

I. ISRAEL AND THE WAYS OF GOD

- A. Why is God so concerned about this little “sliver” of humanity? What is all the fuss about? Why has God chosen to draw the storyline out over such a long period of time? Why so much “drama” over such a relatively small nation and piece of real estate? What is God going for in all of this stuff with Israel?
- B. Quiz: Which of these is most likely to stick with you more? Which of these is going to impact your behavior more and result in an enduring understanding?
1.
 - a) Reading a manual about the dangers of drunk driving
 - b) Watching a drunk driver hit a school bus full of kids
 2.
 - a) Reading a PDF about carpentry
 - b) Doing a one year hands-on internship under a master carpenter
 3.
 - a) Isaiah the prophet shouting “hey everyone, the Assyrians are going to defeat the Egyptians and Cushites!”
 - b) Isaiah the prophet walking about naked for three years shouting, “So shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptian captives and the Cushite exiles!” (Is. 20:1-6)
- C. God is a very excellent teacher and communicator. There are certain lessons about His character and His ways that He wants to “drive home” in a way that human beings will never forget. If people are going to relate to their Creator forever in an eternal kingdom, they must know what He is like. There are some lessons so important to God, that He “goes out of His way” to make sure they are communicated with as great an impact as possible—especially those that have eternal implications.
- D. The real issue of this seminar actually isn’t Israel. *The real issue at stake is the knowledge and ways of God as revealed in the gospel itself.* Bound up in this people and God’s dealings with them, is God’s self-disclosure to the world. God could have just given the human race a systematic theology textbook full of abstract concepts and principles. Instead, He decided to choose a nation and make it a 4,000 year visual aid, object lesson, and case study, in context to which He would make His ways known.
- E. The climax of the story is just around the corner. God is going to shock, offend, and confront self-righteousness in the nations of the earth like never before, by means of what He is going to do with Israel. In context to this little nation, God is going to put the gospel on visual display before the nations in way that will mark all of us forever.

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion,

“Your God reigns!” ⁸Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the LORD returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes. ⁹Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. ¹⁰The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God. (NIVIs. 52:7-10)

- F. As Bill has said, Deuteronomy 32 is the “blueprint” for God’s dealings with Israel in this age. What we need to realize is that when we look closely at Deuteronomy 32, what we are actually looking at is the gospel itself. In this session, we are going to take some time to look at ourselves in the “mirror” of the Song of Moses.

II. GOD IS JUST, RIGHTEOUS, UPRIGHT, AND FAITHFUL TO HIS PROMISES

- A. The Song begins by summoning the heavens and the earth as witnesses (cf. Deut. 4:26, 30:19, 31:28).

¹“Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; And let the earth hear the words of my mouth. (NASB Deut. 32:1)

¹⁹ I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death... (ESV Deut. 30:19)

- B. Though Moses and the Israelites who initially entered into the Mosaic covenant are no longer around, the heavens and the earth still are. They were there at the “wedding,” and they heard all the vows spoken at Sinai and in Moab. In the last days, the heavens and the earth will bring forth their testimony.

³⁰ “And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. ³¹The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. (NIV Joel 2:30-31)

²³ And the heavens over your head shall be bronze, and the earth under you shall be iron. (ESV Deut. 28:23)

¹⁰ For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light. (ESVIs. 13:10)

²⁵ “And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves (ESVLk. 21:25)

- C. The Song then states that God’s instruction through Moses in this song is like water that produces growth and fruit when it touches the ground. God’s word won’t return void (cf. Is. 55:10-11).

² “Let my teaching drop as the rain, My speech distill as the dew, As the droplets on the fresh grass And as the showers on the herb.

¹⁰As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, ¹¹ so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return

to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. (NIVIs. 55:10-11)

- D. Moses' word won't return void, because it is the LORD's name that Moses is proclaiming. The Lord is faithful, without injustice, righteous, upright. The Rock will do a work in Israel. It will be a perfect work, because His ways are just. Though the Lord will punish and discipline the nation for its wickedness and rebellion, this will not be God's final word to the nation. A long time ago, on the plains of Shinar, amidst a wicked and perverse generation, God had friend. His name was Abraham. As the nations built their tower and fashioned their idols, this man left it all behind. He held nothing back, not even his precious Isaac. Because Yahweh chose Abraham and set His affection on him, therefore He has chosen His seed, and therefore His final word to the nation will be "mercy."

