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SPECIAL FAVORS BEYOND THOSE OF THE NEW COVENANT.

The question may arise with some, Do not the Scriptures hold out special promises and blessings to Israel above the blessings promised to mankind in general? And if, as above shown, the New Covenant applies equally to all men because its Mediator gave himself a ransom for all, then where come in the *special* promises and blessings and favors promised to Israel (as well as to the Christian Church) as the Apostle quotes: "This is my *covenant unto them*, when I shall take away their sins." (Rom. 11:27.) Does not this point to special favors, to be fulfilled toward them in the future?

We answer, that God made his covenant in two parts. One part was that he would take away all sin and imperfection, and write his law again in the heart of flesh as originally possessed by Adam. This was typified in the Law Covenant, and will be fully realized under the New Covenant. The other part of God's plan is shown in another promise or covenant – the Abrahamic Covenant or promise that, THE SEED OF ABRAHAM should be honored by being used as an instrumentality in bringing those New Covenant blessings to the world of mankind. [R793 : page 7]

But though the Abrahamic promise, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," was made before the formal announcement of the New Covenant, yet it was made dependent on the ratification of the New Covenant, since none could be "blessed" truly while all were under "the curse" of death for the violated Adamic covenant. Hence the utter removal of sin was typically shown in the symbol of circumcision, and the sacrifice of atonement for sin kept continually before the minds of Abraham and all the patriarchs as a pre-requisite to communion with God.

The conditions of the New Covenant then will apply to all mankind alike, and not in any special manner or degree to Israel. All mankind were alike condemned through Adam, alike redeemed and ransomed by Christ, and will have equal privileges under the redemption. All shall have full opportunity for believing and laying hold upon the ransom and of being restored to harmony with God through it; and by obedience to God's law all will have equal rights and opportunities to have life everlasting. Consequently the *extra* blessing which comes to "Israel after the flesh," the natural "seed of Abraham," and to the Church, the true Israel of God, the higher "Seed of Abraham" (Gal. 3:29) is wholly outside the provisions of the New Covenant – embraced in the promise made to Abraham.

To the Abrahamic promise then we must look for special blessings or privileges, always remembering, however, that none but those who shall first have shared in the blessings of the New Covenant are eligible to *those* privileges and opportunities of blessing others by administering the favors of that New Covenant.

Though not generally discerned, the promise to Abraham includes TWO SEEDS children according to natural process, of generation, and children by special power of God, not actually children of Abraham, but children of Him whom Abraham typified, (Rom. 4:17 – *margin.*) children of God. These are the Spiritual Israel. These two seeds were typified by Ishmael and Isaac – Abraham's sons. (See Gal. 3:7,29 and Gen. 22:17,18.) The one, the natural, is represented in the promise "as the sand of the sea"; and the other "as the stars of heaven." (Gen. 22:17.) In the fulfillment of all the provisions of the New Covenant blessings, there will be ample opportunity for using both of these "seeds," though the fact that there are two, has been hidden from the sight of the majority both of Israel fleshly and spiritual. The former saw and yet see, only the fleshly seed; the latter see generally only the spiritual seed; but we find clear Scriptural evidence that there are two seeds – the natural and the spiritual, not only from the foregoing, but, says the same Apostle, the *promise* made through Abraham is "of faith"

and favor *in order* that "the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to *that also* which is of the faith of Abraham." (Rom. 4:16.) Hence it is written, "I have made thee a *father of many nations*" – or seeds. Isaac, the chief of Abraham's seed, represents the Church – the spiritual seed; Ishmael, Paul assures us, represented fleshly Israel (Gal. 4:22-25), also blessed through Isaac.

The spiritual seed – "as the stars of heaven" is the choicest portion of the promise; and the natural children of Abraham were first offered this honorable position in the beginning of the Christian age. A few of them accepted and laid hold of it, and the remainder of that elect company has been in process of selection and will be completed during this age, and will be composed chiefly of Gentiles. This entire company will be made like their head Christ Jesus – spirit-beings and will be engaged with Jesus in the most exalted sense in the accomplishment of the blessing of all earth's families. But there will be a use, and place, in this work of blessing in which *men*, human beings, may be used; and in this part of the blessing some of the natural children of Abraham shall share. Israel shall be among the first to appreciate the kingdom of Christ when it shall be fully inaugurated or "set up," and among the first to render obedience to it. They will be the first, therefore, to be blessed by it and in turn to be associated with the spiritual powers in conferring its blessings upon all the families of the earth.

This is shown clearly in Paul's argument on this very subject. Read his question, Rom. 11:1, and then his reply in verses 23,24 and his proof in verses 25 to 27. Then comes the grand climax of his argument: "As concerning the gospel [the special favor of the Christian age, though a few have received it, as stated in verse 5, yet the nation as a whole have been cut off from the gospel favor] they are [treated as God's] enemies for your sakes [that you Gentiles might become inheritors in the Abrahamic promise]. But as touching the election, they are [still] beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and callings of God, are without repentance." He has promised certain blessings to the natural children of Abraham, and He did so with full knowledge of all

succeeding circumstances and developments, and He never changes from any *unconditional* promise, such as that made to Abraham. Verses 28 and 29. Then follows in verses 30 to 33 a statement of how Israel shall obtain mercy and be made to share the original promise through the instrumentality of the Christian Church, "They shall obtain mercy through your mercy" – They shall obtain this promised favor of God, through, and by means of, your receiving the chief favor, and thus the boundless unsearchable riches of God's wisdom and favor, will be manifested to them, as well as to us, and through them from us and to the world in general.

The same *root promise* bears both these "seeds" of Abraham, but both are not developed at once. First the natural, afterward the spiritual, and then, as Paul informs us (Rom. 11), finally the natural grafted in *again*. The natural "seed" mentioned in that promise started as branches out of the *first*, and as such, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the prophets and the *man* Christ Jesus were developed as worthy and fit to have part in the work of blessing when the right time should come. Then, when the time had come for the development of the spiritual seed – The Church of which Jesus the "new creature" is "HEAD" – those natural branches were "broken off" and cast aside, while a new set of branches were grafted into that original root – the Abrahamic covenant. During the Christian age, the new growth of the new kind of branches, has been developing, and at the end of this age another change will come and the re-engrafting of the original branches will take place. These natural branches which for so long have seemed as thoroughly cast off of God as the Gentiles appeared to be previously, shall be grafted in again, and shall be sharers again of the richness of the root-promise, though they are and always will be, natural or human branches, while the overcoming Church selected during the Christian age will have secured the choicest portion of that same promise. (Rom. 11:7,8.) Thus the two sets of branches, or two seeds – natural and spiritual – come out of the ONE ROOT PROMISE made to Abraham, and together, though in very different ways, these two seeds become instrumentalities in *blessing* all the families of the earth under the provisions of the New

Covenant mediated and ratified by the *man* Christ Jesus, when he gave himself a *ransom* for all who were condemned to death under the original covenant in Eden.

It will be perceived, then, that the blessing of the World under the New Covenant mediated and ratified eighteen centuries ago waits for the full development of the "Seeds" of Abraham, The spiritual seed, Christ (Gal. 3:29) and the natural seed developed previously, to which shall be added the broken-off branches of the same root who, as the Day Dawns, shall not continue in unbelief, and thus and then the blessing shall spread to all the families of earth.

