Unity of Scripture

The **functional unity** of the Word is shown in the highly diverse aspects of its parts. This unity is ordained and engineered by God. All the parts need one another. It’s a **coherent whole**.

Oh my friend, what ties the parts together? Wherein lies the unity?

Someone said, “There is no **collision** of the Scriptures, but also no **collision**.”

The basis for unity: look at the following verses. What do they have in common?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gen. 1:1</td>
<td>Joshua 1:2,5</td>
<td>11 Chr. 36:15-17</td>
<td>John 1:1,14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ex. 3:6-8</td>
<td>Judges 2:16-18</td>
<td>Ezra 1:1,2</td>
<td>10:14,15; 14:1-3</td>
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In common: God is at work with people on the earth in history!

Foundation for unity is in the **historical** section of Scripture.

Thesis: The unity of the Word lies in the fact that God **acts**.

Therefore, always look for relationships.

Most times Scripture is divided into the Old and New Testaments.

Gen. 17:1
Isaiah 1:1-2
Mat. 5:1-2
Gal. 1:11
Rev. 1:1-3

God speaks.

All Scripture is either what God **does** or says.

**Implications of this:**

- God acts
- God says
- He still acts
- He stopped speaking!

God says…this is revelation, and this is theology.

Theology takes revelation and makes doctrine out of it.

But now…what do you call the acting?

These two, my friend, what God says and does, are two great **realities** of the Word.

The Bible is an infallible record of what God has done and said.
Progress

What is progress? Both in what God said and did progress can be found. Progress is not simply “advance.” Progress is the way in which God speaks and acts. Nobody but God can truly progress.

God - - - life - - - growth
The process is analogous to botany, zoology, etc.
It’s the same growth process as from a seed to a tree.
The seed contains the whole tree. Progress starts in an embryological form.

In all God does He starts with a seed.
You cannot have progress without unity.
Progress is the way God speaks and acts. The beginning is small, but it grows bigger progressively.
When God said to Abraham, “I will bless you,” He started with a seed.
Our study will consist of two parts. The first part will consist of tracing through Scripture the way God acted.

God’s Acts
God starts oh so small. A human being grows from one cell to maturity; that one cell moves towards a goal.
Does God have a goal in Scripture? Yes. Scripture progresses to a certain point and then stops.
What is that goal?
There are two absolute certainties in the Word. One is that God is alive, and the other is that God’s goal will be accomplished.

God’s Goal: the earth will be filled with His glory.
What does this mean? This means that the earth will be full of people. People glorify God.
People: 1) love God with all their hearts
2) love one another
Is this an appropriate goal for a God who works on earth?

A. Creation and disobedience of man and its consequences
   1. Creation: earth, universe, animals
   2. Creation: man
   3. Disobedience of man
   4. Cain and Abel
5. Genealogy: Adam-Noah
B. Judgment on all the earth
   6. Corruption of the earth: flood
7. Flood destroys
8. Flood recedes
9. Post-flood conditions: new beginning

10. Genealogy: Noah and sons
    C. God scatters them
    11. Tower – to a void dispersion

12. Genealogy: Shem-Terah

What does God do in Genesis 1-11? Preparation and prologue.
In Genesis 1-11 there was mostly destruction.

In Genesis 12-50 there are four major things, biographies.

In Genesis 12:1-3 there are six seeds of doctrine:
1. I will make you a great nation.
2. I will bless you.
3. I will make your name great.
4. You shall be a blessing.
5. I will bless those that bless you.
6. In you the families of the earth shall be blessed.

God will make a nation out of Abraham. This is done progressively.
Get this: All the families of the earth are included. What was the goal again? That the earth should be filled.

God starts with Abraham, not with Noah or so and so. He never says, “I am the God of Noah and Adam,” but “I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.”

Why?
Chapters 1-11 are the prologue, the stage.
The Progress of Redemption starts in Genesis 12.
In chapter 12 God starts to work with a seed. Out of this seed will grow a nation.
God works in stages (dispensations):
Genesis 12: In order for Abraham to become a nation, he should have a wife. But Sarai was barren. Why did God do that?

15:2 Abraham wants a child because of God’s promise of a nation.
16:1 Sarai gets no children.
17:18 Ishmael presented to God, but he is rejected.
21:1 God fulfills His promise **in His time!** This is 25 years after the promise!

Is this progress? Don’t be surprised if it will go slow!

24 When Isaac gets a child, Abraham dies. How many are left? One.
25:21 Same contract given to Isaac. Notice: Rebekah was barren!
After 20 years she begets twins. Is this progress?
After 45 years only two people! These are Jacob and Esau.
God rejects Esau, but accepts Jacob.
28:3–4 Charge to Jacob and the ladder. To Jacob is given the same promise.
For some strange reason, God makes a covenant with **three persons.**
Abraham gets a child, and then dies. Again, a covenant.
Isaac gets children, and then dies. Again a covenant.
But Joseph seems to be different.

**Step 1: The Seed Consists of the Founding Fathers, or Patriarchs.**
God starts small and goes slow. Is there any progress yet? No.

29 Leah and Rachel – Rachel was barren. Why?
Leah conceived and was hated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leah</th>
<th>Reuben</th>
<th>30:32</th>
<th>Leah</th>
<th>30:18</th>
<th>Isaachar</th>
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<tr>
<td>Leah</td>
<td>Simeon</td>
<td>29:33</td>
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<td>Leah</td>
<td>Levi</td>
<td>29:34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leah</td>
<td>Judah</td>
<td>29:35</td>
<td>Rachel</td>
<td>30:24</td>
<td>Joseph</td>
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<td>Benjamin</td>
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Bilhah

| 30:6 Dan    |
| 30:8 Naphtali |
God moves slowly. He only does what is significant for me to understand the unfolding.

35:22 Jacob now has 12 songs. God moved from 1 to 12!

Elsewhere God refers to Leah and Rachel who built the nation of Israel.

**Step 2: 49:28 The Tribal Framework**
Are the 12 sons the nation? Yes. They are the nation in seed-form.
From Abraham to these 12 is a long time!

But what was so different about Joseph?
That we shall see in step 3.

**Step 3: Israel in Egypt: A Nation**
Joseph went to Egypt. **There** God would make of them a nation.
So we must be on the lookout for growth there.
Joseph was used to preserve the remnant.

46:2 **There** will I make a great nation..

Between Genesis and Exodus: 350 years

Ex. 1:7 tremendous multiplication. Why just now?
God works progressively.
1:8 even more growth! Pharaoh endeavors to stop the progress.

This is the first time something is done to stop the progress!
But the more they are oppressed, the more they grow, 1:12, 20.

