

The Defense
of the Gospel

Romans

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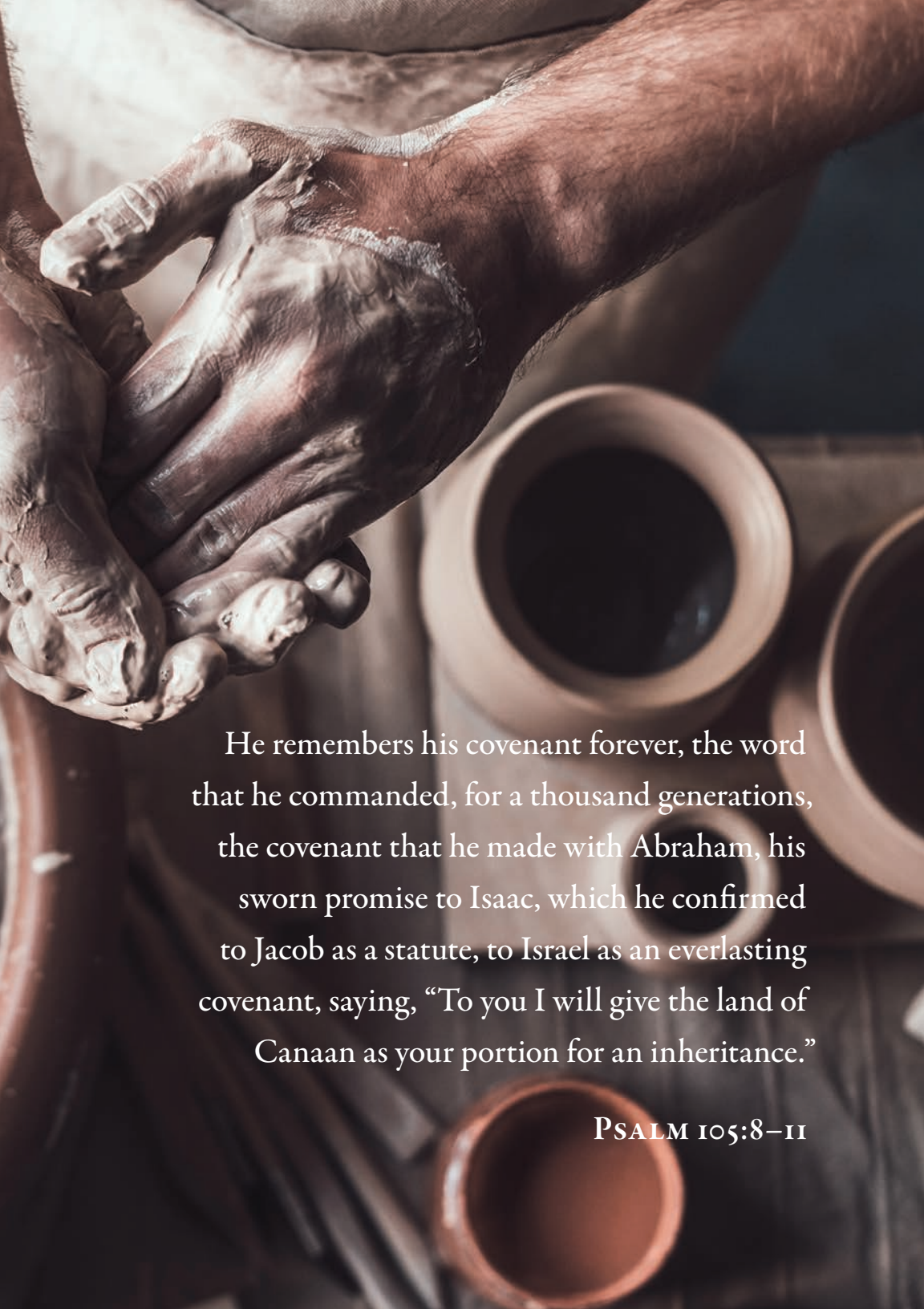
A GUIDE TO THE BOOK OF

Romans

PART THREE

The Defense of the Gospel





He remembers his covenant forever, the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations, the covenant that he made with Abraham, his sworn promise to Isaac, which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant, saying, “To you I will give the land of Canaan as your portion for an inheritance.”

PSALM 105:8-11

A GUIDE TO THE BOOK OF

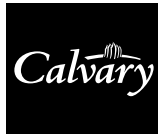
Romans

PART THREE

The Defense of the Gospel

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WHY WE STUDY THE BIBLE

At Calvary Church, our mission is to be and to make authentic followers of Jesus Christ. We take seriously the responsibility to model living a life of obedience to Christ. Though none of us do it perfectly, that's our aim. At the same time, we desire to encourage others in obedience to Him as well. We believe we love God and others best when we are being and making disciples.

The primary way we fulfill our mission is studying and obeying the Scriptures. The Bible is a book about the Lord Jesus; it teaches us who He is and how we can know Him. It equips us for the good work of loving Him and serving Him. The Bible is the Word of God, living and active. God speaks directly through His Word.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

As a church family, we are pursuing an in-depth study of a book in the Bible called Romans. This is Part Three of *A Guide to the Book of Romans*, and it provides some tools to help you explore it and understand it. The guide can be used as a personal resource for you as an individual or as a resource for the entire family.

REVIEW AND INTRODUCTION

As we begin this guide, you will find a brief review of the first eight chapters of Romans: *The Heart of the Gospel* and the *The Hope of the Gospel*. These chapters provide the foundation of Paul's exposition of the Gospel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ. In the next section of Romans (chapters 9–11), Paul defends the Gospel and demonstrates God's plan for Israel.

DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

For each sermon that is preached during our study, we offer a devotional for you to read on your own or with your family. If possible, choose a time each week to spend 10–15 minutes with the devotional. You'll find the Scripture

passage to read, a brief explanation of the text, questions to ponder, and ways to apply these truths to your life. Spend time praying about it, and jot down notes of prayer and praise. Don't underestimate the impact that sharing the Word of God together can have on you, your spouse, and your kids!

SING & WORSHIP

Throughout history, many great hymns of the faith have been inspired by the foundational truths in the book of Romans. Songwriters today continue its message through inspiring lyrics and music. Each week you'll find a song suggestion with the devotions.

SERMON NOTES

Be sure to take notes each Sunday during the sermons from Romans. There is a note-taking page included every week. If you cannot be present one Sunday, listen to the sermon online at media.calvarychurch.com and take notes on your own.

MEMORIZE SCRIPTURE

Finally, we encourage you to memorize Scripture. It is God's Word and should be hidden in our hearts! There are memory verse cards in the back of the guide for selected verses from Romans, chapters 9–11. Punch out the cards and carry them with you, or display them where you'll see them often. Commit to memorizing God's Word!

JOIN THE JOURNEY

We're excited to study the book of Romans as a church family. If you missed any of Part One, *Romans: The Heart of the Gospel* or Part Two, *Romans: The Hope of the Gospel*, the audio and video messages are available at media.calvarychurch.com. The boxed CD sets may be purchased at Calvary Church in the Word Room bookstore.

May God bless you and your family from the pulpit, in your Life Group, and in your home as you use this guide to know Him and His Word.

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A Personal Reflection on Israel

By John H. Munro

I AM THANKFUL THAT AS A WEE BOY I WAS TAUGHT to love the land of Israel and the Jewish people. The earliest stories I ever heard were located in Israel and were about the Israelites. So my heroes were men like Joseph, David, and Daniel — all Israelites. Most important of all, I knew that Jesus was born in Bethlehem and died on the cross in Jerusalem. Since then as I have studied the Bible, the more I have loved the land of Israel and the people of that nation. The Messiah, Jesus the Christ, is from the nation of Israel “according to the flesh and is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen” (Romans 9:5).

FRIENDS

I can't remember meeting a Jewish person until my family moved to live in Gibraltar when I was 13. My brothers and I attended Gibraltar Grammar School, which was a boys-only school. There I was delighted to find that two of my classmates were Jewish: Solomon and Isaac! “Solly” and I played midfield on the school's soccer team. We became good friends. As the sun was setting on a Friday evening, I learned that this was the beginning of the Sabbath for Solly and Isaac. Our Sabbath was Sunday, but whether Jewish or Christian we all came from families where the Sabbath was a special day!