³"For I proclaim the name of the LORD; Ascribe greatness to our God! ⁴"The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just (or judgment); A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He. (NASB Deut. 32:2-4)

⁵ The LORD came down in a cloud, stood with him there, and proclaimed His name Yahweh. ⁶ Then the LORD passed in front of him and proclaimed: Yahweh—Yahweh is a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and rich in faithful love and truth, ⁷ maintaining faithful love to a thousand generations (mercy in the long term), forgiving wrongdoing, rebellion, and sin. But He will not leave the guilty unpunished, bringing the consequences of the fathers' wrongdoing on the children and grandchildren to the third and fourth generation (punishment and discipline in the short term). (HCSB Ex. 34:5-7)

⁹ Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him (like Abraham) and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations, ¹⁰ and repays to their face those who hate him, by destroying them. (HCSB Deut. 7:9-10)

- E. What about us? What testimony do the heavens and the earth bring forth concerning us?

For God's wrath is being revealed from the sky (or from heaven) against every kind of godlessness and unrighteousness of men, who are suppressing the truth in unrighteousness. For that which is known about God is evident among them, because it was God Himself who made it evident to them (indeed, His invisible attributes, being pondered since the creation of the world through the things that were made, are clearly perceived—both His eternal power and divine nature—so that they are without excuse) (Author Rom. 1:18-20)

III. ISRAEL HAS REBELLED

- A. The Song then states that Israel has acted corruptly toward God, by not abiding by the stipulations of His covenant with them. Because of their rebellion and unfaithfulness, they are not like God. Children should share and reflect the traits of their parents. God is just, righteous, and faithful; Israel is not. They are twisted, perverse, crooked, and don't reflect the image of their just Maker. Therefore they are not His children, because they are defective and blemished in His sight.

5“They have acted corruptly toward Him, They are not His children, because of their defect; But are a perverse and crooked generation. (NASB Deut. 32:5)

- B. God saved Israel out of Egypt with mighty signs and great power. He disclosed His law, His justice, and His wisdom at Sinai. How does Israel repay Him? By rebelling. Their response reveals that unlike God, who is all wise, they are foolish and unwise.

6“Do you thus repay the LORD, O foolish and unwise people? Is not He your Father who has bought you? He has made you and established you. (NASB Deut. 32:6)

- C. What about us?

For although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor did they give Him thanks, but instead became futile in their ways of thinking, and their senseless heart was darkened. Even though alleging to be “wise,” they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for a likeness of an image of mortal man, and of birds, and of four-footed creatures, and of reptiles. Therefore God gave them over in the lustful cravings of their hearts to uncleanness, to that of the degrading of their bodies among themselves—men of a sort who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshipped and rendered priestly service to the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed into the ages! Amen! Because of this, God gave them over to dishonorable passions. Indeed, even their women exchanged the natural sexual function for that which is contrary to nature. Likewise, the men also abandoned natural sexual relations with women and were inflamed with their passions for one another—men committing their shameless acts with men, and so receiving back among themselves the recompense (which became inevitable) of their deceitful error. Moreover, just as they did not approve it valuable to regard God with a true knowledge, so God gave them over to an unapproved mind, to do the things that are totally out of place. They have become filled with every kind of unrighteousness, evil, greed, and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, and malice. They are gossipers, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents. They are senseless, covenant-breakers, heartless, merciless, men of a kind who, although they know full well God’s just ordinance—namely, that those practicing such things are worthy of death—not only do them, but also give approval to those who are practicing them! (Author Rom. 1:21-32)

IV. GOD’S CONTENTION WITH THE POWERS OF THE AIR

- A. The Song then takes us back to the plains of Shinar, to Babylon, to the land of idolatry.

