

XVI. Timeless Truth for Timely Topics in Biblical Perspective

What Does the Bible Say?

“Israel and the Church”

Romans 11

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I'd like to start by looking in Genesis 12 as we come to our sixteenth and final study of what the Bible says on the end times. This year our theme is Thy Word is Truth where we take topics and go to the Word for what it says on those topics. This is our final study on the end times. We have covered the millennium, the judgment and the rapture and continually in our study we keep running up against two systems of theology. One system has very much saturated particularly the southern part of our country and that is known as dispensational theology. Because of that what has been the historic position of the church on a number of issues has been reinterpreted through this new system of theology and I say new because dispensational theology did not appear until the 19th century at the instigation of a lawyer's vision and his name was Darby. One of the converts was a preacher by the name of C.I. Scofield who developed this seven fold dispensational position and popularized it in the Scofield Study Bible. It has further been propagated in other study Bibles as well.

This is an intermural discussion. This is a discussion between believers about how you take a look at the Bible. The dispensational position says that God has two people – the Jew and the Gentile. They believe that God brought the Kingdom to Israel and because they did not receive the Messiah the work of God has been put on hold at the finished work of Christ and we're now in parenthesis era where God has a second people, the Gentiles, who are known as the church. Certainly Jewish people can participate in it but God has a plan for the Jewish people, Israel, and a plan for the Gentiles, the church, and at a certain point in time the church will be raptured out. Then God will go back and pick up on the other plan, rebuilding the temple, reinstating the sacrifices and theocracy of Israel. Throughout all eternity not only are there two people and two plans but there are two destinies. The Gentile, the church is called the heavenly people of God and will reside in heaven for eternity and the Jewish people are the earthly people of God who will be under the reign of God on earth. That is the dispensational perspective. I am familiar with this because I was raised in a church that embraced this and had prophecy conferences around it.

As I began to get further in my studies and my ministries I went back to what Isaiah calls the old paths. I went back to the historic position of the church called covenant theology that says God doesn't have two plans but one plan. It is called the covenant of grace that begins in Genesis 4 and progressively unfolds throughout all of the Scripture until it comes to fruition. In the Old Testament it goes through a series of covenants that are like stair steps that God is building one upon the other as God brings the promise of salvation to Adam and Eve. Then He establishes a covenant with Noah, then Abraham, then with Moses, the David, and they are building one upon the other and it all comes to fulfillment in the New Covenant that is fulfilled in the Mediator who did not need a Mediator and that is Jesus Christ. Noah, Abraham, Moses and David all needed their own Mediator but they were looking to the promises of God trusting in Him

so they too were saved by grace through faith in the promises of God that are fulfilled in the Promised One, Jesus Christ. Jesus brings the New Covenant to us.

So is the church an afterthought or was it the plan? Is the Gospel to the Gentiles some separate plan or was it part of the whole plan that is taking place? So continually we have been dealing with this issue as we have gone from theme to theme to theme and certainly it comes to a real focus in this study as we talk about the church and Israel. What does the Bible say about this and how should we look at this? I think this is very important because I meet believers that when they see the present state of Israel they view it as a re-incarnation of the Kingdom of Israel. Therefore they think that whatever policy is proposed that we ought to support it as a country and as Christians. Is that the way we are to look at the present country of Israel? Is this a prophecy fulfillment? On my recent trip to Israel I met some Jewish believers and in Bethlehem I met some Arab believers that were brothers and sisters in Christ. How do I view them in their present situation? Many of them have lost their lives with this onslaught of this seventh caliphate movement of Islam.

So what is the place of Israel and the church? I'd like to hit the highlights with you even though this deserves a whole series, through a number of passages in the Bible. The Jewish people all began with a Gentile. This Gentile's name was Abraham. Abraham is called from Ur in the land of the Chaldeans and God makes a covenant with him. I want you to see this covenant as God articulates it two different times. There are some very specific promises made to Abraham that we need to be aware of and we need to know whether they are fulfilled or not. Let's start by looking at Genesis 12 where God is calling Abraham out and God makes three distinct promises to Abram.