WHERE JESUS WALKED

Even a cursory reading of the Bible makes it clear that the Israelites and the land of Israel are central to the story of the Bible. The Old Testament prophecies made it clear that the Messiah was going to come from Israel and would be the Savior of the world. After years of studying the Bible, you can imagine the excitement of Gudny and myself when, in December 1987, we had the opportunity to visit Israel for the first time. It was a quick visit, but unforgettable! The intifada broke out the day we left Israel, but while we were there we were able to visit Bethlehem and Hebron, and were even able to enter the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount! Since then we have made several trips to Israel and have been privileged to take many from Calvary Church. I never tire of visiting the sites and seeing the enthusiastic response of people who love Jesus Christ, love His Word, and love the Jewish people.

CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE

Israel is a very small country, but it is situated in the middle of the world. My two favorite sites in Israel have remained the same over the years: the Temple Mount in Jerusalem and the Sea of Galilee. Much of the ministry of our Lord took place around the shores of the Sea of Galilee. One can almost see Jesus walking and calling His disciples to follow. We can picture Him in the storm on the sea, feeding the 5,000, and teaching in the synagogues. While much has changed over 2,000 years, the topography is unchanged. It is humbling to think that in the tiny country of Israel, the Word became flesh and lived among us (John 1:14).

Walking on the Temple Mount is an unforgettable experience. It was there on Mount Moriah where the great temple of Solomon stood. It was there where Herod's temple was built, which was visited by our Lord during His ministry. As we stand on the Temple Mount, we know that once the Messiah returns, a new temple will be built, and our Savior will reign from Jerusalem — the very center of the universe — the most famous city in the history of the world.

GOD'S PLAN

I firmly believe both from the Old Testament prophecies and the teaching of the New Testament that there is “an ethnic, national, territorial Israel in the consummate plan of God, and what we are witnessing today in the nation of Israel is a pre-consummate work of God in continuity with the divine plan for Israel and the nations” (Craig Blasing, *The New Christian Zionism*, ed. Gerald R McDermott [IVP Academic, 2016], 79). Scripture makes clear, “And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, ‘The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob;’ ‘and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins’” (Romans 11:26–27). ☞



ABOVE: *The Gibraltar Grammar School U15 soccer team, with forwards John Munro (front, second from left) and Solomon “Solly” Garson (front, second from right)*



RIGHT: *Three Munro brothers in Gibraltar — Jim, John, and George (left to right)*



CHAPTERS 1-4

The Heart of the Gospel

CHAPTERS 5-8

The Hope of the Gospel

CHAPTERS 9-11

The Defense of the Gospel

CHAPTERS 12-16

The Transformation of the Gospel

The True Gospel:

Romans 1–8

THE CENTRAL THEME OF ROMANS IS THE GOSPEL OF GOD concerning our Lord Jesus Christ. As we are to be Gospel-centered people, it is essential that we understand the biblical Gospel and not a false gospel. We have previously considered some distortions of the Gospel, particularly the popular “Prosperity Gospel”.

In that false and unbiblical gospel, followers of Jesus are promised success, wealth, health, and always feeling good about themselves. Jesus is presented as a kind of buddy, albeit a supernatural one, who is just there to help us fulfill our dreams. Tell Jesus what you want, and he will make sure you get it! In a culture where feeling good about ourselves, fulfilling our dreams, and being happy are top goals, we can understand why such a phony gospel is so popular!

In Galatians, Paul writes of the only true Gospel. “But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one preached to you let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:8). These strong statements are necessary lest we be deluded as to God’s only way of salvation.

THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL

At the heart of the Gospel, the “purest Gospel” as Martin Luther describes it (*Preface to Romans*, 1552), is the magnificent truth of “justification by faith.” In Romans, Paul carefully and brilliantly presents this truth. Our salvation is not based on what we do or have done, but it is totally based on what God in

Christ Jesus our Lord has done. “For if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace” (Romans 11:6). Our hearts are warmed as we rejoice in this abounding grace which is available to all who call upon the name of the Lord.

Isn't it wonderful to know that our salvation is not based on our works, or our sincerity, or our endeavors, or our adherence to religious rituals? We rejoice that God declares us righteous by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. Have you by faith received this salvation in Christ Jesus? This “pure” Gospel of the grace of God must always be central to our lives, our preaching, and our living!

THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL

In considering “the hope of the Gospel,” we studied Romans, chapters five through eight. What is the result of this justification by faith? What does it produce in our lives? From these chapters, it is clear that the Gospel must make a difference! For example, we have peace with God, access to Him, and His love is poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who is given to us (Romans 5:1–5). This Gospel is our only hope, as it is only through the Gospel that we who died “in Adam” can be made alive “in Christ.” All in Adam are under the condemnation of God because of their sin. Death has passed upon all because all have sinned (5:12). But in our Lord Jesus Christ there is justification, righteousness, and eternal life — all through God's abounding grace (5:12–21).

Paul emphatically dispels any notion that being saved by grace means that we live as we like. Quite to the contrary! We are united with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. We have died to sin and are now alive to God in Christ Jesus. Authentic followers of Christ are no longer slaves to sin, but are slaves to righteousness and to God (Romans 6:1–23). This is the hope of the Gospel.

Not only is there freedom from sin, there is also freedom from the law. The law is good, as it comes from God and is a revelation of His holiness and goodness. The problem is not with the law, but with us who cannot obey the law! In chapter seven, Paul explains that we have died to the law and have been released from its condemnation and its demands. While it is true that we have died to

sin, we all experience a struggle — as sin has not died to us! Rescue is only found “through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

In chapter eight, Paul continues to underline the eternal assurance of salvation enjoyed by authentic followers of Jesus Christ. Now there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. There is a life of freedom for those who walk according to the Spirit (Romans 8:4) and don't fulfill the lusts of the flesh. They are now in God's family and look beyond this life to that which is to come. Meantime in this life, there are sufferings, groaning, and pain. But those who know Christ are assured that God is working all things together for good (8:28). There is nothing in the whole universe which can “separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (8:39). This is the hope of the Gospel! ❀

REVIEW OF ROMANS: CHAPTERS 1–8

THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL: CHAPTERS 1–4

I. Introduction to Romans

II. The Heart of the Gospel

Condemnation: The Universal Reign of Sin (*1:18–3:20*)

Justification: By Faith Alone (*3:21–4:25*)

THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL: CHAPTERS 5–8

I. Reconciliation — *Chapter 5*

II. Freedom from Sin and the Law — *Chapters 6 & 7*

III. Life in the Spirit — *Chapter 8*

IX-XI

Romans

CHAPTERS 9–11

THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL

Paul defends the Gospel in the light of Israel's rejection of the righteousness of God by faith:

- I. Israel's present rejection is not inconsistent with God's promises or God's justice (9:1–29)
- II. Israel itself is responsible for its rejection (9:30–10:21)
- III. Israel's present rejection is neither complete nor final: God always has a remnant (11:1–36)

The Defense of the Gospel

ALTHOUGH CHAPTERS 9–11 COMPRISE A SHORT SECTION of Romans, it is very important and must not be ignored. Chapter eight is arguably one of the most magnificent chapters in all of Scripture from the viewpoint of the follower of Jesus. There is no condemnation (Romans 8:1) and the righteous requirements of the law are fulfilled in those who walk according to the Spirit (8:4). We are indwelt by the Spirit of God, and this guarantees that we also will receive life to our mortal bodies (8:11). Furthermore, we are adopted as sons of God and “heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ” (8:17). Although in this life there are sufferings and groaning, we look forward to that great day when our bodies will be redeemed (8:18–23). Meantime, we are assured that God is working all things together for our good (8:28). Those whom God justifies he also glorifies (8:30), and Paul finishes chapter eight with this triumphant and glorious note that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (8:38–39)!

Therefore, it is somewhat of a shock when we read immediately in chapter nine about Paul’s “great sorrow and unceasing anguish” in his heart (Romans 9:2). What can have caused Paul, after such a brilliant survey of the spiritual life in chapter eight, to say that he is willing to be “accursed and cut off from Christ” (9:3)?

