 9 that he was concerned only for his “kinsmen according to the flesh” in Judaea, and then he

goes on to compare Jacob, the vessels of mercy, and Esau, the vessels of destruction (Romans 9:1-13, 21-22).

This process of “satan” taking over Jerusalem began when the Edomites moved into much of the lands of Israel and Judah after the deportations. Then shortly before 130 BC, the reigning Maccabean high priest (who had all the authority of a king), John Hyrcanus, decided to conquer all of the cities of ancient Israel inhabited at that time by Edomites and Canaanites, and to either convert them to the religion of Judaea (first called “Judaism” by the Greeks) or to let them leave the land, or to be slain. (Maccabee was a name given to the Asamonean dynasty of high priests who ruled Jerusalem from about 150 BC down to about 36 BC, when the last of them was slain by Herod.) The greater numbers of these people readily converted to Judaism, and thenceforth were known as Judaeans (“Jews” in most translations). This is described in detail by the historian Josephus, who wrote after 70 AD, and is also summarized by the Greek geographer Strabo nearly a century before Josephus wrote. Strabo, writing from a general Greek perspective, says in the 16th book of his Geography: “The Idumaeans [Edomites] are Nabataeans [an arab tribe], but owing to a sedition they were banished from there, joined the Judaeans, and shared in the same customs with them” (16.2.34). In another place, Strabo attests that the Judaeans were “mixed up” with the Idumaeans (16.2.2). When the first Herod, whom Josephus on at least four occasions attests was an Edomite, through treachery and bribery became king of Judaea, he destroyed the last Maccabean high priest and all of the possible rival claimants to the position. From that time he used the position of high priest as a political tool. By the time of Christ, the high priests and many of the influential men of the temple and its religious sects were actually Edomites. There are many New Testament statements which reveal this, which become fully evident to those who first understand the history surrounding these events.

The children of Israel are the anointed of Yahweh. Yes, Yahshua Christ is the Anointed One, however He is the Head of the Body. Generally, the children of Israel are “the anointed” as a collective group, and this is evident throughout the Old Testament in many scriptures, among which are 1 Sam. 2:10, 35; 1 Chron. 16:22; Psa. 2:2; 20:6; 28:8; 84:9; 89:38; 105:15; 132:17; Lam. 4:20 and Hab. 3:13. In the New Testament this is evident at Heb. 11:24-26 and 1 John 2:27, but also in many other passages where it is obfuscated because the translators insist upon translating the word “anointed” as “Christ” upon nearly every occasion that the word appears (for clear instances, see Rom. 9:1-5; 1 Tim. 5:11-12; and 1 Cor. 1:10-13 in the *Christogenea New Testament*, available online).

In Galatians 3:1-14, Paul discusses the faith of Abraham. In Romans chapter 4, Paul explained that the faith of Abraham was that Abraham believed Yahweh when he was promised that his offspring would become many nations (not, as the churches errantly teach, that many nations would somehow become his offspring). In Romans chapter 9, Paul discounts the

Edomites as “vessels of destruction”, since they are not included in the promises. Although these things are not stated explicitly here in the epistle to the Galatians, they are wholly representative of Paul’s teachings. The Galatians had descended from the ancient Kimmerians of the Israelite dispersion, and so, in Galatians 3:19-29 Paul explains the relationship of Israel to the laws given at Mount Sinai, and in chapter 4 we see that Paul tells the Galatians at verse 28 that “we, brethren, down through Isaak, are children of promise”. He then repeats the statements which tell us that the children of Ishmael are excluded from the promises of Yahweh, and reassuringly says to the Galatians “Well, brethren, we are not children of a servant woman, but of the free.”

Seeing that Paul was teaching the exclusion of both Edomites and Ishmaelites from the covenants and promises of Yahweh God - and many more Biblical passages may be cited to support this - only then can the statements made by Paul at Galatians 3:15-16 be properly interpreted in context. First, however, some background in the Greek words of the passage must be given.

Firstly, concerning verse 15, the Greek word translated in the King James Version as “addeth thereto” is ἐπιδιατάσσεται, the Present Passive or Medium 3rd person singular of ἐπιδιατάσσω (Strong’s # 1928), and it appears only here in the NT. Properly, since in Greek verbs of the Medium voice indicate that both the recipient and the doer of the action being described are one and the same, the word may therefore be translated here “makes additions to for himself”. Liddell & Scott in their lexicon define the word as “to add an order, N.T.” but at διατάσσω Liddell & Scott have “...Medium to arrange for oneself, get things arranged...”, and so the propriety of the translation for this verse which will be given here is readily evident.