Genesis 12:1–3 says [1] *Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. [2] And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. [3] 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."*

Here is our very first missionary mandate. God is not only going to bless Abram, his family and an establishment of a nation but God is going to bless through him all the families of the earth and therefore all the nations of the earth. Now let's look in Genesis 15. So God has promised a seed, a nation and a land.

Genesis 15:1–6 says [1] *After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." [2] But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" [3] And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir." [4] And behold, the word of the LORD came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir." [5] 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." [6] **And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.***

There is another text which I won't go to that uses another metaphor where Abram not only is told to count the stars if he can and that will be his offspring but his offspring will also be compared to the sand at the seashore. Thirdly, He will compare it to the dust of the ground. Genesis 15:6 is quoted five times in the New Testament. How

was Abraham saved? He was saved by believing in the promises of God and Abraham received a righteousness that was alien to him but imputed to him, given to him. The promises of God are yes and amen in the Promised One of God, Jesus Christ. Genesis 15 further goes into the promises as the birds are cut in two and amazingly when a superior makes a covenant with an inferior, the inferior takes the sacrifice and walks through it to the superior but not in this case. God walks through the sacrifice to come to Abram for this covenant is a covenant of grace, not of works. Now let's look at Genesis 17.

Genesis 17:1–8 says [1] *When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, [2] that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly." [3] Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, [4] "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. [5] No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. [6] I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. [7] And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. [8] And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God."*

If you put all this together there are three promises that God makes to Abraham. One is that out of His grace He will give him a Seed. Number two He is going to give him an extensive prosperity, a large offspring. Thirdly, He is going to bless him so that he will be a blessing to all the nations and He will give him and his seed the land of their sojournings. There are various passages of Scripture that define that land. I'd like to show you one more passage in Genesis 22 where this matter of Abraham being a blessing is reiterated here.

Genesis 22:17–18 says [17] *"I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, [18] and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."* Here we have God promising a covenant of grace and in this covenant there is a seed, a nation through which the seed will come, a blessing to all the nations and the land of his sojourning. So let's look at each one of these.

What about the promise to the land? That has been fulfilled by the Lord in a gracious and glorious way. Let's look at Deuteronomy 6. Here Israel is about to go over into the land and this book is the second giving of the law. He took Abraham's seed into slavery for 430 years until the wickedness of the six nations had come to fruition and then liberated them out, brought them back and they were to do two things. One was to bring judgment on the pagan nations that were in the land of Canaan and two was God was going to give them the land He has promised.

Deuteronomy 6:20–23 says [20] *"When your son asks you in time to come, 'What is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the rules that the LORD our God has commanded you?' [21] then you shall say to your son, 'We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt. And the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. [22] And the LORD showed signs and wonders, great and grievous, against Egypt and against Pharaoh and*

all his household, before our eyes. [23] And he brought us out from there, that he might bring us in and give us the land that he swore to give to our fathers.”

Joshua then takes over for Moses as he brings them over the Jordan River. They come into the land and the book of Joshua records his conquest of the land and let's see how it ends in Joshua 21. We are told that the Lord gave them rest in the land. Joshua 21:43–45 says [43] *Thus the LORD gave to Israel **all** the land that he swore to give to their fathers. And they took possession of it, and they settled there. [44] And the LORD gave them rest on every side just as he had sworn to their fathers. Not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the LORD had given all their enemies into their hands. [45] Not one word of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.* The Lord kept fulfilling it and extending it even during the times of the kings.

Now let's look at I Kings 4. The description of that land is given to us previously. It is said in the days of Joshua that God had given them title right to that land and the occupation of that land continues all the way through the kings. Then we come to I Kings and the days of Solomon. I Kings 4:20–21 says [20] *Judah and Israel were as many as the sand by the sea. They ate and drank and were happy. [21] Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt. They brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.* He not only ruled over them and had title right to them but he now occupied them. In fact, the nations within their borders brought him tribute and served him. So the land God had promised them had been fulfilled and be given.

