

Pastor Paul R. Bawden
Grace Evangelical Church
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“Israel, Does The Nation Still Have A Future”
Romans 11:25-36

The nation of Israel and the unrest in the Middle East is constantly in the news. In fact, Vice President, Cheney, just returned from Israel recently. He was visiting their attempting to move along a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians that was entered into back in November 2007 at Anapolis.

At that time, President Bush announced the agreement whose aim is to establish a Palestinian state that will live in peace with Israel. A joint document was negotiated to chart the course for negotiating the toughest “final status” issues of the conflict –Jerusalem, borders, security and the fate of Palestinian refugees.

Then President Bush said that the two sides agreed to reach an agreement by the end of 2008, which would be by the end of his term in office.

Since this so-called Peace Conference in Anapolis, there has been continual conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. On March 7, 2008, eight people were killed and nine wounded by a Palestinian gunman who infiltrated a Jewish seminary in West Jerusalem.

Shortly after the Jerusalem shooting, the Palestinian militant group Islamic Jihad said four of its fighters had been killed in an Israeli air strike in the southern Gaza town of Khan Younis.

Israel says the recent military offensive has been designed to stamp out frequent rocket fire by Palestinian militants. Then rocket attacks have hit deeper into southern Israel, reaching Ashkelon, the closest large city to the Gaza Strip.

In spite of all this, the pressure continues from the United States for Israel and the Palestinians to come to a peace agreement and keep it.

With all the things that keep transpiring between Israel and the Palestinians, it seems like a miracle will have to happen for there to be any kind of lasting peace in that region between Israel and the Palestinians.

Well, what is going to happen between Israel and the Palestinians? Should Israel give up some of the land they have now for the Palestinians to have a state of their own? Is Israel right in having it’s own piece of property, when they became a state in 1948? Will there ever be lasting peace between Israel and the Palestinians, and the other Arab states in the region? Yes, what’s in store for Israel in the future. Should the nation be done away with as the leader of Iran says? Or do they have a future still in the world?

The best place and only place to find answers to such questions is to look at the Bible. What did our text say in Romans 11:25-26?

“For I do not want you brethren to be uninformed of this mystery, so that you will not be wise in your own estimation – that partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be save; just as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob This is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.” (The just as it is written is taken from the Old Testament, “Isaiah 59:20 –21a).

I. To understand our text we need to ask several questions.

1. Where did the name, Israel, come from? To find the answer, we need to go to the Old Testament in the Bible to Genesis 32:22-30 where in God’s encounter with Jacob, the LORD changed Jacob’s name to Israel, meaning one who persists with God.

2. Where did the nation of Israel come from? Jacob was the son of Isaac who was the son of Abraham. Jacob was the grandson of Abraham. Out of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel by the Lord himself came 12 sons who went into Egypt due to a famine in the land through Joseph’s help. There the nation grew to a

people of about 2 ½ million people. The nation of Israel was then called Israel after Jacob the grandson of Abraham. Furthermore, in that light, the nation of Israel actually came from Abraham. He was the “father” of Israel. We will say more about that shortly. And when the Old Testament is studied it becomes apparent that God is giving us a history of the nation of Israel’s development along with her relationships with the other nations in her day.

3. Why, then, is Israel so important in the Bible, as the Old Testament gives us the history of the nation of Israel, and the nation is talked about in our Romans text today and in other places in the New Testament?

(1) Israel was chosen by the biblical God.

The book of Deuteronomy in the Old Testament relates to us that the nation of Israel was chosen by God out of all the other nations, not because they were great in number, they were actually the fewest in number when God chose the nation Israel, for Abraham didn’t even have a child and Jacob’s immediate family had about 70 individuals. Deuteronomy 7:8 tells us that God chose the nation of Israel because He loved the nation and He made an oath or covenant with the forefathers, referring to Abraham, Isacc, and Jacob or Israel.

Obviously there is the loving sovereignty of God here in making this choice. But why did the biblical God make this choice for Israel as His nation?

(2) Israel was to be a witness to the other nations of God’s pure character and grace, plus through Israel the Messiah and the Savior of the world would come.

- Isaiah 40:10 & 44:8 tell us that the nation of Israel was to be a witness, a testimony to the other nations of God’s power, holiness, and love.
- From Romans 9:3-5, we find that Paul tells that the nation of Israel was given the adoption of sons, the covenants, the giving of the law, the temple service, and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom is Christ according to the flesh who is over all.

