

THE PLANS OF GOD FOR ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH**I. UNDERSTANDING GOD'S PLAN CONCERNING ISRAEL**

- A. The issue of Israel is central to the Gospel. In Romans 11, Paul described an urgency and necessity for the Church to understand and cooperate with God's plan for Israel's salvation (Rom. 11:25). Paul warned against being **ignorant** and **arrogant** toward the Jews and the **mystery** of Israel and the Church in the plans of God. Paul warns that embracing **ignorance** (v. 25) **arrogance** (v. 18) and **pride** (v. 20 ESV) that resists cooperating with God's plans for Israel could result in Gentile believers being **cut off** (v. 22) from God.

▶▶ *13 ...now I am speaking to you Gentiles...17 some of the branches were broken off (unbelieving Israel), and you (Gentile believers), although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others (Jews)... 18 do not be arrogant to the branches...do not become proud, but fear. (Rom. 11:17-18 ESV)*

- B. God's mystery refers to His plan that He hid through the ages until He revealed it to the apostles (Eph. 3:5, 9). We must understand the Lord's plans in order to cooperate with them.

▶▶ *25 I do not desire...that you should be ignorant of this mystery...that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And so all Israel will be saved. (Rom. 11:25-26)*

- C. God's original intent was for Israel to have the primary leadership role in bringing God's salvation to all nations (Gen. 12:3; Deut. 28:1; Isa. 2:1-4; 43:10-12; 44:8-9). Israel will take the gospel to the nations in the Millennium (Isa. 66:18-20).
- D. God's redemptive plan from the very beginning has been directly tied to Israel *loving* and *receiving* Jesus as their Messiah. God made known these covenantal promises to Abraham (and his descendants), Moses, and David. This promise was to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob/ Israel and connected to a specific piece of land.

II. GOD'S PLAN FOR ISRAEL & THE CHURCH: AN EVERLASTING COVENANT

- A. The issue of Israel is central to the Gospel storyline. God's dealings with Israel demonstrate His faithfulness to His promises how far He will go for the sake of redemption and salvation.
1. Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 15)

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- a. The Abrahamic covenant was an ongoing, unconditional, one-sided promise made by God to Abraham and his physical descendants through his son Isaac and Isaac's son Jacob/Israel.
 - b. Not only was the covenant made to Abraham and his descendants, but it was also a promise to receive a "promised land" from the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River to the river of Egypt in the Southwest.
2. Mosaic Covenant (Exodus 19:1-9; 34:27-28)
- a. The Mosaic Covenant was a two-sided legal agreement between the Lord and all of Israel. God repeatedly highlighted His desire for a people to walk in covenantal love and obedience to Him, by declaring "***If you will....then I will...***" (see Deut. 4:26-27; Deut. 28).
 - b. The chief aim in God's heart concerning Israel is to demonstrate His relentless jealous love to have a people as His own possession, for Israel's salvation by grace through faith in Jesus, and for them to love Him completely in return in the land that He would give them.

▶▶ ***"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."*** (Deut. 6:4-5; Mt. 22:37)

- c. Israel's *residency* in the land promised by God was dependent upon their covenantal obedience to the laws given in the Mosaic covenant. However, God never nullified His promises to Abraham when He made the Mosaic Covenant.

▶▶ ***30 When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the Lord your God and obey his voice. 31 For the Lord your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them. (Deuteronomy 4:30-31)***

▶▶ ***16 Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring [Isaac, Jacob/Israel—see Gen. 17:15-21; 21:9-13]. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many [Abraham's other sons; see Romans 9:6-13], but referring to one, "And to your offspring," [ultimately] who is Christ. 17 This is what I mean: the law, which came 430 years afterward, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to make the promise void. 18 For if the inheritance comes by the law, it no longer comes by promise; but God gave it to Abraham by a promise. (Gal. 3:16-18)***

- d. Paul taught that God's faithfulness was not nullified by Israel's disobedience. He is faithful and all that He promised will come to pass. Jesus will save the people of Israel, fulfill His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob/Israel, and demonstrate the fullness of His zeal toward Jerusalem as "***the city of the Great King.***" (Mt. 5:35)

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- e. From the very beginning, Jesus chose Jerusalem as the place from which He would establish His Throne and reign on the earth.

▶▶ ***You will bring them in and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance [Jerusalem], in the place, O LORD, which You have made for Your own dwelling, the sanctuary, O LORD, which Your hands have established. ¹⁸The LORD shall reign forever and ever. (Exodus 15:17-18)***

3. Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7:8-16)

- a. The Davidic covenant was delivered through the prophet Nathan to King David where God reiterated the promises to the land made through the Abrahamic Covenant. He also promises David that one of his descendants will sit on the Throne of Israel.

