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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Joshua 8.

(2015)

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Joshua 8.

Topics.

- The LORD tells Joshua he has given Ai into his hand.
- Israel captured the city of Ai and set it on fire and no one escaped.
- The warriors and the inhabitants of Ai are killed, but the king is taken alive.
- The king of Ai is hanged on a tree and his body is covered with stones.
- Joshua builds an altar of uncut stones on Mount Ebal to the LORD.
- Joshua wrote the law on the altar between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal.
- Joshua reads the blessing and curse that is written in the book of the law.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION: the first five books of Moses anticipated the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham concerning the Promised Land. Moses is now dead. Joshua crosses the River Jordan (about 1400 B.C.) and after a string of military victories apportioned the land according to the twelve tribes. These battles shine a brilliant spotlight upon the truth that God fights for His people when they are faithful and courageous and put their full trust in Him. (Josh. 1:6-9).

At the close of the book Joshua says that he and all his house will serve the LORD and invites the people to choose whether they will serve the gods of their fathers or the gods in whose land they dwell or the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob. The people choose to serve their God. (Josh. 24:15). Although anonymous the book appears to contain eyewitness testimony, some of which may have been written by Joshua himself.

The LORD tells Joshua He has Given Ai into his Hand.

Joshua 8:1-2 ----- ¹And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear and do not be dismayed. Take all the fighting men with you, and arise, go up to Ai. See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, and his people, his city, and his land. ²And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king. Only its spoil and its livestock you shall take as plunder for yourselves. Lay an ambush against the city, behind it."

In the previous chapter the armies of Israel fled in fear from the men of Ai, because Achan had stolen devoted things of the LORD'S so God was not with Israel. The chapter ended with Achan and everything he had including his sons and daughters being stoned and burned in the valley of Achor. The name Achor comes from the Hebrew word (^ʿAkwr,) and refers to a valley in Palestine, figuratively it means troubled, disturb or to afflict. Now that Israel has purified the nation the LORD tells Joshua that he has given the king of Ai, and his people, his city, and his land to Israel and their armies will have the same triumphant victory as they did over the city of Jericho.

The LORD tells Joshua to Take Men of Valour and Go up Against Ai.

Joshua 8:3-8 ----- ³So Joshua and all the fighting men arose to go up to Ai. And Joshua chose 30,000 mighty men of valor and sent them out by night. ⁴And he commanded them, "Behold, you shall lie in ambush against the city, behind it. Do not go very far from the city, but all of you remain

ready. ⁵And I and all the people who are with me will approach the city. And when they come out against us just as before, we shall flee before them. ⁶And they will come out after us, until we have drawn them away from the city. For they will say, 'They are fleeing from us, just as before.' So we will flee before them. ⁷Then you shall rise up from the ambush and seize the city, for the LORD your God will give it into your hand. ⁸And as soon as you have taken the city, you shall set the city on fire. You shall do according to the word of the Lord. See, I have commanded you."

Joshua now uses the fact that Israel's armies fled the first time they went against Ai to his advantage. He knows Ai have no fear of Israel or their God and uses this to draw the armies of Ai out of their city. Joshua and a number of warriors of Israel attack the city and then deliberately flee. The armies of Ai see Israel fleeing and pursue them once they are drawn out of the city the remaining armies of Israel invade the city of Ai and burn it to the ground.

Joshua Sets His Armies in Place Ready to Invade Ai.

Joshua 8:9-13 ----- ⁹So Joshua sent them out. And they went to the place of ambush and lay between Bethel and Ai, to the west of Ai, but Joshua spent that night among the people. ¹⁰Joshua arose early in the morning and mustered the people and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. ¹¹And all the fighting men who were with him went up and drew near before the city and encamped on the north side of Ai, with a ravine between them and Ai. ¹²He took about 5,000 men and set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, to the west of the city. ¹³So they stationed the forces, the main encampment that was north of the city and its rear guard west of the city. But Joshua spent that night in the valley.

Clearly Joshua like King David was not only a skilful warrior who masterfully planned wise strategies of warfare to conquer his enemies, but also a leader who was prepared to fight with his people.

Israel Pretends to Be Beaten and Fled so the People of Ai Pursue Them.