DEALING WITH ISRAEL

After presenting the heart of the Gospel and the hope of the Gospel, Paul must now defend the Gospel against the charge that God has treated Israel unjustly

and has gone back on His promises. He will make it abundantly clear that God is always faithful to His promises, that God is always just, and the promises which were made to ancient Israel will be fulfilled in the future. “And in this way all Israel will be saved” (Romans 11:26).

GOD’S PURPOSES

Paul is going to trace the purposes of God in the Old Testament, and in so doing he will make it clear that Jesus is the true Messiah and “is God over all, blessed forever” (Romans 9:5). Paul demonstrates that Israel’s failure is not because of God’s unfaithfulness to His promises, but because of Israel’s self-reliance and rejection of the Messiah.

However, Israel’s present rejection of the Messiah is neither complete nor final, because there has always been a remnant of saved Israelites. Paul takes care to make it known that Israel’s present rejection is not final, and that in the future all Israel will be saved. In this way, Paul defends the Gospel and gives God the glory that His wisdom and knowledge are unsearchable and His judgments and ways are inscrutable. “To Him be glory forever. Amen” (Romans 11:36).

GOD’S FAITHFULNESS

Now it may be thought that these chapters are unimportant to Gentiles. On the face of it, Paul seems to be dealing with objections and making a defense of matters which do not trouble us at all. But to the contrary, these chapters are very important in demonstrating God’s faithfulness through His Word — and also, that Israel has a future!

It is of vital importance that we keep Israel and the church distinct. “Replacement Theology” claims that the church of Jesus Christ has replaced Israel. But the Old Testament and the New Testament teach that Israel as a nation has a future and this restoration is certain. Praise God! ❀



THE POTTER AND THE CLAY

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: "Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words." So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. And the vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do.

Then the word of the Lord came to me: "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter has done? declares the Lord. Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel."

Jeremiah 18:1-6

IX

Justice and Mercy

ROMANS 9:1–29

I am speaking the truth in Christ — I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit — ² that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.

³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. ⁴ They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. ⁵ To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

⁶ But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, ⁷ and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.” ⁸ This means that it is not the children of the

flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring.⁹ For this is what the promise said: “About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son.”¹⁰ And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac,¹¹ though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad — in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls —¹² she was told, “The older will serve the younger.”¹³ As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

¹⁴ What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God’s part? By no means!¹⁵ For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.”¹⁶ So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.¹⁷ For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.”¹⁸ So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

¹⁹ You will say to me then, “Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?”²⁰ But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?”²¹ Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for

dishonorable use?²² What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,²³ in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory —²⁴ even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?²⁵ As indeed he says in Hosea,

“Those who were not my people I will call ‘my people,’
and her who was not beloved I will call ‘beloved.’”

²⁶ “And in the very place where it was said to them,
‘You are not my people,’
there they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’”

²⁷ And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: “Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved,²⁸ for the Lord will carry out his sentence upon the earth fully and without delay.”²⁹ And as Isaiah predicted,

“If the Lord of hosts had not left us offspring,
we would have been like Sodom
and become like Gomorrah.”

READ | ROMANS 9:1–29

THINK ABOUT

Chapters 9–11 are often skipped over in reading and studying the book of Romans, but they are extremely important. Not only are they part of inspired Scripture, but Paul is now going to deal with the key subject of Israel.

The Apostle has emphasized that the Gospel of Christ is the power of God to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile (Romans 1:16). But it appears that while the majority of Jews are rejecting the Gospel of Jesus Christ, many Gentiles are believing. So is God going to reject Israel? Has God finished with Israel? Has the church replaced Israel?

The rejection by so many Jews of the Gospel certainly brings great sorrow to Paul. But what about the promises of God and the justice of God?

Is God unjust because some people are saved and others are not? Is God fair?

APPLY

The faithfulness of God to His promises is all important. Isn't it the case that in the difficult circumstances of life, we are apt to question the promises of God? But God's Word never fails (v. 6).

Paul also makes a strong statement that the Christ "is God over all, blessed forever" (v. 5). This is a good verse to mention in conversations with Jehovah's Witnesses.

Think of some of the promises of God which you need to claim today!

ASK

Paul is willing to give his life for the salvation of his fellow Jews. Do you have a similar passion and even sorrow for those in your family and in your sphere of influence who are not yet saved?

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It is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated” (v. 13). Does this mean that God is unfair? Was Esau a man of faith? How did he regard his birthright and his father’s blessing (Genesis 25–27)?

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Does the sovereignty of God give you comfort, or is it challenging for you to accept? Do you find yourself answering back to God (v. 20)? Do you personally feel you deserve the mercy of God or the judgment of God?

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Scripture teaches God’s election and also human responsibility. How do you reconcile these? Is reconciliation possible?

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PRAY

Lord give me a heart of compassion for those in my family and at my workplace who do not yet know Jesus Christ as their Savior. Give me the wisdom and the opportunity to tell them about Jesus.

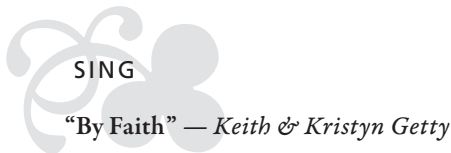
Lord, I am undeserving of your salvation. Thank you for your mercy and your grace which you abundantly pour on me. Help me to live a thankful and fruitful life.

NUMBERS 23:19

“God is not man, that he should lie,
or a son of man, that he should change his mind.
Has he said, and will he not do it?
Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?”

PSALM 51:1–2

“Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!”



“JUSTICE AND MERCY”

Romans 9:1–29

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing.





SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS IN CHRIST

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

Ephesians 1:3–6



THE BREAD OF LIFE

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."

John 6:35–40

IX-X

Jesus Is Lord

ROMANS 9:30-10:13

³⁰ What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; ³¹ but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. ³² Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, ³³ as it is written,

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling,
and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him
will not be put to shame.”

CHAPTER 10

Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. ² For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

³ For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and

seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.⁴ For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

⁵ For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them.⁶ But the righteousness based on faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down)⁷ "or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).⁸ But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim);⁹ because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.¹¹ For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame."¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him.¹³ For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

READ | ROMANS 9:30–10:13

THINK ABOUT

These important verses describe the difference between pursuing a works-righteousness as opposed to trusting Jesus Christ by faith as personal Savior and Lord.

Why did the Jews pursue a works-righteousness? What is the difference between a works-righteousness and the imputed righteousness of Christ which we receive through faith in Him? Think of what we have previously learned on this important subject in our study of Romans.

Paul describes the Messiah as “a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense” (9:33). What did he mean by that?

There is only one way of salvation, as we have “the same Lord who is Lord of all” (10:12).

APPLY

Have you ever pursued this works-righteousness in the past? Is it possible that even now as a follower of Jesus Christ you are still trying to be accepted by God based on what you do?

How would you explain the pure Gospel of grace to a family member or friend who is trusting in their church traditions or their own righteousness to get into heaven?

We again see Paul’s great desire for his fellow Jews to be saved. His love for the Jews does not prevent him from clearly explaining to them the Gospel of the grace of God. Apply that to your situation.

ASK

What does it mean that “Christ is the end of the law” (10:4). Does that mean that followers of Jesus now live as they like? Review some of the earlier references to the law (Romans 6:14, 7:4, 7:6, 8:4). We often stress the death of Jesus Christ when presenting the Gospel, but why is the resurrection so important?

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The early apostles were bold in their proclamation of the Gospel and were not ashamed (Romans 1:16, 10:11). Why are you sometimes ashamed or at least unwilling to tell others about Jesus?

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What did you learn in these verses about the Gospel, which you must keep in mind when presenting it to others?

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PRAY

O God, help me more and more to appreciate Your grace and mercy in my salvation. Help me not to think that I have to do things to be accepted by You.

Lord, I pray for (name specific members of your family, friends, neighbors, or colleagues). Give me an opportunity to tell them about Jesus. Help me to make sure I am communicating Your message and not my own ideas. May I never be ashamed of the Gospel. Give me strength and boldness!

PHILIPPIANS 3:8–10

“Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith — that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.”



SING

“Sovereign Grace O’er Sin Abounding” — *John Kent*

“JESUS IS LORD”

Romans 9:30–10:13

A series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes, extending across the width of the page.

