

# **Romans 3:1-20**

## **What About the Jews?**

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*The Jews Are No Longer The Vehicle Or Vessel For  
Conveying God's Truth To The World*

Now Jesus says **'you've rejected me, the cornerstone' verse 43 [of Matthew 21], 'therefore I'm going to reject you.'** "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder." He's saying, **'This stone that you've rejected, I tell you, this stone is going to judge you, you're going to fall on it, and you're going to be broken.'** Talking to the leadership of that day, he's telling them, **'Look, there's no hope of your salvation, because you've rejected me.'** [verses 45-46 show who this was aimed at, the chief priests and Pharisees, the leadership of that day in Israel.] Then he said, **'The day will come when I'll judge everyone. And the stone will fall and grind to powder those that it falls on,'** shades of Daniel 2 [vs 44] and the great rock, cut without hand coming down and destroying the kingdoms of this earth, grinding them to powder. But Jesus says, **'Because you have rejected me, I reject you to be my vehicle anymore, of giving my truth to the world.'** And at that moment, this verse doesn't mean God has rejected the nation, but the gospel of the kingdom has been taken away from them, and **they're no longer the vehicle or vessel of God's truth today, the church is, the Bride of Christ is.** [But miracle of miracle, God is calling back into the church a growing number of ethnic Jews, re-grafting them back onto the Olive Tree from whence they've been severed, cf. Romans 11.] We are the nation that he says, in verse 43, is producing the fruit of the kingdom of

God [1 Peter 2:9]. We are the nation that has repented. *'The nation? What do you mean?'* Well, that's what it says in **1 Peter 2:9, 'We are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession.'** We are the nation that the kingdom has been given to. So does that mean God has forsaken Israel? Not in your life, he's just said 'You can't be my vehicle anymore.' The treasury was in Israel. It's like, you got this fancy dump-truck that's got the load in it, OK. This is what the world needs, but it breaks down and you can't get it to budge, and it breaks down on purpose. And so, what do you do? You look for another truck. Is there a truck available? And here's the truck, the church, the Gentiles. Well, put it in there. Put the treasure in there. [Now this analogy isn't perfectly true. The early church in Asia Minor and the Middle East had a very high percentage of Messianic congregations, made up of Jewish believers in Yeshua, up until around 325AD. Check out this link: <https://UNITYINCHRIST.COM/history2/index3.htm>.

Jewish Christians, the Messianic congregations in the Middle East and Asia Minor were an integral and initially the main part of the "church" vehicle, dump-truck, "holy nation, royal priesthood" Peter talked of. We must come to understand that the Jewish branch of the Christian church, the body of Christ, got eliminated, first by Greco-Roman decrees starting in 325AD, and then by the civil authority of the Roman government, under the control of the chief Greco-Roman church headquartered in Rome. Now the Messianic Jewish Christian believers are coming back into the body of Christ, called into belief in Jesus of Nazareth by God himself. And what Zechariah 12 has shown us, that at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of the Messiah, the whole Jewish nation of Israel repents, and becomes part of the church, and then the gospel, the Word of the Lord, goes out to the whole world and covers the world as the oceans cover the world.] It's still your [God's] chosen truck. It's still your vehicle. It's still got potential, but you've got to get the word out, you're not going to wait for them [the whole Jewish nation] to come to their senses, let's get the word out, let's save the world. ***And so God took the responsibility of spreading the gospel from the Jews, and he gave it to the church*** [and remember, as I

pointed out, the church was made up of two branches, Jewish and Gentile up until around 325AD, with many Messianic Quartodeciman congregations in Asia Minor].