Joshua 8:14-17 ----- ¹⁴And as soon as the king of Ai saw this, he and all his people, the men of the city, hurried and went out early to the appointed place toward the Arabah to meet Israel in battle. But he did not know that there was an ambush against him behind the city. ¹⁵And Joshua and all Israel pretended to be beaten before them and fled in the direction of the wilderness. ¹⁶So all the people who were in the city were called together to pursue them, and as they pursued Joshua they were drawn away from the city. ¹⁷Not a man was left in Ai or Bethel who did not go out after Israel. They left the city open and pursued Israel.

Ponder for a moment the triumphant joy and feeling of victory welling up in the men of Ai when they saw the warriors of Israel fleeing. They were so confident of winning the battle that every man of Ai left the city with sword or spear in hand and eagerly pursued them tasting what they thought would be their certain victory and the utter slaughter of their enemies.

Israel Captured the City of Ai and Set it on Fire and No One Escaped.

Joshua 8:18-22 ----- ¹⁸Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Stretch out the javelin that is in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hand." And Joshua stretched out the javelin that was in his hand toward the city. ¹⁹And the men in the ambush rose quickly out of their place, and as soon as he had stretched out his hand, they ran and entered the city and captured it. And they hurried to set the city on fire. ²⁰So when the men of Ai looked back, behold, the smoke of the city went up to heaven, and they had no power to flee this way or that, for the people who fled to the wilderness turned back against the pursuers. ²¹And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had captured the city, and that the smoke of the city went up, then they turned back and struck down the men of Ai. ²²And the others came out from the city against them, so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, and some on that side. And Israel struck them down, until there was left none that survived or escaped.

In the previous verses the men of Ai had a sense of triumphant joy and feeling of certain victory and now when they looked back and saw their city on fire that joyful

confidence would have been turned to utter horror and terror their hearts would have melted knowing all who remained in the city would be doomed and that they had been cleverly led into a trap. The battle went exactly as Joshua had planned it.

The Warriors and the Inhabitants of Ai are Killed, but the King is Taken Alive.

Joshua 8:23-26 ----- ²³But the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him near to Joshua. ²⁴When Israel had finished killing all the inhabitants of Ai in the open wilderness where they pursued them, and all of them to the very last had fallen by the edge of the sword, all Israel returned to Ai and struck it down with the edge of the sword. ²⁵And all who fell that day, both men and women, were 12,000, all the people of Ai. ²⁶But Joshua did not draw back his hand with which he stretched out the javelin until he had devoted all the inhabitants of Ai to destruction.

The expression, "Joshua did not draw back his hand," may embrace either of the following two ideas: -

1. He continued fighting in the battle with his spear in hand until he had utterly destroyed the warriors of Ai on the field and the inhabitants of Ai in the city.
2. He kept his hand and spear stretched out and lifted up as a sign to encourage and direct his army to go on with their work until the enemy was utterly destroyed. Should this be the case he may have been appointed by God as Moses was in lifting up his hands, until the battle had been won or he may have been copying the example of Moses as recorded in the following verses: -
 - Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. (Exod. 17:10).
 - Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. ¹²But Moses' hands grew weary, so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side. So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. (Exod. 17:10-12).

From all the warriors of Ai in the wilderness and the inhabitants of its city the only one Joshua kept alive was the king of Ai.

NOTE: God, the righteous Judge, had judged and sentenced the Canaanites for their idolatry and wickedness; the Israelites only executed their doom. It should be highlighted here that none of the Israelites conduct can be drawn or used as example for others to act in the same way or for God's people today. It is most certain there were special reasons for the extreme severity inflicted upon the following seven nations of Canaan.

1. Canaanites.
2. Hittites.
3. Hivites.
4. Perizzites.
5. Girgashites.
6. Amorites.
7. Jebusites.

It is also most likely that it was a religious practice of some of these ancient nations to sacrifice their children to their pagan gods and idols and that they had not only been notoriously wicked, vile and blasphemers of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob the God of Israel, but were also haters of the nation of Israel itself.

Israel Took the Spoil of the City, According to the Word of the LORD.

Joshua 8:27-28 ----- ²⁷Only the livestock and the spoil of that city Israel took as their plunder, according to the word of the LORD that he commanded Joshua. ²⁸So Joshua burned Ai and made it forever a heap of ruins, as it is to this day.

When Israel took the city of Jericho (the first city to be taken) all the silver and gold, and every vessel of bronze and iron, were holy to the LORD and to be placed into the treasury of the LORD (Josh. 6:19) and everything else in the city was to be devoted to destruction, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys, with the edge of the sword. (Josh. 6:21). This is because it was a type of first-fruits to the LORD. Now with the conquering of Ai Israel is permitted to take the livestock and the spoil of the city as their plunder and reward.

