

God righteously, in grace, set the Nation of Israel aside following the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, the descent of the Holy Spirit and their subsequent refusal of the opportunity to repent of their rejection and slaying of their Redeemer. Graciously for He would have been just in wiping the nation off the face of the earth forever. Faithfully because He has not forsaken His promise and covenants made unilaterally with Abram and his descendants. Righteously because He set them aside for a time removing "most favored nation" status with Him. They stumbled indeed at the stumbling stone, Christ, 9:33; 11:9. But all is not lost. Their fall was the occasion of opening the riches of God's grace to the whole world. Their fall paved the way for enormous blessing to individuals of all nations (including any of Jewish descent) that would come to Him. But there is more to come. He reveals the marvelous proposition that if the fall of the Jewish nation was the occasion of enormous blessing to all worldlings, what blessings would proceed as a result of their fullness! Their fullness! Yes, the nation of Israel will be restored and lifted to a glorious prominence above all other nations under their King, the Lord Jesus Christ, when He returns (with us) to reign. They will become the humble but exalted national channel of the fullest blessings of God to be bestowed upon the whole earth. Israel's casting away is being used by God as an opportunity for the reconciling of the whole world to Him and personally to one another. (The reconciliation of all nations under Christ awaits His return to reign.) But NOW because Israel is set aside as God's people, the gospel goes out without reserve to all the world. As stated before, Paul hoped this would provoke his countrymen, the nation, to jealousy and awaken them to what they have missed. That hasn't seemed to have happened yet since Paul wrote this just before the destruction of the temple. Will it soon? In our lifetime, or perhaps not until after we are taken above, out of here? We do know. Although Paul doesn't mention it here, they are to undergo a terrible time of trouble forecast in the Old Testament, by the Lord Himself and by the Apostles and Prophets who wrote the New Testament. Sooner or later they will be brought to the realization of what they have done and what they have missed. Their current national return and occupation of the land God had given them thousands of years ago portends an impending change. Daniel's prophecies of events yet to be fulfilled portray an Israeli king making treaties with a great military power for protection, an impossibility unless a nation is to be reestablished. Sound familiar? It should, if we listen to the daily newscasts. But that western power, the Beast, seems to be Western Europe not the United States. But the stage is being set. None of these preparatory events concerning Israel need to be fulfilled before the Rapture. But the time is short. Are you ready for the Rapture? He

may call us up sooner than later. What a motivation to preach. The Christian profession on the earth may be approaching its conclusion. Paul tells us it will end. The fullness of the Gentiles will come in. The last soul to become part of the Body of Christ will be saved. Then the Rapture. Remaining behind after the Rapture will an apostate religious system about to be spewed out of the Lord's mouth. John describes her as a bloodthirsty whore, Babylon the Great, which will be destroyed by the very nations she has dominated for centuries. See the book of The Revelation of Jesus Christ.

The Day of Grace will end. But God is not through. He has more in mind. Paul masterfully outlines the events following the Rapture as God openly transfers His attention to His people, the nation Israel. The King IS coming! Long delayed, but COMING. Verses 15 - 25 describe at length in a graphically illustrating the secret (mystery) of God's Plan and what He will do to fulfill His Plan. In summary, He is using the setting aside of Israel to bring the gospel to all (and although not mentioned here, to call a Gentile Bride for His Son). After the Rapture (coming for His Bride to His side), He will remove the false Christian profession left behind from the place of blessing it usurped and destroy it. He will then restore God's chosen nation, Israel, to a place of prominence and blessing on earth. Paul uses the branches of an olive tree as a simple illustration. The olive tree is not Christ. The branches are not individuals, believers or unbelievers. This passage does not threaten the eternal salvation of any who have put their trust in Jesus as their Savior. It is a warning to earthly religious orders prominent today. They are indeed very much in jeopardy. He warns that their religious pride will be destroyed (v.21 be not high-minded, but fear; v.25 be [not] wise in your own conceits). Their proclaimed (and supposed) legitimacy as representing God will be exposed as false and unfounded. That vast and intricate religious system built up by man, men that can't accept the Gospel or God's design for church order, will be exposed as corrupt, hypocritical and idolatrous. The Gentile branches grafted in will be broken out. And God in His infinite grace will graft in again the branches cut out when He set aside Israel for their intransigence. Clearly all of this reveals that the Church (Assembly) is distinct from the nation of Israel and they are not to be confused with one another. Yet that is precisely what most of Christendom has done for centuries. Strive diligently to rightly divide the word of truth, 2Timothy 2:15.

Paul cites Old Testament prophecies to seal the fact that Israel is presently in disfavor with God but that God's intent is to restore them to the national glory promised in the Old Testament. "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my

covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.”

Psalm 14:7 Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.

Isaiah 59:20 And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD.

Isaiah 27:9 By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin; when he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and images shall not stand

Then He refers to Israel as the source and channel chosen by God for bringing blessing upon the earth

Romans 11:16 For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

Leviticus 23:10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: 11 And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.

Numbers 15:18 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land whither I bring you, 19 Then it shall be, that, when ye eat of the bread of the land, ye shall offer up an heave offering unto the LORD. 20 Ye shall offer up a cake of the first of your dough for an heave offering: as ye do the heave offering of the threshingfloor, so shall ye heave it. 21 Of the first of your dough ye shall give unto the LORD an heave offering in your generations.

If the offering of the first fruits of their crops was considered holy, certainly the lump of dough made from that flour was holy. If the root of a plant is holy certainly its branches are holy. God’s promises to Abraham and covenant with him constituted the basis for Abram’s faith. He is spoken of as the father of the faithful. The root is not dug up. The unfruitful branches are broken out and

others grafted in. The Gentiles are addressed as a class as distinguished from the Jews. They are as branches grafted into a tree not their’s originally. The Gentiles that have been brought into this blessing are cautioned not to become proud and boast over the branches they replaced. We Gentiles weren’t brought into a relationship with God because of any worthiness of our own, much less because we are better than the Jews. It is God’s infinite wisdom through pure grace alone. God has taken the seemingly hopeless ruin of His chosen people Israel and by His foreknowledge and infinite wisdom turned seeming disaster into unprecedented, unparalleled, unlimited, undeserved, blessing. Blessing in the Gospel and in the Church to the already hopelessly ruined Gentiles. And blessing eventually in national restoration of Israel itself to a greater place than they ever expected – fulfilling the promises and prophecies in a way far higher and deeper than they could have envisioned before Christ came and died.

Is God sovereign? Is He holy? Is He righteous? Is He Good? Is He gracious? Is He wise? Does He bless? Is He Love? Is HE worthy of worship and praise? Paul breaks out in a mighty doxology.

O the depth of the riches
both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
how unsearchable are his judgments,
and his ways past finding out!
For who hath known the mind of the Lord?
or who hath been his counselor?
Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be
recompensed unto him again?
For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to
whom be glory for ever.
Amen.

By Ron Canner, January 2, 2008

NOTE: Speaking of the root one is reminded of Christ the Root out of a dry ground, Isaiah 53 2

References of interest include:

Psalm 80:9 Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land.

Proverbs 12:12 . . . the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit.

Isaiah 11:10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious

27:6 He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.

37:31 And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward:

53:2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

Matthew 3:10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Luke 3:9 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Revelation 5:5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

22:16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.