My friend, **how** does God work? He works amidst opposition, right under Pharaoh’s nose.
Step 4: God Establishes a Man to Lead His People

In Exodus 1, God dealt with the whole nation. Chapter 2 switches to specific individuals.

2:11 Moses is 40 years old. He violates a basic way of God and commits murder. On account of this he has to flee.
2:23 God remembers His promise.
3:5 God reveals Himself to Moses.
3:8 I will deliver.
3:10 You will deliver.
32:7 The people that you (Moses) brought.
32:11 The people that you (God) brought.

This is a principle in leadership. God works through people. The person through whom God works is responsible. This is called a theocracy.

The nation needs a leader. Moses is designated to be that leader. That’s why we have his detailed biography.

Notice the intimate relationship between Moses and God. But to think that a human can do the work of God – oh my friend, this is a serious thing. Many today are trying to do the work of God all by themselves.

Never think that you can do the work of God!
Step 5: Israel Leaves Egypt Through God’s Guidance.
Now God wants to take the people out of Egypt. Why? Can a nation be built within another nation? No, they have to have their own geographical area.
But watch how God does it: He hardens pharaoh’s heart and brings plagues.
By hardening the ruler’s heart He made it more difficult. The plagues are evidence of the progressive way God works.
After 430 years they leave Egypt!

Step 6: God Gives the Nation a Law (Culture)
Step 6 digresses a bit from our survey because this deals with the way God speaks.

For years God gave them the Law: spoken word. Why?
For a nation to function together there must be common ways of doing things. God gives them also a culture. Israel is continually admonished to follow God’s way.

Next they will get land, but only after 40 years due to their unbelief.

Numbers:
13:2 Why spy out the land?
14:11ff God intends to wipe out the nation and elevate Moses. How will Moses respond in view of the earlier promise to Abraham? This is a temptation for Moses.

Here, then, is the first time God shelves His people The unbelieving generation perishes in the wilderness.

The only thing that stops the work of God is rebellion and unbelief.

Step 7: The Land is Conquered and Assigned
This section deals with Joshua and the land. Joshua divides into 1-12 and 13-14. Both parts deal with the land. This is still progress.

:40 – summary*
:16 – summary* Often the authors stop and summarize.

1-12 Joshua goes on a destruction tour. In 10:43 he returns to their vantage point, Gilgal. What has been accomplished?
At this stage all that Joshua did was to establish his authority in the land. Israel does not yet occupy the land, but they are clearly in charge of the place and have broken the military might of the inhabitants.

In 10:28, 31ff there is a rehearsal of all the places they went to. Why? It is progressive.

Who took Jericho? God. What did they do? They obeyed and marched. See here again the intricacies of the divine and human agencies in cooperation.
[*editor’s note - uncertain reference]
With this same thought in mind, what happened at Ai? They failed. Why? Because of self-effort. Their own strength was insufficient.

1-12  The land is theirs.
13-24  The land has not been possessed yet.
13:1  Still at Gilgal.
13:7  Division of the land from Gilgal.
19:15  Land is conquered, assigned, but not invaded or possessed.
24  The progress chapter.
24:2  Terah to Abraham.
24:3  Isaac.
24:4  Jacob.
24:5  Egypt – Moses.
24:6  Deliverance.
24:7  Wilderness wanderings.

**Step 8: Judges**

Judges:

1:1  Joshua is dead.
2:6  Joshua is still alive? The historian retrospects.
18:1  What happened to Dan? He has no occupied his inheritance yet. 350 years have passed!

The book consists of three things.

**Part 1 – 1:1-2:5**

Here we see something new in the progress. Who will fight instead of Joshua? Judah. They are still at Gilgal. Judah leaves first with Simeon. However, they did **not** eliminate the inhabitants.

What happened to the nation? Each tribe has possessed his inheritance.

For the first time the unity of the nation is broken.

By 2:5 the tribes are established.

**Part 2 – 2:6-17**

350 years

For a nation to be a nation it needs leadership. Now watch what happens with this. Joshua dies. **Nobody** takes his place. There is a **void** in leadership. Israel apostasizes and God delivers them to their neighbors. God raised up Judges. God was with the judge, as with Joshua, Moses, etc. He worked through them. They were military leaders, theocratic. The judge only appeared in crises. He was **not** over the whole nation. The judge’s only jurisdiction was on the local level.
The judge was: temporal
temporal local
local crisistime
cri sistime military leaders
military leaders

The judges were raised up to keep the nation from collapse.

Part 3 – 17:1-21:25
Divides into 17/18 and 19/21.
In 17/18 we read of gross idolatry. Dan’s tribe worships images. Why?
In 19/21 gross immorality (levite and concubine).
These two violated two great commands. After 350 years we have
no unity
no worship because there’s no king…
no righteousness

Ruth
What does Ruth have to do with the progress of redemption?
We still have no king.

1:1 It is the time period of the Judges. No leadership, no righteousness.
Point: in the midst of the dark story in the judges period, there is still a righteous
person.

In Matthew’s genealogy 3 women are mentioned: Tamar, Rahab and Ruth. Boaz was
Rahab’s son.

Ruth is from Moab. She is a Gentile. So is Boaz. How can that be? God chooses whom He
wants. The nations are in focus.

4:12 God adds His blessing on the marriage.
4:18 Perez … David

Judges almost screams, “Give us a king.” It is the king who should check idolatry,
immorality, etc.

Step 9: Samuel is Judge and Prophet Over All Israel
1 Samuel

1-7 The birth of Samuel – death of Samuel. This constitutes a very strong biography. His ministry is covered quickly, but one experience is spotlighted.

Elkanah – 2 wives (1 barren) – Hannah – Eli+Hannah – birth Samuel – to Eli
The sons of Eli are wicked (adultery, profanity, as in the days of the judges, and that right in the temple).
In the midst of darkness is Samuel.
3 Rare visitation from above.
3:4 The call of Samuel.
3:7 He did not know God.

Now, for the first time in many years, God has spoken. Samuel receives a direct revelation from God.

3:19-20 Resume – all Israel now knew that Samuel was a prophet.

My friend, if you don’t see this, you ought to hang your prophetic head in shame!

    When something grows you separate functions and offices.
    God spoke to Moses- prophet and leader.
    Samuel is the first full-time prophet.
    Priestly office is already established (Aaron, Levi).
    With the establishment of the prophetic office we see progress.

4:1-7 The defeat of Israel, and subsequent defeat of Philistines by God.
7:15-17 Summary: Samuel is the last judge and the first prophet.

Step 10: Office of King is Established.
    Now we are ready for a king.
    My friend, this will make you stand on the tips of your progressive toes!

1 Samuel 8-15
A dynasty is required. Samuel’s sons are perverted. Israel demands a king. For 350 years they had not had one. Samuel disliked the request. Why? Because of his boys? No. God stood with Samuel in his dislike.