The King of Ai is Hanged on a Tree and His Body is Covered with Stones.

Joshua 8:29 ----- ²⁹And he hanged the king of Ai on a tree until evening. And at sunset Joshua commanded, and they took his body down from the tree and threw it at the entrance of the gate of the city and raised over it a great heap of stones, which stands there to this day.

It is almost certain Joshua deliberately kept the king alive so he could be hung before all the people and left him hanging from the tree for a day for everyone to see so that word of Ai's defeat would spread to all the surrounding nations and upon hearing of Ai's defeat be filled with fear of Israel's armies. At the end of the day Joshua did treat the king with some level of respect in that even though his body was laid at the gate of the city it was covered with stones. Joshua could have left him hanging for the birds of the air to eat, or left his body uncovered for wild beasts to eat.

It is likely Joshua buried the king in this manner for the following reasons, the stones of the grave remained as a moment of Israel's victory and Ai's defeat and it was the proper and right thing to do. The expression, "which stands there to this day," refers to the day that this story was written.

Joshua Builds an Altar of Uncut Stones on Mount Ebal to the LORD.

Joshua 8:30-31 ----- ³⁰At that time Joshua built an altar to the LORD, the God of Israel, on Mount Ebal, ³¹just as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the people of Israel, as it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, "an altar of uncut stones, upon which no man has wielded an iron tool." And they offered on it burnt offerings to the LORD and sacrificed peace offerings.

In contrast to pagan altars being skilfully carved from wood or stone by man's hand this altar that Joshua built to the LORD, the God of Israel, on Mount Ebal was to be built of uncut stones, meaning natural stones as they are found in a river bed or upon the ground. This of course symbolises that it is built from God's creation and not from man's imagination. They would have gathered stones and perhaps used some kind of mixture of clay and water to make a mortar to cement the stones together or perhaps carefully stacked the stones in a manner that they solidly locked into each other.

Joshua wrote the Law on the Altar between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal.

Joshua 8:32-33 ----- ³²And there, in the presence of the people of Israel, he wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written. ³³And all Israel, sojourner as well as native born, with their elders and officers and their judges, stood on opposite sides of the ark before the Levitical priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, half of them in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, just as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded at the first, to bless the people of Israel.

On Mount Ebal Joshua built an altar of uncut stones and on which no man had wielded an iron tool just as Moses had commanded Israel in the following verse: -

- You shall build an altar to the LORD your God of uncut stones. And you shall offer burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God. (Deut. 27:6).

On this altar Israel offered burnt offerings and peace offerings to the LORD and in the presence of the people of Israel, Joshua wrote on the stones of the altar a copy of the Law of Moses.

All Israel: embraces all native Israelites as well the stranger (i.e., those who were born among them and accepted their God and their laws) and all proselyte Jews (i.e., a person who has changed and converted from one opinion, religious belief, sect, or the like, to another) stood in full view of the priests and the Levites, who carried the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD.

The entire congregation of the LORD old and young, male and female stood some on one side of the Ark and some on the other.

Just as Moses had commanded: refers to the following command of Moses: -

- Now Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, "Keep the whole commandment that I command you today. ²And on the day you cross over the Jordan to the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall set up large stones and plaster them with plaster. ³And you shall write on them all the words of this law, when you cross over to enter the land that the LORD your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you. ⁴And when you have crossed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, concerning which I command you today, on Mount Ebal, and you shall plaster them with plaster. ⁵And there you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones. You shall wield no iron tool on them; ⁶you shall build an altar to the LORD your God of uncut stones. And you shall offer burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God, ⁷and you shall sacrifice peace offerings and shall eat there, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God. ⁸And you shall write on the stones all the words of this law very plainly." ⁹Then Moses and the Levitical priests said to all Israel, "Keep silence and hear, O Israel: this day you have become the people of the LORD your God. ¹⁰You shall therefore obey the voice of the LORD your God, keeping his commandments and his statutes, which I command you today." ¹¹That day Moses charged the people, saying, ¹²"When you have crossed over the Jordan, these shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. ¹³And these shall stand on Mount Ebal for the curse: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. (Deuteronomy 27:1-13).
- **Mount Gerizim:** half of the twelve tribes were to stand on the side of Mount Gerizim a symbol of blessing. These six tribes were Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. (Deut. 27:12).
- **Mount Ebal:** the other six tribes were to stand on the side of Mount Ebal a symbol of the curse. These tribes were Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. (Deut. 27:13).