HYMN

“Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” — PHILIPPIANS 2:9–11

All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name

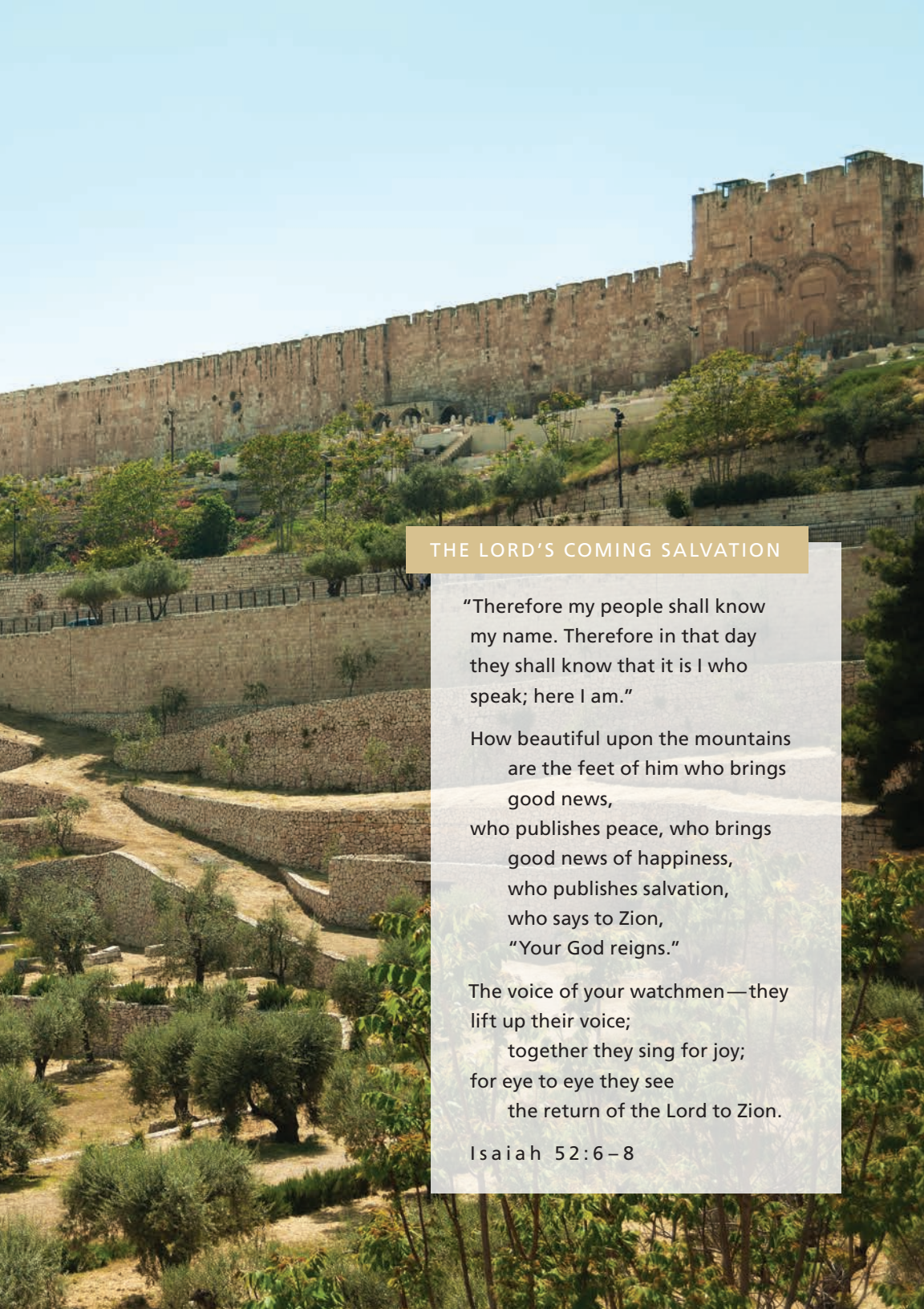
1. All hail the pow'r of Je - sus' name! Let an - gels pros - trate fall;
2. Ye cho - sen seed of Is - rael's race, Ye ran - sored from the fall,
3. Let ev - 'ry kin - dred, ev - 'ry tribe, On this ter - res - trial ball,
4. O that with yon - der sa - cred throng We at His feet may fall!

Bring forth the roy - al di - a - dem, And crown Him Lord of all;
Hail Him who saves you by His grace, And crown Him Lord of all;
To Him all maj - es - ty as - crite, And crown Him Lord of all;
We'll join the ev - er - last - ing song, And crown Him Lord of all;

Bring forth the roy - al di - a - dem, And crown Him Lord of all!
Hail Him who saves you by His grace, And crown Him Lord of all!
To Him all maj - es - ty as - crite, And crown Him Lord of all!
We'll join the ev - er - last - ing song, And crown Him Lord of all!

Text: Edward Perronet, 1780; adapted by John Rippon ☘ Tune: Oliver Holden, 1793





THE LORD'S COMING SALVATION

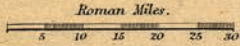
“Therefore my people shall know
my name. Therefore in that day
they shall know that it is I who
speak; here I am.”

How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of him who brings
good news,
who publishes peace, who brings
good news of happiness,
who publishes salvation,
who says to Zion,
“Your God reigns.”

The voice of your watchmen—they
lift up their voice;
together they sing for joy;
for eye to eye they see
the return of the Lord to Zion.

Isaiah 52:6–8

PALESTINA.
ANTIQUA.



MARE MEDITERRANEUM



52°

53°

54°

33°

32°

31°

53° Longitude East from Ferro.

54°

X

Hearing and Believing

ROMANS 10:14–21

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?¹⁵ And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”¹⁶ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?”¹⁷ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

¹⁸ But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have, for

“Their voice has gone out to all the earth,
and their words to the ends of the world.”

- ¹⁹ But I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says,
“I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation;
with a foolish nation I will make you angry.”
- ²⁰ Then Isaiah is so bold as to say,
“I have been found by those who did not seek me;
I have shown myself to those who did not ask
for me.”
- ²¹ But of Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my
hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”

READ | ROMANS 10:14–21

THINK ABOUT

Our mission at Calvary Church is to be and make authentic followers of Jesus Christ. Our understanding from Scripture is that every true follower of Jesus Christ is to display and proclaim the Lord Jesus. We don't all have the gift of evangelism (praise God for those who do), but all of us are called to display and proclaim Jesus. This passage will help us to understand the true nature of evangelism.

God is the one who saves, but He uses us to tell others about Jesus. So this passage deserves to be carefully studied and applied. Reflect on all the rhetorical questions in these verses.

APPLY

Have you called on the name of the Lord and been saved (Romans 10:13)? In order to believe, you must hear and obey the Word of God.

Evangelism is a process, as Paul sets out in these verses. Trace the process.

Prayerfully consider whether you are really involved in this process of making disciples (Matthew 28:19–20). Think of the beautiful feet God sees as we communicate the good news of Jesus Christ!

ASK

The central question is, "Are you involved in evangelizing?" If you are not, what is keeping you back? What fears do you have? Are there things you don't understand about the Gospel? Or are you simply lethargic?

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We previously considered Paul's great passion for those of the Jewish nation who were still unsaved. Ask God to give you that passion for the lost.

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What would you say to a person who says he/she wants to believe but doesn't have the faith to do so? Does this passage help us in answering that question?

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At Calvary, we support almost 100 missionaries who are involved in the process of evangelism. Are you encouraging them, learning from them, and praying for them?

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PRAY

Lord, thank you for the simplicity of the good news of Jesus Christ. Thank you that the Gospel is faithfully preached at Calvary, and that we have so many missionaries sent out with beautiful feet. Help me to tell others about Jesus.

O God, I pray for many souls to be saved through the ministry and people of Calvary Church.

JOHN 5:24

“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.”

1 CORINTHIANS 3:5–6

“What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.”



“Here Am I, Send Me” — *Shannon Wexelberg*

“HEARING AND BELIEVING”

Romans 10:14-21

Lined writing area with horizontal dotted lines.




STILL THERE IS ROOM

And the master said to the servant,
"Go out to the highways and hedges
and compel people to come in, that
my house may be filled."

