

Acts 28 – The Great N.T. dispensational divide

**Romans does not provide the dispensational foundation for Ephesians
Redemptive truths reside in different dispensations.**

Paul's Acts period ministry included righteousness by faith through grace, but that redemptive truth was never hidden in God. Righteousness by faith is a pillar of the coming earthly kingdom and has been evident in the lives of those who hoped to enjoy it. It is found in Abraham and David, Roms.4, Moses, Roms.10, Abel, Hebs.11 and foreseen in the earthly Kingdom by the following prophets.

Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies: And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness. Isa.1:24-27.

Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory. Isa 45:22-25.

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. Isa 61:10.

And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. Hos 2:19.

And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God. Hos 2:23.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; 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. Zec 8:7-8.

Righteousness in the earthly Kingdom is the word of prophesy, and in these extracts above we find the very words of Paul in his Acts period ministry such as betrothal/espousal, Zion, mercy and judgment. Indeed, Isa.45 is Jehovah Tsidkenu, the Lord our righteousness and Jeremiah features this title in a prophesy foretelling Israel's regathering.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land. Jer 23:5-8.

So far, we have seen in every passage of Romans about righteousness reckoned, an inseparable link to the earthly kingdom. Romans is promise and prophecy and it is not right division to extract the redemptive truth of righteousness reckoned from its earthly setting and suggest it is a pillar of the later above-heavenly calling of Ephesians and Colossians.

Romans 10 features Moses who warned those who sought righteousness by works and compared it to the righteousness reckoned to those with heart sourced faith. This passage is an example of Roms.3:21-22.

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Roms.10:4.

For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; Rom 10:5-8. Deut.30:11-14.

This wonderful truth of Moses expanded by Paul, is not a pillar of our present calling, the dispensation of the grace of God. Once again, we find an inseparable link between justification or righteousness by faith and the earthly Kingdom. The context of righteousness in Deut.30 is Israel regathered. Paul, out among the nations where the Lord had scattered Israel, might have felt a closeness to this passage he was inspired to use.

And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee, And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. Deu 30:1-6.

Moses reminds Israel of their regathering from among all the nations if they express that love and obedience which is from the heart of faith. This is the same message of Paul up to Acts 28. Righteousness reckoned in Moses is Israel regathered, righteousness reckoned in Paul is the hope of Israel, Christ's return at Trumpets when he shall gather the outcasts of Israel. Roms.10 has a quote of Moses about righteousness and Israel's regathering which is no change from the first recorded gospel message of Paul as found in Acts 13.

The Lord commissioned Paul as a minister to the Gentiles from a command out of Isaiah which prophet also speaks of Israel's regathering. Acts 13 is Paul's ministry from a prophet speaking about Israel's regathering, and Roms.10 is righteousness reckoned from a passage of Moses which speaks of Israel's regathering. No change in Paul, no progression.

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. 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. Act 13:46-47.

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. Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. Isa 49:6-7.

The scriptures provide evidence that Paul's Acts period ministry is promise and prophecy, and the great doctrine of justification by faith is rich in those things written aforetime. Moses and Paul are on the same page regarding righteousness by faith, and the setting is the earthly kingdom.

Paul turns to Moses again in Roms.15, and this context not only confirms the earthly purpose of Paul during Acts, but ties Paul's apostleship with the apostleship of Christ. Both are ministering under the same earthly program of Moses the Law and the prophets, without one hint of our calling today.

Roms.15 is tied to the Gospels and Christ's ministry. Here is the basis of Paul's hope during Acts.

Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. Rom 15:2-

4. [Psa.69:9, Jn.2:14-17 & Mk.11:15-17, Gentiles Isa.56:7, Amos.9:11-12, Acts 15].

The things previously written include justification by faith and the hope Paul preached during Acts which is the very subject of Roms.15:4-13. Righteousness reckoned is inseparable from the hope of Israel in Paul during Acts.

In this very clear context of Roms.15, Paul states that the ministry of Christ embraced the ultimate inclusion of the Gentiles thus aligning his ministry with that of Christ. The Gentiles were always included with Israel in their history, the Law [Num.15:16] and prophecy, and the Gentiles included during Acts fall under that program, not the program of the Mystery still hidden in God when Paul wrote Romans. Do not miss this link Paul makes with Christ and himself regarding Gentile inclusion.