7“Remember the days of old, Consider the years of all generations. Ask your father, and he will inform you, Your elders, and they will tell you. 8“When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, When He separated the sons of man (or Adam), He set the boundaries of the peoples According to the number of the sons of Israel (Masoretic text; Dead Sea Scrolls “sons of God” (ESV and RSV); LXX “angels”; “the number of the heavenly assembly” (NET); “the number of the gods” (NRSV)) 9“For the LORD’s portion is His people; Jacob is the allotment of His inheritance. (NASB Deut. 32:7-9)

NET Bible note: “‘Sons of God’ is undoubtedly the original reading; the MT and LXX have each interpreted it differently. MT assumes that the expression ‘sons of God’ refers to Israel

(cf. Hos. 1:10), while LXX has assumed that the phrase refers to the angelic heavenly assembly (Pss 29:1; 89:6; cf. as well Ps 82). The phrase is also attested in Ugaritic, where it refers to the high god El's divine assembly. According to the latter view, which is reflected in the translation, the Lord delegated jurisdiction over the nations to his angelic host (cf. Dan. 10:13–21), while reserving for himself Israel, over whom he rules directly. For a defense of the view taken here, see M. S. Heiser, "Deuteronomy 32:8 and the Sons of God," BSac158 (2001): 52-74.

⁶ Now there was a day when the sons of God (LXX-angels) came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. (ESV Job 1:6)

- B. Before God called Abraham, there was no such thing as the nation of Israel. Like the rest in Babylon, Abraham's family was trapped in idolatry and headed for the Lake of fire. But God intervened in His faithfulness to the promise of Gen. 3:15.

² Joshua said to all the people, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Long ago your forefathers, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the River and worshiped other gods. ³ But I took your father Abraham from the land beyond the River and led him throughout Canaan and gave him many descendants. (NIV Josh. 24:2-3)

- C. What about us?

¹And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience (or of "the disobedience") (ESV Eph. 1:1-2)

V. GOD SAVES AND BLESSES ISRAEL BY GRACE

- A. The Song then turns to the Exodus and Conquest of Canaan. God made a promise to Abraham, to bless his seed and to give his seed the land. Israel was a helpless slave nation. Then in His mercy and faithfulness, God came to Israel's rescue. He brought them into the land, and they became prosperous.

¹⁰ "He found him in a desert land, And in the howling waste of a wilderness; He encircled him, He cared for him, He guarded him as the pupil of His eye. ¹¹"Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, That hovers over its young, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions. ¹²"The LORD alone guided him, And there was no foreign god with him. ¹³"He made him ride on the high places of the earth, And he ate the produce of the field; And He made him suck honey from the rock, And oil from the flinty rock, ¹⁴Curds of cows, and milk of the flock, With fat of lambs, And rams, the breed of Bashan, and goats, With the finest of the wheat— And of the blood of grapes you drank wine.(NASB Deut. 32:10-14)

- B. Israel's deliverance out of Egypt and blessing in the land were sheer acts of mercy and grace. They were completely undeserved, and they were freely given.

⁵ It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going in to take possession of their land; but on account of the wickedness of these nations, the LORD your God will drive them out before you, to accomplish what he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. ⁶ Understand, then, that it is not because of your

righteousness that the LORD your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stiff-necked people. (NIV Deut. 9:5-6)

C. When God saved Israel, she was a tiny, despised slave nation that no one cared about.

⁷ The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. ⁸ But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. ⁹ Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him (as Abraham did!) and keep his commands. (NIV Deut. 7:7-9)

D. What about us?

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (ESV Eph. 2:8-9)

²⁶ Brothers, consider your calling: not many are wise from a human perspective, not many powerful, not many of noble birth. ²⁷ Instead, God has chosen the world's foolish things to shame the wise, and God has chosen the world's weak things to shame the strong. ²⁸ God has chosen the world's insignificant and despised things—the things viewed as nothing—so He might bring to nothing the things that are viewed as something, ²⁹ so that no one can boast in His presence. (HCSB 1 Cor. 1:26-29)

VI. JESHURUN GREW FAT

A. The Song then tells us what happens to Israel's heart when she experiences prosperity. When Israel entered the land, she becomes prosperous under the Lord's blessing. However, instead of remembering the lessons of the wilderness and continuing to walk in obedience to the Lord, the people became prideful and rebellious, and they kicked against the Lord. In her pride, Israel turns to other lovers (idols) and arouses the jealousy of her Husband.