What about Abraham's posterity? Who is it that is the posterity of Abraham? The posterity of Abraham are those of the circumcision. Who are those of the circumcision? We know of the sign of this in the Old Testament but now we know of the fulfillment of it in the covenant of grace. In Romans 4 who is the seed of Abraham? This is a little lengthy but requires out reading of it.

Romans 4:1–10 says [1] *What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? [2] For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. [3] For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.” (Genesis 15:6) [4] Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. [5] And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, [6] just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: [7] “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; [8] blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.”*

[9] *Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. [10] How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised.* Basically it is asking when did Abraham get saved and that was in Genesis 15. When was he circumcised? That was in Genesis 17. So he was right with God as the child of God by the grace of God through an alien righteousness given to him by faith and that occurred prior to him becoming a Jew. In other words, Abraham was saved as a Gentile. Then he was given the sign of the nation of Israel. As Paul makes that point, let's continue in the text.

Romans 4:11–13 says [11] *He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised.* (It is just like the New Covenant has its sign which is baptism, so the Old Covenant had its sign which was circumcision.) *The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, [12] and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.* (In other words, Abraham’s children (his offspring) are not just circumcised by the flesh but also by the heart, the children of faith by the grace of God. It began with those called out by circumcision in the flesh but to all called out in Christ. He is the father of all in Christ.) [13] *For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.*

Now Paul comes back to the promise of the land. God called Abraham before he was circumcised. Then He gave him the seal of circumcision. Now whether one comes to Christ as circumcised i.e. a Jew or as a Gentile uncircumcised, they have become the offspring of Abraham because they’re the children of faith. They have believed in the promises of God and the Promised One of Jesus Christ so it has been counted to them as righteousness. They are not saved by works but by Him who worked for you. It doesn’t mean they don’t work but they are not working for their salvation but they are working for their Savior. So Paul is arguing for us to understand that all who have been saved by grace through faith in Christ, like Abraham, are the children of Abraham for we bear the spiritual legacy of Abraham so that we are one in Christ as a people of God. And there is no distinction.

It says in Romans 4:13 that Abraham and his offspring would be the heir of the world so that land of Palestine, Canaan, from the Euphrates down to Egypt was not the objective but the down payment. Isaac was not the fulfillment of the promise but it was the means to fulfill the promise. In Isaac would come One that is the Seed, Christ and now from Christ will come children of Abraham saved by faith from all the nations of the world. God’s down payment of the land in Israel was simply a down payment because now this is My Father’s world. It all belongs to Him in the New Covenant and all of His people, children of Abraham saved by grace through faith, are coming from all the nations. So God had called Abraham to give him a family and a nation through which he would bring a Seed. That Seed is Christ and when Christ has come now this Gospel is to go to all the nations and many will be the children of Abraham and saved just like Abraham as Gentiles. How will this be done? It is done with a glorious circumcision made without hands. It is the circumcision of the heart.

Let’s see how Paul will deal with this matter of circumcised and uncircumcised in Romans 2. Romans 2:25–29 says [25] *For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision.* (If you think just being a Jew and being circumcised gets you saved then you have to obey everything in the law which you can’t do and therefore nullifies that you’re saved. It’s just one more inadequate act. That’s why the point is made that Abraham was saved prior to his circumcision.) [26] *So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?* [27] *Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law.* [28] *For no one is a Jew who is merely one*

outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. [29] But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God. How can we get a righteousness then? We get a changed heart and a new record. It is the righteousness of Christ that we lay hold of by faith.