Luke 14:23

His Story – Our Story

By Pastor Jim Cashwell



I HAD A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE. It happened when I was nine years old. A visiting pastor shared that I had a heart that was prone to sin. My heart was not just prone to sin! I knew that I was a sinner. He continued to share that sin in my life would separate me from a righteous and holy God, and my punishment would be eternal separation from God in hell. I knew beyond a shadow of doubt that I was in trouble — eternal trouble. This visiting pastor then shared the solution. He shared that God had sent His Son who lived a perfect, sinless life to take my place and pay for my sin. Jesus was my way out. How do I make this great exchange?

“IF YOU CONFESS with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”

Romans 10:9–10

Romans 10:9–10 held the answer. Through prayer, I confessed my sin and accepted Jesus as Lord of my life. In my heart, I knew that God had given me victory over this eternal death and hell. My life — my eternity — changed forever. On that day, I began a personal relationship with Jesus, and my life has never been the same.

Sharing how Jesus changed our life should be as easy as telling someone how you met your best friend. I think we allow thoughts of rejection to flood our minds and cause us to hesitate. God’s

Word challenge us, “How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?” (Romans 10:14).

God has given you and me the responsibility of sharing Christ with His lost world. Telling “His Story” of how He saved us from our sinful lives is the best tool for sharing Christ with another person.

I usually begin “My Story” with a word from Scripture. It could be Romans 10:9–10. Other times I use John 3:16, and I talk about how much God loves us. John 10:10 is a great passage to share when you want to contrast the abundant life Christ offers with the lies of the enemy. Romans 5:8 is a wonderful passage to share explaining that Christ died for us while we were yet sinners; many people think they are not good enough to follow Christ.

From there, I just share about my life-changing experience — I cried out to Jesus, and He came into my heart. The best thing about “My Story” is that it cannot be disputed. I am telling first-hand of the transformation that Jesus has made in my life.

There are other great tools to help you frame your personal testimony of how Jesus came into your life. Tracts, such as “Steps to Peace with God” or “The Four Spiritual Laws,” have been used successfully for decades to tell the Gospel story. “The Roman Road” (Romans 3:23, 6:23, 5:8, 10:9–10 and 10:13) is another effective tool to use to share Christ’s love as we witness to others.

Whatever tool you use, do not hesitate because you fear rejection. God just commands us to share. We are to trust Him for the outcome!

Take a moment and list five people you know who need Jesus.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Now, make plans to tell them “Your Story.” ❧





RETURN TO THE LORD

I will heal their apostasy;
I will love them freely,
for my anger has turned from them.
I will be like the dew to Israel;
he shall blossom like the lily;
he shall take root like the trees
of Lebanon;
his shoots shall spread out;
his beauty shall be like the olive,
and his fragrance like Lebanon.
They shall return and dwell beneath
my shadow;
they shall flourish like the grain;
they shall blossom like the vine;
their fame shall be like the wine
of Lebanon...

Whoever is wise, let him understand
these things;
whoever is discerning, let him
know them;
for the ways of the Lord are right,
and the upright walk in them,
but transgressors stumble in them.

Hosea 14:4–7, 9

XI

Israel's Unbelief

ROMANS 11:1-24

I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.² God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel?³ “Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life.”⁴ But what is God’s reply to him? “I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.”⁵ So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace.⁶ But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

⁷ What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened,⁸ as it is written,

“God gave them a spirit of stupor,
eyes that would not see
and ears that would not hear,
down to this very day.”

⁹ And David says,

“Let their table become a snare and a trap,
a stumbling block and a retribution for them;
¹⁰ let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see,
and bend their backs forever.”

¹¹ So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather, through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. ¹² Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean!

¹³ Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry ¹⁴ in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them. ¹⁵ For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead? ¹⁶ If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

¹⁷ But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive

tree,¹⁸ do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you.¹⁹ Then you will say, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.”²⁰ That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear.²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you.²² Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God’s kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off.²³ And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again.²⁴ For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree.

READ | ROMANS 11:1–24

THINK ABOUT

The subject of Israel is a fascinating one. The people of Israel and the land of Israel are central to the biblical story. Paul has explained that the Messiah comes from Israel “according to the flesh” and “is the Christ who is God overall, blessed forever. Amen” (Romans 9:5). Calvary Church rejects the view that the church has now taken the place of Israel. That is, we do not hold to “Replacement Theology.”

Romans 11 makes it abundantly clear that ethnic and national Israel has a future, and that future includes the Promised Land!

The purposes of God, stated in the Old Testament and reaffirmed in the New Testament, are that Jesus Christ, the Messiah, is central to the consummation of the plan of God for Israel.

In these verses, Paul is stating that Israel is presently in disobedience. But that unbelief is not total — there is a remnant.

APPLY

In our society, anti-Semitism is still prevalent. Why is that the case? While we do not necessarily approve everything present day Israel does, God’s purposes include the nation of Israel and the land of Israel.

“I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Genesis 12:3).

Let us be supporters of Israel, and reject the idea that the present day church is a spiritualized Israel.

ASK

How would you respond to a Christian who says that the church has replaced Israel, and that now in Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile (Galatians 3:28).

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What are the examples Paul gives in this passage to demonstrate that there is a believing remnant today within Israel? How would you present the Gospel to a Jewish person today? What obstacles would you anticipate?

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How would you answer their objections from Scripture? Does this passage help?

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PRAY

Lord, I pray for the peace of Israel and for the salvation of the Jewish people. Help me to be a clear witness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Lord, give me wisdom and grace not only to proclaim Jesus but to display His love to all whom I meet, including my Jewish friends.

PSALM 87:1–3

“On the holy mount stands the city he founded;
the Lord loves the gates of Zion
more than all the dwelling places of Jacob.
Glorious things of you are spoken,
O city of God. *Selab*”

PSALM 125:1

“Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion,
which cannot be moved, but abides forever.”

PSALM 130:5–8

“I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;
my soul waits for the Lord
more than watchmen for the morning,
more than watchmen for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the Lord!
For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with him is plentiful redemption.
And he will redeem Israel
from all his iniquities.”



“All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name” — *Perronet & Holden*



RESTORE OUR FORTUNES, O LORD

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then they said among the nations,
“The Lord has done great things for them.”
The Lord has done great things for us;
we are glad.

Psalm 126:1–3

ABRAHAMIC COVENANT


And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness. And he said to him, "I am the Lord who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess."

On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates..."

Genesis 15:5-7, 15



Israel and the Abrahamic Covenant



THE FUTURE OF WORLD EVENTS is not centered in Moscow or Washington, London or Beijing, but in Jerusalem. In our study of Romans 9–11, we learn that there is a future for the nation of Israel. “And in this way all Israel will be saved” (Romans 11:26). There are those who erroneously teach that all of the Old Testament promises to Israel now find their total fulfillment in the New Testament church. But the church of Jesus Christ has not replaced Israel.

The Old Testament Scriptures certainly predicted a distinct future for Israel. The New Testament reinforces these promises. “Behold he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him” (Revelation 1:7). At present, Israel is in unbelief, but there is still a believing remnant. The central and unifying factor in Israel’s future is the Abrahamic Covenant. It is important that we understand what a large and important subject is this covenant.

THE MAKING OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

Abraham was a man of faith (Genesis 12:1–4). The Lord called Abraham from his home, his country, and relatives. He left Ur, which was a great city of the Chaldeans, located 220 miles southeast of Baghdad, Iraq. Abraham trusted God and left Ur “not knowing where he was going” (Hebrews 11:8). His faith was not a theoretical one but was demonstrated by his obedience. He believed God and acted on that belief!

Although the covenant was not made in Genesis 12, note the promises in verses two and three. The covenant is established and confirmed in Genesis 15:7, 13, 17–18. In other covenants, both parties walked between the pieces of the animals. In this case, only God — not Abraham — passed between the parts. God unilaterally ratifies the covenant in this symbolic way, demonstrating that He was solely responsible for this covenant. The promises are guaranteed by God Himself. The keeping of the covenant is as certain and sure as the living God.

Therefore, once the covenant is established, its continuing validity is unconditional (Genesis 17:7, 13b, 19). The continuation of the covenant does not rest on Abraham’s descendants fulfilling certain conditions. If the covenant had been dependent upon them being faithful and obedient, it would have ended long ago. The Abrahamic Covenant is an irrevocable, everlasting promise.

