

Love of Israel?

Misc. Texts

You can't turn on the nightly news without hearing something about the middle east and usually some roll Israel is playing in that news. Or you hear stories about antisemitism rising up all around us. So, it begs the question 'what should be our view and reaction to Israel and the Jewish people be today?'

So, let's dive into Scripture to see if we can answer this question.

I. The Covenants of God

There are 3 covenants we should look at which impact Israel.

A. The Abrahamic Covenant

Genesis 12:2-3, "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Notice that every element in this covenant is what God will do. He will make them a great nation, He will bless them, He will make their name great.

If you mess with Israel, God will mess with you and ultimately all people will be blessed because of Abraham's seed.

What can break this covenant? If God made the covenant and is the one who will act out the promise of the covenant what can break it? Absolutely nothing!

B. The Mosaic Covenant

Exodus 19:5-6, "Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, 6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."

Moses received this covenant while on Mt Sinai shortly after leading the people out of slavery in Egypt. Once again God is setting Israel apart from all other nations to be His people.

C. The Davidic Covenant

2 Samuel 7:8-16, “Now then, tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. 9 I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. 10 And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning 11 and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies.

“‘The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you: 12 When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. 15 But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it

away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16 Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.’”

So, in this covenant delivered to the prophet Nathan God promises to make David’s name great. To provide a home for His people Israel. God makes a promise to David’s offspring and God establishes David’s throne as an eternal throne.

We see the significance of David’s throne throughout Scripture as being the throne over all of true Israel. We will see more of this later.

In these 3 covenants we have seen that despite mankind’s lack of faithfulness to the covenant, God has always been faithful to His promise. It goes to the very nature and character of God. By His character we know without a doubt God will fulfill His covenant promises.

How do we know this to be true? Let’s take a look:

II. The Acts of Israel

A. The golden calf

In Exodus 32 we read of how the Israelites after being freed from Egypt by the mighty hand of God with

miraculous acts turn to worshipping gods made of gold formed into the image of a cow. THEY WORSHIPPED A GOLDEN COW!

Exodus 32:21-22, "He said to Aaron, "What did these people do to you, that you led them into such great sin?" 22 "Do not be angry, my lord," Aaron answered. "You know how prone these people are to evil."

Israel was prone to do evil. They were known to be prone to do evil.

They were God's chosen people and their natural tendency was to do evil. Sound familiar?

B. They had good kings and bad kings.

When you read 1 & 2 Kings you will read over and over about the Kings of Israel and Judah. As each king is introduced you will read that he either did what was right in the sight of the Lord or that he did evil in the sight of the Lord.

Now, you will notice, everything that was done was in the sight of the Lord. We can hide nothing from Him. Nothing!

All of these good kings and all of these evil kings and God never removes the promise of His covenant.

C. The Exile

The Northern Kingdom, Israel, was taken into captivity in 722 BC by the Assyrians.

The Southern Kingdom, Judah, was taken into captivity in 586 BC by Babylon & King Nebuchadnezzar.

Did this mean God broke His promise? In no way. In the ashes of Jerusalem as the people are being taken into captivity God reminds His people of His promise.

Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

The Southern Kingdom would be in captivity for 70 years following the words of this reminder, but God was faithful and Israel, which ceased to exist, would 70 years later return. God is faithful in His promises.

D. Hosea

Hosea is a picture of God in his relationship with his wife, Gomer. Check this out:

Hosea 1:2-3, "When the Lord began to speak through Hosea, the Lord said to him, "Go, marry a

promiscuous woman and have children with her, for like an adulterous wife this land is guilty of unfaithfulness to the Lord.” 3 So he married Gomer daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son.”

OK, first, her name...Gomer. Seriously, poor Hosea has to marry this horrible woman with a hideous name. But Hosea, the prophet, was a picture to Israel of God’s relationship with the adulterous Gomer who symbolized the adultery of Israel.

Men, read Hosea and see how he unconditionally loved Gomer over and over as she was unfaithful to him. That is how Jesus loves the church despite our unfaithfulness to Him.

From the golden calf to the adultery of the nation, did God ever break His promise to Israel? No, never.

But now some will say that Jesus ended the old covenant, God’s promise ended with Jesus. Really?

III. Jesus

Matthew 5:17, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”

Jesus didn’t come to negate the covenant, but to fulfill it. Let’s look at what His disciples said about this.

IV. The Early Church

Paul tells us in:

Romans 1:16, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.”

So, even after Jesus brought the New Covenant Paul says that salvation comes to the Jew first. Let’s keep going:

Romans 11:17-24, “If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, 18 do not consider yourself to be superior to those other branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. 19 You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in.” 20 Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not

be arrogant, but tremble. 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either.

22 Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness.

Otherwise, you also will be cut off. 23 And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 24 After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!”

Let me recap this: The olive root is Jesus, and the natural branches are Jewish believers. The grafted in branches are gentiles. This is the fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham. This is how all people are blessed through Abraham’s seed. God isn’t breaking His covenant; He is fulfilling it.

Does this mean that every Jewish person is connected to the olive root? No.

Romans 9:6, “It is not as though God’s word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel.”

Not every Jewish person accepts Jesus as Messiah and as a result they have been pruned from the olive tree. This isn’t new either, there have always been Jewish people who have rejected God. So, Jewish people rejecting Jesus today is no different than those who rejected God in the Old Testament times.

V. What does this all mean?

A. Is Israel today really Israel?

1. The Jewish population today share a continual lineage and ancestry with ancient Israel.
2. Israel today is in the historical territory of ancient Israel. The Jewish people view it as their literal home.

B. Does being ‘Israel’ make them perfect?

No, they have never been perfect. They had good kings who followed God and evil ones who fought against God. Now they have a president. Some may have been good and others may have been evil...just like Israel has always been.

True Israel has been and always will be those who have believed and received the one true Messiah!

C. Does Israel have a role in God's plan today and in the future?

Yes, in Revelation 7:1-8 God calls out 144,000, 12,000 from each tribe to be His witnesses in the final days of this era.

Therefore, God is still faithful to His promise to Abraham, Moses and David.

Satan has throughout history tried to cause that promise to be broken. He used Hitler and others in his vain attempt to break God's promise.

So, when we see the rise of antisemitism what should we do? How about praying for the peace of Israel? How about praying that Israel receives its Messiah?

This doesn't mean that Benjamin Netanyahu is perfect, but it doesn't mean that he is forsaken either. He too must answer to God with how he responded to Jesus.

Ultimately, we must stand with God and His faithfulness and His promise says that "I will bless

those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse."

And we know what BLESS means don't we?

Begin with prayer

Listen

Eat

Serve

Share

Salvation came to us through God's promise to Israel and now we are responsible to point Israel back to Jesus.