Yes, the nation of Israel was chosen by God for a special purpose to show forth His power, holiness, love, and grace to the world, and to be the people through whom the Messiah would come and the Savior of the world, whom we know from the Bible is Jesus Christ.

Did this make other nations better than Israel. Not at all. It was God’s way of working in history so that today we might have the privilege to have forgiveness before God and His eternal life through the death, burial, and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In spite of all its challenges through history, with all kinds of persecution and suffering, in 1948 Israel became a recognized nation in the Middle East, an incredible occurrence.

Today, as we know, and mentioned in our introduction, Israel and the Middle East is a hotbed of conflict.

So, will Israel continue to exist in spite of what takes place there? For that answer let’s look at

II. The background of our text (Romans 11:11-24).

To understand what Paul is writing about here, we need to go back a few minutes and look at Romans 11:11-24.

1. The nation of Israel has rejected their Messiah, providing the opportunity for the gospel of Christ to be preached world-wide to the Gentiles.

In this section Paul is teaching that the nation of Israel rejected their Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, when He came the first time (11:15). Due to their rejection of their Messiah the first time, the gospel has gone to the world, the Gentiles, so that they can hear the glorious message of the gospel. Today that gospel is being preached to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews. Eventually the nation will accept their Messiah when He returns the second time to earth.

2. Paul, then uses an illustration of the olive tree.

The olive tree is the place of privilege that God gave the Jewish people, the nation of Israel (cf. Romans 9:4-50). Due to their unbelief, the nation has been “broken off” or set aside for awhile in the biblical God’s program. During that time of being “broken off,” God grafts into the olive tree the Gentiles who accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Eventually, when Christ returns, the nation of Israel will accept their Messiah, and the nation will

be grafted back into the olive tree that they were first a part of, and enjoy the privilege they once had with their Lord.

3. God's miraculous plan should cause obedience and worship.

Due to God's miraculous plan, such should cause the Gentiles who accept Christ as personal Savior, to not become conceited but to stand in fear and awe of God because of His kindness to them but also His severity in dealing with His people for rejecting Him. Rejection of Christ is a serious matter, for Gentiles who accepted Christ could also be cut off, if they didn't follow the Lord, but God in His grace will graft back into the olive tree the nation of Israel.

Our text picks up from this point, "For I do not want you brethren to be uninformed of this mystery (what was before unknown but now is known that is the partial hardening of the nation of Israel so the Gentiles would be able to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ) so that you will not be wise in your own estimation – that a partial hardness has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, and so all Israel will be saved just as it is written, " the Deliverer will come out of Zion"

Okay so what's this all mean for us today?

III. The meaning of the text.

There are three different statements we need to consider to discover what our text is teaching us.

- One statement is in the previous section of Scripture we just referred to in Romans 11:11-24 –it is the statement or words, THE RICH ROOT OF THE OLIVE TREE.
- The next statement is " Until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in."
- "All Israel will be saved," just as it has been written, the Deliverer will come from Zion, (which is Jerusalem).

1. The meaning of the words, The Rich Root of the Olive Tree.

As mentioned, the Olive Tree is the place of blessing for the nation of Israel, who lost that place of blessing by rejecting their Messiah when He came the first time. Due to Israel's rejection, the blessing of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, has come to the Gentile world through the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

(1) I would suggest to you that the rich root of the Olive Tree, is the Abrahamic Covenant, the Covenant made with Abraham many years ago back in Genesis 12, where Abram before his name was changed to Abraham was given that promises in verses 1-3 that he would have a **land, a seed, and those who would bless Abraham would be blessed, and Abraham's seed would be a **blessing** to all the families of the earth.**

Now we begin to see why we mentioned that Abraham was the "father" of Israel. The promise to Abraham would not just affect him but his family and the entire families of the world. Now notice how God worked with Abraham and his family.

In Genesis 15:18, God sealed that covenant with Abraham when God (His presence evidenced in the fire and smoke) walked through the sacrifices that Abraham had made, while Abraham was in a deep sleep. God promised that Abraham would have a piece of property from the river Egypt as far as the great river Euphrates.

(2) God's Covenant to Abraham was an unconditional covenant.

God's promise reiterated here in Genesis 15 was not a conditional promise. Rather it was God promising to Abraham that regardless of His response, God would keep the covenant with Abraham. It would not be abrogated if there was disobedience.