¹⁵ "But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked—You are grown fat, thick, and sleek— Then he forsook God who made him, And scorned the Rock of his salvation. ¹⁶"They made Him jealous with strange gods; With abominations they provoked Him to anger. ¹⁷"They sacrificed to demons who were not God, To gods whom they have not known, New gods who came lately, Whom your fathers did not dread. ¹⁸ "You neglected the Rock who begot you, And forgot the God who gave you birth. (NASB Deut. 32:15-18)

⁷ For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land... ¹⁰ When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you. ¹¹ Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. ¹² Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, ¹³ and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, ¹⁴ then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. ¹⁵ He led you through the vast and dreadful desert, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock. ¹⁶ He gave you manna to eat in the desert,

something your fathers had never known, to humble and to test you so that in the end it might go well with you. ¹⁷ You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” (NIV Deut. 8:7, 10-17)

B. What about us?

¹⁵ I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! ¹⁶ So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. ¹⁷ You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. ¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. (NIV Rev. 3:15-18)

¹² Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. ¹³ But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. (ESV Heb. 3:12-14)

O foolish Galatians! Who was it that cast a spell on you, in whose very presence Jesus the Messiah was vividly described as crucified? The only thing I want to learn from you is this: Was it by works of the Law that you received the Spirit, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Although you began by the Spirit, are you now bringing yourselves to maturity by the flesh? (Author Gal. 3:1-3)

VII. THE CONSEQUENCES OF REBELLION AND DISOBEDIENCE

- A. The Song now moves to the consequences of Israel’s disobedience. At Sinai, Israel became God’s Bride. She cheated on Him. Now He lets Israel experience the consequences of her unfaithfulness: the covenant curses of Deut. 28.

¹⁹“The LORD saw this, and spurned (NET, HCSB – “despised”) them Because of the provocation of His sons and daughters. (LXX – “And the Lord saw and was jealous, and was provoked [Gk. paroxyno, cf. Ac. 17:6] by the anger of His sons and daughters) ²⁰“Then He said, ‘I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end shall be; For they are a perverse generation, Sons in whom is no faithfulness. ²¹ ‘They have made Me jealous with what is not God; They have provoked Me to anger with their idols (Lit. vanities). So I will make them jealous with those who are not a people; I will provoke them to anger (like the older brother to the prodigal son, Lk. 15:28-32) with a foolish nation (Gentile believers! cf. Rom. 10-11), ²² For a fire is kindled in My anger, And burns to the lowest part of Sheol, And consumes the earth with its yield, And sets on fire the foundations of the mountains. ²³I will heap misfortunes on them; I will use My arrows on them (according to Deut. 28). ²⁴“They will be wasted by famine, and consumed by plague (Lit. burning heat) And bitter destruction; And the teeth of beasts I will send upon them, With the venom of crawling things of the dust. ²⁵“Outside the sword will bereave, And inside terror— Both young man and virgin, The nursling with the man of gray hair. ²⁶“I would have said, “I will cut them to pieces, I will remove the memory of them from men,” ²⁷Had I not feared the provocation by the enemy, That their adversaries would

misjudge, That they would say, “Our hand is triumphant, And the LORD has not done all this.” ’ (NASB Deut. 32:19-27)

B. What about us?

²⁰ Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols. ²¹ I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. ²² So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways. ²³ I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds. (NIV Rev. 2:20-23)

³ Then Peter said, “Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? ⁴ Didn’t it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn’t the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God.” ⁵ When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. (NIV Ac. 5:3-5)

²⁸ A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. ²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. ³⁰ That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. ³¹ But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. ³² When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world. (NIV 1 Cor. 11:28-32)

¹We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. ² For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, ³ how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? (NIV Heb. 2:1-3)

VIII. THE NATION’S INABILITY TO SEE

- A. The Song now goes on to point out Israel’s inability to perceive reality accurately. She is not thinking in terms of the big picture. She is failing to understand the final outcome of her behavior. She is blind, unable to understand, lacking in wisdom. She is unable to discern that God is the One who is orchestrating her chastisement. The false gods plant vines (i.e. cultivate nations, cf. Ps. 80) that produce poisonous fruit that God deems worthy of punishment and destruction, such as in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah. When Israel worships these imposters, she is drinking deadly poison.

