

Acts 088

How the New Testament Uses the Old, Part 3

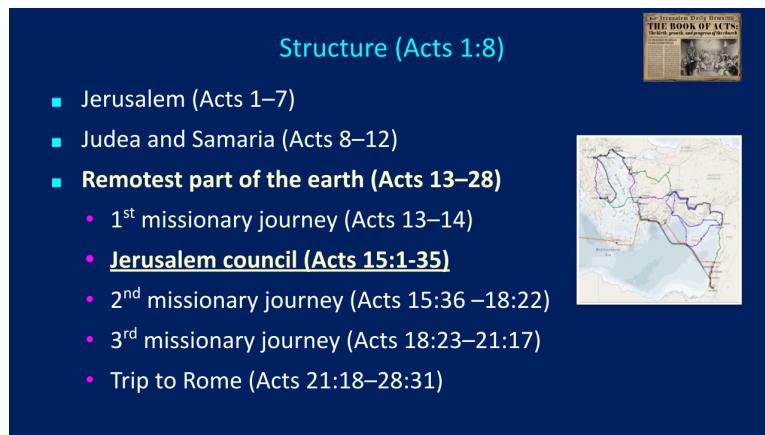
Acts 15:18b

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Let us open our Bibles this evening to Acts 15:16. Jesus, said to the disciples, "*And you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem [Acts 1-7], and in all Judea and Samaria [Acts 8-12], and even to the remotest part of the earth [Acts 13-28]*" (Acts 1:8). That is referring to Paul's missionary journeys, ultimately getting the gospel to Rome as a prisoner.

Structure (Acts 1:8)



- Jerusalem (Acts 1–7)
- Judea and Samaria (Acts 8–12)
- **Remotest part of the earth (Acts 13–28)**
 - 1st missionary journey (Acts 13–14)
 - **Jerusalem council (Acts 15:1-35)**
 - 2nd missionary journey (Acts 15:36–18:22)
 - 3rd missionary journey (Acts 18:23–21:17)
 - Trip to Rome (Acts 21:18–28:31)

We are in that third section of the Book of Acts. "You will be My witnesses to the remotest part of the earth." Paul the Apostle has gone into southern Galatia (modern-day Turkey), on his first missionary journey. That is the first time the gospel left the borders of Israel in a formal, missionary endeavor.

That missionary journey is recorded in Acts 13–14. It takes about two and a half years for Paul and Barnabas to leave Antioch, which is up north of the nation of Israel, to go through southern Galatia, and then make their way back to Antioch, the sending church.

A funny thing happens on that missionary journey. Paul goes to Jewish places, synagogues. He does not get much of a response from the Jews, and they end up usually throwing him out of the synagogues in almost every city he goes to. Then he goes out. We will find that he goes and takes the message to the Gentiles, the non-Jews in that city.

The Gentiles start getting saved in droves, to the point where the Jews in the synagogues get jealous of Paul's success amongst the Gentiles, and they stir up rumors against him. That is how he is literally driven out of one city into the next. By the time he gets back from this first missionary journey, his testimony of him and Barnabas is that all of these Gentiles are getting saved.

Now that there is this huge Gentile population coming into the church, which has up to this point in time been primarily Jewish, they have to figure out, what are we going to do with these people? Do we put them under the Law of Moses, to join the church?

That is the way it has worked for the last since Sinai for 1,500 years. If a Gentile like Ruth—she was from Moab, which is modern-day Jordan—wanted to walk with the Lord, she had to become a Jewish convert. They had a name for them. They called them proselytes. She would say to her mother-in-law Naomi, "Your God will be my God. Your people will be my people" (Ruth 1:16).

If a Gentile wanted to walk with Yahweh, then they had to come under the Law of Moses. There was a thought process in early Christianity that that is how we are going to handle this Gentile influx of people now coming into the church. Acts 15 is sandwiched right in there after the first missionary journey, but before the second missionary journey to get this issue fixed.

It is called the Jerusalem Council. It is not the first Jerusalem Council because they already had a Jerusalem Council and Acts 11. They were trying to figure out, after a guy named Cornelius who was a Gentile came to faith, can a Gentile really get saved? In Acts 11, they said, "Yes, a Gentile can get saved."

Now the issue is, now that Gentiles are getting saved, what do we do with them in terms of being part of the church? Do they have to go into the Law of Moses, as has been the case, going all the way back to Mount Sinai? That is what Acts 15 is doing in your Bible. It is trying to get this issue resolved.