(3) God's Covenant with Abraham is eternal.

That is why in Genesis 17, God tells Abraham that the covenant he has made with Abraham is an eternal covenant (17:7).

(4) The Abrahamic covenant was reiterated to Abraham in Genesis 22:16-18 and then the Abrahamic Covenant was established with Isaac his son in Genesis 26:2-5.

It is well to note that the Abrahamic covenant was not made with Ishmael. Then the promise continued to Jacob. (Genesis 28:3-4). As we mentioned Jacob's name was changed to Israel, which became the name of the nation that came from Jacob. The covenant of Abraham was then made with the nation of Israel as well. Joseph at the end of his life recognized the promise God given to Abraham (Genesis 50:24). In Exodus 3, God appeared to Moses when the Israelites were still in Egypt telling him that He was going to bring the nation into the land promised to Abraham.

(5) In Deuteronomy 30, the land part of the Abrahamic Covenant is reiterated. Israel would eventually be restored to the land God promised his people in Abraham.

(6) Our study of the Book of Joshua gave us the history of Joshua being used by God to bring the people into the land that God had promised Abraham some 600 years before. That's why Joshua at the end of his life reminded the nation of Israel that their beginnings were with their father Abraham.

(7) A brief look at the history of Israel from this time on (around 1400 B.C.) shows us that eventually Israel was granted a king in Saul and then in David (1000 B.C.) and Solomon. During the time of David, God made a promise to David that **his seed would rule on his throne (II Samuel 7:4-17)**. This was an amplification of **the seed aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant**, which looked forward to Jesus Christ coming as the seed of David (cf. Luke 1:31-33). At this time, the nation of Israel had a great kingdom but never really took all the land promised to Abraham. After Solomon the kingdom was divided into the northern and southern kingdoms, both of which would eventually go into captivity. **During the time of Jeremiah (627-585 B.C.), God made the promise of the New Covenant which would eventually be made with the nation Israel in the future. This was part of the blessing aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant.**

(8) The return of the nation of Israel to its homeland came under Cyrus around 536 B. C. Israel never really regained its power, although the walls and temple were rebuilt. Other events took place during the Inter-Testamental Period of history.

(9) What about the Abrahamic Covenant, was it still in tack? Mary, the mother of our Lord, recognized that the Abrahamic Covenant was still in force in her praise to the Lord (called her Magnificat) after finding out that she would bear the Messiah and Savior of the world. Her words are well worth reading from Luke 1:54-55, "He has given help to Israel His servant, in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his descendants." Mary, then, had some understanding that the Jesus Christ would be the fulfiller of the covenant made with Abraham many years before.

(10) Jesus Christ came but was rejected by the nation of Israel. They hailed him as a King hoping for relief from Roman oppression. But in that process they had Him crucified for claiming to be God. He died, was buried, but he rose again the third day and appeared for 40 days to His disciples and others. In Acts 1 right before His ascension, His disciples asked the Lord a very important question, **"Lord, is it at this time you are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6)**. Jesus replied that it was not for them to know God's calendar, but they would receive power when the Holy Spirit would come upon them, and they would be the Lord's witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the entire world.

The question that the disciples asked Jesus before His ascension is a very important question, for it tells us that the disciples were still thinking about the promise made to Abraham many years before. It is also important to notice that the Lord did not say that Israel's kingdom would not be restored. He only said it wasn't for them to know God's plan for that, but now they would receive the power of the Holy Spirit and be a witness for Christ eventually world wide.

(11) The Book of Acts tells us that the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, and the church of Jesus Christ came into existence with the gospel going first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles, both were now included in one family, one body, through faith in Jesus Christ.

(12) In fact Paul teaches in the book of Galatians that since Christ is the fulfiller of the Abrahamic Covenant, those who accept Christ as personal Savior today are really spiritual descendants of Abraham, a part of that Abrahamic Covenant. "Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the

gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'All nations will be blessed in you.' So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham the believer." (Galatians 3:6-9). Then, Paul goes on to say that Christ was crucified, hanged on a tree, cursed for us, in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Galatians 3:13-14).

In fact, our text here in Romans 11 really explains how this all happened as we mentioned. Since the Jewish nation rejected their Messiah, and were broken off from the Abrahamic Covenant for a season, God then took the gospel to the Gentiles so that they might hear the great message of the Gospel.

(13) In A.D. 70 Titus ransacked the city of Jerusalem and the temple. The Jews were scattered. It wasn't until 1948 that Israel was recognized as a state and given some of the land that they still possess today.