God takes even the sin of man to accomplish His purposes.

What was their sin?
1. It consisted of not crying to God for help, but to a man, a king.
   Why didn’t God raise up a king after Joshua? It may be because of tribal identity.
   He also may have wanted them to come to the end of themselves.
2. They wanted a king to fight their adversaries. But God was their Defender.
   8:7 They have rejected Me.
   What they are asking for is out of line. They ask for a **man** to be king. A man is but visible, human power.

What are the implications for church government?

9:1-2 Emphasis is on outward. Still God does not leave them alone. He will choose a good man for them.
9:15ff God had prepared Samuel for the choice. God chose Saul.
   Samuel **knows** God chose Saul to be king. To confirm this in Saul, he tells him 3 things that will happen.
10:9 God changed his heart – a new heart – a man of God.
10:17 They were voting – election time! The people choose him, but he is chosen of God!
10:24 The Lord hath chosen!
11:12ff A military theocratic operation. Now it’s been proved that Saul is God’s man.
11:15 The final act: Saul is inaugurated as king.
   Is this what the people asked for? No. Instead of a monarchy, He gives them a theocracy. He did not give them what they asked for.
Saul’s Sin
12:8 Samuel was not present yet; Saul is impatient and offers.
13:23 Rebellion is the only thing that hinders God.
13:26 Saul is rejected as king. He is shelved because of consistent disobedience and rebellion. His line is broken.

*God works even through sin!*

Now even the office of King is established.

**Step 11  David and Solomon**
David and Solomon are like two sides of a coin.

The call of David in 1 Samuel 16-17:31.
David spent 10-15 years in training.

16:1 Why didn’t God tell him which son (Jesse)?
16:6 Don’t look at externals. We do this all the time. We try to predict which people will become what by considering external factors. Samuel had the same temptation. David had a heart after God. This is what God is looking for.
16:12-13 David is anointed. God has made clear that the heart is the big issue.
“Man looketh on the outward, but God at the heart.”

David’s Training
God will give David two tests to see what he will do. God tests us to see how we shall respond and if He can entrust us with something.
17:31 First test: Goliath
17:32 David says, “I will go.”
17:34-35 David had been prepared a long time before that. God had trained him through the lion and bear. He had already learned the lesson of relying on God. God delivered me…
We see a theocratic operation on the pasture.
17:46 A pure theocracy. He doesn’t even have a sword. God is testing David. Will he rely on Him or on weapons?
17:50 He passed the test.

**
Now we come to the second test. Saul is jealous and seeks to slay David. But Saul is still king. And he is not an enemy. How would David handle this? He runs after Saul. He hides. David knows he will be king...someday. He waits 15 years.

God’s great test: waiting on Him.

Do you wait on God?

Look at David’s heart.

24:4 He takes a piece of Saul’s robe while Saul sleeps.
24:5 He regrets it, though Saul is a reprobate. David repents.

God wants an obedient heart.

All the steps show progression. Step 11 is the culmination.

2 Samuel

2:1 David is called. Notice what he does – he waits on God, and relies on Him. Shall I go to be king? Is this your time? God tells him to go to Hebron.
2:4 God works slowly, progressively. David is anointed king over Judah.
5:1-3 David is anointed king of Israel.

Now, for the first time, we have a theocratic, redemptive nation! God is king through David.

5:17 The Philistines want to kill him.
5:19 David inquires of God two questions: “Shall I fight?” and “Will I win?” These 2 questions reveal David’s heart. They show a beautiful, clear theocracy. God says “yes.”
5:22 Philistines come again! Instead of just relying on God’s previous answer he inquires again! This, my friend, is true commitment to God!
8:6 Wherever David went God gave the victory!
8:14 God wins the battle through David.
8:15 Notice the responsibility of government:
1. Defense – protection
2. Internal guard against idolatry, immorality, injustice.

We have a truly great nation here.

Solomon – 2 Samuel?

7:2 David wants to build God a house.
7:11 God wants to build David a house.
7:12 God promises David that his name will be established.
7:13 Solomon will build my house.
7:15 God will not do with Solomon as with Saul. This constitutes a covenant with David and Solomon. Someone in David and Solomon’s line will always be on the throne.
We now have a prophet, priest and king. The nation is well on its way. The law has been given earlier.

David’s heart showed the opposite of unbelief and rebellion, the two ingredients that hinder the work of God so much. He had a believing, committed heart. What a beautiful picture!

David was characterized by: war
victory

Solomon characterized by: peace
wisdom
riches
knowledge

Kings 5 Adonijah – proud, aspiration/rebellion
5:7 Notice Solomon’s attitude: I am but a little child, completely dependent on Him.
5:28 Solomon’s wisdom was God’s wisdom.
5:20 A multitude, a nation!
5:21 Solomon ruled everything.
5:25 Everyone is safe, perfect security, absence of war.
5:29 Solomon: songwriter, proverbs, botanist, zoologist, entomologist, etc.

God has now established a great theocratic, redemptive nation.

1 Kings 10
The Queen of Sheba visits Solomon. We read in verse 5, “there was no more spirit in her,” she was dumbfounded, perplexed and speechless.
In the temple of forgiveness, there is **redemption**. There people could be saved.

God renews the covenant with Solomon in 9.

God moves progressively, step by step, to accomplish His purpose.

God is **doing** this. The basic unity of the Word is in God’s **acts**, in **history**.

We are now at the end of scene 1. How about God’s words?

  - God spoke to Abraham. There is the seed of all theology.
  - God spoke to Moses extensively, the **law**.
  - God spoke to David and Solomon, the **poetic books**.

Here are three bodies of revelation.

From Genesis 12:1 – 1 Kings 10 we call this: **The Theocratic, Redemptive Nation**.
Step 2, or chapter 2, covers about 400 years.
We are still tracing the historical record.

God goes 2 times over the theocracy of earth.
Scene, or chapter 2, is a double exposure.

1 Kings
11:3ff Solomon’s many wives turned his heart away from the living God. He fell. In a theocracy this is serious. His heart after God is turned.
11:11 **God takes the kingdom from him.**
Because of David He will not do this until Solomon is gone.

What will God do? **God will split the Kingdom in two!**

12:13ff “Solomon’s excessive taxation of the people stirred up such discontent that shortly after his death the 10 northern tribes revolted against the authority of Solomon’s son Rehoboam, and formed another kingdom known as Israel. The other 2 tribes were known as Judah.” – Jenkins

King Rehoboam did not listen to the counsel of the old men, but did what the young men advised him, and treated the party of Jeroboam roughly. Israel rebels and Jeroboam is made king over Israel. Rehoboam wants to fight him but God stops him.
Step 1: God Splits the Nation

12:25ff  Jeroboam is king over Israel. He thinks it’s too far to go to Jerusalem to worship, so he makes some idols. However, Jerusalem is the only place where worship could take place. Besides idols, Jeroboam sets up his own priests.