The continuation of the Abrahamic Covenant is reaffirmed in Genesis 26:3–5, 28:13–14, 35:11–12, and Genesis 50:24. The future of the Abrahamic Covenant is not dependent upon the spiritual state of the nation of Israel.

“He remembers his covenant forever, the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations, the covenant that he made with Abraham, his sworn promise to Isaac, which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant, saying, ‘To you I will give the land of Canaan as your portion for an inheritance’” (Psalm 105:8–11).

TERMS OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

Personal Blessings

God promised Abraham personal greatness (Genesis 12:2). Abraham is one of the greatest and best known people in human history. He is revered by Jews (being the father of their nation), by Muslims (being the father of Ishmael), and by Christians (the Messiah being a son of Abraham, Matthew 1:1). He is the father of kings (Genesis 17:6) as well as a father of nations (Muslims and Jews). Abraham was a great man, personally blessed by God.

National Blessings

In the Abrahamic Covenant, the promise was that God would make Abraham a great nation (Genesis 12:2, 15:5, 22:17). Israel was to have a unique relationship with God:

“For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt” (Deuteronomy 7:6–8).

“And who is like your people Israel, the one nation on earth whom God went to redeem to be his people, making himself a name and doing for them great and awesome things by driving out before your people, whom you redeemed for yourself from Egypt, a nation and its gods? And you established for yourself your people Israel to be your people forever. And you, O Lord, became their God” (2 Samuel 7: 23–24).

Through the Abrahamic Covenant, the Jewish nation has been blessed: “And I will make of you a great nation” (Genesis 12:2). The sign of the Abrahamic Covenant for the Jewish nation was circumcision (Genesis 17:9–13). Circumcision was a daily reminder to Abraham and his descendants that God would not go back on His promises; that God would not reject His people. Circumcision was also a reminder that the Jewish nation should be faithful to God and separated from the pagan nations — a reminder of the need for purity and separation.

The world Jewish population today is estimated at 13 million in a world of six billion people. Yet, arguably they are the greatest people and nation in all of the world — certainly the greatest survivors in spite of the almost continuous persecution against them throughout history. David Brooks, the NY Times

columnist, wrote, “Jews are a famously accomplished group. They make up 0.2% of the world population, but 54% of the world chess champions, 27% of the Nobel physics laureates and 31% of the medicine laureates. Jews make up 2% of the US population, but 21% of the Ivy League student bodies, 26% of the Kennedy Center honorees, 37% of the Academy Award-winning directors, 38% of those on a recent Business Week list of leading philanthropists, 51% of the Pulitzer Prize winners for nonfiction... Tel Aviv has become one of the world’s foremost entrepreneurial hot spots. Israel has more high-tech start-ups per capita than any other nation on earth, by far. It leads the world in civilian research-and-development spending per capita. It ranks second behind the US in the number of companies listed on the Nasdaq” (David Brooks, “The Tel Aviv Cluster,” *New York Times*, 11 January 2010).

The contribution of the Jewish nation in philosophy, science, literature, music, politics, and finance is incalculable. God has taken this small nation, Israel, and made it one of the most influential nations in world history. God has made of Abraham a great nation through national blessings.

Universal Blessings

God promised Abraham that through him there would be universal blessings: “in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 22:18). Those who blessed Abraham and his descendants would be blessed by God. Those who cursed Abraham and his descendants would be cursed by God (Genesis 12:3).

The Jewish nation has been cursed and persecuted throughout its history. It has been persecuted by the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Romans, the Third Reich, and many others. Six million Jews were killed in the Holocaust of WWII. But all of these great empires, which once persecuted the Jews, no longer exist. Where are the Canaanites, the Romans, the Byzantines, the Ottomans, and others who once were in the Promised Land? All gone. But the Jewish nation is there and flourishing!

The blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant come not only to the Jewish nation, but to Gentiles: “in you (Abraham) all the families of the earth shall be blessed”

(Genesis 12:3). Through Jesus Christ, the Son of Abraham, the universal blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant are available to all, including Gentiles. Our Savior is the mediator of all the promises of the covenant. The true sons and heirs of Abraham are those who are justified not by works, but by faith. Through Jesus Christ, the Son of Abraham and the mediator of the Abrahamic Covenant, spiritual blessings flow to all who believe (Galatians 3:6–9, 13–14, 26–29). But those blessings to the Gentiles do not abrogate a future blessing for Israel.

Land Blessings

The land was also promised to Abraham and his descendants (Genesis 12:2, 7, 15:18, 17:7–8). God is guaranteeing that the land of Canaan will be Israel's land. What a promise! The land of Israel is in the strategic center of the world — the hub of three continents: Asia, Europe, and Africa. That small piece of real estate has been fought over throughout history and continues to be the most disputed piece of real estate in the world. It is still at the center of the Middle East crisis. Israel's population today is just under six million, compared with the over 200 million population of the Arab countries surrounding it. It occupies only 8,000 square miles, compared with over five million square miles occupied by all the Arab states. Yet, some of Israel's enemies still seek to push the small Jewish nation into the Mediterranean Sea.

God promised to Abraham that He would give the land “to you and your offspring forever” (Genesis 13:14–17). It would be “an everlasting possession” (Genesis 17:8). Its boundaries would extend from the River of Egypt in the west to the Euphrates River in the east, and the land of the Hittites in the north (Genesis 15:18–21). God has granted the title deed of the land of Israel to the Jewish people. It is incorrect to say that the Church spiritually fulfills this land promise. God will not go back on His promise.

“Then say to them, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all around, and bring them to their own land” (Ezekiel 37:21).

“I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore” (Ezekiel 37:26). ❀






A photograph of a flock of sheep in a lush green field. One sheep in the foreground is looking directly at the camera. The background shows rolling hills under a cloudy sky. A semi-transparent white box with a dark blue header is overlaid on the right side of the image.

THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE

“My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes. They shall dwell in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children’s children shall dwell there forever, and David my servant shall be their prince forever. I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore. My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.”

Ezekiel 37:24–28

Israel and God's Word



ISRAEL'S LAND IS GUARANTEED BY GOD in accordance with the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant — an irrevocable, everlasting promise. One day Israel will safely possess all the land (Jeremiah 30:3). Through the prophet Jeremiah, the Lord assures us that it will be impossible ever to destroy the Jewish people.

“Thus says the Lord, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; the Lord of Hosts is His name: ‘If this fixed order departs from before Me,’ declares the Lord, ‘Then the offspring of Israel also will cease from being a nation before Me forever.’ Thus says the Lord, ‘If the heavens above can be measured and the foundations of the earth searched out below, then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done,’ declares the Lord” (Jeremiah 31:35–37).

ISRAEL WILL POSSESS THE LAND

Israel is the apple of His eye (Zechariah 2:8). Those who have sought Israel's destruction in history — the Pharaoh in Egypt, Haman at the time of Esther, Antiochus Epiphanes, the Romans in AD 70, right down the centuries to Hitler, Yasser Arafat, Hamas, and Iran — will never ultimately succeed. God is faithful to His promises. Isn't it wonderful to recognize that God will not go back on His promises to Israel? At the second advent of our Lord Jesus Christ, the

nation of Israel will be saved (Romans 11:25). During the Tribulation, according to Revelation 7, there will be 144,000 Jewish evangelists who will proclaim the Gospel.

But this does not mean that everything secular, unbelieving Israel does today is in God's will. Israel sinned in the past and that continues today. But Israel's present unfaithfulness does not negate God's covenant with Israel. Israel has a glorious future! Walter Kaiser, former President of Gordon–Conwell Seminary, writes, "If the dispersion was a mark of God's judgment... then Israel's return to the land is the mark of God's grace. In fact, so astounding will be this future return of Israel that it will make the exodus from Egypt seem small in comparison" (Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *Israel, the Land and the People*, edited by H. Wayne House [Kregel Pubns, 1998], 224).