(14) Today, as well, the gospel of Jesus Christ is being taken to all nations, and Christ's church is being built in every local church such as ours here, as we proclaim that good news of Jesus Christ, and those of us who have accepted Jesus Christ as personal Savior, and those who accept Jesus Christ as personal Savior, are the spiritual sons and daughters of Abraham. We are part of that great Abrahamic Covenant spiritually made with Abraham those many years ago around 2000 B.C. In fact we participate in the New Covenant, part of that Abrahamic Covenant given in Jeremiah 31.

Here is the big question? Since the believer in Jesus Christ is part of the Abraham Covenant today through faith in Jesus Christ, being as well a part of the church of Jesus Christ, does Israel as a nation still have a future? Will Israel be restored to her land promised to her back in Genesis 15:18?

Or is it as some today, who are biblical Christians like we are, believe that the nation of Israel does not have a future, and what is happening in the Middle East is just a development among nations who hate Israel, and eventually when the Lord comes it will all be brought to a conclusion? Now the Lord is working with His church world-wide. When the Lord returns that is the end for this world. There is no future kingdom for Israel. Eventually, God will create the new heavens and earth.

Which is the correct interpretation of Scripture?

Before we answer that question, let's look at the second statement we need to consider in our text.

2. The meaning of the words, "Until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in" (Romans 11:25).

It is interesting that Jesus also used these words in Luke 21:24 where He said, "Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."

Then in Revelation 11:2, in the tribulation time on earth, we are told that temple of Israel has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty two months, which is 3 ½ years, the last part of the seven year tribulation yet to come on the earth.

This text seems to be referring to the "times of the Gentiles."

(1) What, then, do the words, "until the fullness of the Gentiles come in," mean?

It refers to the nation of Israel being taken over completely by the Gentiles. When did that happen? It could have begun when Nebuchadnezzar finally took the southern kingdom of Israel (Judah) captive in 586 B.C. Even though much of the nation of Israel returned to their homeland under Cyrus in 536 B.C. the nation of Israel has not had it's own independence until statehood in 1948, and even now Israel doesn't have all the land promised to Abraham. If the times of the Gentiles didn't begin when Nebuchadnezzar took captured Jerusalem and took the nation of Israel into captivity, then it certainly began in 70 AD when Titus came in and destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the temple. Since that time Israel has not had the land promised to the nation in Abraham.

(2) When will the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, or completed?

Jesus, in Luke 21:24, said that Jerusalem would be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, and then He added if you read on in the text, that there will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars, with great fear among the people, and the Son of man will appear, will return.

Our Text in Romans 11:25 says that a partial blindness has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles come in, The Deliverer will come out of Zion, out of Jerusalem.

Paul, is in concert, in agreement with Jesus Christ that the fullness of the Gentiles will be completed at the coming of Jesus Christ to earth. Which is also what Revelation 11:2 is indicating.

Why will Jesus' coming to earth at the end of the tribulation period be the end of the times of the Gentiles ruling the world?

That's why we need to consider the third statement in our text.

3. So all Israel (the nation) will be saved, for the Deliverer will come out of Zion.

This statement certainly is telling us that when Jesus Christ returns to earth at the end of the Tribulation period on earth, He will bring salvation to the nation of Israel. Paul is not referring to the church here as some might lead us to believe. Rather Paul is talking about the nation of Israel receiving Christ as their Messiah and Savior when He returns to earth the second time.

How will this all happen? To find out we have to go to the Old Testament prophets, for there is much in the prophets that is yet to be fulfilled or brought to completion.

- (1) When Jesus Christ returns, they will look on Him whom they have pierced (Zechariah 12:10).
- (2) There will be a great spiritual awakening in the nation of Israel to accept Jesus as Messiah and Savior (Zechariah 12:10-13).
- (3) Christ will make His new covenant with them with His laws written in their hearts (Jeremiah 31; Isaiah 59:21; Romans 11:27).
- (4) Christ will put down all the nations that have turned against Him (Isaiah 59:16-19; Zechariah 14:1-3ff; cf. Matthew 25:31-46; Ezekiel 20:37-38).
- (5) Jesus Christ will establish His kingdom on earth, with Jerusalem as the capitol, and redeemed Israel living in its land that God promised to Abraham (Isaiah 2:3; Zechariah 14:16ff).
- (6) Peace and prosperity will rule as Christ administers true justice and equity (Isaiah 11).
- (7) Longevity of life will be present (Isaiah 65:17-25).
- (8) Religious life will be restored to Israel (Ezekiel 40:1-47:12).
- (9) Christ will provide a true political, economic, and religious environment for all to live in. Israel will be a witness to the world of God's power and love (Isaiah 60).
- 10) This will be the millennial time in Revelation 20.