²⁸ “For they are a nation lacking (Lit. perishing) in counsel, And there is no understanding in them (one of the reasons God sends Elijah). ²⁹ “Would that they were wise, that they understood this, That they would discern their future (Or latter end)!³⁰ “How could one chase a thousand, And two put ten thousand to flight, Unless their Rock had sold them, And the LORD had given them up (to their enemies, cf. Judges 2:14, 3:8, 4:2, 10:7)? ³¹“Indeed their rock is not like our Rock, Even our enemies themselves judge this. ³²“For their vine is from the vine of Sodom, And from the fields of

Gomorrah; Their grapes are grapes of poison, Their clusters, bitter. ³³“Their wine is the venom of serpents, And the deadly poison of cobras. (NASB Deut. 32:18-33)

B. Oppression by Gentile enemies/armies is meant to drive Israel to the following point of crisis: “Our God is superior to and sovereign over our enemies and the gods directing them against us. So, if we are getting hammered by inferior gods and their human puppets, it must be because our God is ultimately the one behind it. Why?” The answer: Because we have sinned against Him.

C. What about us?

¹⁸ Do not deceive yourselves. If any one of you thinks he is wise by the standards of this age, he should become a “fool” so that he may become wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God’s sight. (NIV 1Cor. 3:18-19)

⁹ Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (ESV 1Cor. 6:9-11)

⁵ “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. (ESV Jn. 15:5-6)

IX. ISRAEL’S ULTIMATE VINDICATION

A. The Song then tells us that the nations and the false gods get prideful and cocky in their oppression of Israel—as if they were the ones really running the show! However, God knows that when He is done using them as His rod of discipline on the nation, the tables will be turned, and then it will be they who will experience His wrath.

³⁴ ‘Is it not laid up in store with Me, Sealed up in My treasuries? ³⁵Vengeance is Mine, and retribution, In due time their foot will slip; For the day of their calamity is near, And the impending things are hastening upon them.’ (NASB Deut. 32:34-35)

⁵ “Woe to the Assyrian, the rod of my anger, in whose hand is the club of my wrath! ⁶ I send him against a godless nation, I dispatch him against a people who anger me, to seize loot and snatch plunder, and to trample them down like mud in the streets. ⁷But this is not what he intends, this is not what he has in mind; his purpose is to destroy, to put an end to many nations... ¹¹ [he says] shall I not deal with Jerusalem and her images as I dealt with Samaria and her idols?’ ” ¹² When the Lord has finished all his work against Mount Zion and Jerusalem, he will say, “I will punish the king of Assyria for the willful pride of his heart and the haughty look in his eyes. (NIV Is. 10:5-7, 11-12)

B. At the end of the age, the story reaches its climax. God is going to annul Israel’s “covenant with death” (i.e. with idols, the worship of which warrants the death penalty according to the Law), by letting Israel get a taste of what her false lovers really think about her (Is. 28:14-19). He does this by removing His hand of protection and letting the powers of the air “have at her”

through the Anti-Christ armies (Rev. 13-14). At this point, the true motives of her lovers will be exposed, and like Gomer, Israel will have a choice. Do I appease these false gods by giving myself to them in even greater adultery (mark of the beast, conversion to Islam), or do I turn back to my true Husband in repentance and trust Him to come to my rescue? Many will choose the former. They will be destroyed and then ultimately thrown into the Lake of fire. At this point, their adultery is beyond redemption (Rev. 14:9-12). However, as prophesied in passages like Deuteronomy 30 and Zechariah 12, a remnant will come to their senses and cry out to Yahweh in repentance. As the nations clamor for Israel's annihilation in their Pharisaical self-righteousness, as the nation is completely humbled and emptied of its strength and finds herself on the very brink of extinction, Yahweh will come to their rescue as Jesus splits the sky. He will save the nation, by grace, through faith. Completely undeserved. No boasting. Abraham, his friend, will be with him, as will the angels and the resurrected saints.