That is the occasion of this meeting. Antioch dispatches Paul and Barnabas from Antioch to Jerusalem, where the apostles were, to get this fixed, to get this whole issue ironed out. The apostles are about ready to make a decision that is going to affect the whole church. The decision that they made is still affecting us 2,000 years later.

The only people that can make a decision like this would be the apostles, because to the apostles, Christ gave the authority of binding and loosing.

"Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven" (Matthew 18:18).

They are the only ones that were given this authority to make these kinds of decisions that would affect the whole church, and it would affect subsequent generations.

We cannot have a decision like this today that is so universal and binding because we do not have apostles. They are all dead. This decision had to be made while they were still alive. That is what is going on as Paul and Barnabas leave Antioch and go to Jerusalem to solve this issue.

In Acts 15:6-21 you see the declarations that are given at this meeting. The meeting is convened in Jerusalem (Acts 15:6); Peter speaks up (Acts 15:7-11); Peter gives a great testimony, talking about how he saw Cornelius get saved without the Law, so why in the world would we put the Gentiles under the Law when we Jews have done such a lousy job keeping it?

Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-35)

- I. Occasion (1-5)
- II. Declarations (6-21)
 - A. Meeting convened (6)
 - B. Peter's address (7-11)
 - C. Barnabas' & Paul's testimony (12)
 - D. James' address (13-21)
 - 1. Introduction (13a)
 - 2. Addresses (13b)
 - 3. Peter's address (14)
 - 4. Old Testament citation (15-18)
 - a) Introduction (15)
 - b) Amos 9:11-12 (16-18)
 - 5. Conclusions (19-21)
- III. Decision (22-29)
- IV. Delivery (30-35)

Then Paul and Barnabas speak up (Acts 15:12), and they narrate how all of these Gentiles started getting saved in the first missionary journey without the assistance of the Law at all. It was just by faith alone in Christ alone. Now the heavy hitter steps up to the plate. What he says fixes everything, in my opinion, because he gives the weightiest testimony (Acts 15:13-21). It is a guy named James.

There are four Jameses in the Bible, but this James is the half brother of Christ. Jesus was virgin conceived, virgin born. Joseph and Mary had a normal marital sexual relationship after that virgin birth. From that union came forth these brothers, we call them the half brothers of Christ. They shared the same mother, Mary, but not the same father, because Joseph was not Jesus' biological father. Joseph was his legal father, but not his biological father, since Jesus was virgin born.

You have a series of brothers that come into this family after the virgin birth of Christ. Two of them wrote books of the Bible: Jude and James, both half brothers of Christ. James is the same guy that would become the pastor at the church at Jerusalem, where they are having this big powwow, and he is the same guy that wrote the little book in your New Testament that is a very convicting book to read because it deals with subjects like taming the tongue, stung by the tongue kind of book. That is the Book of James. This is the same guy.

He speaks up. He gives an introduction and addresses the group (Acts 15:13); he makes a quick reference to what Peter has just said, and calls him by his Aramaic name, Simeon, which is a combination there of Aramaic and Hebrew (Acts 15:14).

In the biblical world they had multiple names. Peter was originally named Simon, that was his Hebrew name, and then Cephas would be his Aramaic name. Then the Lord gave him a new name called Petros, meaning "little stone." James refers to Peter by a combination of his Hebrew and Aramaic name. He says, "Look at what Peter has just shared, how Cornelius came to faith without the help of the Law."

Now James cites the Old Testament to communicate a major point, and it helps to explain why the Jerusalem Council decided the way they decided. We have his introduction as James is speaking up (Acts 15:15):

"With this the words of the Prophets agree ["symphoneo"], just as it is written" (Acts 15:15).

You see there in brackets the Greek word for "agree" is "symphoneo," where we get the word "symphony." If you go listen to a symphony, you do not have a bunch of Lone Ranger musicians because a symphony is only a symphony when all of the musicians are cooperating with each other and playing in harmony with each other. A symphony is not a solo, it is a cooperation.