Secondly, concerning verse 16, here Paul contrasts σπέρματι, the Dative singular of σπέρμα (4690), with its Dative plural, σπέρμασιν. Thayer says of σπέρμα that “the singular is used collectively of the *grains* or *kernel*s sown”, although later Thayer claims that this is not so here, perverting Paul’s use of the word and calling it “genius”. In the context of this and other of Paul’s epistles explained here, I must therefore read this verse to be a comparison of the several races sprung from Abraham: Jacob-Israel being contrasted with Ishmael (Gal. 4:21-31), with Esau-Edom (Rom. 9, 10, and 11), and even with those from Keturah. The word “seed”, as in English, also in Greek and Hebrew is a singular used collectively, of many of a single type. The Greek plural of σπέρμα appears in the N.T. only at Matt. 13:32 and Mark 4:31, where diverse types are meant. This is true in Old Testament Hebrew also, where zera’ (2233, “seed”) only occurs in the plural at I Sam. 8:15, where it is used of crops and diverse varieties are implied.

With all of this, I will now quote the version of Galatians 3:15-16 from the *Christogenea New Testament*, translated properly and in the context of the promises of Yahweh God found throughout the Bible and explained in part here in this paper. I will also quote verses 17-18, so it may be seen that Paul indeed teaches that these promises are still to this day exclusive to the descendants of the ancient Israelites, the chosen descendants of Abraham: “¹⁵ Brethren, (I speak as befits a man,) even a validated covenant of man no one sets aside, or makes additions to for himself. ¹⁶ Now to Abraham the promises have been spoken, and to his offspring. It does not say ‘and to offsprings’, as of many; but as of one: ‘and to your offspring,’ which are anointed. ¹⁷

Now this I say, a covenant validated beforehand by Yahweh, the law which arrived after four hundred and thirty years does not invalidate, by which the promise is left idle. ¹⁸ For if from law, the inheritance is no longer from promise, but to Abraham through a promise Yahweh has given it freely.”

Paul is explaining to the Galatians that the Edomites and the Ishmaelites and the children of Keturah are excluded from the covenant, which is only for the literal, physical, genetic children of Israel. Then he proceeds to explain their relationship to the law, which only makes sense to those who had descended from the Israelites, since Scripture attests in many places that only Israel was ever under the law! An example of this testimony is found at Psalm 147:19-20: “¹⁹ He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. ²⁰ He hath not dealt so with any nation: and *as for his* judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD.” At Galatians 3:29, the word found in the final clause which the King James Version translates “and” is not found in any ancient Greek manuscript whatsoever, and does not belong in the text. This verse must be translated: “²⁹ But if you are Christ’s, then of the offspring of Abraham you are heirs according to promise.” And it is fully evident that if you are not offspring of Abraham through Jacob, then you have no part in that promise! For this reason did Yahshua Christ state that “I have not been sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel!” (Matt. 15:24). Paul reaffirms this at Hebrews 11:9, speaking of Abraham: “By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.” Of course, Yahshua Christ could raise up children of Abraham from stones, but they would not be Israelites, and neither were the Edomite Pharisees and Sadducees whom He was addressing!

The beginning of Luke’s gospel reflects the context of the entire New Testament. Here we shall read 1:67-80 from the *Christogenea New Testament*, where Zacharias prophecies concerning the infant John the Baptist and the coming Redemption of Israel: “⁶⁷ Then Zacharias his father was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying: ⁶⁸ ‘Blessed is Yahweh the God of Israel, that He has visited and brought about redemption for His people, ⁶⁹ and has raised a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant, ⁷⁰ just as He spoke through the mouths of His holy prophets from of old: ⁷¹ preservation from our enemies and from the hand of all those who hate us! ⁷² To bring about mercy with our fathers and to call into remembrance His holy covenant, ⁷³ the oath which He swore to Abraham our father, which is given to us: ⁷⁴ being delivered fearlessly from the hands of our enemies to serve Him ⁷⁵ in piety and in righteousness before Him for all of our days. ⁷⁶ And now you, child, shall be called a prophet of the Highest: for you shall go on before the face of Yahweh to prepare His path. ⁷⁷ For which to give knowledge of salvation to His people by the dismissal of their errors, ⁷⁸ through the affectionate mercies of our God, by whom dawn visits us from the heights ⁷⁹ to shine upon those sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace.’ ⁸⁰ And the child grew and was strengthened in spirit, and was in the wilderness until the day of his manifestation to Israel.”

It is absolutely clear, if the Bible were read in context and not – as the Judeo-Christians do – one passage at a time, that in Galatians 3:15 and 16 Paul is informing us that only one group of the descendants of Abraham had expectation in the promises and the covenants of Yahweh, those being the descendants of Jacob-Israel, and that the others, the descendants of Esau and the

descendants of Ishmael, were and still are excluded. Today, the Edomites and the descendants of Ishmael are for the most part found amongst both the jews and the arabs. The descendants of Jacob-Israel are found in the White Christian nations of Europe, and they are the heirs of the covenant.

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