

Paul Was Given a New Revelation!

To properly understand God's Word, we must study to know how everything revealed by God fits together! We must pay very close attention to the details.

Old Testament writers foresaw the coming of the Messiah

In Daniel 9:24-27 we read of the 70 "sevens," or "weeks," which refer to seven-year periods of time (a total of 490 years). Note that Daniel divides these "sevens" into three parts ... 7-sevens, then 62-sevens, then the final seven. The 7-sevens and 62-sevens culminate with the Messiah being "cut off," this being fulfilled with the crucifixion of Christ. When measuring these 69-sevens (or 483 years) from the decree to restore Jerusalem, we come to the very time we know Christ was indeed "cut off" (or crucified). But notice in Daniel's prophecy there is no mention of a pause before the final "seven," which from his description we know to be the "Tribulation" period in the book of Revelation. To Daniel it has been revealed the entire 490 year span of events, right up until the return of Christ, but he sees no pause between the 483 years and the final 7 years.

Matthew through Acts

As Matthew opens, John the Baptist proclaims the kingdom (that had been prophesied in the Old Testament) is near. Jesus enters the scene and proclaims the same message. Thus far there is still no "pause" mentioned as the Kingdom of heaven, to come upon the earth, is proclaimed.

Throughout the four "Gospels" there is also no mention of such things as "The Body of Christ" or the "rapture" of the Body (1 Thessalonians 4). When Jesus speaks about the end times (Matthew 24) he prophesies his own rejection and crucifixion (as was foretold in Daniel 9), and he prophesies his return (as Daniel also foretold as a part of the final "seven"). But there is no mention of a "pause" between his crucifixion and the signs that would signal his return (Matthew 24).

Throughout the four "Gospels" what is being proclaimed is the "Kingdom of heaven" to come upon the earth when Christ returns. This will be the return of the kingdom that had flourished in David's day, but which was now under Roman rule.

Nothing in the Old Testament or the four "Gospels" even makes mention of the resurrected dead going to "heaven." The expectation was always for a resurrection so as to live upon the earth, with Christ reigning. We only "see" heaven in the Gospels because we have confused what Jesus talked about -- with the things Paul talked about. We have "spiritualized" the words of Jesus, when in fact He talked of things to take place upon the earth.

As the book of Acts opens, the message is the same: "Repent, the Kingdom is near." But now the hearers are admonished to repent so that Jesus can return, and the restoration of all things can be

accomplished (Acts 3:19). No “pause” is seen. The proclamation seems to imply that the return of Christ is imminent.

But as Acts closes, the Jewish leaders assembled by Paul reject the kingdom message one last time, and Paul announces that salvation will now be sent to the Gentiles (Acts 28:25ff).

Two Different “Evangel” (Gospels)

The word “evangel” (gospel) is used many times in Scripture, and it does not always mean the same thing. Our efforts to ***force*** a single gospel in all ages throughout all of Scripture cause us to confuse and cloud God’s revelation to us. The Greek “evangel” simply means “good news,” and this news can be different in each case. Context must be studied to know what “evangel” means each time the word is used.

Throughout the four “Gospels” and Acts it is the “kingdom evangel” that is proclaimed: “Repent, the Kingdom is near.” It goes strictly to the Jews, not the Gentiles, as has been the case throughout the Old Testament. Like it or not, Jesus spoke directly to the Jews.

But look at the “evangel” proclaimed by Paul in his writings. Gentiles and Jews alike are “joint heirs” with no priority given to the Jew. The “Body of Christ” is introduced by Paul. An expectation in the “celestials” (or “heavenlies”) is introduced for the first time (Ephesians 2:6). It is the “rapture” that will transport the Body of Christ there (1 Thessalonians 4).