³⁶ "For the LORD will vindicate His people, And will have compassion on His servants, When He sees that their strength is gone, And there is none remaining, bond or free.

³⁷ "And He will say, 'Where are their gods, The rock in which they sought refuge?

³⁸ "Who ate the fat of their sacrifices, And drank the wine of their drink offering? Let them rise up and help you, Let them be your hiding place! ³⁹ "See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded and it is I who heal, And there is no one who can deliver from My hand. ⁴⁰ "Indeed, I lift up My hand to heaven, And say, as I live forever, ⁴¹ "If I sharpen My flashing sword (or lightning), And My hand takes hold on justice, I will render vengeance on My adversaries, And I will repay those who hate Me. ⁴² "I will make My arrows drunk with blood, And My sword will devour flesh, With the blood of the slain and the captives, From the long-haired leaders of the enemy." ⁴³ "Rejoice, O nations, with His people; For He will avenge the blood of His servants, And will render vengeance on His adversaries, And will atone for His land and His people." (NASB Deut. 32:36-43)

¹⁰ "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son. ¹¹ On that day the weeping in Jerusalem will be great, like the weeping of Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. ¹² The land will mourn, each clan by itself, with their wives by themselves: the clan of the house of David and their wives, the clan of the house of Nathan and their wives, ¹³ the clan of the house of Levi and their wives, the clan of Shimei and their wives, ¹⁴ and all the rest of the clans and their wives. (NIV Zech. 12:10-14)

¹² This is the plague with which the LORD will strike all the nations that fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths. (NIV Zech. 14:12)

C. What about us?

⁸ We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. ⁹ Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death.

But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. (NIV 2 Cor. 1:8-9)

¹⁶ He reached down from on high and took hold of me; he drew me out of deep waters.

¹⁷ He rescued me from my powerful enemy, from my foes, who were too strong for me.

¹⁸ They confronted me in the day of my disaster, but the LORD was my support. ¹⁹ He brought me out into a spacious place; he rescued me because he delighted in me.
(NIV Ps. 18:16-19)

X. CONCLUSION

- A. Our outlook and posture toward Israel as God deals with her in the coming days will be a litmus test of where our own hearts are with the God of Israel. At the heart of the issue is the gospel itself.

In light of the above, you are without excuse, O man—every person who is throwing stones (Lit. who is condemning, or is judging)! For in whatever matter you condemn the other person, it is yourself you are actually condemning, because you, the stone-thrower (Lit. the condemner, or the one judging), are doing the very same things! Now, we recognize that God's judgment against the doers of such things is in line with truth. But do you figure this, O man—the person who is casting judgment against the practitioners of such things, even while doing the same things!—that you yourself will escape the judgment of God? Or do you look down upon the riches of His kindness, restraint, and long-suffering, by failing to understand that it is the kindness of God that leads you yourself to repentance? So according to your hardness and unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and unveiling of the righteous judgment of God, who “will pay each person back according to his works.” (Author Rom. 2:1-6)

- B. In this precious gospel, there is no room for boasting or arrogance.

¹⁷ But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, ¹⁸ do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you. ¹⁹ Then you will say, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” ²⁰ That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear. ²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. ²² Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off. ²³ And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. (ESV Rom. 11:17-23)

- C. When this nation enters her time of greatest need at the end of the age, where will our hearts be? If some Jews unexpectedly show up at our doorstep with nothing to offer us but the danger that their very presence brings, how will we respond? Will we turn them away in order to preserve our own lives? If we take them in and they relate to us with a spirit of pride and entitlement, will we relate to them in self-righteousness, or will we serve them out of a deep awareness of the great mercy that we ourselves have received? How about this: Will we still

serve them wholeheartedly, even when we know that in the age to come they and their nation will be exalted in a position of higher authority than our own?

- D. These things don't come naturally to the human race. This is the wisdom of another age. This is the wisdom that only God Himself can work into a man through His Spirit, as He weans us of our deceits and vain ambitions through suffering and discipline. If we are going to be ready for the cross He will require us to carry the coming days, we must first learn to take up our cross now.

²³ ***but we preach Christ crucified... Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God***
(*NIV* 1Cor. 1:23)