

A Really Scary Story

Ephesians 2:11-12 (KJV)

- 11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called
Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;
12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and
strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

In the book of Ephesians, the Apostle Paul tells us of a really scary situation for us. In Eph 2:11-12, we are told that we are considered to be uncircumcised, without Christ, aliens from Israel, strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God.

This sounds really bad! What does all this mean! Why is circumcision important? When was I without Christ? Should I become Jewish? What covenants of promise were made? I would think I have hope, but in what? I really would like to have God on my side, isn't he?

Let's take a journey back in scripture and find out what Paul is telling us.

Genesis 1:1-3 (KJV)

- 1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.
3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

Genesis 1:26-31 (KJV)

- 26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.
27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them.
28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.
29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.
30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.
31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Genesis 2:15-25 (KJV)

- 15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.
16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:
17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.
18 And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.
19 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.
20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.
21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;
22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

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- 23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.
- 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.
- 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Genesis 3:1-24 (KJV)

- 1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?
- 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:
- 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.
- 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:
- 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.
- 6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.
- 7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.
- 8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.
- 9 And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?
- 10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.
- 11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?
- 12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.
- 13 And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.
- 14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:
- 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.
- 16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.
- 17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;
- 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;
- 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.
- 20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.
- 21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.
- 22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:
- 23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.
- 24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

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Genesis 6:1-8 (KJV)

- 1 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,
- 2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.
- 3 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.
- 4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.
- 5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.
- 6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.
- 7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.
- 8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

Noah was given the task to build an ark because God had decided to bring a flood upon the Earth and start over with the offspring of Noah and his three sons.

Genesis 9:1 (KJV)

- 1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

Genesis 10:1 (KJV)

- 1 Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood.

Genesis 10:32 (KJV)

- 32 These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.

Time passed and the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth had repopulated the earth but everyone had become self centered and forgotten God.

Genesis 11:1-9 (KJV)

- 1 And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.
- 2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.
- 3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.
- 4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.
- 5 And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.
- 6 And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.
- 7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.
- 8 So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.
- 9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

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So, mankind had fallen from the Garden of Eden, became so corrupt that God flooded the earth but for Noah and his family. After the flood, mankind wanted to make a name for themselves and build a tower to spite God... so God had decided to stop dealing with mankind directly so he called an individual named Abram and told him that he will be a great nation... and all the families of the earth will be blessed through him.

Genesis 12:1-3 (KJV)

- 1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:
- 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:
- 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Genesis 17:1-14 (KJV)

- 1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.
- 2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.
- 3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,
- 4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.
- 5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.
- 6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.
- 7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.
- 8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.
- 9 And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.
- 10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.
- 11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.
- 12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.
- 13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.
- 14 And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

Abraham was the first Jew. The requirements to be a Jew were to be born of Abraham's seed, and to be circumcised. The descendants of Abraham were Isaac and his son Jacob. Jacob's name was changed to Israel and he had twelve sons who became the twelve tribes of Israel.

Genesis 32:28 (KJV)

- 28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

The promises given to Abraham were passed down through Isaac and Jacob. We see that at the end of Genesis when Joseph asked his brethren to carry his bones to the promised land.

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Genesis 50:24-26 (KJV)

- 24 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.
- 25 And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.
- 26 So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

So being part of Abraham's family was the only way to receive the promises of blessings made to Israel. It seemed that it was advantageous to be a Jew.

Now, fast forward to New Testament times... what did Jesus say?

Matthew 5:17-18 (KJV)

- 17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.
- 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Matthew 10:5-6 (KJV)

- 5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:
- 6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Matthew 15:22-24 (KJV)

- 22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.
- 23 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.
- 24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

So Jesus was Jewish and he came only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Wow, I guess being circumcised and part of the Jewish faith was pretty important.

However, after Jesus was crucified and raised again, he told his Apostles to go be witnesses...

Acts 1:4-8 (KJV)

- 4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.
- 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.
- 6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?
- 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.
- 8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Who are these Apostles supposed to witness to? Israel.

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Acts 2:22-24 (KJV)

- 22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:
- 23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:
- 24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

Acts 2:36 (KJV)

- 36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Gentiles still seem to be on the outside, looking in. What advantage has the Jew? The Apostle Paul told us in Romans.

Romans 3:1-2 (KJV)

- 1 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?
- 2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

Speaking of the Apostle Paul, it's important to recognize his role in God's plan.

Acts 9:1-6 (KJV)

- 1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,
- 2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.
- 3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:
- 4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?
- 5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.
- 6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

Acts 9:13-16 (KJV)

- 13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:
- 14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.
- 15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:
- 16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

Romans 11:13 (KJV)

- 13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

So, there were the 12 Apostles, who were given the ministry of the circumcision, we see that Paul was the status of the Apostle to the Gentiles. Remember Acts 9:15.

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Acts 28:17-29 (KJV)

- 17 And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.
- 18 Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me.
- 19 But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of.
- 20 For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.
- 21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judaea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came shewed or spake any harm of thee.
- 22 But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against.
- 23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.
- 24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.
- 25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers,
- 26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive:
- 27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.
- 28 **Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.**
- 29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.

The word “sent” in verse 28 means “authorized”. This passage now brings us back to where we began with this scary story. The first book the Apostle Paul wrote with this new authority was Ephesians and it was the first time Gentiles were addressed apart from Israel. Before this, Gentiles were blessed through Abraham. Now we have a program of our own with our own promises and blessings!!!

Ephesians 1:3-4 (KJV)

- 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:
- 4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Ephesians 1:18-19 (KJV)

- 18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,
- 19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

Ephesians 2:4-6 (KJV)

- 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,
- 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)
- 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

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Ephesians 2:12-17 (KJV)

- 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:
13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.
14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;
15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;
16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:
17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

Ephesians 3:1-10 (KJV)

- 1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,
2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:
3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,
4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)
5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;
6 **That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:**
7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.
8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;
9 **And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:**
10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

This scary story has a fabulous ending!!! Today, there is no national calling in play, only an individual calling for each of us to have a personal relationship with Christ Jesus. The promises and blessings we have are not Jewish (those still belong to them) but rather, we receive the inheritance of Christ!

The Apostle Paul wrote 7 books after Acts, these books are:

- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians
- Titus
- Philemon
- 1 Timothy
- 2 Timothy

These books are your private mail from Christ addressed to you. Remember, all scripture is written for your learning (2 Timothy 3:16) but not all scripture is written to you. These books were written to you.

In the end of Paul's ministry, he had this to say:

2 Timothy 4:7-8 (KJV)

- 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:
8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.