Paul’s evangel does not go to the Jews, but it pertains to Jew and Gentile alike. His message is not, “Repent, the Kingdom is near” ... but is instead, “God conciliates us to Himself through Christ ... not reckoning offenses” (2 Corinthians 5:18ff). As God’s Ambassadors in these current times we are not to proclaim, “Repent, the Kingdom is near.” That was a message for the Jewish nation, and its proclamation stopped at the end of Acts when it was rejected one last time. The message we are told to proclaim now is, “Be conciliated to God, for the One not knowing sin He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes...” (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Paul was given new revelation to proclaim

Paul points out that the evangel he proclaimed was not taught to him by a man, but it came through a ***revelation*** of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:11). ***By revelation*** “the ***secret***” was made known to him, a secret that had not been made known in the past, but that was now being revealed (Ephesians 3:3-5). Paul goes so far as to say that it had been granted to him to “***complete***” the word of God (Colossians 1:25).

Clearly Paul was given new things to share, things not previously revealed. God has “paused” the course of events leading to the return of Christ. This is a pause between Daniel’s 69 “sevens” and the final “seven.” It is a pause not foreseen by any Old Testament prophet, and it was not revealed during Jesus’ days upon the earth. The purpose of the “pause” is revealed by Paul: “Callousness, in part, on Israel has come, until the complement of the nations may be entering...” (Romans 11:25ff).

And during this “pause” ***new things*** revealed for the first time to Paul are given to us in his writings. Believers, Jew and Gentile alike, become a part of the Body of Christ (different from “The Bride” which was Israel). Believers are an entirely “new creation” (different from being “born again” as was Israel’s expectation). Jewish and Gentile Believers are joint heirs (different from life in the Kingdom of heaven to come upon the earth where the Jew has priority, as described in the final chapters of Revelation). Our expectation in the upcoming eon (age) is in the celestials (heavenlies), not within

the Kingdom of heaven upon the earth. It will be given to Christ to be head over all things ... both that in the heavens (Body of Christ) and that on the earth (The Bride), as is revealed in Ephesians 1:10.

At the End of the Ages

To John was revealed the events to take place in Daniel's final "seven," culminating with the reign of Christ, and the new heaven and new earth of Revelation 21-22. This is all that was revealed to John.

But to Paul, who received his message not from man but through a ***revelation*** of Jesus Christ, it was revealed things that will occur ***after*** the final age has been completed. Compare the end of Revelation with the ***absolute climax of history*** as revealed to Paul, and which we find in 1 Corinthians 15.

1. Christ reigns ***until*** He places all enemies under His feet (v 25)
2. The last enemy (death) is abolished (v 27)
[Note: The lake of fire is defined in Revelation 21:8 as the "second death."]
3. When all is subject to Christ, He then subjects Himself to God (v 28)
[Note: In Revelation 21:5 Christ is still reigning on the throne. The "until" of 1 Corinthians 15:25 has not yet come!]
4. God becomes All in all (v 28)

The lake of fire (second death) has accomplished its purpose as ordained by God. All are now subjected. Every knee is bowing (Philippians 2:9). The Cross has been ***totally*** victorious, not just effective for some, but for ***all***. This is the end of the ages ... total reconciliation. All are saved, some by faith (Body of Christ) and some by sight (as with Thomas in John 20:24ff).

You won't find a description of this climax of history anywhere else but Paul's writings, for some things had been secrets in the past, and revealed only to Paul.

Study, and Think For Yourself

Many within the Church today are teaching a very "simplistic" gospel, mixing together things that are different (like the "kingdom evangel" and the evangel proclaimed by Paul). This causes great confusion, and it becomes impossible to see the things God has revealed to us.

"Endeavor to present yourself to God qualified, an unashamed worker, correctly cutting the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15) To "correctly cut" would seem to call for a very close study of God's Word to determine how it all fits together. When we read from the Bible we cannot simply take a verse here and a verse there, thinking every word is directed to us all in this age. As we read all of God's Word from start to finish we see Him working progressively through history. God is always the same, but He has worked in different ways in different times to accomplish His purpose (as was the case with His using the Law until it had accomplished its purpose -- Galatians 4:1ff).

Pay close attention to the details. Study. Don't let others (even preachers or teachers) tell you what the Bible means. Many of them disagree amongst themselves. Think for yourself!

- Bob Evely -