14  Result: Evil will come upon Jeroboam. God will smite Israel and will scatter them.

Step 2: The 10 Tribes are Removed from the Land and Scattered.

God takes Israel and wipes them out, so that none is left.

2 Kings 21:10ff  Because of abominations in the south, Judah and Jerusalem will be dealt with as Samaria. God will destroy them as well.

2 Chronicles 36:15ff  God’s messengers are mocked. The Chaldeans come and conquer Judah. The possessions of the temple are taken to Babylon.
Step 3: God Utterly Destroys Jerusalem.
Why does God first build the nation and then destroy it?

What is the significance of chapter 2? How come there is progress in chapter 1, and regress in chapter 2?

Consider the following: When Solomon built the temple, the glory of the Lord came there. After the captivity the glory departs. The land is barren and empty.

**There is no more salvation on earth.**

How do you get saved?
Only in Jerusalem could men be saved, in the temple, but now this is gone…

The line of redemption is severed…

Title of chapter 2: God Scatters the Theocratic Nation.
However, in all this misery there are still some positive points.
Edersheim says that God never metes out punishment exclusively; there is always some progress, although it doesn’t look like it.
1. Keep an eye on the scattering. It may prove to be good. Keep the goal in mind.
2. Consider the volume of doctrine that was released through the prophets. Where it not for this situation, there wouldn’t have been any prophets.

So, there is progress in chapter 2. See Psalm 137.
Chapter 3: Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther

Ezra – restoration and reform

Matthew

1:1 Jesus, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.
1:17 Abraham David: 14 generations Chapter 1
David Captivity: 14 generations Chapter 2
Captivity Christ: 14 generations Chapter 3

Chapter 3 starts with the captivity and ends with the Gospels.
Note that part of the NT is included.
Nehemiah – building for security

Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther set the stage for Scene 3.

Ezra and Nehemiah are rather identical. There are some differences between Ezra/Nehemiah and Esther:

1. E/N in Jerusalem; Esther in Persia
2. In Esther absence of God’s name
3. Esther is a historical, infallible record outside of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem lies in waste for 70 years. **For 70 years no human being could get saved.** Either 605-536 B.C. or 586-516 B.C.

Ezra divides into 1-6 and 7-10. Nehemiah into 1-6 and 7-14.
Ezra

1:1 After 70 years they return. Their mission: to build a house in Jerusalem. Why? For redemption!
4:24 It is finished.
1-6 God built the temple in Jerusalem after 70 years.
7-10 Ezra doesn’t build. He teaches.

Nehemiah

1-6 The walls of Jerusalem are built (parallel to the house of Ezra.
7-10 Teaching of the law.

Significance: Now people can get saved once again!

But, is the temple of Ezra/Nehemiah the same as in David/Solomon’s time?
  1. Same place, Jerusalem.
  2. God’s glory is not there.
The bulk of the people is still scattered. Only a remnant is in Jerusalem. For the first time we have something radically different!

They are not just remnants, but slaves as well. They are a satellite nation, ruled over by another.

Nehemiah is called a “governor.” God has changed the channel:

Esther

After 70 years of captivity Ezra and Nehemiah return. There is nothing in Jerusalem; it lies in waste.

Ezra and Nehemiah: The channel of redemption has been restored; the ways of God are reestablished, but… no glory present.
The channel is renewed, but modified.

Esther and Daniel:
Esther is like Daniel.

1. Both are in captivity – outside the land.
2. Both are in government.
3. Both are in trouble.

What is Esther telling us?

Daniel
1:9 God brings him in favor: God gave.
3:28 Nebuchadnezzar says that God did it.
2:18 They sought the Lord.

Esther
2:15 God brings her in favor: Esther got. Why doesn’t Esther say that God gave her favor? A mystery!
4:14 Mordecai sees deliverance coming from somewhere else. Why?
4:16 Esther asks them to fast, without reference to God. Why?

Esther 8:16 Many become Jews, many join the church!
So God is at work in Esther, but He is not mentioned!

When Daniel tells about God’s people he calls them by name: the saints of the Most High (for the first time).
In Esther these same ones are called Jews, about 42 times!

Daniel talks about God working; so do Ezra and Nehemiah. Esther just obtained favor – it just happened?

How are these contrasts reconciled? How is this explained?

God is working in Esther, but why does the book not say so?

**These: Esther tells it like it is.**

God works in a different way in Esther. The difference is qualitative.

Outside the land we see God operating providentially (it “just happens”). It is not supernatural.

In Jerusalem are the saints of the Most High. There God works supernaturally.

Through chapters 1 and 2 God has worked supernaturally in Jerusalem. Only in Jerusalem could one be justified.

**

The Intertestamental Problem

Chapter 3 starts with Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther. Is there a break between these and the Gospels?

How is the incarnation of Christ to be fitted into this?

God had not spoken for 400 years; He spoke extensively to the prophets before this. But, during the 400 before the 400 silent years, God had also been inactive, i.e. during Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther.
The Incarnation:

1. It was an **act of God**. Did God act before this? Galatians 4:4. God **did** it. He was in Christ reconciling the world. This was something different.
2. It the **greatest act** of God.
3. It was the **ground**, the **foundation** of all God did and will do.

Hebrews 1:1-3  
“God, having spoken...hath again spoken...”

The cross is God speaking. He spoke in various manners in history, but all is summarized in the Son. the whole thing is **one process** though.

Bernard: God takes the past, the future, and puts it all in **Him**. Jesus is the great consummation of God.

First we have one record, then four records about Him!

Hebrews 9:26  
“But now once, in the end of the **ages**, hath he appeared...”

How do we interpret “ages”? As **consummation, climax**. Christ’s coming is the climax of chapters 1, 2 and 3. It is also the **end**.

**Christ’s coming is the climax and end of the program.**

1 Peter 1:20  
“...but was manifest in these last times for you.”

The end is the end of John’s gospel.

It started with Abraham and ended with Christ.

Chapters 1, 2 and 3 are finished. The Messiah is the permanent, redemptive solution to the program.
End of Act One.

**Transition**: Acts 1-12

This act starts in…Acts. This will be entirely different. We shall now deal with the Church. This is what God is going to do.

In Act I God chose a nation, the Jews, Israel, to be His channel of redemption.

Now there are some new things:

Matthew 16:18  “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church.”

Here is the promise for a new thing. Do people know who Jesus is? They don’t have the slightest idea. but Peter realized that He was the promised Messiah indeed.