James is going to cite a prophet named Amos who prophesied back in the eighth century BC. Around 755 BC Amos made a prophecy about the coming Millennial Kingdom. James says, "Amos says this, but all the prophets agree on this point." This is important because James never says that the prophecy from Amos is fulfilled. There is a completely different word for fulfilled in Greek called "pleroo." It is used in Acts 1:16 concerning the suicide of Judas, how that fulfilled certain prophecies: *"Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled ["pleroo]" (Acts 1:16).*

If James wanted to say that Amos was fulfilled in Acts 15, there would be a lot of linguistic tools at his fingertips to do that. He does not say that. He says the prophets here all agree on something. What do they agree on? They agree on the fact that when the Millennial Kingdom comes one day, which is something we should be praying for because Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom come." That is what we are praying for, the Millennial Kingdom.

When it comes, all the prophets agree that the Gentiles, non-Jews, are going to be full citizens in that Kingdom. There are going to be Jewish people in that Kingdom, and there are going to be non-Jewish people in that Kingdom, and they are not going to be looked at as second-class citizens. They are going to be full citizens. That is the point he is trying to draw out of the Book of Amos.

*"After these things I will return,
And I will rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen" (Acts 15:16).*

That is the restoration of the Davidic throne—the Davidic Kingdom, the Davidic dynasty—during the Millennial Kingdom. Jesus, who is not functioning as king right now, is the heir as king. He is certainly the King of kings and Lord of lords, but He is not currently functioning as king. He is functioning as High Priest after the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 7:17).

One of these days that ministry will end when Israel is converted at the end of the Tribulation Period and Jesus will return to planet Earth in His Second Advent. This is not the Rapture, which is different, but His Second Advent. He will take His seat on David's throne, which is always portrayed as earthly. In fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant, He will orchestrate a regal reign over planet Earth for a thousand years.

That is what James is talking about when he mentions the tabernacle of David being restored. It is a synonym for the Millennial Kingdom.

*""After these things I will return,
And I will rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen,
And I will rebuild its ruins,
And I will restore it,
So that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord,
And all the Gentiles who are called by My name,"
Says the Lord, who makes these things known from long ago"" (Acts
15:16-18).*

Currently the Davidic dynasty is in a state of ruins. The reason it is in a state of ruins is because the nation rejected their king. Had the nation accepted their king, hypothetically, the Millennial Kingdom could have started. They were given a bona fide opportunity to do that, but they rejected it. They said, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14).

They broke every rule in the book. When I say every, I mean every legal rule they had. Do not put someone to death except on a capital crime witnessed by two or three witnesses, for example (Deuteronomy 19:15). They just made stuff up. "We heard Him say." These were things that He did not say. When they had their trial, they were not supposed to have their trials at certain times. They had them. They were not supposed to have their trials at night. They had it at night.

Every rule they could break, they broke it, and they broke all the rules in their other extra biblical books, the Mishnah and the Talmud. They rushed Him through the judicial system to get Him killed as fast as they could. Rome had taken away from them the right to execute criminals, so Rome had to kill Him. They broke every rule in the book to get this guy dead as fast as possible.

As this whole sad state of affairs is happening, the tabernacle of David, which they could have had, has fallen. James anticipates the day will come when the tabernacle of

David will be restored. When is that going to happen? In the Millennium, and in the Millennium the Gentiles will be full participants.

What is James getting at here? Why is he quoting this? What he is saying is. "If the Gentiles are going to be full-fledged citizens in the Millennial Kingdom, then by way of analogy, let us let them into the church now without submitting to the Law of Moses. It looks like that is the way it is going to be in the Kingdom Age, so that is a good precedent to follow what God is doing yet future."

James has to reason from the Scriptures analogically because there is no word from God in Acts 15. The Book of Acts is a book where God speaks a lot and there are visions. Remember what the Spirit said to Philip? "*Go up and join this chariot*" (Acts 8:29). Then why is it that Paul and Barnabas were sent out on the first missionary journey? Because the Spirit spoke.

"While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart from Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them'" (Acts 13:2).

On missionary journey number two, why would Paul leave Galatia and Asia and make his way into Europe? Because he got a vision of the Macedonian man.

"A vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing and appealing to him, and saying to him, 'Come over to Macedonia to help us'" (Acts 16:9).

The Book of Acts is fascinating because God is talking constantly. But in Acts 15, God does not say anything. What do you do when God does not talk? You have to go with the Bible. They only had one Bible. It is not like we have today with these big, thick Bibles. We have an Old Testament and a New Testament—39 Old Testament books and 27 New Testament books. They do not have a New Testament.

Why don't they have a New Testament? Because it was just being written. The only book that Paul wrote up to this point was the Book of Galatians. Other books that might have been floating around would be maybe Matthew and the Epistle of James.