As soon as Joshua got to the mountains Ebal and Gerizim, without delay he confirmed the covenant of the LORD with his people according to Moses command as recorded in the following verses: -

- I (Moses) am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: ²⁷the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, ²⁸and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known. ²⁹And when the LORD your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, you shall set the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal. ³⁰Are they not beyond the Jordan, west of the road, toward the going down of the sun, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oak of Moreh? ³¹For you are to cross over the Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving you. And when you possess it and live in it, ³²you shall be careful to do all the statutes and the rules that I am setting before you today. (Deut. 11:26-32).

Six tribes stood along the sides and the base of Mount Gerizim and six tribes stood along the sides and the base of Mount Ebal with the Ark of the Covenant between them. These two mountains were in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oak of Moreh not far from Shechem (Deut. 11:29-30) (Judges 9:7)

Joshua reads the Blessing and Curse that is written in the Book of the Law.

Joshua 8:34-35 ----- ³⁴And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law. ³⁵There was not a word of all that Moses commanded that Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, and the women, and the little ones, and the sojourners who lived among them.

At the foot of Mount Sinai Israel entered into a covenant of blessings and curses. If Israel did what was right before the LORD and obeyed the covenant God would bless their homes and their health, He would multiply their children and their livestock and bless their farms and prosper all that they put their hand to do, but if they broke the covenant and turned from God to worship idols and pagan gods their health would suffer, woman would be barren, their livestock would diminish, their farms would come to ruin and everything they put their hand to and had established would come to ruin and all their farms and land would be laid waste.

Israel were God's chosen people from the beginning all they had to do to be saved was to remain faithful to the covenant they had entered into with the LORD at Mount Sinai and by faith believe in God's promise to Abraham. The following verses show that the United Kingdom of Israel has always been God's special and unique nation unlike any other nation.

God said: -

- Israel was his son who he called out of Egypt and he loved them when they were a child (Hosea 11:1).
- He gave birth to Israel and carried them from the womb even to their old age. (Isaiah 46:3-4).
- Israel is his allotted heritage (Deut. 32:9) and the apple of his eye (Deut. 32:10).
- Israel is a people holy to him (Deut. 7:6) and his treasured possession (Deut. 14:2).

The LORD has not spoken this way with any other nation, but God has not only spoken of Israel differently, but always dealt with them differently to any other nation: -

- To Israel God gave the Ten Commandments and showed his great power. (Exodus 20:1-17).
- To Israel God declared his word, statutes and his rules. (Rom. 9:4)
- To Israel God gave the prophets, the worship and the promises. (Rom. 3:4)
- To Israel belonged the covenant, the adoption, the patriarchs and the glory. (Rom. 3:5)
- To Israel the oracles of God were entrusted. (Rom. 3:2)
- The people of Israel are the offspring of Abraham the father of faith. (Rom. 9:7)
- From Israel's race came the Christ the Saviour of the world. (Rom. 9:5)

Added to these God said: -

- Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine (Exod. 19:5).
- The LORD has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments (Deut. 26:18).

The Psalmist wrote: -

- God declared his word to Jacob, his statutes and rules to Israel. He has not dealt thus with any other nation; they do not know his rules. Praise the LORD! (Psalm 147:19-20).

The LORD has not given any other nations such great privileges. These are the many reasons the Jews (especially the religious leaders of Jesus generation) considered themselves to be the holy race with God and the Gentile nations to be the unclean race without God.

The thermometer of God's prophecy: it is true that Israel has been and still is a special nation to God, but since Christ death and resurrection salvation for both Jews and Gentiles is in the Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless Israel remains a clear sign of where we are in prophecy concerning Christ's return. It could be said that they are the thermometer of God's prophecy much like the mercury on a natural thermometer measures the heat of the day and moves up the vertical red line warning us of impending danger when the heat of the sun is reaching temperatures that are dangerous for the good health of the skin and our well-being.

Likewise Israel can be seen as the mercury of Bible prophecy in the sense that world events that come upon the nation of Israel (especially Jerusalem) are signs that give us some insight as to how close we are to that glorious breathtaking and world changing day when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory. But God's focus during our present age for eternal salvation is upon creating a new nation in Christ made up of Jews and Gentiles. This new nation is also called a new creation in Christ, the body of Christ, the Bride of Christ, the church and the Kingdom of God. For further information concerning this new nation God is building in Christ see the title:

- The Commonwealth of Israel, at the end of this chapter.