What is Paul telling us in our Text in Romans 11:25:-27? What are the prophets in the Old Testament telling us?

God has not cast off His people Israel. Right now God is dealing directly with His church, grafting believers into the Olive Tree, the Abrahamic Covenant. But when Christ returns at the end of the tribulation period, the nation of Israel will turn to the Lord as their Messiah and Savior and be grafted back into the Olive Tree, the Abrahamic Covenant.

Taking the covenant to Abraham literally as an unconditional covenant, then, the nation of Israel still has a future today, regardless of what is happening or will happen in the Middle East. The times of the Gentiles have not been fulfilled as yet, but some day soon they will be and the Lord will return to earth, and set up His kingdom for Israel and the world on earth. The question of the disciples to Jesus in Acts 1 will be answered. We will then know the time that Jesus will restore the kingdom to Israel.

But how does this apply to you and me today as we live this week?

III. The application to us.

1. Make sure that we know Jesus Christ as our personal Savior.

Make sure that we are the spiritual descendants of Abraham through faith in Jesus Christ, His person, and work, that He died for us to pay the penalty for our sin, He was buried, and that He rose again from the dead. He has won for us His forgiveness and eternal life. We must admit to Him that we have sinned, and ask His forgiveness and ask Him into our lives. I trust you have made that decision to accept Christ and are living for Him each day.

2. We can bank on the covenants (promises) of God in His Word (Romans 11:28-29).

Don't miss these verses especially Romans 11:29. What does that verse say?

"For the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable." Paul is telling us that God will not go back on His covenant to Abraham. The nation of Israel still has a future. Israel must be completely restored as a nation.

God's covenant to Abraham means that the biblical God can not lie. Look at Hebrews 6:13-18.

13For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, 14saying, "I WILL SURELY BLESS YOU AND I WILL SURELY MULTIPLY YOU."

15And so, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise.

16For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute.

17In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath,

18so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us.

19This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil,

20where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

We can trust God's Word and cling to the promises He has made to us of being there with us at all times, of giving us hope when we find no hope in ourselves and others, and the assurance that we are His forever. We can bank on Him hearing our prayers when we come in the right spirit and attitude. He is the anchor of our souls. No better promises than that! He is a God who can not lie. He has proven it so to Abraham, of whom believers are spiritual descendants through faith in Christ.

3. God gives us an understanding of the times in which we live through His Word.

That's what God is teaching the Roman Christians through Paul, and God is doing the same to us. It was said of the sons of Issachar in the Old Testament (I Chronicles 12:32) that they understood the times.

Friends, I trust as you watch the news reports of what is taking place in the Middle East with Israel and the other nations, that you understand that God is in control. Whether there will be peace between Israel and the Palestinians is rather doubtful. Will Israel give up some of the land it now has in order to appease the Palestinians so a state for them can be agreed upon? We don't know.

But the Scripture is clear from the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 12:1-3 that those who bless Israel will be blessed. This is not saying that approval is given to everything that the nation of Israel does today. But I believe that the United States support of Israel is one reason God has blessed this country of ours.

There is a passage in Zechariah 2:8 that says that the one who touches Israel touches the apple of God's eye. (Zechariah 2:8)

Joel 3:1-2 tells us that God will bring judgment on the nations who have divided up Israel's land, which will occur literally at the second coming of Christ to earth. Perhaps a warning those trying to bring some kind of peace to the Middle East should listen to even today.