They do not have any Bible to adhere to other than what we flippantly call Old Testament. It is better called Hebrew Bible, or as the Jews called it, Tanakh which stands for the three major divisions of Hebrew Bible: T stands for Torah or Law; N stands for Nevi'im or Prophets; and K stands for the Ketuvim or the writings. That is how the Jews organized Hebrew Bible. That is all they had.

God is not speaking here in Acts 15, so they are taking a prophecy. James has taken a prophecy concerning the future, and he is reasoning analogically as to what is happening. This is how the early church functioned. The Bereans examined "*the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so*" (Acts 17:11).

What Scriptures would those be? Not the New Testament, because you do not have one yet. Not the Ryrie Study Bible. There are no seminaries. Today, you can go into a bookstore and you can get any Bible you want. You have Bibles for everything today.

You have to put yourself in these people's shoes. They did not have a New Testament. They had Hebrew Bible, and the canon of Hebrew Bible had been closed for 400 years. They had to make a decision without a vision from God or a voice or anything based on God's pattern in history. They are essentially reasoning from the Scriptures here. That is what James is doing.

James is saying, "You know what? When the Millennial Kingdom comes—which is right here, a thousand years—the tabernacle of David is going to be restored and the Gentiles are going to be full-fledged citizens. I think we ought to just let the Gentiles into the church now without making them submit to the Law of Moses." That is the basis of the ruling that happens here.

I will show you in a minute that what I am saying may seem obvious to you, but it is extremely controversial because we have just walked into one of the great war zones in Scripture. You may not know anything about it, but I am going to try to help us understand it, because what I am saying would be carte blanche rejected in places. What I am saying is that James is using the Amos quote in context. He is not changing the meaning. He says it is a Kingdom passage about the Millennium and he is reasoning backwards.

If you are sitting in a church that teaches Replacement Theology, Reformed Theology, they are going to tell you—and a lot of times they do not even tell you what they believe, they hint around it—but what they believe and what all their seminaries teach is that when James quotes Amos, he is changing its meaning. He is not keeping the meaning stable. He is changing the meaning.

They teach that the tabernacle of David has already been restored. Isn't it great? We are living in a spiritual form of the Kingdom today. That is a doctrine called Amillennialism, which is the dominant view in church history, very sadly, going back to Augustine in the fourth century. It has a kissing cousin called Postmillennialism, which is the same idea that the Kingdom is now, but it is incorporated with the idea of progress. The church is going to have a greater and greater role in subduing culture.

They say that we are setting up the Kingdom. If we are setting it up, why did Jesus tell us to pray for it to come? That does not make any sense. Since we are setting it up, Jesus, at the end of the thousand-year Kingdom that we are setting up, is going to come back and find the world in apple pie order.

You are in a church that is not amillennial. It is not postmillennial. It is the idea that Jesus set up no Kingdom in the first century because they rejected Him. The Kingdom program is not in a state of cancellation, it is in a state of postponement. In the interim,

God is at work through something that Lewis Sperry Chafer called an intercalation, which is an interruption. That is where you get the whole idea of a parenthesis between God's past work with the nation of Israel and God's future work with the nation of Israel.

When James quotes Amos he is keeping the Kingdom meaning of yet future and just reasoning backwards. This is an anathema to Kingdom Now theologians, because they are saying that James is changing the meaning of the Amos passage and making it sound like the tabernacle of David has already been restored, because we are now in a spiritual form of the Kingdom.

Is it legitimate to take things from the distant future and reason backwards? Yes, the Bible does that all the time.

"But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up" (2 Peter 3:10).

If you are into global warming, that is where you would put it. This is something that is going to happen after the Millennial Kingdom is over, according to our chronology. After He subdues it in victory for a thousand years, God is going to take it and destroy it by fire and bring in something completely new called the new heavens and the new earth. This is a completely futuristic statement, but what does Peter say in this passage?

"Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness" (2 Peter 3:11).

In other words, your knowledge of the future impacts your behavior in the present.

God uses this verse in my life all the time. Every time I read it, it reminds me that everything in this world is going to burn up. There are really only two things that are going to withstand the burning process. Only two. Everybody wants a safe investment. There are only two: the souls of people, because God has set eternity into the hearts of men (Ecclesiastes 3:11), and His Word.