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: And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, Rom 15:8-9a.

Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, Rom 15:15=16a.

Christ, a minister to the Jews that included the Gentiles, Paul a minister of Christ that included Jews and Gentiles.

Christ was a minister of the circumcision and that the Gentiles would glorify God and Paul was a minister of Christ so that the circumcision and Gentiles would glorify God. This is an identical dispensational purpose.

Paul's commission, Paul's Apostleship up until Acts 28 was from Christ the minister of the Circumcision which included the Gentiles. The fact that Paul received his Acts period commission and gospel directly from Christ is not proof he was given the latter truths of The Mystery during Acts, Romans makes this clear and obvious. Paul brings forth four prophetic passages in Roms.15 to show this dual ministry of Christ and Paul regarding the mercy of God on the Gentiles with his people, not in heavenly places. These prophecies confirm the relationship between Paul, Christ and the Gentiles during Acts.

The following Roms.15:8-13 is a composite; I have inserted the original O.T. passages to emphasize the Gentile inclusion and hope of Paul's ministry during Acts. This is not Paul writing about the hope he held for himself and the Gentiles under his ministry as if it were different to that of Peter or Christ, but rather the hope he preached is the same as Christ's hope for the Gentiles.

Rom 15:8-9. *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: And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and I will sing praises unto thy name. He is the tower of salvation for his king; and sheweth mercy to his anointed, unto David, and to his seed for evermore. 2Sam. 22:50-51, Psa.18:49-50.

Rom 15:10 *And again he saith,*

Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people. Deut. 32:43.

Rom 15:11 *And again,*

O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD. Psa 117:1-2.

Rom 15:12 *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: and his rest shall be glorious. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, Isa 11:10-11a.

Rom 15:13 *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.*

The word hope appears in Roms.15:4 and verse 13, and in this passage Christ's ministry included the Gentiles. Paul was a minister of Christ to those very same Gentiles the hope of which was Moses, the Law and the Prophets. The hope for the Gentiles in Christ, and the hope for the Gentiles in Paul was the hope of Israel found in Moses, the Law and the Prophets and this is a unifying link between Christ and Paul during Acts. Luke 24 provides further evidence of this connection.

After his resurrection the Lord joined two on the road to Emmaus who were downcast and concerned about recent events. This passage links Christ's suffering with the earthly program as the Lord explains the things which had come to pass were an essential part of the hope they held. The death burial and resurrection of Christ as found in Moses and the Prophets was the suffering prior to his glory, and that glory was the redemption of Israel, exactly as we have seen in Roms.15. Twice in Lk.24, the Lord affirms the prophetic program in view.

And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done. Luk 24:19-21.

Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. Luk 24:25-27.

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. 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. Luk 24:44-49.

The word "trusted" in Lk.24:21 is found in Roms.15:12 and significantly in Acts 26:6-8 where Paul testifies that he, like the two on the road and the 12 tribes, was hoping for the promise made to

Israel's fathers contingent upon the resurrection of the dead.

And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead? Act 26:6-8.[28:20].

Christ, in Lk.24, linked his suffering with the redemption of Israel as found in Moses and the Prophets, He called for the message to go out to all nations, first in Jerusalem accompanied by power from on high. Paul's gospel was none other things than Moses and the Prophets did say should come and this included his hope, the hope of the Gentiles he reached and the mighty power of his witness. All these features fit perfectly with Christ, his suffering and explanations in Luke.24.

That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: But as it is written, [So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him:]..To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand, Isa.52:15. Rom 15:21.

The links in these Scriptures are astounding, further joining Christ, his suffering, the hope of Israel, , supernatural gifts, Moses, the Law, Prophets and Psalms, the inclusion of the Gentiles to the Acts ministry of Paul. Christ and his post resurrection focus is Paul and his Acts period ministry.

The following chart ties these inseparable links together.

Paul's Acts period conversion & commission was from Christ, a minister of the Jews and Gentiles



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Grace in Paul during Acts does not mean the Mystery of Ephesians. Is Romans any foundation for Ephesians?

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