### *Replacement Theology Is False Theology*

There are many in the church today that teach that God is through with the nation of Israel because they rejected Christ. They teach the church is now Israel. But actually this teaching is based upon a belief in God's unfaithfulness. Because if you believe that God has rejected Israel, then what makes you think that God won't reject you someday? If you say that God has rejected Israel, you are showing ignorance of the Scriptures. Because if you knew what God has promised Israel, you would never say God has rejected them, because you would be calling God a liar!--promise breaker! You'd better not do that. You say, 'Well, what did he promise them?' Well, look at Genesis 15. God chose a pagan guy by the name of Abram, called him out of his hometown of Er [of the Chaldees]. Had him move out into the middle of nowhere. And God gave him a promise, he says, ***'Abram out of you I'm going to make a mighty nation, the Messiah's going to come through you, I'm going to bless you so that your descendants are for number like the sand of the seashore, the stars of the sky.'*** And it says, ***"And Abraham believed the Lord, it was reckoned to him as righteousness."*** But then God said, ***'We need to make this official, we need to write this down.'*** And so in those days they couldn't run to the hallmark store and pick up the legal forms they needed. They had a very simple way of making a legal agreement. God said ***'This is what I'm going to do for you.'*** What they would do is, the two parties involved in a covenant or an agreement would decide what they were going to do, they would write it down. And then they would take an animal or animals, they would cut them in two, push the animal apart, make a path through that animal(s) that had been cut in two,

and they would walk through it, back-to-back. They would recite their promise as they walked through it. In other words, they were saying, ***'If I don't keep up my end of the agreement, or, if he doesn't keep his end of the agreement up, you can cut whoever fails in two [like this or these animals we're walking through].'*** We'll people didn't break their promises in those days. [You ever wonder why?] So God made this promise to Abram, and Abram's, *'Lord, OK, what's my part, what's my part?'* And the Lord says, ***'Get the form ready.'*** And it says in **verse 9**, ***"Bring me a three year old heifer, and a three year old female goat, and a three year old ram, a turtle dove and a young pigeon. And he brought all these to him, and he cut them in two, and laid each half opposite the other. But he didn't cut the birds (they're too hard to cut) and the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses and Abram drove them away. Now when the sun was going down a deep sleep fell upon Abram."*** (The kind of sleep that comes upon some of you guys on Sunday mornings, you know. I just hope I live long enough someday to fall asleep during one of my sermons. [laughter] Wouldn't that be funny? I heard about a preacher who did that. He was so old, he started preaching, and sort of got heavier, heavier, eyes would--finally he fell asleep. What would you do? Sing a song, probably.) Ah, anyway, this sleep came upon Abram. Why? God put him out of commission. Why?! Because God didn't want Abraham walking through that covenant, because he knew that Abraham and his descendants wouldn't be able to keep up their end of the agreement. And so, you know what? God put him asleep, and God passed through that himself, taking upon himself the higher responsibility. God's saying, ***'If I don't keep my promise, you can cut me in two.'*** ***My promise is not dependent on Abraham's performance, or any of his descendants' performance, not upon their good works, not upon their faithfulness, nothing, it's all my responsibility to do what I've promised to do, period.'*** Wow. You say, *'So what, Mark?'* Don't you understand? ***That every promise in the New Testament is given to us based upon God's promises to Israel.*** And that if God breaks his promise to Israel, he

might as well, he'll probably break his promises to us. But if he's always been faithful to his covenant with Israel, based on his doing, then we can be pretty well sure that he's not going to break one promise he's made to us. He said, **"I'll never leave you or forsake you."** You can bank on it! Why? Because God's been faithful to Israel. Well, has he been faithful to Israel? You better believe he has. You see, individual Jews, they're not secure unless they believe in Messiah. But the nation itself is secure. [And as we've just read in Zechariah 12 God himself brings the nation of Israel to repentance, as a whole nation, at Jesus Christ's 2<sup>nd</sup> coming (Read Zechariah 12 in context with chapters 12, 13 and 14).] [To read a parallel description of this Genesis covenant agreement, log onto: [http://www.unityinchrist.com/romans/romans9-11\\_4.htm](http://www.unityinchrist.com/romans/romans9-11_4.htm) .]

### *Jeremiah 31, Another Awesome Promise To Israel*

Jeremiah 31, look at Jeremiah 31. And get ready for something that will just knock you off the saddle. **Jeremiah 31, verse 35**, this is good stuff, so get ready. **"Thus says the Lord, who gives the sun for light by day, and the fixed order of the moon and stars for light by night, and who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar, the Lord of hosts is his name:"** Verse 36 says, **"If this fixed order departs,"** 'Well, what fixed order?' He just told you in verse 35, the sun lighting the day, the stars at night, and then the moon making the ocean waves [tides], if the sun stops, the stars stop, the moon stops, **"then, if this fixed order departs from before me, declares the Lord, then, the offspring of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me"** -- how long?--"**forever.**" I went to the circus Friday night. And at the circus I have never been in such a dead crowd in my entire life. I mean, when you think about a circus, I mean, we saw things that I didn't know people could do. I saw these ladies bending their bodies in knots. I think one of them went into one of those boy scout knots. And here's the whole