As I interpret the Scripture, there will come someone on the world scene, who the Scripture calls the man of sin, or the antichrist who will offer a false peace to the world. He will make a covenant with Israel for 3 ½ years bringing peace to the entire world. He will also make some kind of an agreement with the world church existing at that time. He will be ruling the world politically, economically, and religiously. In the middle of that 3 ½ years the antichrist will break the covenant with Israel and go into the temple and set himself up as god. He will

demand worship and honor. He will also break with the world church. As the Book of Revelation tells us there will be all kinds of upheaval in the world with the economic structure falling apart. As Christ prepares to come there will be a gathering of the antichrist and all the armies of the world to fight the Lord who comes on a white horse and those He brings with Him. In the valley of Armageddon the great battle of Armageddon will be fought and Jesus Christ will put down all rule and rebellion. He will judge the nations. Satan will be bound and Christ will rule on earth for 1000 years. There will be peace on earth at this time!!! After that 1000 years, satan will be loosed for a season to go out and deceive the nations that didn't submit to Christ during the millennial time. Christ will step in and put down all rebellion, and the antichrist and his lieutenant will be cast into the lake of fire with the satan. There will be the great white throne judgment and those whose names are not found in the Book of Life will also be cast into the lake of fire. God will then create a new heavens and earth for all those who know Jesus Christ as personal Savior.

4. The biblical God is the only true and awesome God who deserves our worship (Romans 11:33-36).

God's working in time with the nation of Israel, setting them aside for a season, so the Gentiles can hear the good news of the gospel of Christ, and in God's time, bring back His people Israel to Himself, fulfilling the promise to Abraham, shows how great our God, the biblical God is.

Note Paul's response in Romans 11:33 to the amazing plan of God in time that affects all eternity. "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For who has known the mind of the LORD, or who became His counselor (Isaiah 40:13ff). Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to Him again (Job35:7, 41:11)?"

Such activity of the biblical God can only cause us to worship Him, give Him the glory. Note Paul's words in Romans 11:36.

"For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. AMEN.

5. Knowing something about God's future should cause us to live holy lives in our daily walk with the Lord.

One of my profs in seminary a number of years ago has written that the believer in Jesus Christ should be an A student in prophecy.

For as I interpret Scripture, and watching the developments in our world through the eyes of the Bible, the next event that could happen any time is the return of Christ in the air for His church. I take I Thessalonians 4 and I Thessalonians chronological. Christ comes in the air for His church and then the great Day of the Lord begins which is really the start of the Tribulation period to come on the earth.

- **That's why Paul tells us through Titus 2:11-13, that the one looking for the blessed hope of the appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ should live a life of denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and then live a life that is sensible, righteous and godly.**
- **John writing in I John 3:1-3 tells us that when Christ appears for the believer, he shall be like the LORD. The one who has this hope should purify himself as Christ is pure.**

Since Christ could come any time, the believer is to live a life that pleases the Lord with pure thoughts and attitudes and reaching out to others. For when Christ returns, the believer will be judged for how he or she has lived for Christ on earth.

- **Peter concurs that those who know the Day of the LORD is coming, and this old world is going to be destroyed, one should live a life of holy conduct and godliness. Knowing that there is going to be a Day of Eternity, a new heaven and earth, should cause one to live a life of peace that is spotless and blameless (II Peter 3:10-14).**

Since Christ could come any time for the believer, and since God is going to destroy this old planet and create a new heavens and earth, believers in Christ should not let the world squeeze them into

its mold but be transformed by the renewing of their minds so that they can prove what the perfect will of God is for them.

These Questions come to all of us today who know Jesus Christ as personal Savior.

(1) Is my life different from the unbeliever who doesn't have the living hope of knowing Christ could return any time?

(2) Is worship a lifestyle for me?

Not just in prayer and bible reading, but in everything that I do, is it done in the power of the Holy Spirit so that God can be glorified through me?

(3) Do I live each day with the expectancy that Christ could return that day?

Does my expectancy in Christ's return affect my thought life, my attitudes, how I treat others individually, how I treat my husband, my wife, how I serve the Lord in the church, at work or at school? Does it cause me to share my faith. Have a consistent prayer life, and reading of God's Word? I trust you pray daily for the situation in the Middle East, for God to confuse the enemy and that Israel will have peace (Psalm 122:6).

Queen Victoria was much loved. She made unexpected calls on the farm folks who lived in cottages. Any day might be a royal day, and the Scots had a chair prepared for her visit. Their houses were kept spotless. They were a clean and wholesome people, but her announced visits added to the joy of keeping their homes lovely. The old people who remembered her visits in their youth charmed visitors by the expression used in the residences on Deeside. They would say, **Perhaps today, she'll come my way.**

Perhaps today the clouds will part
asunder,
Reveal a glory brighter than the sun;
And we shall view, with transport, joy
and wonder,
The hope of earth and Heavens
beloved one.

Yes, perhaps the Lord will come today! Let's live expectantly today and every day!