GOD'S PROMISES ARE CERTAIN

Do you doubt the truthfulness of the Bible? Do you doubt the reality of a living God? Consider the Jewish nation. Consider God's promises in the Abrahamic Covenant! Wondering if God will keep His promises to you? God always keeps His promises. It is impossible for God to lie. Is your faith and trust in this faithful covenant-keeping God? God promises today that if you receive His Son, Jesus, the Son of David, the Messiah, as your personal Savior and Lord you will receive eternal life and shall never perish. God will not go back on His Word. We are sometimes faithless, but He remains faithful.

Going through a tough time? Feel lonely, abandoned, misunderstood, and discouraged? Remember the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Remember that the true sons and daughters of Abraham are those who are justified not by works, but by faith (Galatians 3:6–9). Have you received this blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant, which flows to those who are people of faith and who receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord?

Have complete confidence in the promises of God. He is a covenant keeping God. One day Israel will possess all the Promised Land. Trust and serve this faithful God with all your heart. ❀

XI

Israel's Future

ROMANS 11:25–33

Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.²⁶ And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written,

“The Deliverer will come from Zion,
he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”;
²⁷ “and this will be my covenant with them
when I take away their sins.”

²⁸ As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers.²⁹ For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.³⁰ For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience,³¹ so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy.³² For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.

READ | ROMANS 11:25–32

THINK ABOUT

Romans 11 is one of the most important chapters in the Bible relating to the nation of Israel and its land. It is clear that Paul is not referring to the church when he writes of Israel. He is writing of a future Israel. He has previously said that Israel is partially hardened. Paul is not now making a change in the identity of “Israel” when he writes that “all Israel will be saved” (v. 26).

The point is that at the present time only a remnant of Israel is saved. But in the future, Israel as a nation will be saved. This is consistent with Old Testament prophecies, and the present possession of the land by Israel today is consistent with this future consummation of the purposes of God.

APPLY

When you read the Old Testament, note all of the references to Israel’s future and the land promises. These promises are central to the Abrahamic Covenant.

Isn’t it wonderful to see how Israel’s present unbelief results in Gentiles sharing in the blessings of God? But these present blessings which followers of Jesus enjoy do not result in the church replacing Israel. God’s promises to Israel stand.

ASK

What is one of the purposes of Israel's present day unbelief? Praise God that unbelief is not final. What will happen in the future to the nation of Israel? In what way will Israel be saved?

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Is there one way of salvation today for a Jewish person and another way of salvation for a Gentile?

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Why is anti-Semitism so sinful?

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PRAY

Lord, give me an increasing love for the Jewish people and for the land of Israel. May I appreciate more and more the blessings which I receive through the grace of God. Thank you for your great mercy towards a sinner like me.

JEREMIAH 31:35–37

“Thus says the Lord,
who gives the sun for light by day
and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night,
who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar —
the Lord of hosts is his name:
‘If this fixed order departs
from before me, declares the Lord,
then shall the offspring of Israel cease
from being a nation before me forever.’

Thus says the Lord:
‘If the heavens above can be measured,
and the foundations of the earth below can be explored,
then I will cast off all the offspring of Israel
for all that they have done,
declares the Lord.’”



“ISRAEL’S FUTURE”

Romans 11:25-32

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes, consisting of 22 lines.

HYMN

“Behold Zion, the city of our appointed feasts! Your eyes will see Jerusalem, an untroubled habitation, an immovable tent, whose stakes will never be plucked up, nor will any of its cords be broken. But there the Lord in majesty will be for us a place of broad rivers and streams, where no galley with oars can go, nor majestic ship can pass.” — ISAIAH 33:20–21

Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken

1. Glo - rious things of thee are spo - ken, Zi - on ci - ty of our God;
 2. See, the streams of liv - ing wa - ters, Spring - ing from E - - ter - nal Love,
 3. Round each hab - i - ta - tion ho - v'ring, See the cloud and fire ap - pear,
 4. Sav - ior, if of Zi - on's ci - ty I, through grace, a mem - ber am,

He, Whose Word can - not be bro - ken Formed thee for His Own a - bode:
 Well supp - ly thy sons and daugh - ters, And all fear of want re - move:
 For a glo - ry and a co - v'ring; Show - ing that the Lord is near.
 Let the world de - ride or pi - - ty, I will glo - ry in Thy Name:

On the Rock of A - ges found - ed, What can shake thy sure re - pose?
 Who can faint, while such a riv - er Ev - er will their thirst as - suage?
 Thus de - riv - ing from their ban - ner Light by night, and shade by day,
 Fa - ding is the world - ling's pleas - ure, All his boast - ed pomp and show:

With sal - va - tion's walls sur - round - ed, Thou mayst smile at all thy foes.
 Grace, which, like the Lord the Giv - er, Nev - er fails from age to age.
 Safe they feed up - - on the man - na, Which He gives them on their way.
 Sol - id joys and last - ing trea - sure None but Zi - on's child - ren know.

Text: John Newton, 1779 🌿 *Tune: Franz Joseph Haydn, 1797*



Israel and Its Persecution



THROUGHOUT THEIR HISTORY, no nation has been so persecuted as Israel. Jews have attracted unparalleled hatred for thousands of years. Their tiny piece of real estate (around 8,000 square miles) has been and continues to be the focal point of much of world history — still disputed and fought over, right up to the present day.

A HISTORY OF HATRED

The Jewish nation was persecuted by Antiochus Epiphanes; it was persecuted by the Romans. It was persecuted in medieval Europe; it was persecuted by the Russians. And most notably, the Jews were persecuted and hated in Nazi Germany during the Holocaust. Heinrich Himmler, the head of the SS, in a speech in 1943 to the government and Nazi party leaders said, “This people (the Jews) must disappear from the face of the earth” (Heinrich Himmler, *A People’s History of the Holocaust and Genocide*, Remember.org, 2018).

Paul Johnson writes, “So nearly six million Jews died. Two millennia of anti-Semitic hatred, of all varieties, pagan, Christian and secular, superstitious and cerebral, folk and academic, had been soldered by Hitler into one overwhelming juggernaut and then driven by his unique energy and will over the helpless body of European Jewry” (Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews* [Harper Perennial, 1988], 512). And the Jewish people continue to be hated today. Many of their enemies, including in the United Nations, still deny Israel’s right to exist as a nation. Johnson continues, “The effect of the Holocaust was chiefly to transfer

the principal focus of anti-Jewish hatred from east-central Europe to the Middle East. What worried some Arab leaders was that Hitler's solution had not, in fact, been final" (*A History of the Jews*, 512).

"For a tiny nation of little more than 6 ½ million citizens (approximately 5.3 million of whom are Jewish and 1.3 million are Muslim and Christian Arabs) living in an area roughly the size of New Jersey, Israel has proportionally more enemies than any nation on earth. No nation has been subjected to more frequent threats of alienation. No nation has had more genocidal incitements directed against its citizen... Indeed, no nation, regardless of its size or the number of deaths it has caused, has been condemned as often by the UN and its constituent bodies. Simply put, no nation is hated as much as the Jewish nation. Yet over the last 60 years, no nation in the world has contributed more per capita to the general welfare of the people of this planet than Israel" (Alan Dershowitz, *The Case Against Israel's Enemies* [Wiley, 2008], 1-2).

THE SPIRITUAL BATTLE

Why such hatred and persecution of tiny Israel? The answer does not lie in the people themselves, but in the God who has chosen them and who loves them. Satan is always utterly opposed to the Lord. He hates Israel and also hates the church. Consider Haman, who in the days of Esther was responsible for the decree "to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all Jews, young and old, women and children" (Esther 3:13). Many "Hamans" who hate Israel exist today.

Anti-Semitism abounds. Yet, God has preserved the Jewish nation for thousands of years. , Israel's present Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu writes, "The reemergence of the Jews as a sovereign nation is an unprecedented event in the history of mankind" (Benjamin Netanyahu, *A Place Among the Nations* [Bantam, 1993], 1).

Pray for the present safety of Israel, particularly when it is threatened by many, including Iran and its attempts to have nuclear weapons. God has a great future for Israel. When Christ returns with power and glory He comes to Israel, the promised land. Jerusalem will then be the capital city of the world!

PERSONAL RESPONSE

Satan not only attacks the people of God, he attacks God's plan of salvation. The future Antichrist will also set himself up as God, so that people look to him rather than to Jesus Christ as the true Savior. Satan always attacks Jesus and the blood of Christ. Satan seeks to draw people away from the uniqueness of our Savior to false gods and false doctrines.