crowd, just-dumb, d-dumb. And I'm going 'Come on gang, this is something to get excited about, come on!' And everybody would look at me with that look that says, 'What is the matter with you?' So don't sit there, dead in your seats. This isn't a circus though. **"Thus says the Lord", verse 37, "if the heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out below."** Can you measure the heaven's, gang? [The Hubble space telescope can't even do this] No, you can't. And if the deepest, deepest secrets of the ocean can be revealed, and they can't. [And our deepest diving subs haven't done this thoroughly yet, and the only sub built to get down into the deepest trench was retired years ago. And this never had all the instrumentation needed to search out every secret of the deep.] He says, **"then, I will also cast off the offspring of Israel."** 'Oh but Mark, they rejected Christ. They've done terrible things.' Do you think God didn't know that? God knows they would do terrible things. But his promise to them is not based upon their performance, it's based on his performance. And that's why he says in **verse 37, "Thus saith the Lord; 'If heavens above can be measured, and foundations of the earth searched out below, then I will cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done', declares the Lord."** In other words, God says basically, **'I don't care what they've done, I'm never casting away that nation. It's mine, forever.'** 'You say, well, that's only one verse Mark.' OK, let's look at Numbers 23. Go to the left, Numbers. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, **Numbers, chapter 23, verse 19.** This is when that false prophet Balaam was prophecying, and he was supposed to be cursing Israel--God took over his mouth. And he couldn't get a curse out. Instead, this awesome revelation of God's care for Israel comes out. 23:19, got it? No? I love the sound of pages rustling. It means you've got your Bibles, that's neat. **23:19, "God is not a man that he should"--what?--"lie, nor a son of man that he should repent. Has he said and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, will he not make it good? Behold, I have received a command to bless. When he has blessed them I cannot revoke it."** Has God blessed Israel? Yes. It can't be revoked. That's neat, gang,

because God's blessed you, and his blessing can't be revoked. We'll look at that more in a minute. **“He has not observed iniquity in Jacob, nor has he seen trouble in Israel, the Lord his God is with him.”** This is so neat, because there had been iniquity in Israel. There had been sin in the camp. And yet he's saying, **‘Look, I'm not going to curse my people, I'm overlooking their sin.’** Hallelujah! Because when God looks at me, does he see my sin? No. He sees me in Christ. You see, the church isn't Israel. But all our blessings are dependent upon God being faithful to Israel, because what he did for them he may do for the church. Now you can't claim these promises just out of context, Haigen and Copeland and some of these guys do. Many of these promises are specifically for Israel. And so don't take them out of context. Make sure you've got them in context.

### *God's Promises To Israel Through Isaiah*

Let's go to Isaiah 54. This is a very important verse for those of you who woke up to the earthquake this morning. **Isaiah 54:9-10**, remember this one when the ground is shakin'. **“For this is like the days of Noah to me, when I swore that the waters of Noah should not flood the earth again. So, I have sworn that I will not be angry with you, nor will I rebuke you, for the mountains may be removed, and the hills may shake, but my lovingkindness will not be removed from you. And my covenant of peace will not be shaken, says the Lord who has compassion on you.”** He's talking to Israel, and he's telling them **‘I don't care, the mountains may fall, the hills may shake, but I am not going to remove my lovingkindness and my compassion and my covenant with you, you will never be shaken.’** [And the Israeli's take **verse 17** to heart even now **“No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper.”** Awesome. Look at **Isaiah 65, verse 15**, **“And you will leave your name for a curse to my chosen ones,**