Let's trace Paul a little further and look at Ephesians 2. I wished I had more time to show you more text but I'm having to be selective due to time. This topic could be made into a whole series. There were Jews and Gentiles in Ephesus. Paul would not have allowed a Jewish church and a Gentile church. He would have certainly understood Jewish evangelism for he did it when he went to the synagogue. He would have understood Gentile evangelism because he did it when he went to the market place but once people were converted he would not have had a Jewish and Gentile church in Ephesus. On the contrary, he would see that as a misrepresentation of the Gospel. One might think then why do we have a Japanese church and a Korean church but that is an issue of language. That is not an issue of ethnicity. People have to hear the Word in their language but once the tower of Babel has been reversed and we understand each other then we who are not a people become the people for we are the people of God – with one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. So look at what Paul says on this in Ephesians 2.

Ephesians 2:11–22 says [11] *Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—[12] remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. [13] But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off (Gentiles) have been brought near by the blood of Christ. [14] For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility [15] by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two (Jew and Gentile), so making peace, [16] and might reconcile us both to God (reconcile first to God and then that brings us to each other) in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. [17] And he (Christ) came and preached peace to you who were far off (Gentile) and peace to those who were near (Jew). [18] For through him we both (Gentile and Jew) have access in one Spirit to the Father. [19] So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, [20] built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, [21] in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. [22] In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.*

Here Paul sees this church in this community, Jew and Gentile, united together because all are saved by grace and the grace of God that has come to them has come to them both so they are one in Christ. Now I'd like to look at Philippians 3. Philippians 3:1–3 says [1] *Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.*

[2] *Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh* (those who would say you have to be circumcised to be saved). [3] *For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh—* There is the circumcision in the New Covenant. They are circumcised in the heart by grace. Certainly Paul would talk like this because he was

an Apostle to the Gentiles. So what would Peter say to this, who was an Apostle to the Jews? Let's look at Acts 2 to see what Peter says about this.

Here Peter steps up to preach the Gospel to Jewish people who have gathered for the feast. They are speaking in languages that they don't know and they are declaring the Gospel to people who hear those languages. This is not inane mumbling that is something nonsensical. It is a language that the speaker did not know but the other people hear them speaking in their language and are wondering how they do this. Peter tells them this is the fulfillment of the New Covenant promise made in Joel 2. There are four promises of the New Covenant that are referred to in the New Testament. They are found in Joel 2, Ezekiel 36, Jeremiah 31 and Isaiah 11. They are constantly referred to and here Peter says Joel 2 is fulfilled for the New Covenant has come upon you and this is God's Way of telling you that the New Covenant that has brought the Gospel into this world through Abraham's seed, through the nation of Israel is now going to all the nations as Babel is being reversed. Now the Gospel goes in all the languages to all the people of the earth.

Acts 2:14–36 says [14] *But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. [15] For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. [16] But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:*

[17] *“‘And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on **all flesh**,*

and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,

and your young men shall see visions,

and your old men shall dream dreams;

[18] *even on my male servants and female servants*

in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

[19] *And I will show wonders in the heavens above*

and signs on the earth below,

blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke;

[20] *the sun shall be turned to darkness*

and the moon to blood,

before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day.

[21] *And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’*

[22] *“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know—[23] this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.*

[24] *God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. [25] For David says concerning him,*

“‘I saw the Lord always before me,

for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken;

[26] *therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;*

my flesh also will dwell in hope.

[27] *For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,*

or let your Holy One see corruption.

*[28] You have made known to me the paths of life;
you will make me full of gladness with your presence.'*

[29] "Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. [30] Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, [31] he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. [32] This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. [33] Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. [34] For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

*"The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit at my right hand,*

[35] until I make your enemies your footstool."'

[36] Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

In other words, God has promised a Kingdom and it came through Israel. It has now come to fruition. Who sits on the throne of David? It is the King, Jesus. We're not going back to start another Israel with more kings for you have the King. We're not going back to start the sacrifices for you have the Sacrifice. We're not going back to get a new word for you have the Word. The Prophet has come. The Priest has come. The King has come and it is all fulfilled in Jesus Christ. All of the promises of God are yes and amen. Now this Gospel goes to all the nations where those children of Abraham are coming circumcised in heart by grace through faith in this Christ as Lord and Savior. I'd like to look at Jeremiah 31.