*"The grass withers, the flower fades,
But the word of our God stands forever" (Isaiah 40:8).*

The more I am pouring myself into people—that could be ministry, discipleship, evangelism, or sometimes it is just basic common courtesy, treating people decently—the more I am invested and I am pouring energy into that, because I could pour my energy into something else, so when I do that I am making an investment. The more I am pouring myself into something that will last, because that soul is going to be around a hundred years, a thousand years, a million years from now.

The only other eternal investment is God's Word. Jesus said:

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away"
(Matthew 24:35).

Here you guys are, out here on a Wednesday. Think of all the things you could be doing. There are a lot of people out on a Wednesday doing a whole lot of other things. Why are you here? Why am I here? Because we are making an investment. I could be out at the movies, but I would be pouring myself into something that is going to be destroyed. Here we are, pouring ourselves into something that is going to last.

The reason I am making an eternal investment now is because I have a knowledge of what is going to happen in the future. The future helps you understand God's priorities. I would never know what the future held if I was not reading His prophetic word. I look at it and I say, "Do you know what? I do not want to spend my life rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic."

As everybody is getting off the Titanic, I do not want to polish the brass. That is a waste of time. If you know that the Titanic is sinking, it changes your behavior in the present. If you know that everything is going to burn and be destroyed, it changes your behavior in the present. The future impacts the present.

If that can be true in the Bible, it can be true with what James is saying. People are always saying, "You have to make Amos' prophecy relevant to the immediate audience." That is why everybody is changing the meaning of Amos and trying to make it sound like the Kingdom is now. It has to be relevant to the audience. I am here to explain that the future is relevant to the audience.

2 Peter 3:10, which will not happen for at least another seven years plus a thousand—the seven-year Tribulation Period plus the thousand-year Millennium—even though that is not going to happen for 1,007 years, it still affects me today. James' use of Amos, even though it is dealing with the future, is still going to affect them now. The Gentiles are going to be full-fledged citizens in the Millennial Kingdom, so let us let them in now. That is what James is saying.

What I am arguing for here is completely consistent with dispensational scholarship. If you go back and dig into some of the greats, you will find them saying exactly what I am saying. I am not giving you some weird new teaching here. If you are coming into this church from more of a reformed background then you may have never heard this before, but what I am saying is part of a well trodden path.

Here is the Scofield Reference Bible. Do you notice how everybody is dogpiling on the Scofield Reference Bible today? Candace Owens does whole podcasts against the Scofield Reference Bible. It just blows my mind. What is the problem with the Scofield Reference Bible? It was a Bible translation with notes at the bottom. Candace Owens makes this point in one of her podcasts that this was the first English Bible with notes in it. That is not true. The Geneva Study Bible, which comes from the Reformed side and long predates the Scofield Reference Bible, has more notes in it than Scofield's Bible.

When you read Scofield's notes, basically what he is saying is to take God's word literally. That is his crime. When it says that Israel is going to be regathered into her land in the last days, take that at face value. That is what it means. There are a few things in the Scofield Reference Bible that I would tweak a little bit. He was writing some of this stuff before we had more of a young earth creationist, understanding, so held to an old earth cosmology and the gap theory and things like that.

I am not some kind of devotee or worshiper of the Scofield Reference Bible, but other than a few little tweaks, what the guy says is extremely helpful because what he is encouraging people to do is to take the Bible literally.

Candace Owens thinks that she can tear down Dispensationalism by tearing down the Scofield Reference Bible, when in reality the problem that Candace Owens has is with God. The only thing Scofield said is to take God at His word. That is his crime. The guy's name is dragged through the mud, and every skeleton in the closet that you could ever find is brought out about him. They do the same thing to John Nelson Darby, and they just hyperventilate on this on social media 24/7.

I am not called to defend Scofield or Darby. I am called to defend the Scripture. Scofield and Darby said, "Take God at His word." If you have a problem with the Scofield Reference Bible, Candace's real problem is with God because Scofield is saying to take God literally. That is all he is saying.

Notice how the Scofield Reference Bible handles this passage from Acts 15. It says:

"...begins with the words 'on that day.' James introduced this quotation in such a way as to show what day Amos was talking about, namely, the time after the present world witness (Acts 1:8), when Christ will return. James showed that there will be Gentile believers at that time, as well as Jewish believers; hence he concluded that Gentiles are not required to become Jewish proselytes by circumcision.¹

Why did he have to conclude? God did not say anything, so he had to reason analogically. "Hence he concluded [by way of extrapolation] that Gentiles are not required to become Jewish proselytes by circumcision." Thus, what I said is completely in harmony with what you would read in the Scofield Reference Bible, published in the early 1900s.