Is there an analogy between this promise and Abraham’s?

In Act I: I will make a nation…
In Act II: I will build the church…

Who is the “I”? It’s Jesus Christ! He is now the new builder!
“My Father worketh hitherto and I work…”

The Father builds the nation.
The Son builds the church.

Problems: Is the nation the same as the church?

The great shift is from the Gospels to Acts.

**

The Beginning

Christ said that He would build the church on “this rock”. Who or what is this?

Thesis: The rock is Peter as representative of the apostles.
1. God had said to Abraham: Of thee will I make a nation. **Abraham was the seed.**
   Christ says to Peter: On this rock will I build my church. **Peter is the seed.**
   Peter is not the pope, but the seed.

2. The **church is now the channel of redemption.**

3. Matthew 16:18 – gates of hell shall not prevail
   Genesis 12 – those that bless you...

4. The “keys” of heaven correspond to the cursing/blessing.

5. Both channels have a commission, a mandate.

6. Genesis – In thee all the families shall be blessed.
   Matthew – Whosoever thou loosest...

   Thus we see a parallel between the beginning of the nation and the church.

Ephesians

2:11 Nobody knew God outside of the nation Israel.
2:12 One had to become a Jew to get to God.
2:13ff Both Jew and Gentile had become **one** in Christ.
2:15 A new social entity.
2:19 The church is like: a body
       A nation is like: a body
       a temple
       a flock

**Conclusion:** **God has created a new sociological, anthropological entity.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Nation</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. A group of people, <strong>elect people</strong></td>
<td>1. A group of <strong>elect people</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Has a <strong>head</strong></td>
<td>2. Has a <strong>head</strong></td>
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<td>3. Is a <strong>theocracy</strong></td>
<td>3. Is a <strong>theocracy</strong></td>
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<td>4. <strong>United</strong></td>
<td>4. <strong>United</strong></td>
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<td>5. <strong>Channel of redemption</strong></td>
<td>5. <strong>Channel of redemption</strong></td>
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<td>6. <strong>Body</strong></td>
<td>6. <strong>Body</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Temple</td>
<td>Temple</td>
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<td>Flock</td>
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</tbody>
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These are **similarities**.
Are there **differences**?

1. The church is **local**, in **every** place.
2. The church is indigenous, universal.
3. The Church does not have a civil government. It cannot exist as a separate society.
4. Only **one place**: Jerusalem.
5. One must become a Jew to be saved, i.e. go to Jerusalem.
6. Nation was one: theocracy, with civil stipulations.

So we have something **new** here. A new executor, channel, nation.

Most scholars regard Acts as the transition. We won’t trace the geographical spread, but the modification of the channel.

Review the differences between Israel and the Church:

**Israel:** 1. local in Jerusalem
            2. only Jewish

**Church:** 1. every place
            2. international
Chapter 1: The seed is the apostles (Peter is representative).

Is this the Church?
Yes, potentially.
No, not mature.

This is the rock.

Chapter 2

The Holy Spirit comes, and the Church is born. If the apostles are the seed, then Pentecost is not the birthday of the Church, but the conception of the Church. The Church is born from the womb of Israel. Now it must grow to maturity, just as with Israel.

Did the apostles have any notion yet of the Church?

Acts
2:46 They met…in the temple.
3:1 Peter and John go…to the temple.

They still lived in Israel!

2-7 Sociologically they have to get out of the temple. There cannot be something new inside of an old structure. The old ways of Israel were still there, e.g. sacrificial system. The Church is pushed out – how? Through persecution.

The Church multiplies; it elects deacons – formalization. They were so united that others really felt as being outsiders.

8:2 Persecution follows, because they are very different. From now on it’s the Church in Jerusalem.
still Jewish
still one not a church yet
still Jerusalem

**Persecution** follows, and so they are scattered.

9:31 The Church has grown; there are at least 3 now.

   Not in Jerusalem anymore!

   The channel is modified!

   Now aw channel of redemption in Judea, Samaria, in Galilee.

   But…it is **not a church yet! It is still a Jewish affair!**

God works slowly and progressively.

**

9-11 Saul is converted. Why? To reach the Gentiles.
10 Cornelius’ conversion. Peter has to do something he has **never** done before.
   Cornelius did not become a Jew. He believed. The door to the Gentiles is opened.
12 Now a fully grown, mature, first **Gentile church**.

**

So, in Acts 1-12 we see a transition from: 1. Jerusalem to Antioch 2. Israel to the Church.

The Church: a new administrator
   it is Jews and Gentiles: international
   it is local/universal
   nonpolitical
How are Israel and the Church related?

Two passages: Matthew 21 – Parable of the householder
Romans 9-11 – On Israel

Matthew 21
Background: The chief priests, leaders challenge Jesus’ authority.
The parable is directed to those who say that they follow God but they don’t.

Householder = God
Farmers = Israel
Vineyard = Kingdom of God
Servants = Prophets (viz., Jeremiah)
Son = Jesus
Other farmers = the Church

Point: the Kingdom of God will be removed from Israel.
Israel will not be the channel of redemption anymore.

What is the Kingdom?
It is redemption, salvation.

This was given to Israel. Only there could one be saved. There was the Kingdom of God. “Salvation is of The Jews.”

Now this is removed from Israel. They are no longer the bearers of redemption.
So, Israel is set aside. That’s where they are today.

What does Jesus say here?
1. God chose Israel as the channel of redemption.
2. They rejected Christ; He took the channel away from them.
3. The kingdom is given to other people = the church.

Romans 9-11

Israel had all this; even Messiah they brought forth. Now they are cast aside and no longer God’s chosen people. In the Church there are no Jews – it is international.

Romans 9:6 “Not as though the Word of God hath taken no effect. For they are not all Israel, who are of Israel.”
Is God unrighteous (14)?
The Church is now Gentile. **What did God say that did not come to pass?**
1. The promise to David – the throne.
2. The promise to Abraham – the nation.
Paul says that this whole thing reflects on God. First He promises Israel, and then He puts her aside. How can that be?

The solution lies in verse 6.
The real Israel is **spiritual**.
They are those who believe.
The biological Israel is put aside.

Can we question God in what He does? **Never question God!**

*God is sovereign and can do what He desires. We trust Him for it.*

Romans 10  Israel tried to save itself instead of choosing God’s way.

**Conclusion: Not God has failed, but Israel!**

Romans 11
Here Paul asks two questions.
1. Did God cast off His people?
   The question should really be “did God put away believers?”
The answer is **never**! Paul himself was a Jew. But he believes. He is now in the church. There is a believing remnant, and they continue in the Church!
The real, saved, believing Israel, is preserved in the Church!