How does the New Testament handle this prophecy of a New Covenant to the house of Israel? Jeremiah 31:31–34 says *[31] "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, [32] not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband (He was faithful, they faltered but He didn't), declares the LORD. [33] For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. [34] And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."*

Finally, let's look at New Testament where this passage in Jeremiah is quoted. Hebrews 10:15–18 says *[15] And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying, [16] "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds," [17] then he adds, "I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more." [18] Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.*

One people – one plan – one destiny – a new heavens and a new earth where God's people will dwell forever. One might be thinking, 'what about the promise where God says He is going to bring them from the nations?' He has fulfilled it already for He

brought them from Babylon back to the nation. What about Him saying that He is going to rebuild the temple? The prophets that gave that, gave that before they were liberated from captivity. They came back and rebuilt the temple with Zerubbabel. So it has been fulfilled. Now we have the fulfillment of it in Jesus Christ. The offerings were reinstated for now we have the fulfillment of it in Jesus who was the Sacrifice once and for all.

So what about the Jewish people? You will find this in Romans 11. It was broken off in 70 AD but what seems to be the clear promise is that God is going to those broken off branches and is going to re-graft them in the olive tree. That is the work of the Gospel going to the nations. He is not going to go back rebuild the temple, reinstate the sacrifices and the Levitical priesthood. He is going to the Jewish people with the Gospel and bring them to Himself. That's why Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, said, 'when you preach the Gospel go to the Jew first.' The Gospel came to you through them and now you who benefited from the Gospel through them, make it a priority to go to them. There seems to be a promise in Romans 11 of a Gospel movement among the remnant of Israel, those whom He would call to Himself as He had from remnants of Israel throughout all the ages.

So do I think our foreign policy ought to line up with Israel? Sure, because they are a democracy but not because I think that's a theocracy nor do I think all the policies of a Zionist movement is in fact something that has come straight from the hand of God. No, what I want to send to Israel is not simply foreign aid but the Gospel. I want to send the Gospel to the Jewish people all over – in Miami, New York, Birmingham and everywhere. I want to tell them there is a Savior who will save them, just as I go to the Gentiles. Do I want to do Jewish evangelism? Absolutely and I like to do Gentile evangelism too but I do not believe that God has another plan where we have another church. Do we need a church that speaks Hebrew to Hebrew people? Absolutely. God has one people. No matter where you come from in the Gentile nations or where you come from with a Jewish background, we're one in Christ for He has broken down the wall of partition.

God's plan has been and is being fulfilled in Jesus. He doesn't have two plans. He has one plan and its victory was secured when the King came out of the grave. He is enthroned and now He is bringing those who are Jews inwardly by the circumcision of the heart from all the nations of the world. One might think this is replacement theology but it is not. This is fulfillment theology. It is realized fulfillment in the promises of God in Jesus Christ. May God bless you as you study His Word. This certainly deserves a lot more and perhaps we'll do it in the future but let's close in prayer.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the time we could be together in Your Word. Thank You Jesus for Your grace and mercy. I thank You so much for Your longsuffering with Abraham and the children of Abraham according to the flesh. I thank You also for Your longsuffering with me and all this pagan world that was in rebellion against You and the glorious moment, not just the small moments in the Old Testament when a Nineveh receives a Gospel message, but this glorious movement that takes place in Acts 2 that keeps spreading throughout all the world. Father, I praise You for the covenant of grace in Jesus Christ. Now Father would send this Gospel to all the world and from those who benefit from that Gospel, would You send it to those through whom the Gospel came to

us, the Jewish people that they also, like us might be grafted into this glorious olive tree that You raising up. That Tree stands because You went to the tree of cursing. Now we praise You for the witness of the Tree of Life, even as we long for that day when our Savior shall return. We give You praise Father in Jesus' Name, Amen.