**and the Lord God shall slay you, and my servants will be called by another name, because he who has blessed in the earth shall be blessed by the God of truth. And he who swears in the earth, shall swear by the God of truth, because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hidden from my sight.”** In other words, they were saying, *‘Look, Oh curse those Jews! They've rejected Messiah, curse them!’* He says, ***‘Look, you don't curse my people! If you curse them, I curse you! Sure they've done a lot of things, but’*** he says, ***‘I've forgotten their former troubles. They're hidden from my sight.’*** [Also look at the promise to Abraham and his descendants in Genesis 12:3, where God promises to bless those who bless Abraham and his descendants, and curse those who curse Abraham and his descendants. And in Galatians 3:29 all believers are reckoned at being descendants of Abraham. I've seen this promise in action, several times in my life, where those who have cursed me in some way or action have not had it easy, something nasty came their way. It's simply God looking after his kids, in a sense. You parents can understand that.] God is forgiving the sin of Israel, and hallelujah that's why he's the God who can forgive your sins too. [If you want to put these verses in context to see if they are really talking about Israel, got back to verse 1 and read through to verse 9-10. He is talking about Israel, Jacob, and Judah who've rejected God and sinned against him in every way. In verse 9 God states through **Isaiah “And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect (elect, mine elect in the OT Scriptures often refers to the church, those God calls to a knowledge of salvation, especially in prophecies that go way into the future, pertaining to the time period of the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.) shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there. And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me.”** So God's elect, those called out ones in the church, indwelt and led by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8), along with God's chosen people, named here specifically as the seed of Jacob and Judah, i.e. Israel, are to re-inherit the Promised land together at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.



Now, we'll be immortal, resurrected with immortal bodies, but these Jews, God's chosen people here, named as his servants, will yet be physical Jews, a remnant, a seed, placed in the land to inherit it and repopulate it. Although Pastor Mark hasn't taken the time to put verses 15-16 in context with the first 14 verses, his interpretation according to context is right on the money. So two groups are really mentioned in verse 9 as inheriting the land, **“mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.”** We who are resurrected, made immortal, along with faithful Abraham and all those resurrected in the church age, those in whom the Holy Spirit really dwelt, will inherit the Promised Land, along with a remnant seed from Jacob and Judah, used by God to repopulate the land of Israel after the tribulation, World War III. In the land of Israel itself, by checking other prophecies, one third of the Israeli's will survive WWII and as Zechariah 12 shows, come to repentance and acceptance of Yeshua of Nazareth as their personal Messiah. It is this "seed" spoken of in verse 9 here that God uses to repopulate the Promised Land for the future coming reign of Jesus Christ over the entire earth from Jerusalem, his capital city now of the world (cf. Zechariah 14:9). All of Israel--the Jews in particular--what Pastor J. Mark Martin calls that discarded dump-truck--will become a rebuilt vehicle for bringing the gospel to the world as a servant nation of the Lord.]

### *Promises To Israel & Judah Through Jeremiah*

Look at Jeremiah 32, just go to the right, to the next book, of **Jeremiah 32. Verse 37, “Behold I will gather them out of all the lands to which I have driven them in my anger, and in my wrath and in my great indignation, and I will bring them back to this place and make them dwell in safety, and they shall be my people and I will be their God.”** Look at **verse 40, “And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them,**

to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they should not depart from me. And I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land with my whole heart and with my whole soul. For thus saith the Lord, Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them.” (verses 40-42) **Jeremiah 33, verse 19 to the end of the chapter.** [He starts in verse 19, but I wish again to put this in proper context, giving the time order of this prophecy. **Verse 15a states “In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David;”** That happened, the first part of verse 15 was fulfilled by the birth of Jesus Christ, and his 33 years spent on earth. **Verse 15b** next, describes Jesus Christ after his 2<sup>nd</sup> coming: **“and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.”** What land? Lets read on through **verse 16, “In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely.”** Is the Israeli nation and Jerusalem dwelling in safety, real safety, right now? No. So this is future, yet to be fulfilled. That's the context these next verses have to be taken in.] **“And the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah saying, 'Thus saith the Lord, If I break my covenant for the day, and my covenant for the night, so that day and night will not be at their appointed time, then my covenant may also be broken with David my servant that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne with the Levitical priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be counted, and the sand of the sea cannot be measured, so I will multiply the descendants of David my servant, and the Levites who minister to me. Moreover the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah saying, 'Have you not observed what the people have spoken, saying, 'The two families which the Lord chose [could be referring to the House of Israel (deported 721BC by Assyria) and the House of Judah (deported 600s BC, temple destroyed by Babylonian Empire; defeated and dispersed 70AD & 135AD, temple destroyed by Roman Empire)] he's rejected them', thus they despise my people. No longer are they a nation in their sight.”** You see, they were