**Only the empty shell is left!**

2. Have they stumbled that they should fall?
   Is God’s purpose in setting Israel aside that they stumble?
   Did God send Babylon to destroy Israel? No.

This question has two answers.

**Their fall made salvation available to the world!**

If they had not fallen the Gentiles could forget about getting saved. It was absolutely necessary to set Israel aside in order to reach the nations.

Paul uses the figure of an olive tree. The Church is grafted into Israel; she is a **wild** olive tree. The church participates of Israel’s fatness.

**God has set them aside, but not forever.** He will graft them back in when the 2.7 billion are reached!

Someday the true branch will come back in. This is their “life from the dead”.

So we, the church have no reason to boast!

**

Intermezzo

Act I: Genesis 12 – John 21
Act II: Acts 13-80
Transition: Acts 1-12
Explanation: Matthew 21; Romans 9-11

Summary: The Kingdom of God is taken from Israel. The real, believing Jews have not been rejected; they continue in God’s new program, the church.

Covenant Theology: The Church is a continuation of Israel.
Dispensation Theology: The Church is a new thing.
It is both.

Luke 24:
44 Retrospect: history talked about Jesus
45 How did He open their minds?
46 This is Act I. This is what God **did**.

**
47 What God will do. Redemption is brought to all nations.
48 This is Act II.

**
John 20:19 In 12 words Jesus summarizes Scripture.
Act I: God sent His Son, through Israel.
Act II: So send I you.

Title of Act I:
“God the Father, through the nation of Israel, has provided salvation for the world.”

End of Intermezzo.

**Act II – Acts 13**

Title of Act II:
“The Son, through the Church, is preaching salvation to the whole world.”

Acts 13:1 For the first time in the history of redemption we have a Ω, a church, a lampstand. This figure we find in Revelation, the 7 lampstands. There now is a new channel in Antioch.

![Diagram of 7 lampstands](image)

How did all this happen so smoothly? Consider God’s wisdom:

Way back, in Esther, the Jews that were scattered build themselves synagogues. These synagogues become the preparation for what takes place now. In every city where the apostles go, there are synagogues; they preach there, some believe, and a church is established. There were **believing Jews** in those synagogues. These were the beachhead for outreach: they understood the message.

Jesus established a church in every community, so that through the Church (local) the Gospel may be proclaimed. That church is His only channel of salvation. God wants to establish and maintain in each community such a channel. **That** is the mission field, where there are no channels yet.

The church is local, with many localities. It is indigenous.

It is not a political community, and therefore nonthreatening. It is an anthropological entity, so it can exist in every society.

The Church is now suited to the purposes of God.

#1 Priority: Establishment of local churches.
After Act II, what is next on God’s program?

Matthew 24:3 “What shall be the signs of the end of the age?”
The answer to this will determine your eschatology.

End of Act I: God sent His Son.
End of Act II: God sends His Son again.

The last things have to do with His coming!

Matthew

24:13 When is the end?
24:14 Answer: When the Gospel is preached in all the world, i.e. to every nation, community. In every community a church must be established. Then shall the end come.

But the end of what?

A. Amillenialists: the end of the whole program, I and II.
B. Premillenialists: the end of Act II alone. There could be another act…Act III?

There must be more, for there would otherwise be many unfulfilled Scriptures.

Act III

The Millenium

This is the premillenial position. Who knows, there might be another channel?

Ezekiel

37 The vision of the valley of dry bones.
11-14 Someday God will raise up these dry bones; they will be a new channel: restored, glorified, Israel.
The nation is, at this time, set aside.

Hosea 3:1-5 Hosea’s experiences portray: Israel will be many days without a king, friend, sacrifice, etc. But after that God and Israel will be reunited in a new way.

Act III: A new channel will be set up: restored Israel.

What will this new channel do?

Isaiah 2:2 All the nations will flow to it in Jerusalem. Why?
The truth, knowledge, prosperity, ways of God will go to all nations. There will be no more crying, no war, no poverty.
Then finally the goal will be reached:

**The whole earth will be filled with His glory.**
Christ, the Son of David, will be on the throne.

Why cannot some people see this?

Not one prophet talks about the church. Why? Because at that time Israel is set aside. The prophets jump from Act I to Act III. The epistles say hardly anything about Act III. Why? **They won’t be there!**
So, the OT prophets are premil, and the epistles are amil!

The problem of transition

Where will the Church be during the millennium, if Israel is the restored channel? You cannot have 2 channels. Besides, a Church would not be appropriate to deal with nations. So the Church must be removed!

Revelation 17  
Destruction of the harlot, which is the apostate church.
God will remove the apostate church, just like He removed Israel.

Will God remove and destroy the true church? **Never!**

1 Thes. 4:13 The true church will be caught up, the channel must be removed.

How will the original channel (Israel) be brought back in? They must be awakened, warmed up! This will take place during the great tribulation. They’ve been sitting too long!
And now, my eschatological friends, we come to the next question. Where will the Church be during the millennium?

Is the Gentile church cast off? No. It could well be, that as the nation Israel, i.e. the believing Israel, was put into the Church, that we, the Church, will be put in with the nation Israel as the new channel. In other words, we may become Jews!

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!
The Progress of Doctrine
Part 3

Introduction

Retrospect:
Scripture is about what God is doing.

Act 1  Provision of Salvation  What God has done
Act II Proclaiming of Salvation  What God is doing
Act III Demonstration of Salvation  What God will do

And now…what God says.  This is **revelation** (or doctrine – Berr).
This is the basis for theology.

We will be dividing the subject into 6 volumes of theology.

Volume I  God spoke to Abraham
Volume II God spoke to Moses
Volume III The Poetic Books
Volume IV The Prophets
Volume V The Gospels
Volume VI The Epistles

My friend, **God’s words must relate to His acts.**
*Never, never separate theology from God’s actions.*

For each volume:  1. **When** does it come? What is the **need**?
   2. What is the **content**?
   3. Is there **progress**?
   4. What **method** does God use?
5. What is the response?

A volume is an extended time when God speaks on a particular subject.

Volume I covers the time of Abraham: Genesis 12-22.

**Question 1:** When does God speak to Abraham?
This is before God has **done** anything.
God gives Abraham a **constitution**. This is the **seed** for all theology.

**Question 2:** What is the content?
Notice the following passages:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The subject and verb is the same in these.</td>
<td>What is the content?</td>
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Content: **The promise to Abraham.** God says, “**I will.**” (grace)
This is a specific promise. God reveals now to Abraham what He will do throughout the whole program of redemption.