Now here is my professor J. Dwight Pentecost. He wrote a book called "Thy Kingdom Come." He says the exact same thing:

¹ C.I. Scofield, *Scofield Reference Bible*, 1520.

"His testimony is further corroborated by Barnabas and Paul (v. 12), and James who presided at this council hearing rendered the decision of the council. It was evident that God for the first time in dealing with men was dealing with Gentiles as Gentiles 'taking from the Gentiles a people for Himself (v. 14). James found this in keeping with the prophetic program."²

What God is doing right now concerning Gentile salvations and citizenship in the body of Christ is exactly what He is going to do in the Kingdom. Since it is going to be like that in the Kingdom, let us follow the same program now and not demand these Gentiles come under the Law of Moses to walk with God. The Davidic throne has been empty for 2,000 years. Jesus never restored the Davidic dynasty 2,000 years ago, although a Reformed Church will tell you the opposite.

"In Amos 9:11-12 it was prophesied that after the period in which Israel was disciplined because of disobedience (vv. 1-10) and the Davidic throne would be restored and the Davidic kingdom would be instituted. When it is reinstated, the kingdom will include not only the physical descendants of Abraham, but also a multitude of Gentiles as well. Therefore the restored Davidic kingdom under its rightful Davidic king would be composed of both Jews and Gentiles. In that Kingdom Gentiles would not be made into Jews; instead they would be in the kingdom as Gentiles. This allowed James to conclude that if God had a program for Gentiles as Gentiles in the future Davidic kingdom established here on the earth, there was no reason to deny that God could include them as Gentiles in this present form of the theocracy. Therefore the issue was settled—the Gentiles did not need to be circumcised and bring themselves under the Mosaic Law in order to participate in the present form of the kingdom."³

You will notice that Dr. Pentecost—and this is one of the rare areas where I am in disagreement with him—thinks that the present work of God is like a mystery kingdom. I do not believe in a mystery kingdom. We are not in a mystery kingdom right now. We are in the Church Age. The phrase "mystery kingdom" is an unbiblical idea. Those are words that are read into Matthew 13. You will not find the expression "mystery form of the kingdom" in Matthew 13.

What we are in is a time period where the heirs of the Kingdom, that is us, are going to experience certain spiritual realities, which are narrated to us in eight parables which Matthew 13 describes. Dr. Pentecost—as much as it is hard for me to publicly disagree with him because the man was a mentor and almost like a father to me in a lot of ways—did open the door not to the Davidic Kingdom being present, but a mystery kingdom being present.

² J. Dwight Pentecost, *Thy Kingdom Come*, 279-80.

³ Ibid.

I do not think we are in a mystery kingdom. I think we are in the body of Christ, the Church Age. When you see him say "the present form of the Kingdom," that is that is what he is getting at. His major point is:

"Rather, apart from the Mosaic Law, through faith in Jesus Christ they are equal participants with believing Jews in the present form of the kingdom of God."⁴

I would cross that out and write, "in the Church Age."

When James quotes Amos he is not rewriting it; he is not changing it. All he is saying is, "Look at God's plan. Look at what He is going to do in the Kingdom, how the Gentiles will be able to come in. So let us let them in now." Therefore, we are not under the Mosaic Law today. We have not been under the Mosaic Law, and we are not under the Mosaic Law. We are under a different legal system called the Law of Christ, called the Law of the Spirit (Galatians 6:2; Romans 8:2).

It looks like the Mosaic Law in some respects, but it is a different system entirely. I am a transplant from California to Texas. I got to the promised land as fast as I could. If I commit a crime in Texas, if I steal something in Texas, even though California has laws against stealing on its books, I am not going to be tried in California because I am under a different legal system. It looks like the California legal system in some respects, but it is different; it is independent.

You are not under the Mosaic Law, but it is interesting that in the Law of Christ and the Law of the spirit, nine of the Ten Commandments are repeated. It looks like the Law of Moses, but it is different just like Texas is a totally independent legal system from California.

With this understanding that I am trying to provide, we do not teach people to bring the whole tithe into the storehouse. That is the preacher's favorite verse. When you want to raise money, go to Malachi 3:10-11: *"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house...I will rebuke the devourer,"* and see if I will not pour out so great a blessing, that you will not have enough room to contain it. But you have to bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, and they define the storehouse as their ministry.