saying the same thing at this time [of Nebuchadnezzar's captivity]. *'God's through with Israel!'* *'God's rejected them. God's despised them.'* Look at what God's response is, **verses 25-26, "Thus says the Lord, 'If my covenant for day and night stand not, and the fixed patterns of the heaven and earth I have not established, then I would reject the descendants of David, Jacob and David my servant."** Hey, the sun came up this morning, right? And it's going down tonight. God hasn't rejected Israel, not on your life. Because if he rejected them, you'd have no hope of thinking that God won't some day reject you. You see, they're his people by his choice, not by their goodness. And we are saved by his choice, and his grace, and not by our performance.

### *Paul In Romans 11 Sums This Up*

To summarize it all let's go to Romans 11. Do a great big circle in the Bible and come back to where we started. **Romans 11:1-5, "I say then, God has not rejected his people, has he?"** What's his response? **"May it never be. For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says, in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, Elijah says, 'They've killed thy prophets, they've torn down the altars, and I alone am left, and they're seeking my life.'** But what was the divine response to him? God said, **'I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.'** In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God's gracious choice." Verse 6, read it out loud, **"But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace."** God has chosen Israel by grace. Now individual Jews must be saved the same way as you and I are saved. But as a nation and as God's people, he's not

through with them. He chose them, and it was by grace, not by their works, and he hasn't rejected them, not on your life. Reading on, we pick it up in **verse 25**, "**For I don't want you brethren to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation; that a partial hardening has happened to Israel**"--and how long is that hardening going to last?--read the end with me -- "**until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.**" That is the end of the church age. When the fulness of the Gentiles come in, we're out of here! It's the Rapture! Zoom! That's the way we talk about the Rapture at my house. When you talk about the Rapture to a three-year-old, what do I do? I pick her up and say "*Emily, we're going to go with Jesus in the Rapture*", and I throw her up in the air and she goes way up, and says "*The Rapture's going to be great, Dad!*" [Calvary Chapel congregations believe in the Rapture and are basically Dispensational Pre-Millennialist in their eschatology. The other pre-millennialist group are the Classic or Historic Pre-Millennialists, who don't stress a rapture or a 7 year tribulation, but a 3.5 year tribulation, with some believing God takes the faithful to a place of safety to sit out the tribulation, WWII, out of harms way. This website does not stress or emphasize either belief in the protection of God's elect born-again Christians during the tribulation, but stresses the one job and calling Jesus gave the church as a whole, and that is to evangelize to the world (cf. Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:6-9). The purpose of this site is not to take sides, although I'm a Classic Pre-Millennialist myself. The purpose is to nourish Christians of all eschatological persuasions, particularly those who dwell on the Pre-Millennial side of the eschatological doctrinal fence.] There goes the Rapture, at the end of the church age, the Lord's going to call us up. No more Gentiles. I wonder who's going to be the last Gentile that's going to be saved? What if you are witnessing to the last Gentile and you didn't know it? And he doesn't know it, and you can imagine all heaven's waiting. But this hardening of Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles come in, **verse 26**, read it out loud, "**And thus all Israel will be saved, just as it is written, the Redeemer will come from Zion, he will remove ungodliness from**

**Jacob, and this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”** Now **verses 28-29** are absolutely essential. **“From the standpoint of the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But from the standpoint of God's choice, they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.”** Hallelujah! God looks at them, and they are a stubborn, stiff-necked, feisty bunch of people with onion breath [laughter], but he says, **‘I chose them.’ “I promised they'd be a people before me forever.”** Gang, you have before your eyes, living proof that if God keeps his word, he keeps his word to them, stubborn, stiff-necked, onion-breathed people, he'll keep his word to you--stubborn, stiff-necked, onion-breathed people. You see, **“The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.”** When he saved you by his gracious choice, not by anything you've done, but by his doing, when he saved you, he can't return you. Hallelujah." [this is a transcript of a sermon on Romans 3:1-20 (page3) given by Pastor J. Mark Martin of Calvary Community Church, P.O. Box 39607, Phoenix, AZ 85069. Any additions to that sermon are in brackets [ ] .]