▶▶ ***I will make for you a great name...And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. ... 16 Your throne shall be established forever. (2 Samuel 7:9,10,16)***

▶▶ ***Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. – Isaiah 9:7***

▶▶ ***"For thus says the LORD: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel... (Jeremiah 33:17)***

▶▶ ***"Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." (Luke 1:31-33)***

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COVENANT	MADE TO	WHAT	UNCONDITIONAL OR CONDITIONAL?	UNILATERAL OR BYLATERAL?
Abrahamic	Abraham and his descendants	God will give the specific land of Israel to the people of Israel forever, and the Gentile nations will also be blessed	Unconditional	One-way promise
Mosaic	The corporate nation of Israel	God defined conditions for Israel to maintain residency of the land	Conditional	Two-way agreement
Davidic	King David	God will raise up a descendant of David to sit on the throne of Israel and rule from Jerusalem forever	Unconditional	One-way promise

B. The New Covenant

- Through the New Covenant we see that God’s *ultimate intent* in His covenantal promises was about much more than simply possessing land. The LORD will place His Spirit, His words, His heart into Israel for the sake of salvation.
- The New Covenant was *inaugurated* when Jesus—Son of God, Son of David, Holy One of Israel—voluntarily gave His broken body unto death on the Cross that both Jew and Gentile would be saved by grace through faith in Christ (Rom. 10:11-13; 1 Tim. 2:5). The new covenant does *not* abrogate God’s original plans to incorporate Israel. Through Christ, Israel will be saved—by love for the sake of love—to serve and love Jesus fully, specifically in the land that God promised to give them.

▶▶ ***Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will ... and bring them to their own land. 22 ... And one king shall be king over them all... I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. (Ezekiel 37:21-23)***

▶▶ ***“Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.” (Jeremiah 23:5)***

- C. The Cross displays the fullness of the God’s covenantal promises and Jesus’ “*zeal*” and “*exceeding jealousy*” for Israel, the Gentiles, and Jerusalem as His city “*the city of the Great King*”.

▶▶ ***For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch. (Isaiah 62:1)***

▶▶ ***For the Lord has chosen Zion; he has desired it for his dwelling place: "This is my resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it. (Psalm 132:13-14)***

▶▶ ***So the angel who talked with me said to me, 'Cry out, Thus says the Lord of hosts: I am exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion...Cry out again, Thus says the Lord of hosts: My cities shall again overflow with prosperity, and the Lord will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.'" (Zechariah 1:14-17)***

III. THE SALVATION OF ISRAEL - 4 PARTS

A. The Cross was the greatest expression of the depths of the Father's love and commitment to Israel's salvation. Jesus willingly endured the pain and scorn of the Cross, giving witness to God's ongoing fidelity to the everlasting covenant.

B. The Cross displays the fullness of God's covenantal promises and Jesus' "zeal" and "exceeding jealousy" for Israel, the Gentiles, and Jerusalem as His city—"the city of the Great King". Jesus is zealous for Jerusalem because of what *will* happen, not only what *has* happened in the past.

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▶▶ ***So the angel who talked with me said to me, 'Cry out, Thus says the Lord of hosts: I am exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion... the Lord will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.'" (Zech. 1:14-17)***

▶▶ ***2 "I am zealous for Zion with great zeal; with great fervor I am zealous for her." 3 Thus says the LORD: "I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth...Mountain of the LORD of hosts, the Holy Mountain." (Zech. 8:2-3)***

C. In Romans 11, Paul highlighted four parts of God's plan to bring the gospel to the nations. God's plan includes the fullness of the Gentiles (v. 25) and the fullness of Israel (v. 12).

▶▶ ***25 I do not desire...that you should be ignorant of this mystery...that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And so all Israel will be saved. (Rom. 11:25-26)***

1. **The Jewish people have a temporary spiritual blindness on them (v. 25).**
 - a. Israel has ***stumbled (v. 11)*** through sin and unbelief causing a ***temporary, partial*** spiritual blindness even to this day (v. 25). Their blindness includes not being able to see Jesus as their Messiah, as well as being blind to their hostility against Him. It is ***partial***—a remnant of Jews have been, are being, and will be saved (v. 5)—and it is ***temporary***—it will be lifted when the fullness of the Gentiles comes in (v.25).
 - b. Israel’s blindness to and rejection of Jesus **is not total** (Rom. 11:1-10) and it **is not final** (Rom. 11:11-32). This ***blindness (or partial hardening)*** is ***until (v.25)***. God has an appointed time to for salvation and restoring Israel’s national calling to her *primary leadership role* of bringing the Gospel to the nations in the millennium (Is. 66:18-20).
 - c. ***Ignorance*** and ***arrogance*** (concerning God’s purposes for Israel and the temporary, partial spiritual blindness) causes many believers to conclude that God is “finished” or “done” with Israel, which can lead to ***passive resistance*** (silence in the face of opposition and persecution of the Jews) and then ***active resistance*** (partaking in the persecution of Israel and the Jews), instead of laboring and praying for Israel’s salvation and destiny.
2. **The fullness and salvation of the Gentiles (v. 25) will provoke Israel to seek Jesus for salvation (v. 11).**

