

Week 1 – God is not done with Israel – Bible Study Helps

Title: God is not done with Israel

Sermon Summary: This sermon addresses the widespread confusion among Christians regarding God's relationship with Israel, particularly in light of modern geopolitical tensions. The sermon systematically works through Romans chapters 9-11 to demonstrate that God has not abandoned Israel despite their rejection of Jesus Christ. The message emphasizes that Israel's current spiritual blindness is partial and temporary, not final. God's covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David remain unconditional and will be fulfilled during the tribulation period when a remnant of Israel will recognize Jesus as their Messiah. The sermon challenges replacement theology—the belief that the church has replaced Israel—and affirms that God's faithfulness to Israel proves His faithfulness to all believers. The sermon calls Christians to pray for Israel while not condoning their rebellion, recognizing that the same God who will restore Israel after centuries of unbelief is the same God who restores fallen believers today.

Key Points:

- Israel's unbelief and rejection of the Messiah did not surprise God; it was prophesied throughout the Old Testament
- God has not cast away His people; their rejection is partial (not every Jew) and temporary (not permanent)
- Israel's current spiritual blindness will last "until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in" (the completion of the church age)
- The church age is a parenthesis or pause in God's prophetic timeline with Israel, not a cancellation of His promises
- God's covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David were unconditional and cannot be revoked
- After the rapture of the church, God's prophetic focus returns to Israel during the tribulation period
- A remnant of Israel (one-third) will be refined through tribulation and will recognize Jesus as Messiah when He returns
- Jesus Christ will literally return to Jerusalem, stand on the Mount of Olives, and reign from David's throne
- Christians should pray for Israel and recognize God's covenant promises while not condoning Israel's rebellion against God
- If God could permanently abandon Israel after making unconditional promises, believers could not be certain He won't abandon them

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Scripture Reference:

- Romans 11:1 - "I say then, hath God cast away His people? God forbid"
- Romans 11:25-26 - "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved"
- Romans 9:1-33 (entire chapter read and referenced)
- Romans 10:1-21 (referenced, particularly verse 21)
- Romans 11:1-36 (primary focus of the sermon)
- Isaiah 53:3 - "He is despised and rejected of men"
- Zechariah 12:10 - "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced"
- Zechariah 13:7-9 - Two-thirds cut off, one-third refined through fire
- Zechariah 14:1-5 - Jesus' feet standing on the Mount of Olives
- Acts 3:11-21 - Peter's sermon about Israel's ignorance and times of restitution
- Jeremiah 30:7 - "The time of Jacob's trouble"
- Luke 1 - Jesus shall reign over the house of Jacob forever
- Revelation 19:11 - Jesus returning on a white horse

Stories:

- The pastor's personal testimony of being spiritually blind and angry when his future wife Melanie witnessed to him in his early twenties, illustrating how he rejected the gospel before salvation
- The analogy of planting trees in springtime: watching seemingly dead trees and bushes through winter, then seeing green buds appear in spring, illustrating that Israel looks spiritually dead now but the covenant root still lives and will produce life again
- The comparison of Israel's future restoration to Joseph revealing himself to his brothers in Genesis—Jesus (like Joseph) will reveal Himself to the Jewish people who will mourn for what their fathers did, and He will forgive and restore them
- Reference to videos circulating on social media showing religious Jews spitting on Christians and attacking gospel preachers, which many use to argue against supporting Israel

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Discipleship Questions

How does understanding that God's promises to Israel are unconditional affect your confidence in His promises to believers in the church age?

In what ways does Israel's spiritual blindness mirror our own spiritual blindness before salvation, and how should this shape our attitude toward the Jewish people today?

What does Romans 11:28 reveal about God's character when it says Israel is both 'enemies concerning the gospel' yet 'beloved for the fathers' sakes'?

How can we balance supporting Israel as God's covenant people while not condoning their rejection of Christ or any unbiblical actions they may take?

Why do you think so many professing Christians today have abandoned belief in God's ongoing plan for national Israel, and what dangers does this pose to biblical interpretation?

What does the mystery of Israel's partial and temporary blindness teach us about God's sovereignty and His ability to work through human failure?

How should the prophecy that Israel will look upon Him whom they pierced and mourn influence our prayers for the Jewish people today?

In what ways does the story of Joseph and his brothers foreshadow the future reconciliation between Jesus Christ and the remnant of Israel?

If God could permanently abandon Israel after their rejection of the Messiah, what implications would that have for the security of our own salvation?

How does the biblical teaching that Jesus will literally reign from Jerusalem challenge popular interpretations that spiritualize or symbolize Old Testament prophecies?