**Question 3:** Is there any progress?

The first time God speaks, if that is a seed, it must contain **all** that He will say later. It will grow and be more and more specific.

a) Genesis 12:1-3 the seed: **I will** make a nation
b) Genesis 12:7 I will give this **land** to thy **seed**.
   You can’t have a nation without land and people.
c) Genesis 13:14-18 The sprout has grown. The land is specified.
   The seed (people) are specified.
d) Genesis 15 “I am thy shield and reward.”
   Abraham will have biological children: his own child, not adopted
**Question 4:** What **method** does God use?

God **appears**. How is a promise given, and spoken?

God literally appears and speaks to him as a friend. This is a theophany.

**God’s method is always adapted to the content.**

**Question 5:** What is the **response**?

Every time God speaks it requires a certain kind of response.

God says, “I will do.” (In the NT this is called **grace**.)

Abraham’s response must be: **faith**.

What I do what **God** says that **He** will do it is wrong! (NT calls this “works”.)

God begins His theology by **grace**. When God says He will do it (grace), I will expect Him to do so (faith).

We are saved by **grace** through **faith**.

**Volume II**

Consists of the **Law** to Moses – Ex 20 – Deut

**Question 1:** What is the **need**? **When** did it come?

The law was given before they entered the land, and after they left Egypt. There are now 2.5 million people without a **culture**.

A nation without a culture is no nation.

First God gives them a constitution, now a **culture**.

**Question 2:** What is the **content**?

Ex. 20:1ff …I will constitution

Ex. 20:3ff …Thou shalt culture

God now gives commands! The commands are **behavioral**.

Ex. 25:1 God gives instructions about the tabernacle. Why?

These instructions are **ceremonial**.

There are 2 qualitatively different things God spoke about!

a) The 1st part of the culture (law): **behavioral** (ethical, moral)

b) The 2nd part of the culture (law): **worship** (ceremonial, community)

The 10 commandments deal with the **moral law**.
Question 3: Is there progress?
In one verse God includes all of volume III.
Gen. 17:1 I am God almighty, walk before me, and be thou perfect.
   walk before me = fellowship
   be perfect = behavioral
Ex. 20:1-8 the 10 commandments
Ex. 21:--
Ex 25:--

Question 4: What method does God use?
On Mount Sinai He came down and spoke with Abraham.
God isn’t giving a promise but lays down the law.
God is establishing the right to tell the people what to do.

   My friend, God is establishing His authority.

Question 5: What is the response?  6 principles
Law and Grace
I will requires faith as a response.
You shall requires obedience as response.
Here we have the great tension. The tension between law and grace.

Galatians 3 and 4:
   In Vol I God says to Abraham: I will = grace
   In Vol II God says to Moses: You will = law
   Is this a contradiction?
The epistle to the Galatians deals with this.

We will now have 5 principles:
1. God always works by grace through faith.
   The Galatians are all mixed up about this. Is the new birth by grace or works? Is sanctification by works?
   Paul takes them back to the beginning, the Abraham’s faith. Abraham was saved by grace.

2. The law did not replace grace.
   A signed contract is permanent. Once a contract was made with Abraham, the law later could not replace that (grace through faith). The law came 430 years afterwards.

3. The law serves to limit, curb and restrict sin.
   Grace and law are two mutually non-exclusive revelations.
   The law was added, placed alongside of grace, for sin.
Do not mix them up, otherwise they will produce bondage!
By the law comes the knowledge of sin.

4. The law does not contradict grace.
It looks like God put two standards on me.

God never contradicts Himself. If there were a way for the law to give life, then the law would save. The Law and Grace function together. Never switch them.

The law only tells you what to do, but it doesn’t do it for you. Jesus does that. The law is a mirror.

Conclusion: Both the law and grace must allowed to function in their particular way (like gas and water in a car). They fit together.
There is law in the NT! “Rejoice!” is a command = law!

5. The Mosaic law is replaced by the law of Christ!
Before Christ came we were kept in custody (a playpen).
The playpen is the law.

Act I – before Christ – children
Act II – after Christ – sons

The law was placed alongside until Messiah was come and then removed, i.e. both the moral and ceremonial law.

Now we have a law for sons – love. This is the moral character of God expressed in Jesus Christ.

“You have heard, but I say…” The playpen is gone.

The law is now more minute and specific for it now is to sons.
The moral standard is much higher, but it still serves the same purpose: to expose sin.

Volume III
The poetic books

**Question 1:** When were they written? What is the need?
The poetic books were produced during the height of the kingdom. Only Job is much older. Job is included for it’s the same kind of material.

The books come when the people have already had: 1. the promise 2. the law

Well why do they need poetry? They have had theology. They need to learn to apply theology.

**Question 2:** What is the content?

- Job 23:1,10
- Psalms 27:1
- Proverbs 10:1 inner being, personal experience
- Ecclesiastes 1:12
- Song 2:2 That is why they need poetry – it lends itself to expression of feelings.

**Question 3:** Is there any progress? No.

**Question 4:** What is the method?

- In Vol I a friend to a friend
- In Vol II establishing/exercising authority
- In Vol III God speaks through an experienced person. This is a new method!

David: The Lord is my shepherd.

**Question 5:** What is the response?

The response is saying the same thing: The Lord is my shepherd. It is personalization of what He says.

Responses so far: Vol I I believe
Vol II I will do
Vol III Have it in your heart
Volume IV  The Prophets
Volume IV contains the biggest body of doctrine.

**Question 1:** What is the **need**?
Israel has been unfaithful. She has rejected the Lord and His ways.
Isaiah 1:2 – My people do not know…
Jeremiah 13:11 – God uses a figure of a belt to illustrate the relationship. Israel will not hear.

God has entered into a marriage relationship with His people. God is the husband, Israel the wife. They blew it.
God never spoke to any other country but Israel. Israel has been unfaithful.
**This is where the prophets come in.**

**Question 2:** What is the **content**?
This consists of two parts:

a) What is the problem? Is it God, or Israel?
   What has Israel done? 1. They have not believed God (Habakkuk).
   2. I will **not** (Jonah).
   God speaks to them about their problem and deals with it.

b) Is there a solution? Is there hope?
   The prophets talk about the future (Acts III).
   There is always hope with and in God.

**Question 3:** Progress?
There’s no progress here. Collectively the prophets are in progressive order.

**Question 4:** What is the **method** employed?
Vol I  friend to friend
Vol II  authoritatively
Vol III through persons
Vol IV  **new!**

The Lord will raise up prophets. They need a man beside them whom they will listen to, but it is God’s speech.
A man, on their level, but with God’s authority. It is a **combination.**

**Question 5:** Response?
Simple repentance and belief. The relationship is severed – Israel must return and repent.
Bernard:
1. Bernard is convinced of the progressive nature of Scripture.
3. The Bible cannot be handled right unless it is seen in a progressive way.
Bernard begins by defining his terms. Every chapter has only 2 points and a text.