Christ's blood flows back to the foundations of the earth: clearly Israel was God's chosen people from the beginning all they had to do to be saved was to remain faithful to the covenant they had entered into with the LORD at Mount Sinai and by faith believe in God's promise to Abraham. Peter in his letter and the book of Revelation show that the cleansing power of Christ's blood flows back to the foundation of the earth which means the faithful of the Old and New Testament are saved by the same Saviour and Redeemer.

In the book of Revelations it is written: -

- All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Rev. 13:8).

And Peter wrote: -

- You were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot foreordained before the foundation of the world and manifest in these last times for you. (1 Peter 1:18-20).

These verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that Jesus was not only the central focus of God's eternal mind and of His eternal plans and purposes for mankind's salvation and for eternity, but also the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The cleansing power of Jesus blood shed on the cross of Calvary doesn't just cover and cleanse only those who have come to the Lord after his death and resurrection, but flows all the way back to the foundations of the earth to Adam and Eve like a spiritual invisible river cleansing all the faithful of the Old Testament from the fall of Adam onward who obeyed the covenant and by faith looked to the appearing of the promised Messiah the Christ.

The faithful of the Old Testament were saved by their faith that the blood of their sin sacrifices (shadows of Christ) covered their sin and by their faith in the promised seed of the woman spoken of in (Genesis 3:15), in the prophet Moses said was to come like him, in God's promise to Abraham that from his seed a deliver would come and by their faith in the promised seed of David the Messiah and Saviour.

The faithful of the New Testament are saved by their faith in looking back to the bloodstained cross of Calvary and by looking forward to the glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ. This shines a glorious spotlight on the truth that whether a man or woman is of the Old or New Testament we are all saved by the same cleansing power, the same cleansing blood and the same Deliverer, King and Saviour.

This is because God in his eternal mind planned and purposed before time began that His Son the Lord Jesus Christ would be the Saviour of all mankind for all eternity. Truly, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. (Heb. 9:22).

The Commonwealth of Israel.

It is important to understand that the promised seed of Abraham and David is Christ, all the promises to Israel are now fulfilled in Christ therefore they are not limited to Israel only, but extend and embrace all those who belong to Christ.

This is because God is now creating one new nation in Christ made up of both Jew and Gentiles. (Gentiles are everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew). This means that Jews and Gentiles become one new nation in Christ (also called a new man, a new creation, the church, the body of Christ and the Kingdom of God).

The Apostle Paul said: -

- Remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision (Jews), which is made in the flesh by hands—¹²remember that you (Gentiles) were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the *COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL* and *STRANGERS* to the *COVENANTS* of *PROMISE*, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you (Gentiles) who once were far off (from God) have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he himself is our (Jews and Gentiles) peace, who has made us both *ONE* and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he (Jesus) might create in himself *ONE NEW MAN* (or Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles), so making peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile us (Jews and Gentiles) both to God in *ONE BODY* through the cross, thereby killing the hostility (between the Jews and Gentiles). ¹⁷And he (Jesus) came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) who were far off (from God) and peace to those who were near (Jews). ¹⁸For through him (Jesus) we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access in *ONE SPIRIT* to the Father. ¹⁹So then you (Gentiles) are *NO LONGER* strangers and aliens, but you are *FELLOW CITIZENS* with the *SAINTS* (the Jews) and members of the *HOUSEHOLD* of God, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone ²¹in whom the *WHOLE STRUCTURE* being joined together (Jews and Gentiles) grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you (Jews and Gentiles) also are being built together into a *DWELLING PLACE* for *GOD* by the Spirit (Ephes. 2:11-22).

Gentiles were separated from Christ, alienated from the, Commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles).

In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Christ is the head of this new nation and its Jewish and Gentile citizens are now equal in status before God since in Christ we are all brothers and sisters in the same eternal family that God is now establishing in the Lord Jesus Christ throughout all nations of the world.

The practical application of what this means to those who belong to Christ is that all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel also apply to them. The book of Revelation states: -

- When Christ returns in glory every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the tribes of the earth (Rev. 1:7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation (i.e., Jews and Gentiles) and he has made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9-10).

End.