Small Group Discussion Guide: God's Plan for Israel

Opening Prayer

Begin by asking God to open hearts and minds to understand His Word and His faithfulness to His promises.

Ice Breaker (5-10 minutes)

Question: Have you ever made a promise that was difficult to keep because circumstances changed? How did you handle it? How does this compare to God's promises?

Key Scripture Readings

- Romans 11:1-2
 - Romans 11:25-29
 - Zechariah 12:10
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Main Discussion Questions

1. Understanding Israel's Role

Read Romans 11:1-2

- What does Paul's emphatic "God forbid!" tell us about God's commitment to Israel?
- Why do you think so many Christians today believe God is done with Israel?
- How does understanding that Israel's unbelief didn't surprise God change your perspective?

2. The Mystery Revealed

Read Romans 11:25-26

- What does "blindness in part" mean? Why is this important?
- Explain the phrase "until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in" in your own words.

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- How does this passage show both God's justice and His mercy?

3. God's Faithfulness

Read Romans 11:28-29

- How can Israel be both "enemies" and "beloved" at the same time?
- What does this teach us about God's character and covenant-keeping?
- If God keeps His promises to Israel despite their rebellion, what does this mean for us as believers?

4. Current Events and Biblical Truth

- How should Christians respond to modern-day controversies surrounding Israel?
- What's the difference between supporting Israel biblically and supporting everything Israel does politically?
- How can we pray for Israel in a way that honors God's Word?

Key Takeaways

1. God's Promises Are Unconditional

God made covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David that He will fulfill regardless of human failure.

2. Israel's Blindness Is Temporary

The current spiritual blindness of Israel is partial (not every Jew) and temporary (until the church age ends).

3. The Church Has Not Replaced Israel

The church is a mystery revealed in the New Testament, but it does not cancel God's promises to Israel.

4. God's Faithfulness to Israel Proves His Faithfulness to Us

If God abandoned Israel after their failure, we could never be certain He wouldn't abandon us.

5. Prophecy Will Be Fulfilled Literally

Jesus Christ will literally return to Jerusalem, literally reign from David's throne, and literally restore Israel.

Practical Applications

For This Week:

1. Personal Bible Study

- Read Romans chapters 9-11 in their entirety
- Write down every promise God makes to Israel that you find
- Note how these promises relate to God's character

2. Prayer Focus

- Pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6)
- Pray for Jewish people to recognize Jesus as their Messiah
- Pray for wisdom in discussing Israel with others who may disagree

3. Examine Your Sources

- Where do you get your information about Israel?
- Are you reading the Bible more than social media feeds?
- Commit to filtering current events through Scripture, not the other way around

4. Practice Discernment

- When you hear someone say "God is done with Israel," be ready to share Romans 11:1-2
- Distinguish between supporting Israel biblically and supporting every political action
- Learn to separate God's covenant promises from human government policies

5. Share the Truth

- Identify one person in your life who is confused about Israel
- Prepare to share what you've learned from Romans 11
- Be ready to give an answer with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15)

Reflection Questions for Personal Growth

1. **Am I reading God's Word daily, or am I getting my theology from social media?**
 - Action: Commit to reading Scripture before checking your phone each morning
2. **Do I trust God's promises even when I fail?**
 - Reflection: If God keeps His promises to rebellious Israel, He will keep them to you

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3. **How does God's faithfulness to Israel increase my faith?**
 - Journal: Write about a time God was faithful to you despite your failure
 4. **Am I praying for those who reject Christ, including Jewish people?**
 - Challenge: Add Israel to your daily prayer list this week
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Digging Deeper (Optional Study)

For those who want to explore further:

- **Old Testament Prophecies:** Study Isaiah 53, Zechariah 12-14, Jeremiah 30-31
 - **The Covenants:** Research the Abrahamic, Davidic, and New Covenants
 - **Church History:** Investigate how "Replacement Theology" developed and its effects
 - **Current Events:** Read about Israel from biblical sources, not just mainstream media
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Memory Verse

Romans 11:29 *"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."*

Closing Prayer Points

- Thank God for His faithfulness to His promises
 - Pray for the salvation of Jewish people
 - Ask for wisdom to rightly divide the Word of Truth
 - Pray for courage to stand for biblical truth even when unpopular
 - Request God's help to love Israel while not condoning sin
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Next Week Preview

Be prepared to discuss specific objections and arguments people make against supporting Israel biblically. Bring questions you've encountered or heard in media/conversations.