### *In Closing*

[Now when you read that section from Cecil Roth's "History of the Jews" I know a lot of that was very dry reading, but in spite of the dry language of a historian, the immensity of Jewish suffering comes through. The word massacre means just what it says, wholesale indiscriminate killing of men, women and children. Count how many times he uses that word. Is it any wonder, as the Lord is currently restoring the Jewish branch of Christianity, these Jewish-Christians want nothing to do with Greco-Roman Christian worship practices or styles of worship. Be sure to check out my new section about the Messianic movement of the Holy Spirit at <https://UNITYINCHRIST.COM/messianicmovement/messianicmovement.htm> . And if anyone reading this here believes that God is

done with the Jews, is of say, the amillennial persuasion, log onto:

<https://UNITYINCHRIST.COM/messianicmovement/twobranches.htm>

and read that article as well as the other articles in that section, and see by God's very calling of massive numbers of ethnic Jews within the past 50 years, that He is very far from being finished with them. The very beginnings of the spiritual restoration of Israel, which is prophecied in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> chapters of Zechariah to occur at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus Christ, has already begun in earnest. Don't believe me, log on that article and read the evidence for yourself. It's truly time for the Amillennial's to check out what the Holy Spirit has been doing, and check their eschatological beliefs against the backdrop of recent church history.]

[Now that we're on the subject, having just looked at the history of the Jews, and how they've suffered at the hands of Gentile civil governments under whom they've been dispersed since Roman times. We read that horrible account of their treatment in Europe leading up to the Spanish Inquisition (which was worse). Then coming into modern times, we see powerful repeats of history carried out against them in Hitler's Germany. We see from prophecy that two thirds of the Israeli Jews will die in the tribulation, or World War III. We also have seen that God does not forsake them in the end, but in essence rewards them, first by calling them into a relationship with Yeshua, Jesus of Nazareth. I wish to leave this picture in your mind of how God feels about these people. I found the best explanation in a book titled "Loving God With All of Your Mind" by Elizabeth George. Let her explain on page 167 how God feels:

### **“The Fulfillment of the Promise**

Have you ever planned a vacation to mark the end of a long project or a special evening out to celebrate the completion of a difficult task? Rewards like these are effective motivators. We can endure hard times as long as we know there is something good at the end. We can work hard and sacrifice meals, sleep, and fun when the goal and the reward are worthwhile.

God knew that the seventy-year exile would be difficult [and I might add here, the 2,000 year exile or dispersion the Jews would find themselves in after 70-135AD, along with everything they would go through, plug that one in here just for kicks], so when he pronounced that sentence He also promised the Israelites a reward-an expected end, a future and a hope, and the restoration of peace and prosperity. As one commentator observed, God did not want "that unexpectant apathy which is the terrible accompaniment of so much worldly sorrow.to be an ingredient in the lot of the Jews." (H.D.M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell, eds., The Pulpit Commentary, Vol. 11, p. 587) The promise He held out-the promise that they would have an end, "literally, and 'end and expectation' meaning such an end as they wished for"-offered them security, hope, and a reason to persevere."

Now the expected end God initially promised them through Jeremiah was their restoration to the land of Israel and Jerusalem under Cyrus, king of Persia. But as we just saw God used Jeremiah, as well as many of the prophets of the Old Testament to promise a glorious restoration of Israel at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of their Messiah, Yeshua of Nazareth. The Old Testament is virtually filled with these restoration prophecies. The more astute and religious Jews know about these prophecies and place their hope in them. God has not left the Jews without hope or promise for the future. Read Ezekiel 36, whole chapter. [or read Ezekiel 37:1-14, which the unsaved Jews interpret literally, this one will really through you for a loop (see <https://unityinchrist.com/plaintruth/battle.htm> for a possible interpretation of this which matches theirs.)) Read Isaiah 35:1-10. Read Isaiah 2. Read Joel 3:1-21, the whole chapter, especially if you believe the Lord has forever cast off

the Jews. Joel 3 cross-references to Revelation 16 & 19, the return of Christ. But read what is written in verses 20-21, when it's all over, the battle of Armageddon is won by the Lord, **“But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed: for the Lord dwelleth in Zion.”** Doesn't that just say it all?]

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