

# IS THERE HOPE FOR ISRAEL? THE BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

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## Introduction

- I. God's covenant with Israel
  - a. God made a covenant specifically with Israel, and He is not going to break it.
  - b. Those who adhere to replacement theology are mistaken in thinking that the church has replaced Israel.
- II. From a human perspective, it is hard to imagine that there is any hope for Israel; consider:
  - a. Israel is surrounded by enemies on all sides who seek to destroy her.
  - b. Israel has about 200,000 regular troops while the surrounding nations have millions.
  - c. Every month Israelis are killed as a result of terrorist activities; people in Israel live from day to day anticipating the next suicide attack.

What does God's Word say about hope for Israel?

- I. Where do we put our hope?
  - a. Consider Psalm 130, especially verse 5:

*I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope. (NIV)*
  - b. The foundational truth: Genesis 1:1
    - i. We are agreed that God created everything.
    - ii. God is in control.
- II. The Abrahamic covenant
  - a. The covenant is first stated in Genesis 12:1-3:

*The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. "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. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." (NIV)*

i. Note that God says, "I will bless you," and, "I will make you great." It is God's doing.

ii. Note that God is the one who chose Abram and God is the one who blessed Abram.

iii. Note that God says, "I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse." This will be an important point for us to consider later.

iv. God made this covenant with Abraham.

1. covenant is unconditional and still in effect; God keeps His word.

2. Abraham is the recipient of the benefits of the covenant, but he did not make it; it is not up to Abraham to keep the covenant.

b. *Genesis 12:7 The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him. (NIV)*

i. Note again that it is the LORD who is making the covenant.

ii. Note again that the covenant is unconditional.

c. *Genesis 15:18: On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates -- (NIV)*

i. Once again, we see that God is the one who makes the covenant, and there are no conditions [*no if you do this... then I will do that.*].

ii. Note also that the covenant includes a promise of land.

iii. God states that the covenant is made with Abraham and with his descendants after him.

d. In *Genesis 17:19*, God narrows down which of Abraham's descendants He will establish His covenant with. *Then God said, "Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him. (NIV)*

i. Abraham had several sons, most notably Ishmael and Isaac, but the covenant God made with Abraham is continued only through his son Isaac and his descendants.

ii. God did not neglect Ishmael; there is a blessing and a promise for him also, but it is not the Abrahamic covenant. Genesis 17:20-21: *And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation. But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year.* (NIV)

iii. Which of Isaac's descendants benefit from the Abrahamic covenant?

e. Genesis 35:9-12:

*After Jacob returned from Paddan Aram, God appeared to him again and blessed him. God said to him, "Your name is Jacob, but you will no longer be called Jacob; your name will be Israel." So he named him Israel. And God said to him, "I am God Almighty; be fruitful and increase in number. A nation and a community of nations will come from you, and kings will come from your body. The land I gave to Abraham and Isaac I also give to you, and I will give this land to your descendants after you."* (NIV)

i. The covenant God made with Abraham is now continued specifically through Jacob (Israel).

ii. Note that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did nothing; God is the one who made the covenant.

iii. No one has the right to take land from Israel because God gave it to him. Believers must recognize that the land is designated by God as belonging to Israel.

f. In spite of God's covenant, we have seen Israel suffering persecution for thousands of years. How can it be, if Israel is God's chosen people, that they suffer so greatly?

### III. The Mosaic Covenant

a. Exodus 19

i. This covenant is made specifically with Israel and it is conditional.

ii. God's purpose in bringing Israel out of Egypt and establishing the Mosaic covenant with them was to make Israel a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

iii. Note that this covenant is conditional and depends upon their obedience.

b. Throughout their history, Israel has rejected God

i. They have rejected His son, the only way to know Him.

ii. Although Israel made this covenant with God, none has kept it, according to Isaiah 64:6: *All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away. (NIV)*

c. But there is hope for Israel, in Isaiah 53:6: *We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (NIV)*

i. God knew Israel would not follow Him, that they would reject Him after He brought them out of Egypt.

ii. In 1948, Israel was just re-established and had nothing; since then, it has won its wars miraculously.