Leader Notes

- **Be Sensitive:** This topic can be emotionally charged; maintain a grace-filled atmosphere

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- **Stay Biblical:** Keep bringing the discussion back to Scripture, not politics
 - **Encourage Questions:** Create space for honest questions and doubts
 - **Avoid Extremes:** Don't support Israel blindly, but don't reject God's promises either
 - **Focus on Application:** Help people know how to respond practically to what they're learning
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"God forbid that we should ever think God has cast away His people. His promises are sure, His Word is true, and His faithfulness endures forever."

5-Day Devotional: God's Unchanging Promises to Israel and the Church

Day 1: The Faithfulness of God's Promises

Reading: Romans 11:1-6

Devotional: "God forbid!" Paul's emphatic response to whether God has cast away His people reveals a fundamental truth: God's promises never fail, even when we do. Israel stumbled greatly—rejecting prophets and crucifying their Messiah—yet God's covenant remained unshaken. This isn't just about Israel; it's about the character of our God. If He could abandon Israel after their failures, what hope would we have when we stumble? But God's faithfulness doesn't depend on our performance. He foreknew our failures and still chose to love us. Today, reflect on areas where you've failed. God's promises to you remain as solid as His promises to Abraham. Your salvation rests not on your faithfulness, but on His.

Reflection Question: What promises of God do you struggle to believe when you've failed?

Day 2: Spiritual Blindness and God's Mercy

Reading: Romans 11:7-12; Isaiah 53:1-6

Devotional: Israel's blindness to their Messiah wasn't a surprise to God—Isaiah prophesied it centuries before Christ came. Yet this blindness was "in part" and "until"—two words filled with hope. Partial blindness means some still see; temporary blindness means sight will return. Before we judge Israel's rejection of Christ, remember your own blindness before salvation. Perhaps you were angry when someone shared the gospel, resistant to Jesus' name, spiritually dead. God's mercy extended to you, a Gentile, because of Israel's stumbling. Their fall became your riches. How then should you respond? Not with pride or contempt, but with gratitude and prayer for their awakening. The same mercy that opened your blind eyes longs to open theirs.

Reflection Question: Who in your life remains spiritually blind? How can you pray for them with patience and hope?

Day 3: The Mystery of God's Timing

Reading: Romans 11:25-27; Ephesians 3:4-6

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Devotional: God operates on a divine timetable that often confuses us. The "mystery" Paul reveals is that Israel's blindness has a deadline: "until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." Right now, God is gathering Jews and Gentiles into one body—the church. When the last person receives Christ, the door closes, the rapture occurs, and God's focus returns to Israel. This mystery teaches us that God wastes nothing. Israel's rejection wasn't the end of the story but a pause—a parenthesis in His redemptive plan. Our salvation was planned before the foundation of the world, and Israel's restoration is equally certain. God's delays are not denials. Trust His timing in your circumstances, knowing that He who promised is faithful to complete what He begins.

Reflection Question: Where do you struggle to trust God's timing in your life?

Day 4: Refining Fire and Future Hope

Reading: Zechariah 12:10-14; 13:7-9

Devotional: The image is sobering: two-thirds cut off, one-third refined through fire like silver and gold. The tribulation will be Israel's darkest hour—yet it leads to their greatest awakening. When they "look upon me whom they have pierced," national mourning will turn to national salvation. God's refining isn't cruelty; it's love pursuing the resistant heart. Sometimes God allows intense pressure not to destroy us but to purify us, to bring us to the end of ourselves where we finally cry out, "The Lord is my God!" Consider the trials you face—could God be refining you? The fire that feels unbearable may be burning away everything that keeps you from fully trusting Him. The same God who will restore Israel through tribulation restores you through trials.

Reflection Question: What impurities might God be refining out of your life right now?

Day 5: Standing Firm in Biblical Truth

Reading: Romans 11:28-36

Devotional: "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes." This verse holds two truths simultaneously—Israel's present rebellion and God's unwavering covenant love. In our age of information overload, biblical truth gets drowned out by videos, opinions, and emotional reactions. Many Christians are abandoning support for Israel based on current events rather than eternal Scripture. But God's promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David remain regardless of Israel's behavior or world opinion. Our position must be biblical: we don't excuse Israel's unbelief or violence, but we recognize God's covenant and pray for their salvation. Stand firm on Scripture when culture

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shifts. God keeps His word—to Israel, to you, to all who trust Him. Failure is not final when God has spoken.

Reflection Question: Where are you tempted to let culture shape your beliefs instead of Scripture?

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for Your unchanging promises. Help us believe Your Word even when circumstances seem to contradict it. Give us compassion for Israel and all who are spiritually blind. Teach us to trust Your timing, embrace Your refining work, and stand firm on Scripture. May we be faithful witnesses of Your mercy, pointing others to the truth while we can. In Jesus' name, Amen.