If I really wanted to follow that, I would have to go to the Middle East and to the temple. That is the storehouse. There is a problem. We do not have a temple right now, so they rewrite that, and they make it sound like it is something that we are under. That is why your finances are not working out. If you would just tithe, then you would all be rich.

If you really want to do that, you should not tithe 10%, you should tithe 23 $\frac{1}{3}$ %, because that is the Law of Moses, where there were three tithes, one every three years and two

⁴ J. Dwight Pentecost, *Thy Kingdom Come*, 279-80

annually. Israel was a functioning country with a military and borders and a priesthood to support, and it was a mandatory taxation system.

The church is not like that at all. If you want to understand principles for giving in the Church Age, you do not go to Malachi 3, which was Israel functioning under the Mosaic law. You go to 2 Corinthians 8-9 where Paul does not give a number of what you should give. That is between you and the Lord. He develops the principles of grace giving through a series of adverbs—which modify verbs in English, typically ending in -ly.

When you give, give hilariously, give cheerfully, give proportionately, give secretly, those kinds of things. If you are looking for a number to give, and if you want to give 10% or whatever number you come up with, that is between you and the Lord. Go for it. Whatever God puts on your heart, you should do, but I am saying you are not under a specific number that is binding and mandatory. You would be if you were under the Law of Moses, but we are not under the Law of Moses.

When Ronald Reagan was sworn in, the Bible was open to 2 Chronicles 7:14 because of the influence of Jerry Falwell over the election of Ronald Reagan. I liked and voted for Ronald Reagan. He was the first president I voted for when I finally came of age to vote. But 2 Chronicles 7:14 is pretty good patriotic preaching, which I enjoy—I love patriotic preaching—but when the patriotic preachers preach on Fourth of July Sunday, they all quote 2 Chronicles 7:14:

"And My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14).

Jerry Falwell said that is how we are going to get rid of high gas prices in America. That is how we are going to get rid of inflation, because the Bible says that if we will put God first by doing all of these things, then God is going to heal our land. The problem is that the land is the land of Israel; it has nothing to do with the United States. It was applied, saying that we have to get rid of pornography, we have to get rid of abortion, and then God is obligated to heal our land.

Let us try to get rid of abortion and pornography, but let us go to the right verses to talk about it. You do not go to that and make it sound like if I put a coin in, then I pull a lever and God is obligated to do something. He is not. He was obligated under the Mosaic Law, but He is not today. We are not under the Mosaic Law; we are under the Law of the Spirit, or the Law of Christ.

The thing about the Mosaic Law, as the Book of James tells us, is that if you are guilty of part of it, you are guilty of all of it (James 2:10). If you put one little finger under the Mosaic Law, you are automatically under everything. You cannot just pick, "I am going to be under Malachi 3, but nothing else." It does not work that way. "I am going to be under 2 Chronicles 7 and nothing else." It does not work that way.

If you come under it, then you have to stone to death Sabbath breakers. You should not be showing up on Sunday. You should be showing up on Saturday. You better bring your unblemished lamb with you. You want to go under the Law of Moses? We have to go under all of that stuff. This is the problem of going back and picking and choosing.

Now the Reformed guys, they try to say that the Law of Moses has three parts. There is the civil part of the stoning to death of witches and homosexuals and Sabbath breakers. Then there is the ceremonial part of it, which deals with all of the sacrifices. Then there is the moral part of it, which is the Ten Commandments. They will take it and divide it into thirds and say, "We are not under the civil, we are not under the ceremonial, but we are still under the moral."

Here is the problem: when you go through the Mosaic Law, it never divides itself up like that. It never says, "We are done with the civil stuff. Here comes the ceremonial stuff. We are done with the ceremonial stuff. Here comes the moral stuff." That is a totally artificial division. If you go under the moral aspects of it, then you have to go under the ceremonial and the civil aspects of it as well, because it is a take it or leave it proposition. This is the kind of stuff that James is talking about.

I am glad they got this squared away because if they did not come down the way they did here in Acts 15, I think our church world would look a lot different. We would all be under the Mosaic Law, which we are not under. "Pastor, are you just going to throw out the Mosaic Law?" Are you kidding me? I love the Mosaic Law, I love studying it.

