

A Disingenuous God? - Part 2

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I've mentioned analogies in this series, so let me give one of my own.

Suppose someone made you a promise concerning something of great importance to you. This person then went a step further and, to show his intent to make good his promise, entered in to some solemn ritual involving a self-maledictory oath. You could surely trust the promise right?

But wait. Suppose you knew that this same individual had made many promises before, and had also sworn oaths to perform the words of the promises, but when the fulfillment was looked for, it came about that this person claimed his oaths were already fulfilled, just in unexpected ways and with different parties. If you knew this about this promiser, how would that knowledge affect the way you trusted the words of promise given to you?

But further, if, upon reflection, it became apparent to you that this individual knew, before making the oaths, that he would not fulfill his promises in the way he had led others to believe, what opinion would form in your mind about this person's character? And what grounds would you have for believing the words of any promise he made to you?

Please think long and hard about that scenario because, contrary to the false analogies of some supercessionists, this one properly represents what they state to be the modus operandi of the God of the Bible!

Consider this promise from Jeremiah 33:14-26 (please read with attention):

14 'Behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD, 'that I will perform that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah:

15 'In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David A Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.

16 In those days Judah will be saved, And Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.'

17 'For thus says the LORD: 'David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel;

18 'nor shall the priests, the Levites, lack a man to offer burnt offerings before Me, to kindle grain offerings, and to sacrifice continually.' "

19 And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying,

20 "Thus says the LORD: 'If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season, or that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers.

21 'then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the

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Levites, the priests, My ministers.

22 'As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the descendants of David My servant and the Levites who minister to Me.' "

23 Moreover the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying,

24 "Have you not considered what these people have spoken, saying, 'The two families which the LORD has chosen, He has also cast them off'? Thus they have despised My people, as if they should no more be a nation before them.

25 " Thus says the LORD: 'If My covenant is not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth,

26 'then I will cast away the descendants of Jacob and David My servant, so that I will not take any of his descendants to be rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will cause their captives to return, and will have mercy on them.' "

In this impressive piece of oath-taking we find God expressing Himself in the most unambiguous terms to perform certain promises:

1. The Branch of righteousness [Christ] will exercise righteousness in the earth.
2. He intends to perform what He has promised to Israel and Judah [not the Church]
3. Jerusalem will dwell safely and be called YHWH-Tsidkenu
4. The Davidic Covenant is expressly quoted
5. The Priests will also offer to the Lord continually [probably a reference to the covenant in Num. 25]
6. God's intention to fulfill these promises is underlined by His intent to uphold His creation [cf. Gen. 8:22]
7. The promises to David and the Levites are then repeated for emphasis
8. Then the Abrahamic covenant is quoted and the promises to David and the Priests are repeated
9. A saying concerning God's rejection of His people is contradicted in the terms of #4-8.

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Every one of these promises may be found in other prophetic passages in the OT. This is what God says. But there is a problem. According to many Christians, God is not going to put another King [Christ cf. #1] on the throne of David in Jerusalem. God is not going to let the Levites offer continual offerings to Him (which would require another Temple. One like Ezekiel's maybe?). In fact, God supposedly has had no intention of coming through on what He had promised in this passage, or for that matter, many similar OT passages. These "promises" aren't literal (although that is what people were led to believe). They were meant spiritually and typologically (even though there is no hint provided that would lead a person to view them that way).

Of course, the people who first heard them and believed them didn't understand this. How could they? The New Testament, which we are told is needed to correctly interpret all these promises, wasn't written yet!

I refer you to a little post I put up a week or so back where OT scholar Richard Hess has something interesting to say about the interpretation of Ezekiel's Temple. It is brief enough to include here:

"In terms of the future and the Messiah, Routledge views things from an amillennial context. Everything prophesied in the future was symbolized and fulfilled in Jesus. There is no future temple or time of peace before the new heavens and new earth. So when Ezekiel 40-48 describes this in detail, he was just condescending to people who could not otherwise understand except by making them think there was really going to be a temple and a repopulated Promised Land. Somehow Routledge doesn't find this deceptive in the least, despite the fact that every example we have until after the New Testament was written believed in a literal fulfillment of a restored temple." (my emphasis)

- From Richard Hess's [review](#) of R. Routledge's OT Theology in Denver Journal.

Umm. So God made a detailed promise about a future Temple which led many pious Jews to believe there really would be a future Temple of that description? But, as it turns out (according to interpreters like Routledge) God meant something entirely different than what He said!

Does anyone find such equivocation in God alarming?

Whatismore, this is not an isolated example. In the theology of supercessionism, this act of saying one thing but meaning another is standard operating procedure for the God of the Old Testament. One might point to the prophetic portions of

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say Isaiah, e.g., Isaiah 2, 11, 26, 27, 30, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 52, 54, 55, 60, 61, 62, 65, (seventeen chapters in one Book!) and be told by these brethren that these were merely types and shadows of NT realities – “realities” which would have been incomprehensible to the OT saints, given the information they were left with. Shall we look at another example?

NKJ Malachi 3:1 “Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,” Says the LORD of hosts.

2 “But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner’s fire And like launderer’s soap.

3 He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness.

4 “Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem Will be pleasant to the LORD, As in the days of old, As in former years.

5 And I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness Against sorcerers, Against adulterers, Against perjurers, Against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, And against those who turn away an alien — Because they do not fear Me,” Says the LORD of hosts.

6 “For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.

In this prophecy the Lord is Jesus Christ in His first and second advents (this prophetic foreshortening is found e.g. in Isa. 61:1-3). He comes in his role as “Refiner” and “Purifier” when He comes “for judgment.” But notice what He does to the “sons of Levi” in verse 3. He purges them in order that they may “offer...an offering in righteousness.” When do they do this? Well, they did not do it at Christ’s first Coming! But verse 2 is more in keeping with what we know about the Second Coming (Mal. 4:1; Isa. 63:1-6; cf. Rev. 19:11-16). Therefore, this purging of the Priests occurs when Jesus returns. But that requires (again) a future Temple in which to offer the prescribed offerings of verse 3. That is, if God means what He says.

The trouble is, the God of replacement theology doesn’t mean what He says. He is like the person described in the opening analogy. It is in the very nature of this supercessionist god to prevaricate and mislead. In short, it is in the nature

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of the god of supercessionism to equivocate. That is one of his attributes!

Thus, along with the qualities of omniscience and eternity and aseity and the rest, the god who makes oaths and covenants about one set of circumstances to one people group but who never intended to do what he promised to those to whom he promised it, must also have the attribute of equivocation or prevarication. Now what that does to other attributes like goodness, veracity and holiness is another question; and a disturbing one at that. But there seems to be no way out of it. Any being who could say Jeremiah 33:14ff. and mean something else when he said it is an equivocating, and hence disingenuous being.

We shall see this yet more when we consider what God (the true God who makes covenants and will do what He says in those covenants) says about others who don't keep their covenanted promises...