1. For example, in 1973, there were just two Israeli tanks pitted against the entire Syrian army, but the Syrians thought there was a vast army arrayed against them and they fled!

2. God enabled Israel to win by bringing misinformation to the enemy, something we have seen Him do in battles recorded in the Old Testament.

3. So the Bible is still alive today; God still works in the same ways.

IV. The present and the future for Israel: God is faithful even though Israel is not.

a. In Isaiah 43:25, God does it for His own name's sake: *"I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more. (NIV)*

b. In Isaiah 63:8, God is speaking of Israel *He said, "Surely they are my people, sons who will not be false to me"; and so he became their Savior. (NIV)*

i. There are prophecies which speak to specifically to Israel.

ii. Not everything that one reads in the Bible is addressed to the church.

c. Hosea 5:15 describes Israel's present state: *Then I will go back to my place until they admit their guilt. And they will seek my face; in their misery they will earnestly seek me.*"

i. Jesus is now at the right hand of God and He will remain there until they admit their guilt.

ii. They will seek Him when in misery.

d. God is waiting for Israel to repent, according to Matthew 23:37-39

*"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'" (NIV)*

e. Ezekiel 11:17: *"Therefore say: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will gather you from the nations and bring you back from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you back the land of Israel again.'" (NIV)*

i. Note that God says, "I will bring you back."

ii. God says, "I will give you back the land."

iii. The land of Israel will be returned to Israel.

f. Jeremiah 23:3-8

*"I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number. I will place shepherds over them who will tend them, and they will no longer be afraid or terrified, nor will any be missing," declares the LORD. "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness. So then, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "when people will no longer say, 'As surely as the LORD lives, who brought the Israelites up out of Egypt,' but they will say, 'As surely as the LORD lives, who brought the descendants of Israel up out of the land of the north and out of all the countries where he had banished them.' Then they will live in their own land." (NIV)*

i. The people of Israel will be returned to their own land; God will regather them to the land which He gave them.

ii. The people of Israel will no longer live in fear.

- g. In Jeremiah 31:31-34 is the New Covenant, also made with Israel:

*"The time is coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." (NIV)*

- i. God will write His law on their hearts.

- h. Isaiah 65:17-20 describes the future hope for Israel:

*"Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more. "Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth; he who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed. (NIV)*

- i. Jerusalem will be a delight.  
ii. There will come a day when there is no more weeping.  
iii. The hope comes from God Himself, in His Word.  
iv. God will create a new heaven.  
v. With this perspective, we must remember to keep our

eyes upon the Lord.

## Summary

- I. We have a living hope in our Messiah; He is our peace.  
II. What should believers do?  
a. Pray  
i. Pray for blessing of Israel, according to Psalm 122:6

- ii. Pray Jeremiah 29:11-14
  - iii. Pray that the Jewish people would seek God.
  - iv. Pray that the Jewish people would repent and acknowledge Yeshua (Jesus), in accordance with Psalm 118:26.
  - v. Pray that God would make Himself real to the Jewish people.
  - vi. Remember that God allows the misery and terror so that they would be moved to seek Him.
- b. Go share your hope in Messiah with Jewish people.
  - i. Tell them you are praying for them.
  - ii. Tell them, “It is because of the love that your Messiah gave me for you that I am praying for you.”
  - iii. Beware: Say, “your Messiah” or “Yeshua” (Hebrew). “Jesus” (English) is an offense.
- c. Support Jewish missions/ministries
  - i. Remember the promise of Genesis 12:3: God blesses those who bless Israel.
  - ii. Pray for Jewish/messianic believers in Israel.
- d. Live out the hope you have in Messiah so that they would see it and be jealous and desire to have the same thing, in accordance with Romans 11:13-14.