We are going to get into it in the Book of Exodus. In fact, we may get into it and never get out of it because Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy—that is some good stuff in there. But I do not teach that we should come under this. I teach it as moral principles that are reiterated in the New Testament. This is a big decision that is being made here. James makes the statement that he makes not because he is changing Amos' prophecy.

That was my introduction. What does the other camp say? Look at Acts 15:16:

*"After these things I will return,
And I will rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen,
And I will rebuild its ruins,
And I will restore it" (Acts 15:16).*

What they will say is that this is not talking about some future Millennial Kingdom. How would that apply to the original audience? I have already explained how it applies to the original audience. What they would say is that the Davidic Kingdom is restored now, because 2,000 years ago David inaugurated an invisible spiritual Kingdom that we are now in.

What they have done is they have allowed James to take Amos' prophecy and change its meaning in such a way that all of Israel's promises, many of them still to come, are all erased. It is all gone. It is all fulfilled in the person of Christ. This is why Tucker Carlson

can look at people like ourselves who believe in a future Kingdom headquartered in the nation of Israel, elevating the city of Jerusalem, and call us heretics. Tucker Carlson uses the expression, "That is heresy."

Why is Tucker Carlson calling it heresy? Tucker Carlson comes from a Christian tradition, too. It is called Episcopalianism. I grew up in it. It is amillennial to the absolute core. What he thinks happened is that the coming of Christ refiltered all of Israel's Old Testament promises so that they have taken on a heightened meaning in a spiritual sense, which means there is no future Kingdom for Israel.

I am just going to assume Tucker Carlson is a believer. I do not know, I do not have any conversations with him. I do not know where he stands with the Lord, but I know he is coming out of a Christian orientation, a Christian perspective. He would say, "I am a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. What you people, Dispensational Zionists, are teaching is heresy."

He is calling it heresy because he thinks the New Testament can change the Old Testament. Whereas what we are saying is that God cannot lie. When God made Israel promises—for example, having land from the Nile to the Euphrates—I do not have any business reading that and saying that God was just saying, just fooling. "I really did not mean that. Really what has happened is you have to wait 2,000 years for Jesus to show up and change all these things. When Jesus shows up and changes all of these things, then you will understand."

The Muslims have a doctrine called abrogation. When the Muslims are in a minority, they are very nice people. When they get the upper hand, it is called moving to the upper house. Everything changes. They become very belligerent, very cutthroat, more literally than metaphorically. This happens in country after country after country after country.

There are two sets of texts in the Quran. There are the nice happy verses, and those are the verses that Muhammad talked about when he was in the minority. The moment his people—through population growth, because they have about eight kids per family, something like that—moved into the majority is the moment he moved to a separate set of texts, which are the war texts. The war texts are to slay the pagans wherever you find them.

When Muslims reach that level of population growth—and what I am telling you here is not front page news. If you research this, you will see you will see them doing this in country after country after country. Nice texts, minority; aggressive texts when they move from lower house to what they call upper house, when they perceive themselves as moving into the majority.

When they get the majority and move to the upper house, you say, "Wait a minute. What happened to all the nice verses you used to quote?" Do you know what they say? You should memorize this term. "Those verses have been abrogated. That is the term

for the day: abrogated. What does that mean? The mean verses eclipse the nice verses.

Reformed Theology is like that because what they are saying is that Christ and the apostles changed Old Testament passages, which to me sounds a lot like the Islamic doctrine of abrogation. Can I share with you something about God? God does not abrogate. Do you know why? Because He cannot lie.

"It is impossible for God to lie" (Hebrews 6:18).

"God is not a man, that He should lie" (Numbers 23:19).

"God, who cannot lie" (Titus 1:2).

We are supposed to be like God in our character. That is why one of the Ten Commandments is "Thou shalt not lie or bear false witness" (Exodus 20:16). When you are telling me the New Testament reshuffled the deck, to me that sounds a lot like abrogation. That has more in common with Islam than biblical Christianity.

I am not going to stand up here in a pulpit and use these New Testament verses to rewrite these Old Testament verses. I will not do that. What I will do is interpret the New Testament in light of what has already been revealed in the Old Testament. That is the difference between a Dispensational approach, which is what you get here, versus an approach from Reformed Theology.

Speaking of abrogation, my time has been abrogated. I am going to pick it up next time here with this citation from Kim Riddleberger. I want you to see how these people from the Amillennial camp think, because it will help you more intelligently interact with them.