▶▶ ***...through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. (Rom. 11:11)***

- a. ***Salvation:*** the salvation of the Gentiles speaks not only of individuals being saved, but the Gentiles being used as God’s instrument to bring the Gospel to the nations and to the Jews over the last 2,000 years.
- b. ***Fullness:*** the fullness of the Gentiles speaks of the *full number* of Gentiles who will come to salvation and walking in *the fullness of the Spirit’s power and godly character*—***a walk worthy of the Lord (Col. 1:10; Eph. 4:1)***—that causes them to fulfill *the fullness of God’s purposes* for them.
- c. ***Provoking to Jealousy:*** Gentile believers will walk in the Spirit to such a degree that they will *provoke Israel to godly jealousy*—they will jealously yearn to possess the things of God in the way that they see the Gentiles do. This reality will take place in the context of the suffering of Great Tribulation.

- d. Jesus prophesied that He would not return to Jerusalem until the governmental leaders of Israel voluntarily ask Him to reign over them as their Messianic King. Just as the Father “bound” Himself to Israel’s leaders by covenanting the land to them (Gen. 15:18) so Jesus “bound” Himself by His prophecy to only come back after Israel’s leadership invites Him.

▶▶ ***37 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, ... How often would I have gathered your children together ... [but] you were not willing! 38 See, your house is left to you desolate. 39 For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’” (Mt. 23:37-39 ESV)***

▶▶ ***19 “Repent...and be converted, that your [Israel] sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, 20 and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you [Israel]...21 whom heaven must receive [retain] until the times of restoration of all things [Millennium] which God has spoken by...His holy prophets...” (Acts 3:19-21)***

3. All Israel will be saved (v. 26).

- a. Literally, all of corporate Israel will come to salvation in the context of Jesus’ return and the Millennium. This means that 100% of the Jewish people who survive the Tribulation will believe in Jesus as they are provoked to jealousy and behold His beauty (Zech. 13:8).

▶▶ ***26 And in this was all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The Deliverer [Jesus] will come from Zion, and He will banish ungodliness from Jacob [Israel].” (Rom. 11:26 ESV)***

▶▶ ***On that day the Lord their God will save them, as the flock of his people for like the jewels of a crown they shall shine on his land. 17 For how great is his goodness, and how great his beauty! (Zechariah 9:16-17)***

- b. Paul’s teaching that all Israel will be saved is confirmed by Isaiah (Isa. 45:17, 25; 59:20; 60:21).

- c. Israel will be the first nation that is totally saved and living righteously (Isa. 60:21).

4. The fullness of Israel (v. 12) will lead to God’s glory filling the millennial earth (v. 15).

▶▶ ***For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? (Romans 11:15)***

- a. **Fullness:** the fullness of Israel speaks of the *full number* who will come to salvation and walk in *the fullness of the Spirit's power and godly character—a walk worthy of the Lord* (Col. 1:10; Eph. 4:1)—causing them to fulfill *the fullness of God's purposes* for them.
- b. **Life from the dead:** If Israel's temporary and partial rejection (v.15) meant the reconciliation of the world as salvation came to the Gentiles, then Israel's salvation will be extraordinary—Paul likens it to nothing less than ***life from the dead*** for the whole earth.

IV. HOW SHOULD THE CHURCH RESPOND?

- A. God's ***irrevocable*** (v.29) plans are directly tied to Israel loving His Son Jesus. This means the plans of the Gentile Church are directly tied to Israel as well.
- B. The international Gentile Church must not remain in ***ignorance*** and ***arrogance*** concerning God's purposes for Israel which can lead to ***passive resistance*** (silence in the face of opposition and persecution of the Jews) and then ***active resistance*** (partaking in the persecution of Israel and the Jews).

▶▶ ***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 [Gentiles] were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their [Jews] disobedience, 31 so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy. (Romans 11:28-31)***

- C. The Father promises to establish a global prayer movement for the salvation of Israel and the future glory of Jerusalem becoming a praise in the earth to usher in this reality on earth.

▶▶ ***On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen; all the day and all the night they shall never be silent. You who put the Lord in remembrance, take no rest, 7 and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth. (Isaiah 62:6-7)***