But nothing can thwart the purposes of God! Jesus Christ still stands as the only Savior. Receive Jesus as your Savior, who died for your sins and rose again. Love Him. Trust Him. Display Christ to others, including your Jewish friends. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. 🌿



*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!
"May they be secure who love you!
Peace be within your walls
and security within your towers!"*

Psalm 122:6-7

XI

To God Be the Glory

ROMANS 11:33-36

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

³⁴ “For who has known the mind of the Lord,
or who has been his counselor?”

³⁵ “Or who has given a gift to him
that he might be repaid?”

³⁶ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

READ | ROMANS 11:33–36

THINK ABOUT

Having regard to Romans, chapters 9–11, in what ways do you see “the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God” (v. 33)? Think about ways in which God’s ways are truly inscrutable.

Consider the wisdom of God in his plan of salvation for Jews and Gentiles. Consider ways in which you can glorify God as you think of His all-wise ways and plans.

APPLY

As we consider His purposes, the wisdom of God makes us humble and more and more appreciative of His mercy and grace. May this motivate us to live our lives to His glory and ensure that we walk humbly in His paths rather than our own.

God truly is awesome, and we must never take Him for granted. May these great themes which Paul presents in Romans lead to hearts and lives of worship.

ASK

What ways of God do you find inscrutable? What are some of the questions you would like to ask God when you consider His plans and purposes in salvation?

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Why is it we live lives of such mediocrity in light of this awesome God who is all powerful and all mighty?

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Rejoice that in Jesus all of the Old Testament prophecies and types and shadows find their complete fulfillment. What Old Testament prophecies regarding the coming of the Messiah are particularly meaningful for you?

.....
.....

PRAY

Lord, You are an awesome and all powerful God. I give You all of the glory in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Help me to praise You and to live for You with my whole being. Forgive me of my selfishness and self-centeredness. Help me to focus on You — my Creator, my Redeemer, my Savior, and my Friend.

LUKE 1:68–75

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people
and has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,
as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
that we should be saved from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us;
to show the mercy promised to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant,
the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us
that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,
might serve him without fear,
in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.”

PROVERBS 3:5–6

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.”



“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” — *Charles Wesley, Prichard & Harkness*

“TO GOD BE THE GLORY”

Romans 11:33-36

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

HYMN

“To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.” — 1 TIMOTHY 1:17

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

1. Im - - mor - tal, in - - vis - - i - - ble, God on - - ly wise,
 2. Un - - rest - ing, un - - hast - ing, and si - - lent as light,
 3. To all, life Thou giv - est, to both great and small;
 4. Great Fath - er of glo - ry, pure Fath - er of light,
 5. All laud we would ren - der; O help us to see

In light in - - ac - - ces - - si - - ble hid from our eyes,
 Nor want - ing, nor wast - ing, Thou rul - est in might,
 In all life Thou liv - est, the true life of all;
 Thine an - - gels a - - dore Thee, all veil - ing their sight,
 'Tis on - - ly the splen - dor of light hid - - eth Thee,

Most bless - ed, most glor - ious, the An - cient of Days,
 Thy just - ice, like moun - tains, high soar - ing a - - bove
 We blos - som and flour - ish as leaves on the tree,
 But of Thy rich gra - ces this grace, Lord, im - part
 And so let Thy glo - ry, al - - might - y, im - part,

Al - - might - y, vic - - tor - ious, Thy great Name we praise.
 Thy clouds, which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.
 And with - er and per - ish but naught chang - eth Thee.
 Take the veil from our face, the vile from our heart.
 Through Christ in His stor - - y, Thy Christ to the heart.

Text: Walter Chalmers Smith, 1876 🎵 *Tune: Traditional Welsh Melody from John Roberts, 1839*

The Miracle of Israel



IT IS A HISTORICAL FACT THAT ISRAEL has never fully possessed all of the land which God promised. In AD 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, the Jewish nation was scattered to the four winds of the world.

“They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (Luke 21:24).

For over 1900 years, the land of Israel was in the possession of Romans, Arabs, Crusaders, the Turks, and the British. However, there has always been a remnant in the land.

In 1867 Mark Twain wrote, “Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes. Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fettered its energies... Palestine is desolate and unlovely... It is a hopeless, dreary, heart-broken land” (Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad* [American Publishing Company, 1869], Chapter 56). Was there a future for Israel? Had God forgotten or rescinded His promises under the Abrahamic Covenant?

ISRAEL COMES HOME

Then a miracle happened! After nearly 2,000 years without a homeland, scattered and persecuted, the Jewish sovereign state came into being. In 1917, there was the Balfour Declaration by the British government. It declared: “His Majesty’s government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be

done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country” (Arthur James Balfour, *Balfour Declaration*, 2 November 1917).

And with great difficulty, Jews began to return to Israel. On May 14, 1948, Israel became the homeland of the Jewish nation. Leon Uris, the author of the historical novel *Exodus*, said of the founding of the State of Israel, “...an event unparalleled in the history of mankind: the rebirth of a nation that had been dispersed two thousand years before” (Leon Uris, *Exodus* [Bantam, 1958], Preface).

David Ben-Gurion, Israel’s first Prime Minister, declared: “By virtue of our national and intrinsic right, and on the strength of the resolution of the UN General Assembly, we hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, which shall be known as the State of Israel” (*Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel*, 14 May 1948). The nation was back in the land promised to them 4,000 years ago: promised under the Abrahamic Covenant. What an event! After centuries of saying “Next year in Jerusalem,” the Jewish people were back in the only piece of land God specifically promised to any people.

PERSECUTION IN THE LAND

In May 1948, Israel was immediately attacked by Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq. But God has been faithful to His ancient people in spite of the tremendous opposition and persecution of the past — and in spite of the continued persecution, hatred, and attacks on the Jewish nation by so many to this day. Thousands of years after God’s promises to Abraham, Israel today exists as a nation! Israel has a national identity. Israel is now the national home of the Jewish people.

Benjamin Netanyahu, the present Prime Minister of Israel, writes: “But when in a hundred different lands, century after century, Jews prayed, ‘Next year in Jerusalem’ they meant something entirely different: not merely an individual’s desire to return to a holy site for prayer, but the wish for an entire people to return and rebuild its life in its own national home, of which Jerusalem was the

heart.’ This powerful longing was so unique that it was sometimes dismissed as a pitiful gasp of a dying race. It was nothing of the kind. The persistent yearning to return was an expression of the very life source of the Jewish people, the idea that held together, as distilled defiance of its historical fate” (Benjamin Netanyahu, *A Place Among the Nations* [Bantam, 1993], 31).

FUTURE PROMISED LAND

As promised in the Abrahamic Covenant, the Jewish nation is back in the land. It is true that Israel does not possess all of the promised land; the complete fulfillment of the land promise to Israel awaits that future Millennial Kingdom when the Christ, the Messiah, returns and reigns as King of kings.

“Behold, I will gather them from all the countries to which I drove them in my anger and my wrath and in great indignation. I will bring them back to this place, and I will make them dwell in safety. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for their own good and the good of their children after them. I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me. I will rejoice in doing them good, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul” (Jeremiah 32:37–41).

“My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes. They shall dwell in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children’s children shall dwell there forever, and David my servant shall be their prince forever. I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore. My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore” (Ezekiel 37:24–28). ❀



PRESENTATION AT THE TEMPLE

Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

"Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel."

Luke 2:25-32



LET'S MEMORIZE GOD'S WORD TOGETHER

Punch out these Scripture cards and carry them with you, or place them where you'll see them often. Review the verses daily and commit them to memory!

*For Christ
is the end
of the law for
righteousness
to everyone
who believes.*

ROMANS 10:4

Oh, the depth of
the riches and wisdom
and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable
are his judgments
and how inscrutable
his ways!

ROMANS 11:33

For he says to Moses,
“I will have mercy
on whom I have mercy,
and I will have
compassion on whom
I have compassion.”

ROMANS 9:15

*For from him
and through him
and to him
are all things.
To him be
glory forever.
Amen.*

ROMANS 11:36



FOR THE WORD OF GOD AND FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST

REVELATION 1:9

