

DEVOTION FOR THE 16th WEEK OF PENTECOST

Psalm 145:15-21

The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season.

You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

The Lord is righteous in all His ways and kind in all His works.

The Lord is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth

He fulfils the desire of those who fear Him; He also hears their cry and saves them.

The Lord preserves all who love Him, but all the wicked He will destroy.

My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless His holy name forever and ever.

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen*

Deuteronomy 27:1-26

Curses for breaking the law

Questions for Reflection

Israel was to erect an altar of stone. What words were they to write on it?

What were the words and the altar to remind them of?

What was the purposes of the curses spoken from Mount Ebal?

Romans 11:1-36

The remnant of Israel and ingrafting of the Gentiles

Questions for Reflection

What proof does Paul offer that God has not rejected the Jewish people?

What does Paul warn Gentile believers against?

What makes a person a member of God's spiritual people?

“GOD’S PURPOSE IN ISRAEL”

God created Israel from the physical descendants of Abraham and Sarah. He created them as a physical nation to fulfill a spiritual purpose; to make His Name known among the nations and create a spiritual people who would live with Him through faith. As a racial group who traced their DNA back to Abraham and Sarah, Israel achieved the purpose for which God created them, when Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit within the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Jesus was the perfect son of Israel, who through His sinless life, perfect obedience and sacrificial death, fulfilled the work of the children of Israel, by bringing the knowledge of God to the Gentiles and the good news of salvation to the ends of the earth. Everyone who calls on the name of Jesus is saved and a member of God's spiritual Israel.

God achieved His purpose in Israel through Jesus, but this didn't mean God no longer had a purpose for Israel as a nation, or as a racial group. Many people who shared the DNA of Abraham and Sarah rejected Jesus, but not everyone. Through people who could trace their DNA back to Abraham and Sarah such as Peter and the other apostles, God took the gospel of salvation in Jesus' Name to the ends of the earth. Paul himself was an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham and Sarah through the tribe of Benjamin. God did not reject His ancient people with whom He made covenant through Moses.

Biological ancestry is not important. The only thing that matters is our spiritual ancestry. All who share in the faith of Abraham and Sarah are part of God's spiritual Israel. We look past our racial, ethnic and cultural differences and see that in Christ we are the children of God. Through faith we are spiritual descendants of Abraham, a man who believed God's promises; all of which were fulfilled in Christ Jesus. Regardless of our ancestry, we share in the work of Israel, by making the name of Jesus and salvation in His Name known to all people, both Jews and Gentiles. This is what matters the most, because on a day and at an hour known only to God, Christ will return and as Paul says, “*All Israel will be saved.*”

HYMN: “HOW GREAT THOU ART” (CCLI #453681)

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder, Consider all the works thy hands have made, I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder, Thy power throughout the universe displayed. Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee, How great Thou art! How great Thou art! Then sings my soul my Saviour God to Thee. How Great Thou art! How Great Thou art!

When through the woods and forest glades I wander, I hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees; When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur, And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze; Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee, How great Thou art! How great Thou art! Then sings my soul my Saviour God to Thee. How Great Thou art! How Great Thou art!

But when I think that God, His Son not sparing, sent him to die, I scarce can take it in. That on the cross my burden gladly bearing, He bled and died to take away my sin; Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee, How great Thou art! How great Thou art! Then sings my soul my Saviour God to Thee. How Great Thou art! How Great Thou art!

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation, And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart! Then I shall bow in humble adoration, And there proclaim: ‘My God, how great Thou Art! Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee, How great Thou art! How great Thou art! Then sings my soul my Saviour God to Thee. How Great Thou art! How Great Thou art!

PRAYER

We thank you Lord God for showing us our sin and need for your forgiveness in your holy law. We thank you that Jesus took the curse of the law upon Himself, paid our debt of sin and lifted death’s condemnation from our heads. Bless us always with your Holy Spirit that we may believe the gospel of forgiveness and live as your people, until we live forever in your presence in the resurrection to everlasting life. In Jesus’ Name. Amen

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven.

Hallowed be thy name.

Thy Kingdom come.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory,

Forever and ever. Amen

THE CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

BENEDICTION

Psalm 9:9

“The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.”