Chapter 1:
John 17:1 – the words are doctrine: i.e. direct communication from God.

Chapter 2:
The Gospel as fact, i.e. what God did: 4 records.
Fact cannot be separated from doctrine.
The relationship between the Gospels as fact and the Epistles is progress.
Matthew 27:33 – the miracle of communication: knowing what they knew, they wrote what they wrote.
The Gospel authors make their statements in a cold factual manner, although they knew more than they wrote. This is definite inspiration!
They present Christ simply. They see the person of Christ first.

Chapter 4-7:
From Acts onwards is another era of doctrine. God’s method has changed.
The method of the Epistles is adapted to their need.

Chapter 6: The teaching of the epistles
Chapter 8: Revelation

Volume V
The Gospels

**Question 1:** What is the need (for further revelation)?
Jesus spoke. He came to fulfill the law, of all that God ever said. Act I is personified in Him. We need to see truth modeled, “I am.”

**Question 2:** What is the content?
1. Matthew 5-7
   This, my friend, is the law! Jesus raised the law!
2. John 13-17
   This, my friend, is grace! He raised grace as well!
Thus the content is law and grace!

**Question 3:** Is there progress?
How are the Gospels related to the Epistles?
1. Jesus’ teaching includes the substance of all doctrine.
   His mind has been expressed on all points, in a casual way.
2. Every doctrine in the Epistles can be found again in seed form in the Gospels.
   Jesus looks back: He is the fulfillment.
   Jesus looks forward: utters seedform for the epistles.

This is progress.

Examples:
      “It” shall turn to you for a testimony = seed
      Phil 1:12  
      Paul’s persecution worked out for the furtherance of the Gospel. This is the outworking.
   b) John 13:14  
      Ye ought to wash one another’s feet.
      Phil 2  
      doctrinal expansion of Christ’s mind.
   c) John 15:1-8  
      Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you…if ye abide in Me.
      Romans 6-8
      d) Mat 24  
      the seed for Revelation

If this is true, then the Gospels cannot be the same as the Epistles. The Gospels are introduction; they are elementary.
Jesus spoke in parables (stories). Paul did not. Parables are only good for the elementary. A parable is a seed.
How did Jesus teach? He taught occasionally. As situations arose He acted.
The Gospels are:
   elementary in form
   elementary in occasion
   elementary in content

Question 4: What method is employed?
Jesus had disciples. He taught them. He was there.
Jesus was with them.

Question 5: What is the response?
Following Him.

Volume VI
The Epistles

Question 1: What is the need?
Bernard calls the need the “function” of the epistles.
This is a current theological problem.

Abraham  had a promise. Personally, he had nothing. But we read that he had imputed righteousness. He had God. If everybody in history had only what Abraham had, we would still be praising God forever.
David  had the law. He had the house of God.
Daniel  had the promise, the law and poetical books.
Peter  had the Son. Did he have more on Pentecost than the others?
Acts

What did the Christians at Antioch have?

- gospel
- salvation
- spirit-filled
- fruit of the spirit
- gifts
- witnessing
- stewards

When you’ve come all the way from Gen 12 to Acts, when they have the Gospel, what else do they need? Why the Epistles?

Where are we now? Various groups are saying: there is no place for the epistles. They never use them. While the world is dying we’re sitting around playing!

Group A  All you need is the Gospel! Forget the epistles.

Group B  All you need is the Gospel and Pentecost. Consistently the epistles are cut down.

Evangelical heresy: we tell a saved person to read the Bible, pray, witness etc. The Epistles are ignored.

What does a convert need to know?

The evangelical heresy begins with “I am saved!” An then? Everyone has to formulate an explanation of what happened to him.

The person must have God’s explanation of what happened to him!

The United States is filled with people who don’t know what it means to be saved!

What we need is the true interpretation of Scripture!

The need of the epistles is to tell you how to work out your salvation.

Question 2:  What is the content?

The epistles are all addressed to Christians. Their content is not to tell a person how he must get saved!

That is for the Gospels.

Content: sanctification

Here are 2 positions:

1. The cross is everything. Nothing else is needed. God always works at the cross!
2. Not only the cross, but also a second work: Pentecost.
3. You need a new understanding and knowledge.

Bernard:

a) The epistles don’t give a new thing we need. That is not their purpose.

b) The epistles explain the cross. They look back and tell you what you’ve got, what happened to you.

c) Running through the epistles is a great foundation of doctrine.
Thinking that that is all there is to it is heresy! This produces a shallow Christianity.
2 Cor 5:17 In Christ, not in me! Not, “be saved”!

Revelation
Bernard separates the revelation from the epistles. Revelation belongs, says he, to the apostolic time. It is fact, not future.
Revelation is the last doctrine; it is different doctrine.

The Need for Revelation

Having come to the climax, what is the need for Revelation?
In Bernard’s day, and more so today, all you hear about is individual salvation. Where is corporate salvation?
When you read through the epistles, is there anything else you want? In the epistles you don’t see what you feel.
The epistles create this need: the body is dead, decaying. Something is missing in the body (phy).
Paul says, “I am wretched, sinful”. Would you like to stop there? The last enemy to overcome is death.
We sense, through the epistles, that there must be other things to come yet!
Take Revelation out and the plan is unfinished.

Revelation tells about Act III. There is much unaccounted for without it.

Without a millennium on earth much will still be unsettled. Revelation meets that need.
Bernard sums up the doctrine (general):
1. Grounds for consummation: the Lamb that was slain, the cross.
2. History for consummation: he goes behind the history to its reality. It is the culmination of the conflict between God and Satan.
3. Coming of Messiah.
5. Judgment: the wrath of God is unleashed.
6. Restoration: the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem.

We must go on. What happened when you “got saved”?

Try to explain that!

Now there is an intimate relationship that can be explained in no other way then, “we are one.” Nobody tells babes in Christ about what has happened to them.
All that is in Him is potentially in me. But you must know what to do about it. Some think it’s an experience.
The son-relationship gave me the right to partake of everything in my Father’s house. But the relationship has to be maintained.

**Question 3:** Is there progress? No.

**Question 4:** The method?
In the epistles Jesus is still speaking. But Jesus has a new method.
God does again what He did in the poetic books. Here they identify with Christ. Christ is still speaking in the epistles.
Paul says, “Christ lives in me, I have been crucified”.

**Question 5:** Response?
**Abide in Him** – total commitment!

What makes a city? A **restored** city?
Restoration involves:
1. **Relationships** without problems
2. **Law**: the love of God pervades, for each other and God
3. **Earth**: complete renewal
4. **Universe**: complete renewal

**Revelation gives a consummation and restoration of the Garden of Eden.**